RECORDS OF THO.LING

A LITERARY AND VISUAL RECONSTRUCTION OF THE "MOTHER" MONASTERY IN GU.GE

Roberto Vitali
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Monumental reconstruction and mapping of Tho.ling and branch monasteries by Bianca Visconti with the collaboration of Christophe Besuchet

Oral contributions by the Tho.ling notables: Jampa Dawa, Jampa Yonten, Bumdzin Lhagpa, Mey Daren, Tsering Chöphel, Tsöndru Chöphel and Dawa Lama Yugyal

Visual work by Laura Boutwell, Robert Powell, Mukti Singh Thapa and Bianca Visconti

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Preface

During the autumn of 1996, as a follow-up to the celebration of the millenium of Tho.ling, it was decided that it would be a worthy effort to try to reconstruct its temple complex symbolically, basing the work on literary documents, since most of the monastery suffered destruction during the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976). Hence the present work, given that the celebration of the thousand years during which Tho.ling has been a light of inspiration for generations is an event that belongs to the past, is grounded on the wish to see the culture of West Tibet revive to some of its ancient splendour. At the same time, this book is a homage to a legacy, that of Tho.ling, which cannot be wiped out with its destruction.

In rather more specialist terms, this work aims to show that Tho.ling, the main or "mother" monastery (ma.dgon) of a network of branch or "children" monasteries (bu.dgon) in Gu.ge, has been investigated in some detail from a perspective that is based on Tibetan knowledge of the temple found in the literature and in oral accounts; and that the records of the temples composing Tho.ling, contained in textual material and the traditional knowledge introduced in the following pages, are quite accurate.

This work is thus a timid attempt to preserve at least the memory of the monumental conception of Tho.ling before this becomes irreparably lost with the disappearance of those who have lived in its temples. The same reasons should apply to other monasteries located in the many regions of the Tibetan plateau. A simple rule holds that to restore a monument is to understand its history. Literary research could definitely help the rebuilding activities, for which it should be a precondition, pursued in many cases in Tibet during the recent years often with diverging motivation, competence and financial support.

The task of recording any significant oral information on any subject belonging to the traditional culture of Tibet is particularly urgent because, with a generational change approaching, the wealth of this knowledge is in danger of becoming unavailable.

The textual evidence at the disposal of the present author pertains to records of
the structure, religious properties and organization of Tho.ling, which were generously provided by the Tho.ling monks Mey Daten and Mey Donyo.

Oral tradition has been mainly contributed by the few surviving monks and inhabitants of Tho.ling who frequented the temple before its destruction. Their testimony has proved very useful in double-checking information derived from the literary sources and in adding details on the organization and functioning of the monastery.

Hence, the present author dealt mainly with the written sources and related philological work. Jampa Dawa, Tsöndrü Chöphel and Dawa Lama Yugyal were so kind as to provide the oral accounts which have supplied many concrete aspects that otherwise would have been lost forever. Other elders of West Tibet who have given useful information are Bumdzin Lhugpa, Jampa Yonten, Mey Daten and Tsering Chöphel.

The work of a few persons, who have been so gracious as to involve themselves in this project, and various kinds of assistance given, must be acknowledged in detail.

The contributions of the Tho.ling elders to this slow and painstaking process of advancing towards a closer and closer assessment of the Tho.ling complex should not be forgotten. In particular, Tshöndrü Choephel was extraordinarily sharp in locating the buildings with utmost precision. In the long run, his assessments almost always proved correct. Jampa Dawa was no less brilliant, especially in the identifications temple by temple. Dawa Lama Yugyal did extremely well in helping us with mDa’ba.rdżong, his place of origin. Roberto Vitali remembers him with particular devotion.

Tashi Tsering has been a major driving force in this work, contributing writings, research, material, bibliographical and critical advice, his share in the interviews, and logistics. He has thus involved himself on the frontline from the beginning to the end. Lobsang Shastri has been, much like Tashi Tsering, deeply involved in the project. He has assisted with research, bibliographical advice, work in the interviews and production of the Tibetan documents published in this book.

Tsering Chöphel, a respected monk from Tho.ling, and Jigme Tsering, the honorable outgoing and incoming presidents of the Ngari Welfare Association, have paved the way for this work to progress. They have provided many kinds of precious assistance, facilitating the gathering of people involved in this work from distant places around India for discussion and analysis of the available material. We are especially indebted for their friendship, contributions and ready help.

A special thank you goes to everyone at the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives (Dharamshala) for their proverbial openness in making all their material always available. The Library has a record of consistently giving way to any request by scholars, which is a sign of the Tibetan open-minded attitude towards sharing their culture.

Laura Boutwell has also done very well. Her voluntary work has been highly appreciated, especially since it was given during the earlier and more critical phases. The elevation views of Tho.ling, drawn by her, convey a meaningful vision d’ensemble from the interior of the complex.

Mukti Singh Thapa has painted the two thang ka-s that, in this author’s view, reveal how much he has entered into the spirit of Tho.ling and its ancient history. He has been considerably pestered with directions and explanations by Bianca Visconti and Roberto Vitali, but his two paintings show how much his artistry was able to combine with thematic requirements.

Robert Powell has contributed a noteworthy reconstruction of Tho.ling gsug lag khang, combining his unique artistic technique with an understanding of Tibetan monuments also derived from his architectural training.
Alexander von Friesen has edited the first draft of this work. Subsequently, Felicity Dhumkhang has taken the pains to re-edit the final draft. They have both made a substantial contribution for a better reading, a demanding task, especially since they had to go through the long lists of temples and religious objects that the Tho.ling inventories contain.

Bianca Visconti has succeeded in converting the indications provided by the textual material, the accounts of the Tho.ling elders and a limited photographic documentation into a coherent reconstruction on paper of the monumental complex of Tho.ling. She laid the foundations of the visual work by means of a detailed analysis, building by building, and of the complex as a whole. This is a remarkable achievement, given that, at the beginning, it seemed almost impossible even to attempt a summary visual organization. Very little material was at her disposal and in loco inspection did not help much, since traces of the destroyed buildings have been obliterated by the construction of new edifices on the spots where they were located. She worked incessantly to obtain much deserved breakthroughs.

Christophe Besuchet came into the picture at a subsequent stage, contributing a brilliant critical analysis of Bianca Visconti’s work by means of perspective studies and computer simulations. The two of them are responsible for mapping Tho.ling, which the author of this work considers an achievement going beyond expectations. After completion, the final symbolic reconstruction of the monastery was submitted to the Tho.ling elders, who approved it, considering it faithful to the structure that the monastery had before its destruction.

What this author wishes to emphasize is the dedication shown by everyone to obtain results, which, at times, seemed difficult, but which, despite all odds, have corresponded to the intentions and aims set out at the beginning. A big thank you goes to all these friends behind the book.

Help has also come from other sources. Nancy Jo Johnson allowed us to study her pictures of present-day Tho.ling, which, together with reconnaissance in loco by some of the contributors, have been crucial for this work. This has been for us further proof of her love and dedication to Tibetan culture, which we had already learned to appreciate. Arya Maitreya Mandala, the foundation which is concerned with the legacy of Li Gotami and Lama Govinda, has been very generous in giving us some old photographs of Tho.ling before its destruction. These are especially appreciated given that this institution was so altruistic as to be willing to share its visual material for publication with us.

Initially IsIAO (formerly called IsMEO) had shown an enthusiastic interest in participating in the project by making the Tucci Photographic Archives, kept in the Museo Nazionale d’Arte Orientale Roma, available for study. Subsequently, they withdrew their interest in the project for reasons best known to them. I wish, however, to express to them my gratitude and to invite the reader to relate the references to the accession numbers of the Archives, found in this work, to the actual pictures when these are published.

It is important to remember here that the sketches of Tho.ling, found in this book, aim at giving an impression of how the complex and the temples, which composed it, appeared before their demolition rather than at depicting them with architectural exactitude.

Finally, my gratitude goes to Jamyang Norbu and Tashi Tsering of Amnye Machen Institute for accepting to publish the present work in its High Asia imprint.

This author regrets that the release of the present monograph on Tho.ling is late, since the millenium of the foundation of Tho.ling fell in 1996, but the documents
There could be no more appropriate beginning to a literary and partially visual reconstruction of Tho.ling than the opening pages of the inventories of the religious properties kept in the Tho.ling _lha.khang-s_, known as _rten.deb_ (on which see below p.65-81), which were compiled before the temple complex was destroyed, because it is from these that the present work started. These pages, describing the state of decay in which Tho.ling, founded by Khri.lda Srong.gtsug.btsan known also as Srong.nge (mNgags.ris rgyal.rabs p.51 lines 7-8), the great king of Gu.ge Pu.hrang who became a monk under the name Ye.shes.'od, was languishing in the third quarter of the 19th century, are, however, symptomatic of a situation hardly comparable to the present condition of Tho.ling, which is dramatically worse. Most of its temples have been destroyed, their religious objects looted and the couple of _lha.khang-s_ whose structure was not dismantled survive merely as empty shells. These have been hastily and superficially refurbished in the recent past with the few receptacles that were recovered from the debris or that have been clumsily made for the purpose, while some of the ancient images extracted from the rubble have found their way to the antiquarian market, where people do not even know that they are from Tho.ling.

The _rten.deb_ (f.2b-f.3a) reads: “Concerning the present [condition of] the gtsug.lag.khang, the receptacles and the objects of this chos.sde chen.po Gu.ge mTho.ling dgon[.pa], which is attached to Sera.byes grwa.tshang, [lay in a state of decay], given that in iron ox (1841), ‘Byor.ru.sing and his troops, possessed by a ‘bun.po (“evil spirit”) [and driven by] wrong intentions, brought [such] a fire into the land of sKor.gsum that it was as if it was competing with the light of the sun. Since they behaved ill by invading the territory and causing destruction, we cried into the golden ears of gong.ma mchod.yon chen.po (i.e. the Dalai Lama), [and a response] has come back. A favourable order was sent. A select group of the best troops, headed by a commander, came to the land of sKor.gsum, and the protagonist of many actions during the invasion, Wa.gzir, the actual leader, was repulsed without leaving a trace. Since [this enemy] was dispersed during a fierce battle, the land, people, _rdzong-s_ and estates in sKor.gsum were taken back again. Since the sun of fortune, prosperity and peace shone in the sky, many signs of virtue became eminent, at the same time (f.3a) the excellent system of gtsun[.deb-s] (sic for _rten.deb-s_), which are convenient to check, was introduced, but, at present, these registers are again in poor condition. The images, receptacles and objects for worship, whatever is in possession, large and small, are broken or cracked. This is a major problem, since the registers and the properties do not correspond”.

Ibid. (f.3b): “In addition to this, the times [are bad]. In the long run, the images and the receptacles [and] the properties, large and small, will eventually be completely missing (stong, lit. “empty”). Since there will be no [possibility of] reclaiming them, it will certainly happen that one day there will be nothing virtuous left outside and inside the monastery, in any place, and it will be like an empty paradise. Since [Tho.ling] is unlike all [other] dGe[.lugs] dgon-s in the borderlands attached to our own [monastery, i.e. Sera.byes], given the great [and] extremely noble blessings it bestows, this is a very serious problem. Given that no one dares to leave it in such a serious condition, funds were taken from the _shug.dzin_ (“treasury”) of the precious Sera.byes grwa.tshang for the regular religious ceremonies [at Tho.ling], and a sum was allocated [for Tho.ling], taken from the fund for the renovation of all kinds of monasteries. The installation of _mantra-s_ in the gtsug.lag.khang
images and objects was thus offered and, at the same time, a renovation of the outside and inside [of the gtsug.lag.khang] was promptly made”.

Ibid. (f.4a): “Custody must be undertaken in the best possible way. Records must be kept as if every single hair has been counted. A new gtan.deb (sic for rten.deb) has been prepared to make the record of what is there easier (rtsa.dsins, lit. “holding the root”) [to compile].”

But before passing to study the documents on the temple complex of Tho.ling from a monumental point of view and attempt a symbolic reconstruction based on the literary sources, an historical summary is included here to place the issue in its cultural context.
Part One

The temples of Tho.ling
An annotated reminder of historical events concerning them
A description of Gu.ge, the land of Tho.ling

Sum.pa mkhan.po (dPag. bsam ljon. bzang p.6 lines 2-4) describes in the following mythological terms the people of Gu.ge and Cog.la (bordering on Gu.ge to the west): “In Lus dang Lus.phags², the people are four-legged. To the north of here, in Gu.ge, the people are three-legged. Nearby in Co.la (sic Cog.la), the people are four-eyed”.

The same work (ibid. p.7 line 7-p.8 line 4) adds a few notions regarding the religious geography of sTod: “In the north of Ma.gadha, beyond the Nine Black Mountain range is gangs.chen Ti.se, the abode of dBang.phyug chen.po (Shiva), and between the latter and the scented sPos.ngad is the holy place of Klu Ma.dros, praised in the summarized mDo-s as mtsmo Ma.dros.pa, which measures fifty dpag.tshad³ both in length and breadth. To the east of this, the rivers Gang.ga, Sin.du, Pakshu and Si.ta (sic for Si.ta) springing from [four] great rock formations which resemble a bull, a horse and a lion [respectively] in the four directions (sic, one missing), carry silver, gold, baidurya and rdo.jes and into the 500 minor rivers. After encircling the Ma.dros.pa seven times, each flows into the ocean in its own direction. To the right of the lake is the ’Dzam.bu tree. When its fruits ripen, they fall into the lake. The sound [they produce when falling] sounds like ’dzam. bu and they transform into precious gold. On the left-hand side is [the area] with the special feature of the Shal.ma.la tree, which is the abode of the four Khyung races (rigs). To the north of the scented sPos.ngad is the rock gSer.gyi bya.skyibs.can (“having a golden nest”), which is square. Each side measures fifty dpag.tshad. Surrounding are hundreds of thousands of small gSer.gyi bya.skyibs. To the north of this is the Sa.la rab.brtan tree which is surrounded by seven rows of sa.la [trees]. (p.8) To the east of the latter is a pond which flows slowly (dal.gyi bab.pa), surrounded by 500 smaller ponds. Near these three [trees?] it is said that [here] is lHa.dbang.gi glang.chen Sa.la rab.brtan (“the elephant of divine power standing firm upon the ground”). The four great mountains are, in the north, gangs.chen Kaila.sha Ti.tse; in the south “big.byed (“Himalayan range”) Ma.la.ya...”. The source of these descriptions that Sum.pa mkhan.po incorporated at the beginning

² Tshig.mdzod chen.mo defines Lus ‘phags.po as the continent in the ocean to the east of Ri rab otherwise known as ‘Phags pa’i yul, where seven banana trees grow, and where people have “superior” bodies (i.e. lus, “body” and ‘phags.po “superior”), from which its name derives.

³ Is one dpag.tshad equal to one mile?
of his chos 'byang is not indicated by him. These concepts seem to be based on Abhidharma literature, and are often found in the opening sections of Tibetan historical works of all periods.

The morphology of the land of Gu.ge is described in a passage of Nyang.ral chos 'byang together with the other two skor-s of mNg'a.ris, when the conquest of the skor.gsum by Nyi.ma.mgon is discussed: "As three greatly knowledgeable ministers were sent to survey the territory of the three skor-s of Tod, the minister who had been sent to inspect sPu[.rang], on returning from his tour, prostrated to the king. Having been asked how [the land] looked, he reported: "The land looks like the carcass of a slaughtered horse surrounded by snow mountains. The people resemble srin.po-s (in this case "demons" rather than "blood suckers")". [The minister] who had gone to Gu.ge reported: "The land looks like the white carcass of a fish surrounded by barren canyons. The people resemble sheep". [The minister] who had gone to Mang.yul (sic for Mar.yul), reported: "The territory looks like a hollow land filled with lakes and surrounded by snow mountains. The people resemble frogs" (ibid. p.457 line 20-p.458 line 7: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.2). These characteristics of the three districts of Gu.ge recall the conventional description of the morphology of the skor.gsum found in the literature, according to which Pu.hrang is surrounded by snow mountains, Gu.ge by barren hills, and Mar.yul by lakes.

mNg'a.ris skor.gsum lo rgyus 'bel gtam resumes another three-fold grouping often found in the sources, that concerning the famous holy mountains and holy lakes of the land: "Likewise, gangs Ti.se, sMan.mo nag.snyil (lit. "dense forest of medicinal plants") and Ri.bo rtse.bryad, these three, are called the sa.yi 'bur.gsum ("the three protuberances of the earth"). Ma.pang g.yu.yi mtsho.mo, which is the palace of Klu.rgyal Byang.chub sems.dpa' and possesses the eight qualities (yan lag); La.ngag, the palace of the great mGon.po Bing (sic for Beng) in yab.yum, in the shape of a human skin and bestowing the four prosperities (g.yang ba.zhi); Gur.rgya khrus.kyi mtsho ("bathing lake"); these three, are called the sa.yi 'khyil.gsum ("the three coils of the land")" (ibid. p.174 lines 13-18: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.3).

A few classifications, dating from a late period, of the people, the administrators and the districts that made the three territories connected to Gu.ge, which were the rdzong-s ("administrative units") of the IHa.sa government, are introduced here. The three rdzong-s are those of rTs'a.rang, mDa'.ba and Ru.thog. The latter is a territory attached to Gu.ge, although, strictly speaking, it is not part of it.

mNg'a.ris skor.gsum lo rgyus 'bel gtam, when it briefly describes the divisions of rTs'a.hrang, reads: "The five divisions (tsho) of subjects under rTs'a.rang include the division of Chu.mur ti; the division of mKhar.stod Byang.ngo (sic for Byang.ngos); the division of Gling together with rTs'a.do, these two being grouped as mKhar.spur [note: the latter [division] is also known as IHo.stod]; the division of IHo.smad [note: also known as Ma.sbug]; and the division of Rong.chung, these five. The general head is rTs'a.rang rdzong [note: also known as Shang.rts'e (sic)]". The association of rTs'a.rang with Shang.rts'e, obviously not one and the same place, rests on the fact that Shang.rts'e was the summer seat of the rdzong.dpon while rTs'a.rang was his winter capital.

The same text discusses the organization of mDa'.ba in the following terms: "Firstly, concerning the people under mDa'.ba.rdzong and the record of the successive rdzong incumbents, the people under this rdzong are called mDa'.ba cha.zhab ("subjects of mDa'.ba"). There are the general division (tsho.spyi) of Khyung.lung, the general division of gDong.po gzhung.chos, the entire territory
DESCRIPTION OF GU.GE

(yul.spyi) of mDa'.ghol (sic for zhol “at the foot of mDa’ ba?”), the entire territory of mDa'.mkhar, the people not included among (snye, ba, lit. “at the back”) the administration (gehung.rgyug) of Ma.nam [note: ri.ba (?)], and the entire territory of Zur.khang” (mNga’.ris skor.gsum lo.rgyus ‘bel.gtam p.157 lines 8-12: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.6).

The text (ibid. p.158 line 17-p.159 line 11: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.7) adds: “Some [names of the people of mDal.ba] are mentioned below for the sake of research, such as sMon.tsho.ba; ’Bo.khyang.pa, Mi.ro.skyabs, sMa.khams stod.pa, rGyang.mkhar nang.pa, (p.159) Zhol.pa grags.chen. Shes.dkar gling; gDon.gna.sras, the representative (ngo.tshab) of rGyang.mkhar Tang.pa; IDan bya.tshang; ’Chum.po.gling; sNgon.lung phyag.mdzod (“administrator”) Byams.pa Thub.bstan; gSang.jo, the representative (ngo.tshab) of gDon.nag; Tshe.‘phel, the representative (ngo.tshab) of sMan.Zur; bSam.Zur rTa.mgrin tshe.dbang; Ye.shes, the representative (ngo.tshab) of Thub.bstan ’od.zer”.

Concerning Ru.thog, mNga’.ris skor.gsum lo.rgyus ‘bel.gtam says: “Ru.thog dgon[.pa] is under Se.ra.byas grwa.tshang. A mkhan[.po] (“abbot”) [and] a phyag[.mdzod] (“treasurer”), these two, are appointed [from Se.ra.byas] and the length of their tenure is six years. The four different representatives (sku.tshab), charged to help the work of the rdzong dpon, are the Tshwa.ka sku.tshab, the Gul.pa sku.tshab, the lCags.khang sku.tshab and the Ru.thog lKog sde.pa. Since they were appointed [to these posts], they run the administration. In order to facilitate the collection of taxes by the rdzong.dpon and the bla.brang, the subjects are divided into five divisions (tscho). The five divisions of laymen and monks are the four divisions paying taxes to the government (gehung.rgyug.pa), which are the division of mKhar.stod, the division of mKhar.smad, the division of Shar.sna, and the division of Nub.sna and one is known as Chos.gzhis ’go.pa (“leader of the monastic estates”). Under them are nine leb.tscho (i.e. tax-paying divisions?): rTing.smad leb.tsho, rTing.stod leb.tsho, (p.98) Ra.sang (Ra.bang?) leb.tsho, Rog.gsum byang.ma leb.tsho, lCags.khang leb.tsho, Ri.chos leb.tsho, dBo.byang leb.tsho, sDe.cho leb.tsho, sDe.og leb.tsho. Likewise there are the so called zur.sdod leb.tscho.drug (“six tax-paying divisions dwelling at the margin”). They are Byang.smad leb.tsho, Byang.stod leb.tsho, Bod.rong leb.tsho, Blo.gling leb.tsho, Ru.thor leb.tsho and Gul.pa leb.tsho. The dgon.pa grwa.tshang is lHun.grub chos.sdings grwa.tshang. Since the [monasteries] are classified into seventeen mother and branch [monasteries] (i.e a mother monastery and sixteen branch monasteries), soda is paid [to them] as tax” (ibid. p.97 line 13-p.98 line 7: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.8).

Valleys of Gu.ge

The heart of the Gu.ge territory is divided by the Glang.chen kha.’babs into two major areas: Gu.ge Byang.ngos and Gu.ge lHo (composed of lHo.stod and lHo.smad). Byang.ngos borders on the Glang.chen kha’.babs to the south, on Gu.ge Rong.chung to the west, on the area of Chu.mur.ti in the north and on the mountain range leading to the sGar.chu territory to the east. It comprises a number of valleys which are all more or less perpendicular to the course of the Glang.chen kha’.babs. Its valleys are:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Valley</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Guge Byang-ngos</td>
<td>North</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zhay Rgyag-gling</td>
<td>Shangri Valley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shangri Valley</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mDun-chu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pret puri</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khwoil</td>
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<td>Tholing</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>man-za</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sPulo.ling</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gGo.sham</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yulin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mDa-la</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mDza.ling</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sFang</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Synopsis
The Genealogy of the kings of Gu.ge
(mainly from mNgag.rigs rgyal.rabs and Baiser)

sKyid.lde Nyi.ma.mgon
bKra.shis.mgon
Strong.nge who became known as Ye.shes.'od
Khor.re
lHa.lde
'Od.lde
Byang.chub.'od
rTse.lde
'Bar.lde otherwise known as dBang.lde
bSod.nams.rtse
bKra.shis.rtse (Jo.bo rGyal.po's regency)
rTse.'bar.btsan

sPyi.lde.btsan (ruling in Gu.ge Byang.ngos) dPal.mgon.btsan (ruling in Gu.ge lHo.stod)

rNam.lde.btsan [gap of some 50 years: no lHo.stod king recorded]

Nyi.ma.lde

bKra.shis.lde

dGe.'bum bKra.shis dbang.phyug
La.ga

bKra.shis dbang.phyug

Chos.rgyal.grags.pa dPal.mgon.lde

Grags.pa.lde (reunified lHo.stod and Byang.ngos)

[Gap of about one hundred years]

rNam.rgyal.lde

Nam.mkha'ib dang.po phun.tshogs.lde
rNam.ri sangs.rgyas.lde
Blo.bzang rab.brтан

'Phags.pa.lha

'Jig.rten dbang.phyug pad.dkar.lde
Ngag.gi dbang.phyug
Nam.mkha'ib dang.phyug
Nyi.ma'ib dang.phyug
Grags.pa'ib dang.phyug.lde
rNam.rgyal.grags.pa bzang.po'i lde
bKra.shis.grags.pa (last ruling king of the Gu.ge dynasty)

Seng.ge rnam.rgyal (king of La.dwags)
Indra.bo.dhi rnam.rgyal (from La.dwags)

[ dGa'.ldan pho.brang government]

Blo.bzang padma bkra.shis (of Gu.ge mDa'.ba.rdzong under dGa'.ldan pho.brang)
Building phases at Tho.ling

1. The foundation of Tho.ling gtsug.lag.khang in 996 and the expansion into dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pai gtsug.lag.khang, which occurred until 1028. This phase ended with the damage caused by the 1037 invasion of the Qarakhanid-s.

2. Foundation during the rest of bstan.pa phyi.dar: Padma rmad.du 'byung.ba (around 1037-1041?) and gSer.khang (1067-1071) followed by bSod.nams.rtse's restoration of the latter temple. gSung.chos ra.ba, frequented by Rin.chen bzang.po and Jo.bo.rje, belongs to this period. This phase ended in 1111 with Zhi.ba.'od's death. Rin.chen bzang.po'gi gzims.chung belongs either to phase 1 or phase 2.


4. Ngag.dbang grags.pa and lHa.dbang blo.gros' expansion of Tho.ling, i.e. the making of the so called chos.sde gbar.ma (15th century), comprising 'du.khang 'Dzam.gling.rgyan, lha.khang 'Jig.rten.brgyan, the new gSer.khang and possibly by the gNas.bcu lha.khang, which had 15th or 16th century murals (early dGe.lugs.pa period in sTod).

It is not mentioned in the sources during which phase the Byams.khang, Bla.brang, rGya.khang and Mani lha.khang were built.

Building phases at each of the main Tho.ling temples

Tho.ling dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pai'gi gtsug.lag.khang
Tho.ling gtsug.lag.khang founded by Ye.shes.'od in 996;
Tho.ling gtsug.lag.khang expanded into the dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pai'gi gtsug.lag.khang by lHa.lde (1028);
renovated by Grags.pa.lde (1230-1277).

Pad.ma rmad.du byung.ba'gi gtsug.lag.khang at Shingsgra rtse.mo founded by Byang.chub.'od (year unknown, but probably between 1037-1041).

gSer.khang 'Jam.dpal rnam.'phrul bla.med 'Dzam.gling.rgyan built by Zhi.ba.'od (1067-1071);
renovated by bSod.nams.rtse (late 11th-early 12th century).

'du.khang 'Dzam.gling.rgyan founded by Gu.ge mkhan.chen Ngag.dbang grags.pa (15th century).

lHa.khang dkar.po founded by Gu.ge mkhan.chen Ngag.dbang grags.pa (15th century).
gSer.khang
founded anew by IHa.dbang blo.gros (late 15th century).

The restoration of the gtsug.lag.khang by Grags.pa.lde concerned the following lha.khang-s
rNam.par snang.mdzad lha.khang;
IHa.khang bKra.shis 'od.'bar;
sMan.lha.khang;
rGyal.ba Rigs.inga'i lha.khang;
Tshe.dpag.med lha.khang;
'Jigs.brgyad lha.khang (based on monumental evidence).

The phases which concerned the rNam.par snang.mdzad lha.khang are
the bstan.pa phyi.dar phase (literary evidence);
the Grags.pa.lde's phase (monumental evidence) and
Ngag.dbang grags.pa's phase (literary and monumental evidence).

Other temples existing during bstan.pa phyi.dar
gSung.chos ra.ba (earlier than 1042 given Jo.bo.rje's evidence?);
Rin.chen bzang.po'i gzims.chung and
the other lha.khang-s in which the statues of Tho.ling gtsug.lag.khang,
mentioned below on the same page, were installed.

Temples of difficult dating
Byams.khang (depicted in the 15th century (no longer extant) mural reproduced in the modern thang.ka) (see pl.111);
Ma.ni lha.khang (faint traces of murals may point to the fact that the temple was part of the 13th century phase);
Bla.brang mgon.khang;
Mkhan.po rin.po.che'i gzims.chung (belonging to the Bla.brang; the latter is mentioned in Shanti.pa'i rnam.thar, thus predating the 1530s);
rGyal.khang (which could not predate the dGa'.ldan pho.brang period).

Documented images and structures put up at Tho.ling from its foundation to the end of bstan.pa phyi.dar
dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa'i gtsug.lag.khang
a statue of rNam.par snang.mdzad (whose existence is not recorded in the rten.deb) and the other rGyal.ba rigs.bzhi to compose the rGyal.ba rigs.inga (sponsored by Ye.shes.'od);
a statue of Shakyamuni (sponsored by lHa.lde);
a statue of rTa.mgrin (of Gu.ru Hum.'bar fame, existing in the time of Ye.shes.'od);
a statue of Thugs.rje chen.po (one of Rin.chen bzang.po's yi.dam);
a statue (?) of rDo.rje chen.mo (in the bSrung.ma.khang built during the time of lo.chen Rin.chen bzang.po);
rGyud.sde.bzhi ri.mo-s (existing in the time of Jo.bo.rje-Byang.chub.'od).

The location of the rGyud.sde.bzhi murals (ri.mo) is not clear. A suggestion is that the rGyud.sde.bzhi ri.mo-s, for which Jo.bo.rje, overcome by great emotion, improvised
verses, were the murals existing in the gling.phran bcu.gnyis, thus possibly including the rNam.par snang.mdzad lha.khang as well as the lhakhangs of the brGya.rtsa and the walls of the roofed corridors, which are the spaces linking the rNam.par snang.mdzad lha.khang to the brGya.rtsa. But, on the authority of Nyang.ralchos.byung, it is more probable that they were either in the Thug.rje lha.khang of Tho.ling gtsug.lag.khang or in the Rin.chen bzang.po’i gzims.chung (see below p.27 and n.25).

gSer.khang
  a statue of ’Jam.dbyangs chen.po;
  ’Jam.dpal smra.ba’i rgyal.po;
  the gods of the ’Jam.dpal mthhan.brjod dkyil.’khor;
  seventy-four clay statues and many minor dkyil.khor-s (made by Zhi.ba.’od).

Building phases of the Gu.ge temples

There are various phases of temple building during the fertile season of bstan.pa phyi.dar in West Tibet. The first phase recorded in the sources took place in 992. The second was that of 996.

Tho.ling, with the exception of the first phase in 992 when the record of only one foundation is preserved in the sources, is represented in almost all the other ones.

The temples built during the earliest phases
  Ye.shes.’od’s or Khor.re’s Pa.sgam (992).
  Ye.shes.’od’s Tho.ling, Nyar.ma and Ta.po; Khor.re’s Kha.char; and also Ka.nam, Ro.pag Mo.nam, sPu, Pi.wang dKar.sag (all dating to 996), and IHa.lde’s completion of Kha.char with the making of the silver Jo.bo (around 996).

Temples built during the life of Ye.shes.’od or under his influence
  Kho.re’s Tsha.tsa.sgang, g.Yu.sgra and Khri.sde.chos.skor; De.ba.ra.dza’s dKar.sag chos.sde (after 996 and before 1023); Na.ga.ra.dza’s dPe.pa chos.sde (after 1016 and before 1026); IHa’i me.tog’s Kre.wel, ’Od.lde’s dPe.thub (1024) and IHa.lde’s completion of Tho.ling dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa (1028).

Others belonging to the phase of bstan.pa phyi.dar after Ye.shes.’od’s death
  Byang.chub.’od’s Mang.nang Byang.chub dge.gnas.gling, Kyin.re.gling, Ta.po IHa.khang dmar.po (all of them between 1037 and 1041) and Mang.nang Byams.pa.’phel, Tho.ling Shing.sgra Pad.ma rmad.du byung.ba.

Finally, a temple built in the later period of bstan.pa phyi.dar in West Tibet
  Zhi.ba.’od’s Tho.ling gSer.khang (1067-1071), contributions to Tho.ling dBu.rtsa.
**Plate 1**

*A thang ka* depicting the temples of Tho.ling before destruction and the main events occurring during the first hundred years of its history

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**Buildings**

1. Tho.ling dPal.dpe.med
   - lhun.gyi grub.pa'i
   - gtsug lag khang
2. Rin.chen bzang.po'i
   - gzim.chung
3. gSung.chos ra.ba
4. Byams.khang
5. gNas.bcu lhakhang
6. Bla.brang
7. gSer.khang
8. IHa.khang
9. dzuk.lag.khang
10. Tho.ling
11. IHa.bla
12. gDung.rten
13. rDo.rje
14. gNyer.tshang
15. IHa.khang
16. IHa.bla.ma
17. IHa.lde
18. IHa.bla.ma
19. IHa.bla.ma
20. rDo.rje
21. Re.ma.ti
22. IHA.bla.ma
23. gSer.khang
24. gtsug.lag.khang
25. mChod.rten khra.bo
26. mChod.rten khra.bo
27. mChod.rten khra.bo
28. mChod.rten khra.bo
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38. mChod.rten khra.bo
39. mChod.rten khra.bo
40. mChod.rten khra.bo
41. mChod.rten khra.bo
42. mChod.rten khra.bo
43. mChod.rten khra.bo
44. mChod.rten khra.bo
45. mChod.rten khra.bo
46. mChod.rten khra.bo
47. mChod.rten khra.bo

**Events**

- mchod.gnas Ser.po, the officiating bla.ma of Iha.bla.ma
- Ye.shes.'od was assassinated by the Sa.sang 'Bro.mi-
- IHa.bla.ma demanded compensation and he was granted the Dong.rge gold fields, from which he extracted the gold to build Tho.ling

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**The Srib skyes sisters**

The Srib skyes sisters, who came to Tho.ling to show their devotion, planted their walking sticks made of wild rosewood. The walking sticks became the wild rose tree which was the "soul tree" of rDo.rje, chen.mo, the protectress of Tho.ling. This proved that the sisters were transformations of rDo.rje, chen.mo.

The Srib skyes sisters wearing the typical attire of Rong.chung, from which they were called in 1037, the Gar.log invaded Gu.ge and damaged the temple of Tho.ling. A big black snake slithered in their camp. Taken by awe, they rebuilt one of the Iha.khangs.

The Gar.log and the snake of Rong.chung

Before dying in the rat 1024, Ye.shes.'od broke his meditation and met his population, which organized five days of ceremonies, processions and dances.

On reaching Gu.ge by water horse 1042, A.ti.sha went to Tho.ling. Taken by great emotion on seeing the murals of the Rgyud sde bshis deities, he recited verses in their honour that he composed *improntu* Rin.chen bzang.po

In fire sheep 1067, Zhi.ba.'od founded the three storeyed gSer.khang. Not only Kashmiri artists were active to make the gods of the temple but also artists from the Magadha region of India. The artists from Magadha making the *Jam.dpal.dbyangs statue* of the gSer.khang

In fire dragon 1076, the king rTse.lde and his uncle, the royal monk Zhi.ba.'od, held the Tho.ling council. Master from all over Tibet and India came to participate to it.

**A caravan approaching Tho.ling bridge**
Section One

Historical phases at Tho.ling
A summary of the literary material
(10th-15th centuries)
(from R.Vitali, *The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.hrang*)

The thousand years during which Tho.ling was, with varying fortunes, a light of inspiration in the lands of mNga'.ris.stod are here classified into phases relevant to the history of this temple and of West Tibet rather than into the typical phases in which the history of Tibet is divided. The material on which this historical treatment of Tho.ling is based derives mainly from the sources and the assessments used by this author in his *The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.hrang*. Material from this work has been extracted and reorganized monographically with Tho.ling in mind. Since the same work extends its analysis only until the end of the 15th century, other material has been excerpted from sources dealing with Tho.ling from the 16th century.

The foundation

Following the issuing of the 986 bka'.shog chen.mo ("great edict"), in which lha.bla.ma Ye.shes.'od fixed the interaction between secularism and religion in Gu.ge Pu.hrang, a phase of temple foundation took place. The year of the monkey 996, as is well known, marked the apex in the effort of the mNga'.ris skor.gsum dynasty, and the religious exponents connected to it, to give to the kingdom a network of important temples. Although Tho.ling was not the most ancient of the dynasty (Pa.sgam was founded in the dragon year 992), it was the most important.

On the one hand, mNga'.ris rgyal.rabs (p.55 line 4-p.56 line 12) provides an account of the legal organization introduced by the Gu.ge Pu.hrang royalty by means of authoritative bka'.shog-s, among which the most significant was the 986 bka'.shog chen.mo marking the definitive establishment of Buddhism as the preeminent force in mNga'.ris.stod. On the other, *Nyang.ral chos. byung* describes the circumstances which allowed the foundation of Tho.ling and the other temples in 996.

*Nyang.ral chos. byung* says: "His (Ye.shes.'od's) mchod.gnas ("officiating bla.ma") called Ser.po was killed by the Sa.sgang 'Brog.mi-s. Hence, Ser.po can having been

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6. Concerning the issues treated in this paragraph, the reader can see Vitali, *The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.hrang*, from which they have been excerpted. On Pa.sgam see ibid. p.251-255; on the preliminaries of the foundations of lha.bla.ma Ye.shes.'od's temples, when he obtained the Dong rtse gold mines see ibid. p.249-251; on the temples lha.bla.ma founded according to *Nyang.ral* see ibid. p.261 and n.384; on mNga'.ris rgyal.rabs being the only known ancient source which gives the foundation date of Tho.ling see ibid. p.255; on the Ta.po inscription stating that Ta.po was founded in 996 see ibid. n.401.
None of these texts fixes with precision when these temples were established.

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In the theocratic organization of the Gu.ge Pu.hrang state, introduced with Ye.shes.'od's bka'.shog chen.mo, eminent attention was paid to Tho.ling and its support. Compulsory endowments to be made by farmers and nomads secured for Tho.ling a firm and lasting basis for the exercise of religious practice. Elsewhere, mNga'.ris rgyal.rabs fixes at eighty monks the original community at this most important religious seat of the Gu.ge Pu.hrang kingdom, to whom the ordinance of the bka'.shog chen.mo attributes means of sustenance as follows: “To provide supplies for the monks, farmers were required to give to the monasteries, and in particular to Tho.ling, the main temple, a piece of land that needed 1000 khal-s and 10 nyag.ma-s (lit. "scale", i.e. a weight?) of seeds to be cultivated. The nomads of the country had to provide various types of their produce equivalent to such a piece of land” (ibid. p.56 lines 3-7 and Vitali, The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.hrang p.111: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Trib.18).

Antecedents: Tho.ling before the foundation of its temple

The provision which secured the interchange of secular and religious power amongst the members of the royal family sitting on the throne of Gu.ge Pu.hrang gave Tho.ling an enhanced position in the kingdom after its temple was founded in 996. The fact that Ye.shes.'od built his main temple at Tho.ling indicates that he had moved the centre of the kingdom to Gu.ge (Tho.ling) from Pu.hrang, where it had been sited from the reign of Nyi.ma.mgon, and Tho.ling remained the capital of the kingdom for most of bstan.pa phyi.dar.

It thus became the capital of Gu.ge Pu.hrang, the skor of Ye.shes.'od's father bKra.shis.mgon, but it also became the capital of the skor of Zangs.dkar and S'Pitsi, which passed under the successors of bKra.shis.mgon after the untimely demise of lDe.gtsug.mgon. This is gleaned from material originating from Zangs.dkar, which is documented to have been under the latter king.

An account in gDung.rabs zam.phreng (in Joseph dGe.rGan La.daw ga rgyal.rabs 'chi.med gter p.82 line 3) shows that Tho.ling was a royal residence before its temple was built by Ye.shes.'od in 996. This source says that bKra.shis.mgon was born in dBus (Central Gu.ge) mTho.ba. This is the earliest reference to mTho.ling/Tho.ling (ling being a localizer), albeit in an abbreviated form of its more common name. Being the birthplace of lha.bla.ma's father, an association of the Gu.ge Pu.hrang dynasty with Tho.ling existed before the time of Ye.shes.'od. Therefore, it cannot be ruled out that the earlier choice of Tho.ling as a royal seat resulted in the establishment of the major temple of the Gu.ge Pu.hrang dynasty at this locality.

There is a belief popular at Tho.ling that confirms the statement of gDung.rabs zam.phreng and takes it to an even earlier period. It holds that Nyi.ma.mgon established his site on top of the hill to its south-west, that bKra.shis.mgon built his own halfway up the same hill (roughly at the spot where later ruins are found), and that Ye.shes.'od built his temple on the Tho.ling plain. Despite Ye.shes.'od being the first member of the dynasty universally acknowledged in the sources to have been active at Tho.ling, the oral tradition is, in all probability, historically correct.

An episode occurring at Tho.ling during bstan.pa phyi.dar

An interesting event that took place at Tho.ling, which shows that the spiritual and temporal leadership of Gu.ge Pu.hrang was not so stubbornly opposed to religious

11. Concerning the issues treated in this paragraph, the reader can see Vitali, The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.hrang, from which they have been excerpted. On the role of Tho.ling as the capital of Gu.ge Pu.hrang see ibid. p.239; on the incorporation of the skor of lDe.gtsug.mgon into that of Gu.ge Pu.hrang after his death see ibid. n.432, which is based on material published by E Dargyay in “The Dynasty of Blang-La (Zangskar West Tibet) and its Chronology - A Reconsideration” p.25, on Tho ling being the birthplace of bKra.shis.mgon, the father of Ye.shes.'od, see Vitali, The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.hrang n.210, on the choice of Tho.ling as a royal seat before the foundation of its temple see ibid. p.239, n.210 and p.315; on the localities built by Nyi.ma.mgon and bKra.shis.mgon on the hill in the south-west of the Tho ling plain see ibid. p.314.

trading traditions different from that diffused by them in mNga’ris skor. gsum during that period, is an episode involving the Bon.po gter.ston known as sTag.sde Bon.ston Hum.’bar. He extracted the gZa’ Mon. pa Ke.ti gdams. skor shin. tu zab. cing rno. myur tshan. che’i drag.sngags (“especially profound cycle of instructions on the planet Mon. pa Ke.ti, [containing] the wrathful mantra/Tantra of the great section on being sharp and swift”) from the rTa.mgrin statue in Tho.ling gtsug.lag.khang. This work was passed on to sTag.sde Grags.pa rgyal.mtshan, who gave it to Pu.rang btsad.po lha.bla.ma Ye.shes.’od, who was pleased to receive it, and continued its transmission.

Guru bKra.shis choe. byung reads: “As sTag.sde Bon.ston Hum.’bar rediscovered gZa’ Mon. pa Ke.ti gdams. skor shin. tu zab. cing rno. myur tshan. che’i drag.sngags, which had been hidden by Gu.ru Padma ’byung.gnas in the heart of the dPal rTa.mgrin of mNga’ris. Tho.ling gtsug.lag.khang, he gave it to sTag.sde Grags.pa rgyal.mtshan. He [in turn] gave it to Pu.rang rtsad.po lha.bla.ma Ye.shes.’od, who was pleased [to receive it]. He gave it to Klog.skya ston. pa from gTsang sGyer. phu” (ibid. p.504 line 24-p.505 line 3: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.19). gTer.ston brgya.rtsa rnam.thar says: “Gu.ru Hum.’bar was born at sTag.sde in a family of Bon gyen.s. He was a sngags.pa. Having rediscovered the gZa’ bdud Mon. pa Ke.ti gdams. skor shin. tu zab. cing rno. myur tshan. che’i drag.sngags from the heart of the dPal rTa.mgrin statue of Tho.ling gtsug.lag.khang, he gave it to sTag.sde Grags.pa rgyal.mtshan. He [in turn] gave it to the Pu.rang king lha.bla.ma Ye.shes.’od, who was pleased. He handed it over to gTsang sGyer. phu Klog.skya ston. pa” (ibid. p.481 lines 3-5: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.20. See also Kun. grol grag. pa bstan. byung p.386 line 4-p.387 line 2).

Similar to another great temple of mNga’ris. stod.id, i.e. Pradum.rtshe in ‘Brong.pa founded by Strong.bstan sgam.po, Tho.ling was a theatre of eclectic activities, which saw Bon.po-s as well as Buddhists undertaking religious work at its premises. Hence, the common idea that Tho.ling was a bastion of Buddhist practice and in particular of the sngags gsal.ma (New Tantra-s) seems not to be entirely correct.

The year in which Bon.ston Hum.’bar extracted his gter.ma from the statue of rTa.mgrin of Tho.ling gtsug.lag.khang is not fixed by any available source. This event must have taken place between 996, the foundation year of Tho.ling, and 1024, the date of the death of Ye.shes.’od, who was the second lineage holder of this gter.ma after Bon.ston Hum.’bar.

The completion of Tho.ling gtsug.lag.khang in 1028\(^13\) mNga’ris rgyal.rabs records what the text defines as a renovation but which was probably the completion of Tho.ling gtsug.lag.khang into the dPal.dpe.med khang.dmar lhun.gyi grub.pa\(^14\), the name for which the Tho.ling temple is famous: “In the earth male dragon year (1028), the great renovation (zhal. bso sic for zhal.go) of the gtsug.lag.khang was completed and the name Tho.gling Khang.dmar dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyi grub.pa’i gtsug.lag.khang was given to it. A statue of the lord of the teachings (bstan. pa’i gts. bo) was made. Materials for worship, manpower, goods and estates were regularly provided [to maintain Tho.ling]” (ibid. p.53 lines 8-10 and Vitali, The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.hrang p.109: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.21).

The name of the completed temple is confirmed by its appearance in the colophons of the works translated on its premises\(^15\). This name, which often applies to a chos.skor, would apparently indicate that Tho.ling gtsug.lag.khang was expanded.

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13. Concerning the issues treated in this paragraph, the reader can see Vitali, The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.hrang, from which they have been excerpted. On the assessment of the completion of Tho.ling gtsug.lag.khang in 1028 see ibid. p.255-258, on lHa.ide being involved in this completion as well as on the chronology of some events in lHa.ide’s life during the reign of his son ’Od.ide and following the death of Ye.shes.’od see ibid: p.257-258, on the death of Ye.shes.’od at Tho.ling see ibid. p.185, on the dismissal of the legend according to which Ye.shes.’od died in captivity after he was captured by the Garlog see ibid. p.281-291, on the dates of Ye.shes.’od see ibid. p.179-185.

14. The name Tho.ling khang.dmar dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyi grub.pa is mentioned in the colophons of the translations of dPal.mchog dang.po ’rgya cher bshad.pa begun by Rin.chen bsang.po and continued by Zhi.ba’ od and mkhan.po Man.tra ka la.sha (Cordier, Catalogue de fonds tibetaines de la Bibliothèque Nationale partie 2 (Rgyud. grel) p.261 and S.Karmay, “An Open Letter by Pho-brang Zhi-ba’ od to the Buddhists of Tibet” p.6); of ’Dod.ge ‘phreng.bas’ rgyud by Zhi.ba’ od with mkhan.po Su.dza na.shri.dznya.na (S.Karmay, “An Open Letter by Pho-brang Zhi-ba’ od to the Buddhists of Tibet” p.4-5); and also of ’Phad.ma rnam.‘grel gryud made by Blo.idan. Shes.rab with the help of pand. ta skal.idan rgyal.po in Kha.che, in which the religious deeds of Zhi.ba’ od and lTe.ide are recorded (Cordier, Catalogue de fonds tibetaines de la Bibliothèque Nationale partie 3 (Mo. grel) p.431-442 and S.Karmay, “An Open Letter by Pho-brang Zhi-ba’ od to the Buddhists of Tibet” p.7-9).

15. For instance, the name Tho.ling gtsug.lag.khang in 1028
into such a temple structure in 1028, during the reign of Od.lde. In the absence of specific evidence, it is difficult to say which were the building phases that were completed in 1028.

Mnga'ris rgyal.rabs says that a statue of Shakya thub.pa was placed at Tho.ling during the 1028 expansion, but, given the material available at present, its location remains obscure.

A more extensive passage in Mnga'ris rgyal.rabs, concerning the expansion of Tho.ling gtsug.lag.khang which reached completion in 1028, reads: "He (IHa.lde) built the Rin.chen brtsags.pa'i gtsug.lag.khang at Kha.char and the great silver image of Jam.dpal. He provided many means of support for [their] worship. He established a monastic community of officiating incumbents [at Kha.char]. He invited pandi.ta-s and dge.ba'i bshes.gnyen-s of India. Having obtained religious teachings, since he (IHa.lde) realised that worldly well being is without any foundation and regretted in his mind dwelling in the karmic cycle, he was known by the monk's name Dharma.pra.bha. He made a gtsug.lag.khang in Tho.gling and a Byams.pa gser.thang (a "golden thang ka") at She.ye in Mar.yul" (ibid. p.61 lines 8-14 and Vitali, The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.hrang p.115: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.22).

These notions have new and significant implications. The controversial assessment of Kha.char apart, they provide an insight into the historical sequence of IHa.lde's religious undertakings. While still a lay ruler, he sponsored Kha.char (Rin.chen bzang po'i nam.thar 'bring.po states that IHa.lde established yon.mchod ("patron-bla.ma relation") with Rin.chen bzang.po around 996 for this purpose). Subsequently he invited Indian masters to Stod. He was ordained not later than 1024 when 'Od.lde is documented to have been ruling and when Ye.shes.'od died. After receiving the monk's name of Dharma.pra.bha, IHa.lde built a temple in Tho.gling. The 1028 accomplishment of the transformation of the Tho.ling gtsug.lag.khang into the dpal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa gives substance to the first reference to it found in Mnga'ris rgyal.rabs (p.53 lines 7-8), in which it is left unattributed.

In a different passage from the one in which IHa.lde's donation of the Byams.pa gser.thang to She.ye in Mar.yul is mentioned, he is credited with the sponsorship of a Shakya munsi statue (ibid. p.53 line 10), but details of the temple in which it was housed are not given. It cannot be ruled out that this is the image of the bstan.pa'i gtso.bo ("master of the teachings", i.e. Shakya munsi) which, the same source says, was placed at Tho.ling when IHa.lde completed the expansion of the gtsug.lag.khang.

The statement of Mnga'ris rgyal.rabs that Ye.shes.'od died at Tho.ling (ibid. p.59 lines 16-18 and Vitali, The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.hrang p.113: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.23) does not only serve historical accuracy but gives further evidence to exclude the legend of his death in captivity at the hands of the Gar.log-s. Ye.shes.'od's dates can be fixed with the help of Tshe.dbang nor.bu's Bod.rje Iha bsad.po'i gdung.rabs and various passages in Mnga'ris rgyal.rabs. He was born in the sheep year 947 and died in the rat year 1024.

This shows that, despite the fact that Tho.ling remained his residence until his death, Iha.bla.ma did not survive to see the completion of his most important temple. On these grounds, it is not surprising that Mnga'ris rgyal.rabs credits IHa.lde with being the ruler who brought the major temple of Tho.ling to the stage that was deemed definitive in the period of bstan.pa phyi.dar.

16. Bod.rje Iha bsad.po'i gdung.rabs (p.74 lines 1-3: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.24) says: "They are mentioned in a fragment of a document discovered thrown inside an old Ka ni ka mchod.rten in Mnga'ris Gung.thang", and continues (p.74 lines 9-11): "Since it derives from the [same] Gung.thang lo rgyus that Iha bla ma was born in a sheep year [and lived for seventy-eight years, the difference between Iha bla ma and lo chen's birth [dates] was no more than one year". 
The protectress of Tho.ling

The appointment of the protectress of Tho.ling is discussed in Jo.bo dngul.sku mched.gsum dkar.chag (f.10a lines 1-2). The text says that rDo.rje chen.mo, a form of lHa.mo, was originally brought to Tho.ling from Ma.ga.dha by lo.chen Rin.chen bsang.po and installed as the protectress of the temple along with her retinue Re.ma.ti and Garja.ma (otherwise known as Gar.dza.ma).

Jo.bo dngul.sku mched.gsum dkar.chag says: “This protectress was [originally] summoned by lo.chen (Rin.chen bsang.po) from Ma.ga.dha. He installed [rDo.rje chen.mo] riding on a black horse at mTho.ling, [while] she rode a stag on the way. [With] blon.po Re.ma.ti and Garja.ma, these are the three rje.blon-s (i.e. the “queen” and her two companions)” (ibid. f.10a lines 1-2: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.25).

Given the foundation date of Tho.ling (996), the summoning of rDo.rje chen.mo to the main temple in Gu.ge took place at the time of Rin.chen bsang.po’s return to sTod in 1000 after his second visit to Kha.che.

Jo.bo dngul.sku mched.gsum dkar.chag adds that ‘Od.lde appointed rDo.rje chen.mo as bsrong.ma (“protectress”) (“‘Od.lde appointed bsrong.ma (sic for bsrong.ma) rDo.rje chen.mo and her cycle as protectresses”) (ibid. f.10a line 1: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.26). Two early phases of the rDo.rje chen.mo cult thus have to be recognized. A first appointment as protectress of Tho.ling by lo.chen in 1001 and a second by ‘Od.lde some time before 1037. rDo.rje chen.mo stood guard over the Tho.ling temples from the beginning of the 11th century until recently, when the religious complex at Tho.ling was destroyed.

It seems that rDo.rje chen.mo also was the bsrong.ma of Nyar.ma, the great temple founded in Mar.yul by lha.bla.ma Ye.shes.’od in the same year of the monkey (996).

Blo.bzung bzod.pa, the present abbot of Khri.gs.se in Mar.yul, in his Rin.chen bsang.po’i rnam.thar, states: “Since dPal.ldan lHa.mo rDo.rje chen.mo, the protectress of lo.tsa.ba, [was made] to reside at this holy place, she also became known as Nyar.ma rDo.rje chen.mo. Later, as the king of La.dews summoned her to this region, she became the protectress of the king” (ibid. p.15 lines 3-5: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.27).

This account confusedly transfers to Nyar.ma the appointment of rDo.rje chen.mo by Rin.chen bsang.po to be the bsrong.ma of Tho.ling and her subsequent reappointment by ‘Od.lde, who also ruled in La.dews (see BAI.ser p.279 line 17-280 line 1). Blo.bzung bzod.pa’s version of these events is anachronistic, for rDo.rje chen.mo cannot have been chosen to preside over Nyar.ma at the time of its foundation in 996. This mistaken chronology derives from Blo.bzung bzod.pa’s claim that Nyar.ma was founded in 1012.

The 1037 sack of Tho.ling

Jo.bo dngul.sku mched.gsum dkar.chag introduces a significant episode which shows that the existence of Tho.ling was threatened soon after its foundation. This incident is important because it adds further detail concerning the events that destabilized the kingdom and marked the end of ‘Od.lde’s reign. The episode involves a sack of Tho.ling, which was raided by the troops of the Hor-s and must have undergone considerable destruction, since the text says that the Hor-s felt compelled to restore a lha.khang after the miraculous appearance of a big black snake.
Jo bo dngul.sku mched.gsum dkar.chag reads: “The Hor troops came to mTho.ling. A big black snake slithered among the troops who had assembled [there]. Since the Hor-s were frightened and repented at [this] miraculous appearance, according to an oral account, they restored a lha.khang. It became known as the Hos (sic for Hor?) lha.khang, which is standing to this day” (ibid. f.10a lines 2-3. Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.29).

This event is the 1037 invasion of the Qarakhandi-s described in Mar.lung.pa rnam.thar21, which occurred after ‘Od.dge had been taken prisoner during his campaign in Bru.sha (mNga.ris rgyal.rabs p.62 lines 1-2 and Vitali, The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.hrang p.115: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.31). Therefore, Tho.ling suffered its first major blow around 1037, soon after the grand plan of the dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa had been completed.

A hint of an early destruction of Tho.ling is found in an anecdote in Ngor chos.byung: “[Ye.shes.’od] thought of founding Tho.ling gtsug.lag.khang in Gu.ge. His architect said: “We can build it, but it will be destroyed within a hundred years”. He replied: “Nonetheless, it will indeed be beneficial for the teachings during these hundred years” (ibid. p.262 lines 2-4: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.32). Padma dkar.po cho.s byung (p.359 lines 5-7) has almost the same wording.

No indication is given as to whether the major temple of Tho.ling was affected, but it must have been the dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa, given that all the other religious structures at Tho.ling were presumably built after 1037. If this is so, then the Hor.pa restoration of a lha.khang, which became known as Hos/Hor lha.khang, was focused on one of the lha.khang-s of the major temple. It seems rather doubtful that the Qarakhandi-s, who were Muslim observants, could have restored a Buddhist temple.

It is a pity that the memory of an alleged Hos/Hor lha.khang is lost and that no confirmation of this legend is possible at present. On the other hand, Wa.gindra karma, the author of the dkar.chag, affirms that Hos/Hor lha.khang still existed in his time, i.e. after earth pig 1539 (see Vitali, “Introduction to Jo bo dngul.sku mched.gsum dkar.chag by Wa.gindra karma” p.VIII-IX), this being the terminus post quem to assess the period of Wa.gindra karma in Pu.hrang. He wrote Jo bo dngul.sku mched.gsum dkar.chag and the well known Ti.sse gnas.yig (entitled Gangs.chen Gangs.ris mtsho Ma.pham chu.bo bzhi dang cas.pa gtan.la phab.pa gyang.don snang.bar byed.pa. ’i me.long zhes.bya.ba bzhung.50) at Kha.char which he calls the Rigs.gsum mgon.po.i gando.la.

The Hos lha.khang heavily damaged by the 1037 invaders is nowhere else mentioned by the sources. None of the Tho.ling lha.khang-s bore the name of Hos lha.khang. A suggestion, based on an argument e silentio, is that perhaps one of the two lha.khang-s incorporated into what became the ‘du.khang Thub.dbang bDud.dul.ma (see below p.125) may have borne this name, which became forgotten following the fact that this holy chamber did not exist anymore. The name Hos lha.khang poses another problem, that of being remarkably different from the type of names given to the other Tho.ling lha.khang-s.

Byang.chub.’od’s contributions to Tho.ling22

The successors to Ye.shes.’od followed the principle sanctioned in the latter’s bka’shog.chen.mo (“great edict”), according to which it was their duty to perpetuate the Buddhist tradition and preserve the temples. Among all the descendants of Ye.shes.’od, Byang.chub.’od was one of those who did the most to keep the legacy

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21. Mar.lung.pa’i rnam.thar (f.15a line 5-f.15b line 2: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.30): “His (Thon.mi ‘Dzu ‘phrul ’thu sobs) son Thon Kun dga’ rgya.mtsho was born. During his time, Bha ra dan dur, who belonged to the lineage of Hor nag. mo A. lan, at the head of the Hor-s’ army, invaded Tibet. He drove [people] to various skal Mon lands (skal Mon rnam.s), [such as] Se reb, Mu.khun, gTis.ru in Rong. mNga.ris of Tibet was overrun by the Hos. He (Bha ra dan dur) was the sovereign of Ye.tshe (Ya.rtsue) etc…” See Vitali, The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.hrang n.439.

22. Concerning the issues treated in this paragraph, the reader can see Vitali, The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.hrang, from which they have been excerpted. On Byang.chub.’od building the Pad ma rma du byung ba’s gtsug lag khang at Tho ling see ibid. p.309-311; on the assessment that this gtsug lag khang stood on the Shing sgra hill see ibid. p.310; on Byang.chub.’od assigning this temple to the care of the royal family and the court see ibid. p.211; on the dates of Byang.chub.’od see ibid. p.295-296.
of his paternal uncle alive. Hence, although other activities of his are more commonly mentioned in the sources, especially his invitation of Jo.bo.rje to Gu.ge Pu.hrang, he is remembered as a builder of temples. His building of Mang.nang (both religious and lay edifices) as the seat of Jo.bo.rje and his endowments at Ta.po are possibly his best known achievements in the sphere of the construction of religious and lay settlements.

Byang.chub.‘od devoted his attention to Tho.ling as well. mNga’.ris rgyal.rabs is the only source recording his foundation of Pad.ma rmad.du byung.ba’i gtsug.lag.khang at Tho.ling (ibid. p.62 lines 15-16 and Vitali, The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.hrang p.116: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.33). Its identification poses problems prima facie. Especially useful in establishing the location of this temple are Byang.chub.‘od’s administrative grants providing support to the temples built during his secular and religious rule, which are listed by Ngag.dbang grags.pa in territorial sequence (mNga’.ris rgyal.rabs p.63 lines 2-10). The temples at Tho.ling (Shing.sgra and gSer.khang) are introduced first, followed by the Ha.khang dmar.po of the gZim.mal community in Pi.ti (i.e. Ta.po) and then by those at Mang.nang. Ngag.dbang grags.pa subsequently acknowledges the existence of specific scrolls sanctioning an individual grant for each temple built during the time of Byang.chub.‘od, to which he draws the reader’s attention.23

The only temple to which no royal grant seems to have been awarded was Tho.ling Pad.ma rmad.du byung.ba. Ngag.dbang grags.pa records that Byang.chub.‘od issued one in favour of Shing.sgra, which is the name of the south-western Tho.ling hill. The grant issued by Byang.chub.‘od indicates that a temple was built on the hill, possibly near its castle. Apart from Tho.ling gSer.khang, which was also provided for by a grant (for its appraisal see below p.28-31), no temple other than the Pad.ma rmad.du byung.ba was built at Tho.ling during the time when Byang.chub.‘od was occupying the secular or religious throne of Gu.ge Pu.hrang.

The administrative endowment in favour of Tho.ling Shing.sgra shows that the Pad.ma rmad.du byung.ba was built by Byang.chub.‘od on the Shing.sgra hill and was the object of his concern. He spent tens of thousands of golden coins and used much copper for the making of its statues (mNga’.ris rgyal.rabs p.63 lines 2-3 and Vitali, The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.hrang p.116: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.34). The amount spent on the Padma rmad.du byung.ba’i gtsug.lag.khang reinforces the notion that this temple was not the dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa, as too many new statues were made for it merely to have been a renovation.

A confirmation that Byang.chub.‘od complied with Ye.shes.‘od’s wish to maintain, in what is a significant application of Ye.shes.‘od’s laws, the temples built during the latter’s and his successors’ times is provided by a passage of mNga’.ris rgyal.rabs. He entrusted the Tho.ling temples built during his time (i.e. Pad.ma rmad.du byung.ba and gSer.khang) to the care of the royalty (i.e. in primis to himself) and its court (ibid. p.63 lines 4-5, where rtsed.gor has to be corrected to rts’e.khor, i.e. rts’e.mo ’khor: ‘the palace and the court’) (see Vitali, The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.hrang p.211).

Reference to Shing.sgra hill during the time of Byang.chub.‘od is the earliest found in the extant literature, mNga’.ris rgyal.rabs included. The importance of this locality may not only derive from the fact that Byang.chub.‘od built the Pad.ma rmad.du byung.ba’i gtsug.lag.khang there, since it cannot be ruled out that the occupation of Shing.sgra hill goes back to an earlier period in the history of the mNga’.ris skor.gsum dynasty. While Pad.ma rmad.du byung.ba’i gtsug.lag.khang is the first major religious edifice to have been located on this hill, accounts exist, which relate that lay buildings predated this temple (see above p.21).

23. In comparison to the limited provision for Ta.po, the considerable amount of gold Byang.chub.‘od allotted to the temples built at Tho.ling during his lifetime (Pad.ma rmad.du byung.ba and gSer.khang) reveals that he concentrated his support in favour of the latter rather than Ta.po, which the gZim.mals were sponsoring.
While the other temples built by him (Mang.nang Byang.chub dge gnas.gling, Mang.nang Byams.pa 'phel and Ta.po lhIa.khang dmar.po) must be dated to the years 1037-1041, the only temple of Byang.chub.'od which cannot be chronologically assessed is Tho.ling Pad.ma rmad.du byung.ba. An all too vague dating for it is that its contraction took place before earth horse 1078 when Byang.chub.'od died.

Tho.ling and Jo.bo.rje

Tho.ling is linked to Jo.bo.rje's sojourn in West Tibet from water horse 1042 to wood bird 1045 as one of the most important sites where he resided. Almost every source says that, on visiting Tho.ling, Jo.bo.rje was so impressed by the greatness of the images of the deities of the rGyud.sde.gzhi'i dkyil.khor-s ('mandala-s of the Four Classes of Tantra') that he composed impromptu verses praising them. Given the cycles of deities known to be existing at Tho.ling some nine hundred years after Jo.bo.rje's visit (i.e. as recorded in the rmen.deb of fire ox 1937), which do not specifically correspond to those which belong to the four classes of Tantra-s, and the successive renovations of the Tho.ling lha.khang-s, it is quite problematic to ascertain which were the rGyud.sde.gzhi deities praised by the Bengali master, or what was their location.

A significant clue comes from Nyang.ral choi. byung, which, in its account of the event, says that the paintings of the deities of the Tantric mandala-s (the text uses the term sngags.kyi dkyil.khor-s ('Tantric mandala-s') rather than rGyud.sde.gzhi dkyil.khor-s as in other sources, hence they did not necessarily belong to all four classes of Tantra) included an image of Mi.g.yo.ba and were in lo.chen's gzim.khang ('residence')25. Their possible location is thus reduced to two lha.khang-s. As is discussed below (p.88 and p.123), the gzim.khang-s ('residences') of Rin.chen bzang.po at Tho.ling were the so-called Rin.chen bzang.po'i gzims.chung (in the north-western part of the Tho.ling complex) and the Thugs.rje chen.po lha.khang in the bRgya.rtsa lho.bgyud (i.e. the southern wing of the main temple of Tho.ling, for an assessment see below p.78-79) of the dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa'i gtsug.lag.khang.

According to some of his biographies, Jo.bo.rje was brought first to Tho.ling to meet lha.bla.ma Byang.chub.'od. Jo.bo.rje rnam.thar rgyas.pa (in Eimer, Materialien zu Eine Biographie des Atisa (Dipamkarasrijana) p.251) is one of the many works which says that Jo.bo.rje, on his way to Gu.ge, first stopped at the bank of mtsho Ma.phang and then proceeded to Tho.ling to meet Byang.chub.'od.

mNga.ris rgyal.rabs is not very specific regarding Jo.bo.rje's movements after he had reached the heart of Gu.ge, since it does not clarify whether he went first to Mang.nang or to Tho.ling. The text states somewhat vaguely that Jo.bo.rje was somewhere else with Byang.chub.'od before going to Mang.nang, where he apparently wrote Byang.chub lam.sgron, after which he returned to Tho.ling (mNga.ris rgyal.rabs p.64 lines 11-15 and Vitali, The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.brang p.117-118. Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, p.36).

It seems that Jo.bo.rje went first to Tho.ling and then later to Mang.nang, his chosen residence. rDo.rje mdzes.'od (bkAs.bgyud rnam.thar chen.mo) is helpful in establishing the sequence of actions of the Bengali master in mNga.ris.stod after his arrival at Tho.ling. Following his sojourn at Tho.ling, Jo.bo.rje resided at Mang.nang for one year. The same source adds that after staying at Mang.nang, the three year period that Jo.bo.rje was allowed to stay in stod was over and, on his

24. Concerning the issues treated in this paragraph, the reader can see Vitali, The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.brang, from which they have been excerpted. On Jo.bo.rje's movements after he reached the heart of Gu.ge see ibid. p.297-298; on the two great offerings given to Jo.bo.rje in stod see ibid. p.298-299.

25. Nyang.ral choi. byung (p.467 lines 14-19: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, p.35): "Since lo.chen Rin.chen bzang.po invited ma ha pan.di ta Shi.dnya.na, [the latter saw that] many painted images of the sngags.kyi dkyil.khor-s were in his gzim.khang. Since, above the door, there was the painted image of bcom.ldan. 'das Mi.g.yo.ba, [Jo.bo.rje] offered verses of praise composed from the depths of his heart. Then, having composed a sho.lo.ka each for the other mandala-s, he offered them [to their deities]."

26. rDo.rje mdzes.'od, bkAs.bgyud rnam.thar chen.mo (p.270 lines 1-3: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, p.37): "Then, [Jo.bo.rje] went to Mang.nang, [the temple which] lha.btsun pa bKyung.chub.'od patronised. Gung.thang. ba, i.e. Nag.tho lo tsa.bal pleased. "Since [Jo.bo.rje] can stay less than one year here, all the religious practitioners, according to the agreement, are requested to bring him back after one year, since our invitation to the great Indian Arhat will have expired [by then]."" and ibid. (p.277 line 6): "Having stayed there (at Mang.nang) for less than one year, [Jo.bo.rje] was brought back [in order to return to India]."
The colophon of the Byang.chub lam.sgron says that it was composed at Tho.ling, gsuglag.khang (Cordier, Catalogue du fonds tibétain de la Bibliothèque Nationale, partie 3 (MDo. grel) p. 327-328). It follows that Jo.bo stayed at Tho.ling during 1042 and 1043 and Byang.chub lam.sgron was written in either of these two years, for he spent the last year of his stay in sTod at Mang.nang, not long before he left for dBu.s.rgung in 1045.

Another obscure aspect of the history of Jo.bo.rje in Gu.ge Pu.hrang concerns the episodes of devotion shown to him. They are the two great offerings given to Jo.bo.rje in sTod, which are recorded in mNga'.ris rgyal.rabs. One was that by the Gu.ge lay and religious notables, who organized a grand procession, called mNga'.ris 'bul.mo.che'. This may have taken place at Tho.ling, given that this was the capital of the kingdom and was thus the place where most of the local notables resided. The other was by the general population and took place at Mang.nang.

During the years Jo.bo.rje was in Tho.ling, Khyung.po rnal.'byor (996-?) came to this great monastery of Gu.ge. He is the protagonist of a curious incident. Some books he had brought with him to Tibet from his most recent journey to India got damaged on the way and he was saddened by the circumstance. Jo.bo.rje interceded with Rin.chen bzang.po so that the latter would translate A.ti.shal's copy of the texts that Khyung.po rnal.'byor had lost. Hence, it seems that Khyung.po rnal.'byor was at Tho.ling in either one of the first two years of A.ti.shal's three year visit to mNga'.ris.stod (1042-1045).

While Khyung.po rnal.'byor was given at Tho.ling copies of the texts that became damaged on his return from India, Zangs.dkar lo.tsa.ba 'Phags.pa shes.rab (?-?), at an unspecified date afterwards, had an opposite experience. An episode, which concerns Tho.ling, is narrated in the bstan.rtsis, entitled Jo.bo.yab.sras.las 'phros.pa'i skyes. bu dam.pa 'ga.zbig gi byon.pai tshul bstan.rtsis. This could indicate that biographical information (if not an entire rnam.thar) on the latter master was available to lHo.srang.pa Byang.chub dpal.bzang.po, feasibly the master who composed, during the 13th century, the section on the lineage of transmission of Bai.shra.ba.na containing the account under scrutiny. The same section was (partially or entirely?) incorporated into his work by Kirti.badzra, the 15th century author of the bstan.rtsis. This account narrates that Zangs.dkar lo.tsa.ba left at Tho.ling an important text on Bai.shra.ba.na, which he had taken with him from Kha.che, and his early disciples g.Yag.sde'i gNyan.ston Tshul.khrims.'bar and dMyal.pa Nyi.ma shes.rab thus could not receive teachings on this chos.skyong. The narrative then becomes rather confused, but it seems that, in order to get his book back from Tho.ling, Zangs.dkar lo.tsa.ba opted for the stratagem of making a Bum written in golden letters on a scroll and, after going to gTsang, sending it to Tho.ling in exchange for the text on Bai.shra.ba.na. After receiving the latter work the following year, he was finally able to impart teachings on this chos.skyong. Incidentally, of the three disciples sent to Tho.ling to check whether the scroll of Bum had arrived there (g.Yor.po Byol.ston), 'Brom dDo.rje rtsce.mo and Kurur.ston.pa Chos.kyi rgyal.rpas), it was g.Yor.po Byol.ston who was chosen to be the lineage holder of Bai.shra.ba.na by the casting of lots.

Tho.ling gSer.khang

The next great phase that modified the structure of the Tho.ling complex was the building of one of its most important temples. It is somewhat peculiar that the
literary works, while recognizing the existence of what they call Tho.ling gSer.khang, often confuse it with the main temple built by Ye.shes.'od.

The epitothe of this confusion in the literature between Tho.ling dpal.dpe.med lhun.gyi grub.pa and Tho.ling gSer.khang is the account of Ye.shes.'od's building of Tho.ling dpal.dpe.med lhun.gyi grub.pa, wrongly taken to be the gSer.khang, found in Ngor chos. byung and Pad.ma mkar.po chos. byung. Both texts say in the same words: "In particular, he (Ye.shes.'od) built a large mchod.rten in the east. When the sun rises and golden light is reflected by this [mchod.rten], all the lha.khang-s become wonderfully a radiant with golden glow. [This is why] it became known as mTho.ling gSer.khang."35.

It is only mNga'ris rgyal.rabs which assesses the foundation of the gSer.khang in detail. It is extraordinary in dating with accuracy the successive building phases that brought the gSer.khang to completion. This source provides ample evidence for the identification of the gSer.khang by describing its structure and the images placed in it, before passing to name the temple specifically, and eventually by its ornate denomination. Significantly, the text says that it was Zhi.ba.'od who founded it during the reign of rTse.lde, which helps, once and for all, to dismiss attributions of the gSer.khang to lha.bl.a Ye.shes.'od, an oversight often met with in Western authors.

This work says: "On the 'og lha.khang ("ground floor"). Zhi.ba.'od made the complete cycle of gods of the Jam.dpal mtshan.brjod dkyl.'khor and, on the bar.khang ("middle floor"), the statue of rje. btsun Jam.dbyang chen.po the size of lha.bl.a ma [Ye.shes.'od]'s own body, the statue of Jam.dpal smra.ba'i rgyal.po, studded with all kinds of jewels, which was made at mKhar.sgra (i.e. Shing.sgra mkhar, the castle on the hill above the monastery of Tho.ling) in the style of Central India ("rGya.gar dBus.kyi sku" i.e. Magadha), seventy-four clay statues and many minor dkyl.khor-s; [all these] were placed in [Tho.ling] gSer.khang. In the dbu.rtse, he made the complete Kun.rig rtsha.ba'i ("root") dkyl.'khor, the assembly of gods of the Rigs.kyi gzhon.nu.ma'i dkyl.'khor, which were of clay. Masons (rtsgs.mkhan); carpenters (shing.mkhan); plasterers of the walls (zhul.mkhan); painters of the murals (ri.mo.mkhan); sculptors in clay (lde.gy.mkhan); casters in gold, iron and copper alloys (gs'er.bzo, lcags.bzo, zangs.bzo.mkhan); altogether 233 [artists] and their assistants were gathered to [work on] the ground floor. In the sheep year (1067), the foundations were planned and laid. In the monkey year (1068), the walls and roof were raised (rtsgs shing thugs phub). In the bird year (1069), the clay statues were made. In the dog year (1070), the murals were painted. In the pig year (1071), the great painting of the [gods'] faces was accomplished. The name 'Jam.dpal rmam.phrub bla.med 'Dzam.gling.rgyan ("the ornament of the universe [which is] the great painting of Manushri") was given [to the gSer.khang]."36.

bShad.mdo'od yid.bzhin nor.bu is the other source which comes close to this assessment when it attributes the gSer.khang to rTse.lde. This work reads: "As for who is the lord of these people, this king rTse.lde, the ruler of the land of Shu.rang. He built the 'Dzam.gling.rgyan gtsug.lag.khang as the innermost essence of his ancestral lineage. Inside the [Tho.ling] boundary wall are seven lha.khang-s with Khung heads" (ibid. p.190 lines 2-4: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.45). This is correct as far as it goes, but is incomplete in that it does not mention Zhi.ba.'od.

The identification of the five consecutive years from the sheep to the pig year during which the gSer.khang was built, according to mNga'ris rgyal.rabs, is made possible by evidence internal to the same source. It is based, as a starting point, on the fact that the construction predates the Tho.ling council, which began in fire

31 An analysis of the complex structure of this bstan rtis, which is not "just" a bstan rtis, and the problems arising from it concerning its paternity and conception must be postponed to another occasion. Given its relevance to the subject of this monograph, its analysis has to be restricted here to mentioning that this rare work has an interesting section dedicated to the lineage of transmission of Bas.shva ba na, from which the episode under scrutiny has been excerpted. The text identifies two traditions concerning the transmission of this deity. One is derived from a source called rGya gargyi lo rgyus, the other from that named Kha che'i lo rgyus. They have different Indian lineage holders but agree on the fact that the transmission reached Kha che dbon.pa, who imparted it to Zangs dkar.lo tsa.ba 'Phags.pa shes.rab. Interestingly, rGya gargyi lo rgyus documents Zangs dkar.lo tsa.ba's secret name, given as Shri badza (see lo byo yab.sras sprod.pal'i skyes bu'i bstan.rtis i 12a lines 3-6).

32 Lo byo yab.sras sprod.pal'i skyes bu'i bstan.rtis (f 12a line 6-f 12b line 3: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.42): "When [Zangs dkar.lo tsa.ba] went to Tibet, as he had left the book at Tho.ling, his early spiritual sons (note: g.Yag sde'i gnyen ston Tshul.bar and dmbyal.pa Nys.ma shes.rab) were not able to receive excellent teachings on this chos skyong. Then, at a later time, he pianed a horse, the king of animals (i.e. the best horse which normally heads the caravan). He placed a 'Bum in golden letters, made in scroll form, inside a leather bag [and] put it among his robes. Giving the justification of this course of teachings (f 12b), he left for gSa.sang, saying that he would come back. [Later], followed by three of dBus, after taking along the gSer.Bum, he went upwards (i.e. westwards) thinking to stay at Tho.ling. As Chu.mg ring.mo.ba made him delay [the journey], he stayed there. He sent the gSer.Bum to be offered to Tho.ling. Later, in the following year, he received the book on the chos skyong and after sending g.Yor.po Byol.ston, 'Brom rDo.rje rtse mo and Kyur.ta ston.pa Chos.kyi rgyal.po to [Tho.ling] to see whether the gSer.Bum had been brought there or not, they came back within a year. The texts of rDo.rje rtse mo, dPal.bzhin hor.khang can and Chos.skyong being placed inside an iron ka ba li, lots were cast and the teachings of rhIn.mam.sras went to g.Yor.po Byol.ston." 33 After g.Yor.po Byol.ston, the lineage of transmission that originated from Zangs.dkar.lo tsa.ba included Bum ston bSod nams rn.chen, 'Byi.phu bta.Pad.ma bkra.shis, rDo.rje chos bzang of dPal.thang phug mangs and then Khro phu lo tsa.ba. This brief account has an interesting note, which relates the many names that Khro.phu lo tsa.ba received in his life. When he was a layman he was called Khro 'Dul, when he was ordained to the monk vow, he became known as 'Bshul khirims.

(Continues on next page)
dragon 1076. The only useful sheep year between fire monkey 1056, when Zhi.ba.'od became a fully ordained monk and received his religious name, and fire dragon 1076, is fire sheep 1067. Moreover, this is the only sheep year falling during rTse.lde's reign before 1076.

As a matter of fact, mNga'ris rgyal.rabs says that, following consultations between rTse.lde and Zhi.ba.'od, the two decided to promote a new phase of religious activities (which included the building of temples) (ibid. p.65 lines 12-15 and Vitali, The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.hrang p.118; Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.46). Following the laying down of the gSer.khang foundation in fire sheep 1067, in the monkey year 1068 the walls, woodwork and roof were finished; in the bird year 1069 the clay statues (including the seventy-four images on which see above) were made; in the dog year 1070 the murals were executed; in the pig year 1071 the faces of the deities were painted. The gSer.khang was thus completed in five years from 1067 to 1071.

The name 'Jam.dpal rnam.'phrul bla.med 'Dzam.gling.rgyan ("supreme miracle of Jam.dpal, ornament of the universe") (mNga'ris rgyal.rabs p.66 line 12) was given to Tho.ling gSer.khang, which rarely appears elsewhere, not mentioned in the colophons of the texts translated on its premises in the time of Zhi.ba.'od.

Hence, while Tho.ling dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa was founded by Ye.shes.'od in 996 and subsequently completed in 1028, Tho.ling gSer.khang was built in the years 1067-1071 by Zhi.ba.'od with the help of rTse.lde, which confirms that the two temples should not be confused.

A reference to Tho.ling gSer.khang in the colophon of a translation by Zhi.ba.'od as the place where this work was carried out reconfirms the link of Zhi.ba.'od with this temple 37.

The gSer.khang is included among the temples to which Byang.chub.'od provided support for their upkeep (see above p.23). This is consistent with the date of construction of this temple and that of the death of Byang.chub.'od (earth horse 1078). Byang.chub.'od's grant for its financial support fell sometime after the gSer.khang completion in 1071 and before 1078.

mNga'ris rgyal.rabs (p.66 lines 1-12 and Vitali, The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.hrang p.119; Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.44); A possible prototype for Tho.ling gSer.khang, which thus was not the earliest three-storied temple built in Gu.ge Pu.hrang, was Kyen re gling tha khang in Pu.hrang, one of the holy places where Rin.chen bzo rang po resided and where he met lo bo rje. The famous dialogue between the two took place here, during which A sh a advised lo.chen not to perform separate meditations for different deities. Kyen re gling (spelt as in mNga'ris rgyal.rabs p.63 line 1, but given as

(Continues on next page)
The Kingdoms of Gu ge Pu hrang p.314-315. 

38 On Zhi ba.'od making images and other decorations at Tho.ling gtsug lag khang see Vitali, The Kingdoms of Gu ge Pu hrang p.315-316.
found on temple roofs) on the 'jam.ri (sic for leam.ri, i.e. a small cubic structure on the roof) of Tho.ling dBu.rste around fire sheep 1067 when he built the golden mcbo.d.rten with 'khor.lo at Shing.sgra'i rtses.mo (mNga'.ris rgyal.rabs p.65 line 19-p.66 line 1: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.49).

These passages in the work by Ngag.dbang grags.pa do not clarify whether the golden pagoda roof, for which the dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa was famous in later times, already existed during bstan.pa phyi.dar. The 15th century mural depicting Tho.ling during that period, reproduced in a modern thang.ka (see pl.III), since the original wall painting has been destroyed, shows that the dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa had a different pagoda roof at that time.

The Tho.ling chos.'khor

One of the major events in the history of Tho.ling was, as is well known, the chos.'khor ("council") organized by pho.brang Zhi.ba.'od and the Gu.ge king rTse.lde. This council is widely covered in the literature. Quite a few chos.'byung, rgyal.rabs and lo.rgyus deal with it. However, the main primary source for the Tho.ling council is the colophon of the commentary to Tshad.ma rnam.grel, where reference is made to this event. This colophon is an eyewitness description of the council, for it was written by rNgog Blo.Idan shes.rab, who attended the council, thus being a document contemporary to the convening of the council (see S.Karmay, "An Open Letter by Pho-brang Zhi-ba'-od to the Buddhists of Tibet"). Among the secondary sources, the article by Lobsang Shastri entitled "The Fire Dragon Chos'khor (1076 AD)" is the most accurate assessment of the Tho.ling council.

mNga'.ris rgyal.rabs has a peculiar treatment of the council. It states that 121 masters were invited to the council (ibid. p.67 lines 8-10; Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.50). As mNga'.ris rgyal.rabs refers to the local masters separately from the teachers invited from beyond the boundaries of mNga'.ris skor.gsum, the number 121 refers to those who came from outside sTod.

The most significant and controversial notion in mNga'.ris rgyal.rabs concerning the council is that it lasted three years (ibid. p.67 lines 10-12; Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.51). Lobsang Shastri gives an astrological explanation of this surprising length of the council provided by the late Prof. Dagthon Jampa Gyaltser ("The Fire Dragon Chos'khor (1076 AD)" p.879 n.33). All sources say that it took place in fire dragon 1076. Flatly following mNga'.ris rgyal.rabs, one would be led to believe that it ended in earth horse 1078. Shastry and Dagthon are in favour of a conclusion of the religious council at the end of the first six months of 1077. This calculation is based on the fact that two systems of reckoning years were adopted in Tibetan astrology. One, known as sgang.lo, counted twelve months in a year, while the other, known as bgrod.lo, counted only six months in a year. If the bgrod.lo system is applied to the length of the chos.'khor, it follows that the three years mentioned in mNga'.ris rgyal.rabs were actually one and a half years.

The period of obscurantism in Gu.ge and particularly at Tho.ling

Although mNga'.ris rgyal.rabs fixes the end of the great bstan.pa phyi.dar in mNga'.ris skor.gsum to the death of Zhi.ba.'od in iron hare 1111 (ibid. p.67 line 18), the period of splendour of the Gu.ge Pu.hrang kingdom actually came to an end some time before that date, following the assassination of rTse.lde and the usurpation of

40. On Tho.ling chos.'khor and its duration see Vitali, The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.hrang p.319-322.
41. Concerning the issues treated in this paragraph, the reader can see Vitali, The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.hrang, from which they have been excerpted. On the usurpation of the throne by Bar.'ide, a member of a collateral branch of the royal family, following rTse.lde's assassination see ibid. p.335-345; on bSod.nams rTse's restoration of Tho.ling gSer.khang see ibid. p.346-347; on Tho.ling losing its preeminent position as capital of the kingdom in favour of Dun. bkar (Dun.gkar) see ibid. p.343-344; on one Kum.'ug.pa occupying the religious throne of Tho.ling see ibid. p.352; on the devastating invasion of Gu.ge in the second quarter of the 12th century see ibid. p.351; on Nyi.lde btsan and lha btsun lde, other religious members of the ruling family before Kum.'ug.pa, not indicated as holders of the religious throne of Tho.ling see ibid. p.360; on Tho.ling Dblu.dbu.rste as a residence of king rTse.'bar btsan see ibid. p.355.
the Gu.ge throne by a collateral line of the royal family. The last major episode at Tho.ling was the building of the gSer.khang by Zhi.ba.'od.

It is noteworthy that the same source mentions what it defines in the concerned passage as a restoration of the same temple undertaken by bSod.nams.rts'e, the son and successor of that 'Bar.lde who had usurped the throne of rTse.lde. The passage reads: "The husband and wife (bSod.nams.rts'e and lhA.sgron) . . . renovated the mes lha.je bka ma's (i.e. Zhi.ba.'od's) 'Dzam-gling.rgyan" (mNga'ris rgyal.rabs p.75 lines 5-6: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.52). However, this work does not provide any insight into the reasons that urged bSod.nams.rts'e and his wife to restore a monument which had been built only a few decades before their reign, such a restoration supposedly falling in the early 12th century.

Following the usurpation of the Gu.ge throne and then the death of Zhi.ba.'od, a period of obscurantism befell Gu.ge for the next one and a half centuries, during which Tho.ling almost disappears from the records. This darkness is occasionally dispelled by information often not dealing specifically with Tho.ling.

A reason that may partially explain why Tho.ling fell into such a state of oblivion is that the capital of the kingdom, which had been situated there for some one hundred years from the late 10th century, had been transferred by 'Bar.lde to Dun.bkar (Dung.dkar) following rTse.lde's assassination[^42]. On the other hand, the impression one glean from mNga'ris rgyal.rabs is that not much evidence is preserved in the documents available to Ngag.dbang.grags.pa concerning this period, which ultimately may have something to do with the decadence that the kingdom of Gu.ge experienced in those years.

An isolated fragment of information which sheds a little light on Tho.ling is that some time after the death of pho.brang Zhi.ba.'od in iron hare 1111, one lhA.btsun ("royal monk") Kum.ug.pa occupied the religious throne of Gu.ge, taking up residence in the ancient lay and religious seat of Gu.ge.[^43]

Kum.'ug.pa's tenure of Tho.ling is linked by mNga'ris rgyal.rabs to the reign of the Gu.ge king rTse.'bar.btsan, who began to rule in his youth (and was therefore nicknamed Bu.chung rgyal.po, the "child king"), after the devastating invasion of the Gar.log-s during the second quarter of the 12th century.

Kum.'ug.pa is defined in the text as the gdung ("progeny or relative") of Bu.chung rgyal.po and thus belonged to the branch of the royal family which had usurped the throne. The account quoted above seems to prove that, despite the fact that the Gu.ge kings after rTse.lde had moved their capital to Dun.bkar (Dung.dkar), Tho.ling retained its position as the spiritual centre of the kingdom until Kum.'ug.pa.

Thereafter no other royal incumbent of Tho.ling is found in mNga'ris rgyal.rabs for quite some time. Kum.'ug.pa is the only clear case of a member of the Gu.ge dynasty, begun by 'Bar.lde/dbang.lde, being appointed abbot of Tho.ling, according to mNga'ris rgyal.rabs. Nyi.lde.btsan and lhA.btsun.lde, other members of the same family who devoted themselves to religion before Kum.'ug.pa, are not manifestly indicated as holders of the religious throne of Tho.ling.

It seems that Tho.ling recovered some importance during the reign of rTse.'bar.btsan. This is indicated by the fact that he retained his capital at Dun.bkar (Dung.dkar) as before the Gar.log.pa invasion, but occasionally resided at Tho.ling Drl.in.u.rts'e.[^44]

A castle stood on Drl.in.u.rts'e, a hill in Tho.ling (probably the sandy cliff to the south of the main temple complex on the plain where ruins are still extant) not later than the 12th century. Hence, mNga'ris rgyal.rabs mentions two royal residences at Tho.ling. mKhar.sgra (a.k.a. Shing.sgra) is associated by the text with Byang.chub.'od and Zhi.ba.'od, while Drl.in.u.rts'e is linked to rTse.'bar.btsan.

[^42]: mNga'ris rgyal.rabs (p.74 lines 17-18 and Vitali, The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.hrang p.126: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.53): "As his merit was burning like fire, he was given power over Gu.ge Zhang zhung into Byang (IHo stod and Byang.ngos). He established his residence at sku mkhar Dun mkhar." A metaphor with a burning ('bar) fire is introduced in this passage to echo 'Bar.lde's name.

[^43]: mNga'ris rgyal.rabs (p.76 lines 5-6 and Vitali, The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.hrang p.127: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.54): "Bu.chung rgyal.po's rTse.'bar.btsan's kinsman (gdung) Kum.'ug.pa, since he became a lhA.btsun ("royal monk"), resided at Tho.gling." The reading "kinsman" rather than the more canonical "progeny" is preferable, for, earlier in mNga'ris rgyal.rabs, Ngag.dbang.grags.pa refers to Ki ti.mal as the gdung mchad (lit. "brother in the lineage, in the family") of gVes.khi.lde. Ki ti.mal was gVes.khi.lde's uncle and thus could not be his descendant.

[^44]: mNga'ris rgyal.rabs (p.76 lines 7-8 and Vitali, The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.hrang p.127: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.55): "During his reign, mNga'ris bdag rTse.'bar.btsan selected Dun.bkar as his residence. At times he resided at Drl.in.u.rts'e of Tho.gling."
The events to come in Gu.ge led to a division of the kingdom into those of Byang.ngos and iHo.stod, which seems to imply that the area of iHo.stod, which includes Tho.ling, experienced a resurgence and that circumstances made it possible for it to sever links with the area of Byang.ngos, where Dun.bkar is located. rTse.bar.btsan may have been obliged to reside at Tho.ling at times in order to keep a close watch on events in iHo.stod. In the next generation, this separation took place, for his sons divided the kingdom amongst themselves. sPyi.lde.btsan ruled in Gu.ge Byang.ngos, while dPal.mgon.btsan ruled in Gu.ge iHo.stod.

Tho.ling from the late 12th to the late 13th century, the period in sTod dominated by the bKa’.brgyud.pa-s⁴⁵

After slipping to a marginal position following the usurpation of the throne by ‘Bar.lde, and resurging to a minor importance with the division of Gu.ge into the kingdoms of iHo.stod and Byang.ngos, when it was part of iHo.stod, a long period of oblivion in literary sources again befell Tho.ling.

This silence is broken by a brief reference in Deb.ther dmar.pa, which pertains to Tho.ling and the Tshal-pa.s of Pu.hrang during the third quarter of the 13th century. It is somewhat surprising that Tho.ling is not mentioned in the ‘Bri.gung.pa sources during the period in which this sect exercised supremacy in West Tibet. It seems, therefore, that Tho.ling was not ‘Bri.gung.pa during the period from iron pig 1191, the date of the earliest ‘Bri.gung.pa expedition to Ti.se, until the third quarter of the 13th century, these being the decades in which the ‘Bri.gung.pa exercised preeminence in sTod. In particular, it seems that the centre of the ‘Bri.gung.pa activities was outside Gu.ge."⁴⁶

Evidence of this state of affairs is provided by the account in ‘Bri.gung.ta lo.rgyus that the ‘Bri.gung.pa-s took the statue of Chos.sku rin.po.che away from what is called a Gu.ge dgon.pa in the same source⁴⁷. This seems too vague an indication to allow an identification, which was not attempted in Vitali. The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.hrang (n.491).

The fact that the ‘Bri.gung.pa-s took away a very holy statue from Gu.ge to transfer it to Nyan.po.rDzin in the skor.lam of gangs Ti.se seems to imply that they had some ascendancy over Gu.ge but at the same time that they minimised its importance in favour of gangs Ti.se, their stronghold in sTod. It remains unclear whether the statue was kept at Tho.ling before its transfer. This is possible, given the importance this temple had in the territory, which makes it a candidate to have housed Chos.sku rin.po.che, but it is far from being proved.

An instance of the reappearance of Tho.ling in the literature, albeit indirectly, is gleaned from the fact that the Byang.ngos king La.ga built some temples at Mang.nang⁴⁸. In order to do so, he must also have taken control of Tho.ling, for a king of Byang.ngos (the land of Gu.ge to the north of the Glang.chen kha’bs) had to take hold of the latter place to be active at Mang.nang, which is located due south of Tho.ling.

Hence, some time in the second quarter of the 13th century when La.ga reigned, Tho.ling passed again under the rule of Gu.ge Byang.ngos, as it had been from ‘Bar.lde’s usurpation (end of the 11th century) until the death of rTse.bar.btsan (mid 12th century).

This situation did not last for long, for, a few years later, the iHo.stod king Grags.pa.lde (1230-1277) was able to re-unite the whole of Gu.ge and take control of Pu.hrang. Grags.pa.lde had a significant part in the destiny of Tho.ling, as will be shown immediately below.
As mentioned above, Tho.ling goes unnoticed in the 'Bri.gung.pa sources, which deal with the diffusion of ri.pa-s ("hermits") of this sect primarily in the retreats around gTsh.rul. The main Ma.pham and farther away from them in several regions of sTod. Their sites centred especially in Pu.hrang and the bordering areas towards the Himalayan range rather than in Gu.ge, where it seems they did not settle.

Concerning the fact that no signs are available in the sources of 'Bri.gung.pa-s being active in Gu.ge, an interesting passage in Deb. ther dmar.po is significant. This source states that a king, whose name and dominions it does not record, gave the gSer.gyi lhakhang founded by Rin.chen bzang.po to Shes.rab 'phel.ba, the 3rd Tshal.pa bla.mchod ("officiating bla.ma") in Pu.hrang. Deb. ther dmar.po says: "Then, [after Tshul.dar.ba's death,] Shes.rab 'phel.ba was invited upwards (to sTod). He took care to protect the dgon.pa, the monks and the disciples. Having stayed with [the king of Gu.ge Pu.hrang], he became the bla.mchod of the king and his wife. Owing to the yon.mchod [established with] the king, he was offered the great gSer.kyi gtsug.lag.khang built by lo.tsa.ba Rin.chen bzang.po [and] its [monastic] community. As he was given bZhi.sde gtsug.lag.khang [and] its [monastic] community, he performed innumerable deeds for the benefit of sentient beings. He then died" (ibid. p.148 lines 6-11: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.58).

No temple in mNga.ris.stod other than Tho.ling is anywhere recognized to be the gSer.gyi lhakhang founded by Rin.chen bzang.po. This is obviously a half mistaken assessment since mNga.ris rgyal.rabs gives details of the fact that it was Zhi.ba.'od who built Tho.ling gSer.khang. As is stated above (see p.29), Tho.ling dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyi grub.pa is often confused with the gSer.khang in the sources. Hence, in the case of this passage in Deb. ther dmar.po as well, the foundation attributed to Rin.chen bzang.po refers to the Tho.ling dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyi grub.pa'i gtsug.lag.khang.

It has been shown elsewhere (see n.45) that the king who donated Tho.ling to the Tshal.pa-s was Grags.pa.lde48, who was responsible for the reunification of Gu.ge Byang.ngos and IHo.stod after the kingdom had been divided into these two territories some time around the mid 13th century. He also took Pu.hrang under his control and thus, for the first time since the end of the 11th century, they were reunited.

The donation of Tho.ling by Grags.pa.lde to the Tshal.pa-s took place some time during the years 1265-1277, the latter being the date in which this king of Gu.ge died. An indirect hint that shows a specific connection of Grags.pa.lde to Tho.ling, which is absent in the case of his predecessors on the Gu.ge throne (both of Byang.ngos and IHo.stod), is that he undertook a renovation of Tho.ling, traces of which, on monumental grounds, remained until recently, and a few are still extant despite the irreparable damages of the Cultural Revolution.

The passage in Deb. ther dmar.po, apart from serving historical knowledge, explains the absence of Tho.ling from the 'Bri.gung.pa documents.

The restoration of Tho.ling by the Gu.ge king Grags.pa.lde49

mNga.ris rgyal.rabs50 treats somewhat succinctly the first major restoration of Tho.ling after bstan.pa phyi.dar, when it attributes it to Grags.pa.lde together with that of dPal.rgyas, a temple near Gur.gyam, thus being to the east of Khyung.yunglung and to the west of Pre.ta.puri.

The brevity of this treatment is, however, supplemented by monumental evidence provided by the pictures of the Tucci-Gherri expeditions in 1933 and 1935.

48. mNga.ris rgyal.rabs (p.77 lines 15-16 and Vitali, The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.hrang p.128: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.57): "The middle brother La ga was appointed to [exercise] the royal power (rgyal stod). He built four gtsug lag khang-s at Mang nag".

49. Concerning the issues treated in this paragraph, the reader can see Vitali, The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.hrang, which from they have been excerpted. On this renovation phase see ibid. p.443, on Sa skya pa control of mNga.ris stod including Gu.ge see ibid. p.450-452, on one instance in which the Sas kya pa authority over this land was occasionally broken, when troops were levied by the 'Bri.gung.pa-s at Tho.ling, and on its dating see ibid. Addendum Three p.560-561.

50. mNga.ris rgyal.rabs (p.78 lines 16-17 and Vitali, The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.hrang p.129: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.59): "[Grags.pa.lde] renovated Tho gling and dPal rgyas, which had been built by his ancestors (yab mes)".
Elsewhere in this work (see below p.119-132), this monumental evidence is treated concisely, because the pictures of the Tucci-Ghersi expeditions cannot be published here. They would have been useful for a more articulated analysis.

The photographic material shows that the dpal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa was conspicuously renovated during Grags.pa.lde’s restoration, not so much in its structure but definitely as far as the painted and sculpted cycles of deities in its interior are concerned. This renovation concentrated on the rNam.par snang.mchad lha.khang (the core of the gisug.lag.khang) and several of the central and side lha.khang-s of both the brGya.rtsa byang.ma and brGya.rtsa lho.brgyud (i.e. the north and south wings of the main temple of Tho.ling, for an assessment of which see below p.78-79).

The documents do not clarify whether lha.khang-s other than the dpal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa were either built or renovated during Grags.pa.lde’s phase, since the available ancient sources do not mention the minor temples of Tho.ling. One of them which was built or renovated during this phase was the Mani lha.khang, on the south-eastern corner of the dpal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa, since it still contains faded traces of murals dating to the period in which Grags.pa.lde was active.

Immediately after the end of Grags.pa.lde’s reign, in the years 1277-1280, Gu.ge passed under the Sa.skya.pa-s, who ruled locally by means of their Khab Gung.thang and Zhwa.lu feudatories. This is the most obscure period in the history of mNga’ris skor.gsung and other territories of sTod. Given this rather desolate absence of information for large tracts of the lands which were part of the culture of sTod, it is not surprising that almost nothing is known about Tho.ling for some seven decades.

An episode in the political history of Tho.ling helps to lift, in an isolated case, the veil of literary silence that covers Gu.ge during the Sa.skya.pa period and seems to indicate that the Sa.skya.pa control of this land was occasionally broken. *Si tu bka’ chems in rlangs Po.ti bse.ru* records an instance in which relations between the ‘Bri.gung.pa-s and Gu.ge were tided when ‘Bri.gung sgom.pa Kun.rin levied troops at Tho.ling to fight against the Phag.mo grub.pa-s as far away as Central Tibet.

Byang.chub rgyal.mtshan says: "There was no occasion to meet ‘Bri.khung rin.po.che. Since sgom.pa (i.e. the lay chieftain of the ‘Bri.gung.pa-s) [Kun.rin] levied troops at mTho.ling [and] went to rGya.ma, despite having forwarded a request [seeking permission to fight], he did not receive any response to his request. The troops of the ‘Bri.khung.pa-s arrived at ‘On.phu earlier and later on [that] day" (*Si tu bka’ chems in rlangs Po.ti bse.ru* p.223 lines 16-20; Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.60) (See also Sperling “Some Notes on the Early ‘Bri-gung-pa Sgom.pa” p.38 and p.46 n.44).

On the basis of episodes taking place before and after the troop levy at Tho.ling, it is possible that this episode occurred between the winter of iron tiger 1350 and the late summer of water snake 1353. This event is not a sign that Sa.skya sovereignty had been removed from Gu.ge by then. As a matter of fact, Byang.chub rgyal.mtshan says that Gu.ge was still under Sa.skya at the time of writing his *bka’ chems. Sa.skya’s rule continued until after Si tu bka’ chems in rlangs Po.ti bse.ru was completed in 1361. Following the defeat they inflicted on the ‘Bri.gung.pa-s in dBus nor later than 1353 and the subsequent removal of Sa.skya as the dominant power in Tibet, the Phag.mo grub.pa-s possibly exercised some predominance in sTod, which lasted until 1406 at least in Ru.thog (see Vitali, *The kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.brang Addendum Four*). However, this does not directly pertain to the history of Tho.ling.
The second great phase of Tho.ling (15th century)\textsuperscript{52}

With the end of the Sa.skya.pa predominance in Tibet, the local powers of sTod underwent a period of renewed flourishing. In particular, Gu.ge experienced a remarkable resurgence after centuries of decay. The earliest protagonist of this happy time, when lay and religious life prospered, was the king rNam.rgyal.lde (1372-1431).

In this period, Tho.ling was no longer the lay capital of the kingdom. rNam.rgyal.lde resided at Mang.nang. Later, his son Phun.tshogs.lde built royal palaces at Ts'a.rang and resided there.

A few decades after the beginning of this period of renaissance, Gu.ge also experienced the phenomenon, introduced by the disciples of Tsong.kha.pa, of the diffusion of their master's teachings in the regions of their provenance. Profiting from the resurgence and prosperity in Gu.ge, these proto-dGe.lugs.pa-s were able to secure for their teachings a quick and thorough dissemination in this land. Tho.ling was retained as the main spiritual centre of the kingdom.

Before a new phase was started at the dgon.pa, an important piece of civil engineering, for which Tho.ling is famous, was accomplished. The Tho.ling bridge, known as Tho.ling zams.pa Byang rta.sgo ("the northern horse door", otherwise Byang[.ngos] rta.sgo or "the horse door to [Gu.ge] Byang[.ngos]?") (see below p.105 and pl.xi), was originally built during the reign of rNam.rgyal.lde\textsuperscript{53}. This took place around the early 1390s, for mNgag.ris rgyal.rabs says that rNam.rgyal.lde (b.1372) personally helped to build it when "his body did not grow anymore", i.e. when he reached adulthood at the age of eighteen or twenty. The iron bridge stands to this day, although in rather poor condition.

When he was seventy in the iron dog year, he thought of building an iron bridge. This journey of his thus took place after his first journey to the regions of their provenance. Profiting from the diffusion of their master's teachings in the regions of their provenance. Profiting from the resurgence and prosperity in Gu.ge, these proto-dGe.lugs.pa-s were able to secure for their teachings a quick and thorough dissemination in this land. Tho.ling was retained as the main spiritual centre of the kingdom.

Before a new phase was started at the dgon.pa, an important piece of civil engineering, for which Tho.ling is famous, was accomplished. The Tho.ling bridge, known as Tho.ling zams.pa Byang rta.sgo ("the northern horse door", otherwise Byang[.ngos] rta.sgo or "the horse door to [Gu.ge] Byang[.ngos]?") (see below p.105 and pl.xi), was originally built during the reign of rNam.rgyal.lde\textsuperscript{53}. This took place around the early 1390s, for mNgag.ris rgyal.rabs says that rNam.rgyal.lde (b.1372) personally helped to build it when "his body did not grow anymore", i.e. when he reached adulthood at the age of eighteen or twenty. The iron bridge stands to this day, although in rather poor condition.

This is interesting, for it proves that the technique of building iron suspension bridges existed before its use by mNgag.ris rgyal.rabs. According to mNgag.ris rgyal.rabs, the first bridge was built by Thang.srong rgyal.po in 1372. The bridge was made in iron (!) dog 1430 on the IhSa.s Skyid.chu after he had collected a large quantity of iron in Kong.po with the help of local patronage. Thang.srong rgyal.po's rnam.thar says: "He went to IhSa. When he was seventy in the iron dog year, he thought of building an iron bridge on the Skyid.chu". A few lines below, it is Thang.srong rgyal.po himself who affirms in his own words that the task was embarked upon: "Tib.64). The sources attribute the impulse of the new religious phase to Ngag.dbang grags.pa, the disciple of Tsong.kha.pa from Gu.ge, who returned to his native land and undertook a major work of diffusion of his master's teachings during the renewed flourishing of this territory, engendered by rNam.rgyal.lde. Yon.mchod
The record of the abbeys of Vitali, The Kingdoms of Guge Pa-brang, including the monastery established by Ba-ran thrang pa, is discussed in Appendix Eight, p. 460. It shows that Vitali was the supreme master of Guge by 1424, and the monastery was established by Blos stangs. This text states: "After Vitali returned to Guge, Ngag dbang gras pa was the abbot of Tho-limg. rTsar.hrang Blos.stang, Deng.dkar and Mang.nang (see Bai.ser passim)." Authors attribute the construction of the new Tho-limg. chos.sde (monastery) to Vitali's return to Guge. The author of the text, in Appendix Eight, p. 460, states that the monastery was established by Blos stangs. Another very important temple was founded during the same phase characterized by the presence of the early Guge rulers. "The Kingdoms of Guge Pa-brang" is a text written during the 15th century. The author of the text was not the lone founder of the monastery, as are the others in the Dkyil.khang murals, accompanying the main painted image on the left wall, which reads: "rJe.bat.sin mkhyen.pa, the abbot of Tho-limg, rTsa.hrang Blos.stang." The inscription found in Ta.po dKyil.khang attributes the construction of a new Tho-limg. gSer.khang and of various temples at Ta.po to Iha.dbang blo.gros, a disciple of mKhas.grub.rje. The following inscription has been discussed in a note (n.896) of Vitali, The Kingdoms of Guge Pa-brang, and is given here in its entirety. "Tsong.kha.pa (left wall) and Iha.dbang blo.gros (right wall) are glorified on the side walls of Ta.po dKyil.khang, the first as founder of the dGe.lugs.pa-s, the second as founder of temples at Ta.po. The inscription (written in dbu.can, as are all the others in the Dkyil.khang murals), accompanying the main painted image on the left wall, reads: "rJe.bat.sin mkhyen.pa, the abbot of Tho-limg, rTsa.hrang Blos.stang (grags.pa)...", that accompanying the main image on the right wall: "Gro.ba mKhas.grub.rje, the abbot of Tho-limg, rTsa.hrang Blos.stang." This name is no more in use at present.
tshan (sic).can la”, “The one bearing the name rje lhA.dbang, ...who became the ornament of the crown, the lord of sentient beings”. Immediately below the image of lhA.dbang blo.gros is a depiction of temples, accompanied by inscriptions, both connected to lhA.dbang blo.gros’ portrait. The inscription near the main image of lhA.dbang blo.gros reads: “Ta.po rgyan gyi gtsug. lag.khang bko.d pa”, “He (lhA.dbang blo.gros) founded the gtsug.lag.khang ornament of Ta.po” (Ta.po is called cog.nlag.Khang, i.e. “ornament of Cog.nlag”. in mNga.rIg.rgyal.rabs p.54 lines 9-10).

A depiction of the temples composing the Ta.po complex in the days when the dKyil.khang mural was painted accompanies the latter inscription. It shows five temples in a row. Their names are given as follows (from left to right). The first temple has no related inscription, while the temple next to it is identified as ‘Brom.ston lhA.khang. In the centre of the scene is the temple named gSer.khang, followed by the temple called dGon.chen gtsug.lag.khang together with three mchod.rten-s. This is the ancient bstan.pa phyi.dar gtsug.lag.khang, although the mchod.rten-s are probably not contemporary (no extant mchod.rten-s at Ta.po of some antiquity bore any sign of dating back to the 11th century before they were replastered a few years ago). Finally, the depiction of the temple called dKar.chung by its inscription is on the extreme right, next to that of the gtsug.lag.khang.

Painting images of temples was common practice in West Tibet from the 15th century (see the scenes of the construction of temples during bstan.pa phyi.dar on the walls of Tsa.rang mChod.khang dmar.po). The scene illustrates the temples at Ta.po predating the dKyil.khang, which is not included among them. In order for the gSer.khang, ‘Brom.ston lhA.khang and dKar.chung to be depicted on its mural, the dKyil.khang must have been erected after these three temples. It is noteworthy that the gSer.khang is given the central position in the scene, although it is not the central temple in the Ta.po plan. Its centrality, I believe, derives from the fact that, on inspection, the gSer.khang is the most important of the early Tsong.kha.pa temples at Ta.po. Among the three temples which predate the construction of the dKyil.khang, Ta.po gSer.khang has murals painted in the same style of those of rTsa.rang mChod.khang dmar.po, sponsored by Don.grub.ma, the wife of the Gu.ge king Blo.bzang rab.brtan, thus dating to around the third quarter of the 15th century, i.e. to the period when lhA.dbang blo.gros was active in Pi.ti (Ta.po). The dgon.khang attached to the ancient gtsug.lag.khang built in the time of Ye.shes.’od has to be associated with the gSer.khang on stylistic grounds. On the other hand, both ‘Brom.ston lhA.khang and dKar.chung have been subjected to a number of restorations, to the extent that 15th century works are now obliterated. These two temples have later wall paintings, possibly conceived as imitations of the gSer.khang murals or of their own 15th century originals. The dKyil.khang as well as all the other Ta.po sacred structures not included in the mural in this temple have to be dated to later than the last quarter of the 15th century.

Below the depiction of the Ta.po temples, the wall painting is completed by a few personages headed by Tsong.kha.pa. He is flanked, to his right, by one called Chos.nyan.pa in the accompanying inscription and, to his left, by one named gNas.brtn chen.po Chos.’phags. Below them the court of Pi.ti of those years is depicted. rGyal.po bSod.nams.’bum has to his left jo.co IHas.lham.’joms, his wife, and next to her blo.n po Rin.rgyan. Below them is depicted blo.n po Grang.dkar dpon.btsun, his name indicating that he was a junior religious minister of royal descent from Grang.dkar (spelled Brang.mkhar in mNga.rIg.rgyal.rabs p.74 line 11), the well known monastery on a spectacular barren hill crest not far to the north of Ta.po. It was a residence of the Gu.ge royalty in the 11th century, when three sons of rTse.lde went in exile to its castle.
To the right of Ta.po monastery and court is a symmetrical scene near the portrait of lHa.dbang blo.gros and related to him in the same way as the depiction of the Ta.po temples. An inscription accompanies the image of another temple. It is of the utmost importance, for it says: “Tho.glung gSer.khang.gi bkod.pa”, “He (lHa.dbang blo.gros) founded Tho.glung gSer.khang”. Below them another image of Tsong.kha.pa is flanked, to its left, by a vertical row of four personages, the first of them identified as dpon Ti.rta.puri (the reading of the last syllable is uncertain). Below Tsong.kha.pa is an unidentified personage and another called Byang.sems bDag.med ... (the rest of the inscription is illegible). It cannot be ruled out that the presence of dpon Ti.rta.puri (?) and Byang.sems bDag.med ... in the mural implies that they were involved in the rebuilding of Tho.ling gSer.khang as sponsors”.

The style of the murals in the gSer.khang that existed until the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) (portions of which have escaped destruction) indicate that they were executed in the 15th century. This is confirmed by the Ghersi pictures in the Tucci Archives (see below n.124). Given that the gSer.khang, built by Zhi.ba.'od in the years 1067-1071 (see mNga.ris rgyal.rabs p.66 lines 1-12, p.311-313), was sensibly larger than the temple known to exist until recently, this reveals that the original temple was destroyed before the 15th century. Feeble evidence (a couple of pictures of murals in its interior; see Tucci Archives accession number 6571/3 and Tucci, *Cronaca della Missione Scientifica Tucci nel Tibet Occidentale* fig.238) seems to show that gNas.bcU lha.khang as well may have been a temple built during the same period. Better proof is needed, since, on such grounds, this suggestion remains conjectural.
PLATE II

sGrol.ljang
(after an ancient mural in Tho.ling dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa'i gtsug.lag.khang)

Pencil drawing by Bianca Visconti
A thang.ka, replica of a 15th century mural depicting the Tho.ling complex

Painting by Mukti Singh Thapa
Section Two

Further annotated reminders of events in the history of Tho.ling (16th-19th centuries)
(from several sources)

Tho.ling during the time of Shanti.pa Blo.gros rgyal.mtshan (16th century)

The early 16th century was particularly profluous for the relations between this land and the sect of the Dalai Lama, although the emphasis in building activities was shifted by the Gu.ge king 'Jig.rten dbang.phyuPad.dkar.lde and the dGe.lugs.pa-s from Tho.ling to other localities of the kingdom 59 to expand the number of dgon.lag-s ("branch monasteries") of Tho.ling.

A figure of note was the master Shanti.pa Blo.gros rgyal.mtshan (1487-1567), who was responsible for the foundation of the very important monastery mDa’ba bKra.shis lhun.po and was one of the most prestigious abbots of Tho.ling of the dGe.lugs.pa period. After going to Central Tibet in his youth (1499), he became the 7th abbot of bKra.shis lhun.po dKyil.khang, but he left its throne to return to Gu.ge and diffuse the teachings of Tsong.kha.pa.

Shanti.pa’s arrival at Tho.ling is described at some length in Shanti.pa’i rnam.thar: "Three days later (phyi.nyin), he went to Go.phug. Here he met chos.kyi rgyal.po Khri’Jig.rten dbang.phyuPad.dkar.lde, the lord and his subjects, who had come to welcome him" 60. Then, since a complete mchod.yon ("patron-blama relation") was established (lit. “unlocked in front of everyone”), they proceeded to mTho.lding dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa’i gling. Thereupon, the monks of both gling lHo [and] Byang (i.e. the two areas into which Gu.ge as well as the monastery of Tho.ling were divided) came in procession to accord him an elaborate reception, welcoming him with flags, spears, many musical instruments and dances. Then, he served tea to gling lHo.ma at 'Dzam.gling.rgyan and to gling Byang.ma at 'Jig.rten.rgyan. The sponsors, the lord and the subjects were elated, and sang and danced. (f.33a) On that occasion, at the dancing ground on the Tshig.mda’ (“lower Tshig”) road, youthful girls with white complexions like the moon, singing very melodious songs with words like nectar, performed the plays typical of Zhang.zhung" (ibid. f.32b-f.33a: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.72).

59 The two monasteries which are attributed to Shanti.pa and his family are:
Lang ka chos.sde in Shangs.rtsa built by Maitri.pa, who was the paternal uncle of Shanti.pa (1487-1567) (Ba’i ser p.278 lines 13-16. Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.71)
*Gyal sras Maitri pa built Lang ka chos.sde at Shangs.rtsa. He appointed Legs grub dpal bzang as its abbot [and] became the head blma of chos rgyal’Jig rten dbang.phyu. Moving nearer to the Shang.rtsa palace, he also built a gtsug lag khang [there]. He gave the name Rab bstan byams pa’i gling to this chos.sde. The succession of the abbots is as follows: Legs grub dpal bzang. Shanti pa Blo gros rgyal.mtshan. [who was] rgyal sras Maitri pa’s patrilinear nephew *
The second successor of Ngag dbang grags pa as the mTho.lding mkhan po was Legs grub dpal bzang. He was the first abbot of Shang.rtsa. Hence, in the absence of a date for the foundation of the latter dgon.pa, one should suggest that it was possibly built in the last part of the 15th or at the beginning of the 16th century.
mDa’ba bKra.shis lhun.po built by Shanti.pa Blo gros rgyal.mtshan during the reign of ‘Jig rten dbang.phyuPad.dkar.lde (ibid. p.276 lines 1-2).

60 The copy of Shanti.pa’i ram thar used in Vitali, The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.hrang was largely defaced in this passage and the word “Ba la” was wrongly read (ibid. n.901). The copy used here, generously supplied by the 19th Lo chen sprul sku bsTan ’dzin bskal bdin rin chen, to whom gratitude is due, is far more legible. The words under consideration clearly read bsu.ba (“to welcome him”). Apologies are due to the readers of the former work.
It is noteworthy that, in earth pig 1539, when this episode took place (see Vitali, *The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.brang* n.901 for its dating), the monastic community at Tho.ling was divided into two groups: that known as lHoa.ma and centred on the 'du.khang 'Dzam.gling.btgyan as their assembly hall, and that known as Byang.ma and centred on the 'Jig.rten.btgyan as their assembly hall. This division echoes that of the brGya.rtsa in brGya.rtsa lho.btgyud and brGya.rtsa byang.ma (see below p.78-79) and may have a similar origin.

Another important implication is that the two temples mentioned in this passage of Shanti.pa'i rnam.thar existed by 1539, when Shanti.pa returned to Gu.ge after abdicating from the throne of gTsang bKra.shis lhun.po dKyil.khang and was offered the ceremony under examination. Given that no date is available for the foundation of these two temples, this is an imprecise confirmation of the fact that they preexisted Shanti.pa's period, being linked, as monumental inspection indicates, with the phase introduced at Tho.ling by Ngag.dbang grags.pa.

It remains to be seen whether the grouping of the monks resident at Tho.ling into gling lHoa.ma and gling Byang.ma has something to do with their provenance from Gu.ge lHo.sod or Gu.ge Byang.ngos (South and North Gu.ge, the two major divisions of this land marked by the Glang.chen kha.'babs) and whether, at least in the 16th century, the monks from lHo.sod gathered at 'du.khang 'Dzam.gling.btgyan, while those from Byang.ngos gathered at lha.khang 'Jig.rten.btgyan, otherwise known as lHa.khang dkar.po.

Shortly after, Shanti.pa's enthronement as the abbot of Tho.ling is described as follows. Shanti.pa'i rnam.thar relates: "On the occasion of dbyar.chos ("religious practice during summer"), he went to mTho.ling. rje (i.e. Shanti.pa) came to mTho.ling dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa'i grug.lag.khang as the rgyal.tshab ("successor") of lo.chen Rin.chen bzang.po at the request of Zhang.xung gi rgyal.blon ("king and ministers") mchod.yon (i.e. given the patron-bla.ma relations between 'Jig.rten dbang.phyug and Shanti.pa)" (ibid. f.33a lines 6-7: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.73).

The time of dbyar.chos, when Shanti.pa was made abbot of Tho.ling, was the summer of the same earth pig 1539 after he returned to Gu.ge from bKra.shis lhun.po. He abdicated from the throne of Tho.ling at an unspecified time leaving it to slob.dpon Phyag.rdzor dpal.bzang. This is a major discrepancy with the Tho.ling mkhan.rgyud found in Bai.ser (see below p.51) which includes Seng.gge rgya.mtsho as the abbot of Tho.ling after Shanti.pa and before Phyag.rdzor dpal.bzang.

Given that Shanti.pa'i rnam.thar was written by Ngag.dbang bsod.nams rgya.mtsho, a disciple of his who thus was close to the events taking place during his master's life and who was able to collect his words, the version contained in the rnam.thar may have to be favoured.

Some time after 1539 (Shanti.pa'i rnam.thar does not specify when), during the abbotship of Shanti.pa, Gu.ge was shaken by a war waged by Gung.thang and Glo.bo and other lands of mNga'.ris.sod. The former two kingdoms were both traditional adversaries of Gu.ge despite ancient and recent family links, Glo.bo being especially hostile to Gu.ge from the 15th century. After forming an alliance with the Ru.thog.pa-s and the Byang.pa-s, who had previously been on good terms with Gu.ge, the troops of Gung.thang and Glo.bo intruded into Gu.ge Pu.hlhang, damaging Tho.ling and attacking rTsa.rang.

Shanti.pa'i rnam.thar says: "When he was residing at mTho.ling, since the troops of the Byang.pa-s, Glo.bo, the Mon.pa-s, the Ru.thog.pa-s and the Mang.yul.ba-s were accurately levied [and] many [West Tibetan powers] joined forces as a single
political faction, they attacked Gu.ge. They harmed the Byams.pa of sKyom [and] the receptacles of body, speech and mind. Although Be.la had been surrounded, [Shanti.pa] did not leave. Later he escaped to Dung.dkar. He encamped on the mountain behind Sa.snying ("essence of the earth", i.e. "ancestral locality", otherwise sic for Sa.snying "the ancient site"?). A messenger being sent to see rje, since there was fear that harm could be caused to mTho.lding etc., founded by the ancestral lo.pan-s ("lo.tsa.ba-s and pandi.ta-s", i.e. translators and erudites) and ancestral chos.rgyal-s ("religious kings"), it was requested that rje should take part in a parley that had to be held. At this juncture (mthams), since he sent two mTho.lding chos.khrims.pa-s ("followers of the religious law") as his own messengers, he said: "We wish to propose a peace parley. [In the meantime,] do not move the camp elsewhere. Keep it where it is". However, they did not listen to his order. As they damaged even the gtsug.lag.khang "essence of the earth" (sa.snying.gi'ang gtsug.lag.khang, this being Tho.ling dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa, which, in the sentences above, faced risks of ravage at that time), they pitched the camp in the direction of the rgyal[.sa] ("capital, seat") of the three worlds (ibid. f.34b lines 1-4: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.74).

Shanti.pa rnam.thar does not give a record of the damage that Tho.ling suffered at that time, and nothing can be deduced from this source. The rgyal[.sa] of the three worlds is, quite obviously, rTsa.hrang.

The war ended happily for Gu.ge. The attackers were repulsed from rTsa.hrang. Shanti.pa rnam.thar concludes: "Prior to this, the troops of Glo.bo etc. having gone towards Byang.ngos, a few troops of Gu.ge gave them battle at A.wang. Most of Glo.bo [troops] and the Ru.thog.pa-s fled. Whichever Byang.pa-s were there, they took the forefront and engaged [a battle]. Since the heroic archery of Gu.ge showered a rain of arrows, swords, spears and (f.35a) long spears, they defeated the enemies from outside. Despite sTag.rte nang.so and gzim.dpon ("personal attendant chieftain") Ber.ma etc. and many people died in this battle, he (Shanti.pa) heard the news that victory in battle went to Gu.ge and much wealth (otherwise "much cattle") was obtained concomitantly" (ibid. f.34b line 6-f.35a line 1: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.75). His biography (f.35a lines 1-2) attributes the merit of the victory to Shanti.pa's powers. A detail of the battle (i.e. the shower of weapons) indicates that the invaders had laid siege to the citadel of rTsa.hrang.

Concerning the major part that Shanti.pa Blo.gros rgyal.mtshan played in the establishment of dGe.lugs.pa temples during the 16th century, apart from mDa.ba bKra.shis lhun.po, which was his main foundation (see below p.141-143), he is popularly credited with those of Be.lHun.grub chos.lding, mDa.ba IDong.po Rab.brtan lhun.po, mDa.ba 'Gram dgon.pa, Chu.ze dgon and a temple at Dung.dkar, whose name is not preserved in the memory of the elders (see below p.111-114 for lists of dGe.lugs.pa monasteries in Gu.ge). It is noteworthy that his main extant biography often mentioned in these pages does not mention any of these foundations.

During the reign of the king of Gu.ge 'Jig.rten dbang.phyug pad.dkar.lde, a major event took place, which is not directly connected with Tho.ling, but whose importance in the relations between mNga.ris.stod and the Dalai Lamas is conspicuous. This was the foundation of mNga.ris grwa.tshang in iron ox 1541 at the entrance of the 'On valley of dBu.s. Monks from mNga.ris skor.gsum stayed at this grwa.tshang ("monastic college") during their studies in Central Tibet.61.

dGe.dun rgya.mtsho'i rnam.thar by g.Yang.pa chos.rje reads: "Then, in the autumn of iron female ox (1541), (f.145a), the king of mNga.ris 'Jig.rten dbang.phyug pad.dkar.lde and the great cabinet minister (bkai'blon.chen) Ngag.dbang rnam.rgyal,

61. bKra.shis tshe.ring, Tho.ling gtsug.lag.khang sngon, gro lam.ston (p.102 line 19-p.103 line 3: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.76). "During the time of mNga.ris Gu.ge chos.rgyal 'Jig.rten dbang.phyug pad.dkar.lde and bion po Ngag.dbang rnam.rgyal, they became the patrons of thams cad mkhyen.pa pan chen dGe.dun rgyal(1603) mtsho when the latter was sixty-six years old (i.e. in iron rat 1540). Many precious offerings were given [and] many ordained monks like a flock of ducks were sent [for studies to dBu.s] from mNga.ris skor.gsum. Consequently a grwa.tshang was established at rGyal, named mNga.ris grwa.tshang."
the king and minister, these two, in order to build one grwa.tshang at Chos.khor.rgyal, the great holy place of the incarnation (i.e. dGe.dun rgya.mtsho), sent the most brilliant among the subjects, who had been ordained in flocks like smoke, together with offerings such as gold, coral and pearls, and various precious things. Consequently, a request letter accompanied by precious gifts was sent with these people to rje.btsun rin.po.che. [Since the latter thought]: "E. ma, it is extraordinarily marvellous that [the ruler of Gu.ge] is the holder of the tradition of the ancestral religious kings such as lha.bla.ma Byang.chub.'od", he was utterly delighted and issued an order in favour of the king of Gu.ge. Chos.rje bsTan.pa dar.bzang, the holder of sDe.snod, was appointed as slob.dpon. Starting from that year, it seems that mNga'.ris grwa.tshang was established" (ibid. f.144b line 6-f.145a line 4: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.77).

Tho.ling in the 17th century: the La.dwags-Gu.ge war and the advent of dGa'.ldan pho.brang

After the fertile 16th century, an important episode, preserved in the sources, brings Tho.ling back to cultural attention, when the monastery was lying in literary oblivion, removed as it was from the religious and political epicentre in a remote corner of the Tibetan territories during a time in which decadence in mNga'.ris.stod had started to be felt.

In order to preserve the tradition that linked the late rulers of Gu.ge with the main dGe.lugs.pa exponents of their period and in particular with the incumbent of bKra.shis lhun.po, which from its foundation had maintained steady relations with mNga'.ris.stod, the 4th Pan.chen rin.po.che Chos.kyi rgyal.mtshan was invited to Gu.ge. The visit he paid to West Tibet, and Tho.ling in particular, in earth horse 1618 is described by him at some length in his autobiography. He came to Tho.ling via gangs Ti.se and Ma.pham g.yu.mtsho, taking the course of the Glang.chen kha.'babs. Pan.chen rin.po.che met the king of Gu.ge khri rNan.rgyal.grags.pa bzang.po'i lde and his uncle lha.btsun Blo.bzang ye.shes.'od, who was the abbot of Tho.ling62. The Pan.chen's autobiography reads: "Then, as for many years continuously I had been requested to go, in the summer of the previous year, a delegation including people wearing yellow and red robes came from Gu.ge to invite me. Accordingly, thinking to go there, I arrived at bKra.shis lhun.po. After staying there more than half a month, by halting on the way, I received the service of the communities of monks and faithful people and gave teachings to the satisfaction of whoever wanted them.

On the twenty-third on the fourth month, after arriving at the bank of Ma.pham.mtsho, I performed ablutions and, on picking up a handful of pebbles from the lake, as I envisioned most of them as manifestations of deities, which I held to be an extraordinary event. Departing from there towards the front of Gangs.ril, the next day, innumerable banners, hangings, objects in the shape of umbrellas and spread scarves appeared inside a five-coloured rainbow. As I walked along, I found this pleasant. The 'Bri.khung.pa rdor.idzin was inspired [by these visions]. As he pursued them, I met him above Sha.la.rtsa. He said: "Today the most extraordinary signs have occurred in the ten years I have been here since I came to Gangs.ril", and showed respect to me.

Then, on the thirteenth day, which is before the full moon of the fifth month, inside the valley of Zhang.zhung known as sPa'i sding, here zhabs.drung chos.rje, jo.bo bdag.po, the leaders of the religious and lay communities came to receive me
in a group which filled the whole area with their horses and accompanied me. The gods adorned [us] with flowers and virtuous signs excellently appeared.

On the fifteenth day, the zhab.sugs.drup mi.dbang of mTho.ling gSer.gyi lha.khang invited me to the throne of lo.tsa.ba Rin.chen bzang.po, the most excellent of human beings, and offered me a mandala of precious flowers. Abundant offerings were made to the assembly of the yellow robes like an ocean together with the recitation of Bhavapra. Then I offered them the most profound and extensive religious instructions on the teachings such as the dbang and bskyed.rdzogs of gSang.'dus bDe. [mchog and] 'Jigs[.byed], these three; sNar.thang bgya.rtsa; 'Jam.dbyangs chos.skor, bKa'gdams chos. 'byung to the [monks and laymen, entertaining] mchod.yon, who were at chos.gwa (Tho.ling). In brief, the headmen such as the king of Gu.ge, his brother/brothers, his successors; all the religious and lay communities of that land found [in themselves an inspiration] born from the dancing ocean of their incomparable faith and offered in a pure way the flowers of their special respect that mind cannot grasp. They behaved to maintain the tradition of the chos.rgyal-s of the stainless lineage of Bu.ram shing.pa (i.e. the progenitor of the Solar race, to which the kings of Gu.ge belonged).

I also went to Mu.dkar, Mang.nang, mDa'.ba bKra.shis lhun.po and Shangs.rtse. I gave people teachings as they requested. Even the householders were led to the path of virtue such as [the practice of] bsnyen.gnas (“fasting”). Since I could not go to fulfill the invitation of the Mang.yul (sic for Mar.yul) king, I established a virtuous link, as many leaders of the religious and lay communities of this land came to see me. Drung chos.rje, drung Blo.bzang rnam.rgyal etc. and over one hundred who wished to receive the bsnyen.rdzogs vow from Gu.ge, Mang.yul and Ru.thog, these three, came and empowered zhab.sugs.drup chos.rje as the lord of the teachings in those lands. On the thirteenth of the ninth month I left Gu.ge. Those who entertained mchod.yon came to see me off until Gangs.ri. After the circumambulation of the mountain, in front of Gangs.ri, around noon, when I was giving an empowerment at the market, Gangs.ri appeared in a variety of forms such as in baidurya colour. When I questioned a monk near me: “How does this Gangs.ri look to you?”, he answered: “It looks very much to be of indigo colour”. This much was seen and it was wonderful” (Blo.bzangchos.kyi rgyal.mtshan, sLyod.shul gsal.bar kstan.pa nor bu'i phreng ba (bKra.shis lhun.po ed.) p.63b line 4-p.65a line 2: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.79) (See also Tho.ling gtsug.lag.khang rgyal.bron lam.ston p.103 line 6-p.105 line 5).

The La.dwags.pa period of Tho.ling

With the second quarter of the 17th century Gu.ge ceased to be the master of its fate. A new phase began, lasting until the present day, in which Gu.ge was under the control of external powers.

The king of La.dwags Seng.ge rnam.rgyal conquered rTsa.hrang in 1630 and took Gu.ge under his control. bKra.shis grags.pa, the last monarch of Gu.ge, was brought to La.dwags, where he remained in exile for the rest of his days, despite wishing to be banished to dBu.gTsang. His demise took place some time before fire pig 1647. Seng.ge rnam.rgyal ruled Gu.ge until his death in 1642. His wife bsKal.bzang rgyal.mo had an interregnum, after which she gave way to her sons. Concluding this lapse of six years, which is unaccounted for in sTag dbang rgyal mo, the main source dealing with these events, Indra.bodhi rnam.par rgyal.ba (or
Indra.bodhi rnam.rgyal), the middle son of Seng.ge rnam.rgyal, was enshrined as ruler of Gu.ge bod.rong.rong.gsum ("the settlements, nomadic pastures and lower areas, these three") in earth rat 1648 64. Thol.ing passed under his power. La.dawgs rgyal.rabs also affirms that Indra.bodhi was appointed to rule Gu.ge 65.

In the following year, earth pig 1649, Indra.bodhi rnam.rgyal, who was the favourite disciple of stags.thang rabs.pa, invited his 'Brug.pa master to Thol.ing 66.

Indra.bodhi rnam.rgyal is again mentioned as the ruler of Gu.ge around 1652 by Yong .sdezin Kun. dga' lhun.grub gi rnam.thar (p.223 lines 1-2) in concomitance with a grievance expressed by the dGe.lugs.pa-s that their members and monasteries in MnGa.ris were been negatively discriminated against by their La.dawgs overlords (p.221-223). It is noteworthy that the absence of a suitable residence for the Gu.ge bdag.po is also among the reasons that induced the dGe.lugs.pa-s of MnGa.ris.stod to manifest their discontent. From stags.thang rabs.pa'sTag thang ras.pa one can glean that bKra.shis grags.pa, the deposed ruler of Gu.ge, living in exile in La.dawgs, died before 1647 (see above p.47 and n.63). It would seem, therefore, that one of his sons, the Gu.ge.pa heir apparent who had lost his opportunity to rule after the conquest of Gu.ge by La.dawgs, and had married, like a brother of his, a princess of the La.dawgs.pa royal house, did not receive a residence appropriate to his rank.

The next event, significant to the history of Thol.ing, was the bka’shog that Indra.bodhi rnam.rgyal issued in favour of the main temple of Gu.ge in water snake 1653 (this edict is published on p.181-182). The bka’shog is not greatly significant politically, but helps directly to confirm that he was the ruler of Thol.ing at that time.

The La.dawgs.pa control of Gu.ge, and thus of Thol.ing, lasted from 1630 with the capture of rTsa.hrang 67 until 1679-1680 when dGa'.ldan Tshe.dbang dpal.bzang ousted the La.dawgs.pa garrison from rTsa.hrang and bKra.shis.lang 68. Hence, Indra.bodhi rnam.rgyal ruled Gu.ge from earth rat 1648 to 1679-1680. By the latter date, the conquest of Gu.ge by the dGa'.ldan pho.brang government was a fait accompli.

After having lost Thol.ing and rTsa.rang, Indra.bodhi rnam.rgyal is found organizing resistance against the troops of dGa’.ldan Tshe.dbang in Zangs.dkar in water dog 1682. Ngag.dbang tshe.ring gi rnam.thar says: "Later, in the autumn of the dog year (1682), the dKar.sha.pa elders invited the Sog.po-s. They went to Zangs.dkar. At that time, since rgyal.po Intra (i.e. Indra.bodhi) encamped with his troops at Thar.la, they stayed there. In order to defeat the troops of the [enemy], Seng.ge summoned Mon troops from Nyung.ti and joined [Indrabodhi]. Since No.no 'Brug travelled from place to place in order to negotiate between them (i.e. the two parties), with the pretension that a parley [was to be held], a lot of cunning was practised. The Mon [troops] noticed that. First, [No.no ] 'Brug was arrested. He was tied with ropes. Then, since [the Mon.pa-s] had revolted against Intra.bho.ti, they captured him and his retinue at Thar.la. At 'Bar.gdan, choi.rje dbu.mtshad (i.e. the head bbla.ma of the king) and about 200 monks from He.mi and I.Cem. brs were captured and taken to prison. (p.72) At that time, some groups of the [Mon] people plundered anything valuable. Some people were bound by the Mon [troops] and beaten. On that occasion when everybody was out for his personal gain (thi.thor ko.thor), I (Ngag.dbang tshe.ring) took a rtag.\text{\char12}kang gling ("femur trumpet") and a thod.phor ("skull cup") from the mgon.khang. I smeared my body with ashes. Since I had left as an ascetic about this time last year, everyone stared at me and laughed. The Mon [troops] amassed all the wealth in front of me. I laughed and left. Then, all the Tibetans [went] plundering and, the Mon [troops] having again snatched [valuables], took them away. Then, since all of us gathered together, we
went to Mu.ne. As we had no option other than to stay, we remained there. At that
time, rgyal.po Intha.bru.ti had 500 sheep (dkar.rgya.ma), 100 g.yag and 'bri, a group
of horses etc., which were here at Ra.ru. A Mon with a sword in his hand seized the
saddles and took [the animals] away'69.

The same biography adds: "At that time, since the Mon.pa-s slaughtered all the
500 goats and sheep belonging to the king, bleeding meat was scattered all around
the ground and one could eat as much as one wished" (Ngag.dbang tsh.e.ring gi
rnam.thar p.73 lines 2-3: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.87).

The passage of Gu.ge from La.dwags to dGa.'ldan pho.brang was officially ratified
with the treaty of wood rat 1684 (Ahmad, "New Light on the Tibet-Ladakh-Mughal

In 1685, following the ousting of the La.dwags.pa-s from Gu.ge, Khang.dmar
Tshe.bri.tan rdo.rje, the first rdzong.dpon of dGa.'ldan pho.brang, was sent from
IHa.s.a. He was de facto the new ruler of the land.

It seems that the La.dwags.pa abbot of Tho.ling, bSod.nams dpal.grub, chosen
by his fellow countrymen after they took Gu.ge, remained the mkhan.po of Tho.ling
for some time after La.dwags lost Gu.ge. In 1687, the first abbot of Tho.ling appoint
ed by dGa.'ldan pho.brang reached Tho.ling.

Tho.ling as the secular seat of Gu.ge.pa power
A summary

Tho.ling became the capital of the kingdom with Ye.shes.'od, who resided
and died here. No evidence is extant to believe that the capital of Gu.ge
Pu.hrang was transferred elsewhere until after the reign of rTse.lde.

Tho.ling lost its role as the capital of the kingdom with IHo.stod/'Bar.lde.
It probably became the capital of Gu.ge IHo.stod, although it is never men
tioned as a royal residence of the kings of IHo.stod when Gu.ge was divided
into two kingdoms. However, the absence of any mention of Tho.ling in the
sources dealing with the members of the IHo.stod dynasty may derive from the
fact that the kings of IHo.stod are mainly recorded in the 'Bri.gung.pa
sourced because of their relations during the 13th century with this
bKa'.brgyud.pa sub-sect. The 'Bri.gung.pa-s did not hold Tho.ling.

It is unclear whether Tho.ling retained its place of preminence in Gu.ge
during the Sa.skya.pa period. The Gung.thang.pa feudatories of Sa.skya ruled
Gu.ge Pu.hrang from dKar.dum at the border between Pu.hrang.stod.smad,
a fort located at a considerable distance from Tho.ling.

With the renaissance of the Gu.ge dynasty with rNam.rgyal.lde, Tho.ling
did not recover its role as capital of Gu.ge. rNam.rgyal.lde resided at
Mang.nang. His son Phun.tshogs.lde founded Tsa.rang, which became the
capital of Gu.ge until its downfall in 1630 at the hands of the La.dwags king
Seng.ge rnam.rgyal. From the time of rNam.rgyal.lde, Tho.ling remained the
chief monastic and spiritual centre of Gu.ge but its role as the main secular
centre of Gu.ge was lost.

blessing to the son of the previous king and
his ministers. He diffused everywhere the flow
er of blessing. He [then] went to thenth

67. sTag tshang ras.pa's rnam thar (f 33a lines
2-4: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib 84):
"In iron male horse (1630), a Chu.mur ti pa
subject, having revolted, gave king Seng ge
rnam.rgyal. access to all the Gu.ge bod 'brog
("settlements and nomadic pastures"). As the
La.dwags.pa troops marched into Gu.ge, when
they surrounded the rTa.sar palace, this rye
(sTag tshang ras.pa), the need for a peace par
sley having arisen, accordingly left together
with a few disciples. Although jo bdag po (i.e.
the king of Gu.ge) was advised by chos rje
A.ne to surrender, the merchants of
Phyur.chung and Na.ga rko.ta, which had earli
er rebelled against La.dwags, resisted here.
The fort was taken".

68. MiIdbang rtags bshod (p 36 lines 10-13
Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib 85):
"The remains of the nearly defeated enemy forces,
which were in disarray in the desert plain,
took refuge in the impenetrable forts of
Pu.rang sTag la mkhar, rTa.sar and bKa' shis sgang;
and, concerning their surren
der, ibid. (p.38 lines 1-2): "Given that a
huge army was raised up and additional rein
forcements were added on the way.
rTa.sar and bKa' shis sgang spontaneously surren
dered". For the dating to 1679 of the
former event and to 1680 of the latter see
Ahmad, "New Light on the Tibet-Ladakh-
Mughal War of 1679-1684" p.345-346 and
p.349.

69. Ngag dbang tsh.e.ring gi rnam.thar (vol 1
p.71 line 4-p.72 line 5: Tibetan text in Appen
dix Eight, Tib 86): 'Khru.l zhig Ngag dbang
the ring was born in a fire bird year. This year
is wrongly given as 1717 in the introduction to
the 1975 Delhi edition of his biography. He
was born in fire bird 1657 otherwise he could
not have witnessed the La.dwags-dGa.'ldan
pho.brang war of 1679-1684. His death, given
in the same introduction as 1794, is conse
quently one rab byung too late. It took place in
1734.
The dGa'.ldan pho.brang period

Soon after Tho.ling and the lands of Gu.ge became territories under the control of the lHa.sa government, the importance of Tho.ling was duly acknowledged. The 5th Dalai Lama had already recognised its great legacy when he used some of the religious depictions at Tho.ling as models for his renovations in the Jo.khang: "Then, the great rGyal.ba'i dbang.po, the 5th, as he made a renovation of the middle floor of 'Phrul.snang gtsug.lag.khang, thinking to have especially good wall paintings, since he took in consideration to use the murals of mTho.ling gtsug.lag.khang depicting the dkyil.khor-s of the rGyud.sde.bzhi as authoritative models, he made similar dkyil.khor-s on the middle floor and also composed a flower of praise to the murals of mTho.ling"70.

Two major decisions, made by dGa'.ldan Tshe.dbang and feasibly by sGar.dpon Khang.dmar Tshe.brtan rdo.rje in favour of Tho.ling, which reorganized the monastery in two different yet related aspects. The first was that, similar to other decrees, including that by lNdra.bodhi rnam.rgyal, promulgated before this ordinance, an edict was issued to the effect that the middle son in each family of Gu.ge had to become a monk at Tho.ling, thus securing the monastic re-population of the temple (for some details, as are described by sdes.srid Sangs.rgyas rgya.mtsho, see below p.52-53).

Having settled matters within the sacred precinct of Tho.ling, the other order concerned the organization of the Tho.ling dgon.lag-s ("branch monasteries"), which consolidated a stable network of support from outside the monastery71. As mentioned below (p.110), the dGa'.ldan pho.brang classification of the Tho.ling branch monasteries may have been modelled after the dGe.lugs.pa organization when Gu.ge was ruled by its own royal dynasty, but this is conjectural and no exact chronology can be established regarding the introduction of this network (on this matter see bKra.shis tshe.ring, Tho.ling gtsug.lag.khang sngon 'gro lam ston p.112 line 6, where the classification of the dgon.lag-s is attributed to an unspecified period after the 5th Dalai Lama).

The lineage of the early dGe.lugs.pa abbots of Tho.ling

Bai.ser discusses the lineage of the Tho.ling abbots: "Lo.chen Rin.chen bzang.po was its abbot. Jo.bo.rje A.ti.sha visited [Tho.ling] and the rGyud.sde.bzhi lha.khang was also there (sic). Subsequently, after many generations of bStil.mas, following the same treatment adopted [for the other monasteries] mentioned above, the successive abbots after Gu.ge Ngag.dbang grags.pa were chos.rje Tshul.khrims bshes.gnyen; rJe.legs grub.pa; the Kun.spangs.pa bearing the name Nam.mkha'; rje Kun.dga' dpal.bzang; rje Rin.chen dpal.bzang; pan.chen Shanti.pa Blo.gros rgyal.mtshan; slob.dpon Seng.ge rgya.mtsho; chos.rje Phyag.rdo dpal.bzang; chos.rje bDe.legs.dar; rje Sangs.rgyas dpal.bzang; rje Grags.pa 'od.zer; rje Tshul.khrims rgyal.mtshan; lha.btsun Blo.bzang bstan.pa'i nyi.'od. Around that time, pan.chen Blo.bzang chos.rgyan was invited [and] opened the door of religion by his promotion of it. Following [pan.chi], return [to Central Tibet], after lha.btsun Blo.bzang ye.shes.'od sat on the throne [of Tho.ling] for twelve years. L.a.dwangs Seng.ge rnam.rgyal, who bound them with five arrows, brought under his own power the mkhan.po and the king of Gu.ge bKra.shis grags.pa, who were independent. He reduced Gu.ge under his dominion. Subsequently, those who were appointed [mkhan.po-s] were Dung.dkar bshes.gnyen bZang.po; Gu.ge Bye.dkar bZod.pa..."
rgyal.mtshan and rTsa.hrang.pa sku.skyes ("incarnation of rTsa.hrang.pa") Blo.bzang chos. phel. Later, since in [mNga'.ris] skor.gsum [people] came under the cover of the white umbrella of the religious government of rje bla.ma, La.dwangs bSod.nams dpal.grub and Byang.rtse chos.rje A.mdo sByin.pa rgya.mtsho [were abbots]. At present, it is ruled by Shar.rtse Khams sPo.'bor.ba Blo.bzang chos. phel. He newly expanded in a great way the number of the monks and estates to keep up worship [at Tho.ling]. This will be discussed below. sMon.lam is performed in the same way as at lHa.sa. As for the religious system practised in the monastery quarters and the dgon.pa, the monks pursue further studies by going to Se[t.ra], 'Bra[s.pung], dGe (i.e. dGa'.ldan) and mNga'.ris grwa.tshang" (ibid. p.273 lines 9-25: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.90).

Those enumerated in Bai.ser are the dGe.lugs.pa abbots of Tho.ling. The first of them was obviously Ngag.dbang grags.pa, who ascended its throne before 1424. The abbots Tshul.khrims bshes.gnyen, rDo.legs grub.pa, Kun.spangs.pa Nam.mkha', Kun.dga' dpal.bzang and Rin.chen dpal.bzang have to be considered as sitting on the throne of Tho.ling in succession after Ngag.dbang grags.pa until pan.chen Shanti.pa. The latter's dates are documented in the sources as 1487-1567, with earth pig 1539 as the year in which he became the abbot of Tho.ling, when he returned from dBu.gsTsang (see Shanti.pa'i rnam.thar f.33a lines 6-7), after he resigned from being the mkhan.po of bKra.shis lhun.po dKyil.khang grwa.tshang. Rin.chen dpal.bzang, the last of this group of abbots must have left the throne of Tho.ling vacant soon before 1539.

The successive abbots from some time after 1539 (but before 1567, the date of Shanti.pa's death, which is a terminus ante quem for Phyag.rdor dpal.bzang to have ascended the Tho.ling throne) were slob.dpon Seng.ge rgya.mtsho, Phyag.rdor dpal.bzang, bDe.legs.dar, Sangs.rgyas dpal.bzang, Grags.pa 'od.zer, Tshul.khrims rgyal.mtshan, lha.btsun Blo.bzang bstan.pa'i nyi.'od, who have to be accommodated in the period after Shanti.pa until 1618, the year in which pan.chen rin.po.che Blo.bzang chos.kyi rgyal.mtshan visited Tho.ling. It is noteworthy that Seng.ge rgya.mtsho is not mentioned in Shanti.pa'i rnam.thar; Phyag.rdor dpal.bzang seems to have been Shanti.pa's successor as the former abdicated in his favour according to the latter source.

Twelve years later, in 1630, during the abbotship of Blo.bzang ye.shes.'od, the king of La.dwangs Seng.ge rnam.rgyal seized rTsa.hrang and subjugated Gu.ge. The abbots from 1630 until 1687, the latter date being when Gu.ge passed under the dGa'.ldan pho.brang government, were Dung.dkar bshes.gnyen bZang.po, Gu.ge Bye.dkar bZod.pa rgyal.mtshan, rTsa.hrang Blo.bzang chos.phel and La.dwangs bSod.nams dpal.grub, who seems to have been the last abbot during the domination of Gu.ge by La.dwangs.

The abbots of Byang.rtse chos.rje A.mdo sByin.pa rgya.mtsho occurred after the La.dwangs-dGa'.ldan pho.brang war began in 1679.72 That of Shar.rtse Khams sPo.'bor.ba Blo.bzang chos.'phel was still continuing at the time of completing Bai.ser (i.e. in earth tiger 1698), (Bai.ser p.461 lines 2-4).

Tho.ling during the regency of sde.srid Sangs.rgyas rgya.mtsho

Following the death of the 5th Dalai Lama Ngag.dbang blo.bzang rgya.mtsho, sde.srid Sangs.rgyas rgya.mtsho, who took his place by concealing his death, continued relations with the monks of Tho.ling. He ordered the dGa'.ldan pho.brang to bear the expenses of the various annual ceremonies. Keeping in mind the greatness
of Tho.ling and its lineage of masters and abbots, such as those issuing from the ancient royal family and more recently those issuing from the dGe.lugs.pa ranks, he decided to choose abbots worth of its past.

sDe.srid Sangs.rgyas rgya.mtsho introduced the system of sending the successive Shar.byang chos.rje-s to be the abbots of Tho.ling dgon.pa. The abbots of Tho.ling, after a period of incumbency at this temple, became the dGa.ldan rKhris.pas-s. This was enacted from water monkey 1692. In that year, Byang.rtses.chos.rje A.mdo sByin.pa rgya.mtsho, often mentioned in these pages, and, after him, Shar.rtses.chos.rje Khams sPos.'bor Blo.bzang chos.phel, these two in succession, ascended the throne of Tho.ling dgon.pa. The newly established tradition of rGyud.stod was then introduced at Tho.ling dgon.pa and entrusted to the care of the La.dWags king, although he did not have any over the greatest monastery in Gu.ge, which remained entirely under the control of dGa.ldan pho.brang.

Around that time, the rNam.thar of the first kun.mkhyen 'Jam.dbyangs bzhad.pa Wa.shul Ngag.dbang btson. 'grus (1648-1721), who belonged to the line of abbots of A.mdo bKra.shis.dkhyi, gives an indication of how important in the eyes of sDe.srid Sangs.rgyas rgya.mtsho were the abbots and the throne of mTho.lding: “Concerning this, since the golden throne of mNga'ris Tho.ling gSer.gyi gtsug.lag.khang was the throne of the incomparable Jo.bo.chen.po, and, moreover, since a request was made many times that the successive [abbots], who ascended the golden throne of dGa.ldan, the seat of chos.kyi rgyal.po Tsong.kha.pa chen.po, in particular the abbots of Shar.byang, should hold [the throne of mTho.lding], likewise, although there was a request from sKyor.mo.lung, since it was the seat of sBal.ti dGra.bcom.pa, the great spiritual son of 'Dul.dzin Thag.ma.ba, who resided there, that teachings should be imparted [at the latter place], such as oral instructions on 'Dul.ba, the empowerment of rDor.phreng etc., extensive Tantric cycles, sDe.srid Sangs.rgyas rgya.mtsho did not accept [the latter request]” (dBal.mang dKon.mchog rgyal.mtshan, bKra.shis.dkhyi.gyi gdan.rabs p.19b lines 3-6: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.93) (See also bKra.shis tsha.ring, Tho.ling gtsug.lag.khang sngon, gro lam.ston p.107 lines 4-11).

In the second volume of the biography of the 5th Dalai Lama by sDe.srid Sangs.rgyas rgya.mtsho (Du.lu.kai.gos.bzang 'phros.pod rgyus.pi f.277 line 3) a reference is made to the appointment of a gnyer.pa (“keeper”) to what is defined as mTho.lding, the newly established dgon.pa in mNga'ris. (“Du.lu.kai.gos.bzang 'phros.pod rgyus.pi f.231 line 3: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.94).

Such a statement led Petech to think that Tho.ling had undergone a renovation. This was not the case. The year in which this alleged renovation took place was fire hare 1687 when other monasteries in sTod received the attention of the dGa.ldan pho.brang government. Apart from the above mentioned passage (Khri.mkhyer.ba Don.yod rDo.rje and sTag.sna.ba were appointed to be sent respectively as gnyer.pa of the newly established dgon. pa mTho.lding in mNga'ris and as Phu.rang gnyer.pa), in another volume of the biography, the grants in favour of Tho.ling to fund the offerings for the worship of the deities are said to have been allocated in the same year 74.

This becomes more evident if one reads other passages in the same section of bKra.shis dedicated to Tho.ling, which deals with the new organization set up for Tho.ling by the dGa.ldan pho.brang government, including the change in the system of appointing the Tho.ling abbots mentioned above. sDe.srid Sangs.rgyas rgya.mtsho first says: “Although it seems that all the laymen and monks of Zhes.yul (i.e. the La.dWags.pa-s) had pure faith in the dGe.lugs, bDe.ldan rNam.rgyal was
obscured by mischievous darkness and both the religious and secular powers [at Tho.ling] were reduced to the small extent of no more than thirty monks" (ibid. p.460 lines 13-15: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.96). To re-establish religious life at Tho.ling he summarizes a few measures taken for its benefit: "From fire hare (1687), at the beginning of the twelfth rab.byang, in addition to the original thirty monks, 160 new [Tho.ling] monks were gathered by means of ban.khram ("monk tribute", for which every family had to give its middle son to the monastery). The assembly of the pure tradition of the great 'jam.mgon rgyal.po Tsong.kha.pa [at Tho.ling] followed the model of the newly established monasteries of dBus.gTsang in their recitations and religious practices such as that of sMan.bl'a" (ibid. p.460 lines 19-22: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.97). He then goes on to say (p.461 lines 2-4): "As to the mkhan.po, in that year [the system of appointment] was changed. [Bla.ma-s] from dGa'.ldan rTse.shar (i.e. Shar.rtse) went [to be mkhan.po] in turn. The first was Byang.rtse chos.rje sByin.pa rgya.mtsho. After he ascended the golden throne [of Tho.ling], Shar.rtse chos.rje Blo.bzang chos.phel is the present [abbot]. The treatment of the history of the ancient dgon[.pa] and its monks is concluded at this stage. The monastic assembly [of Tho.ling] consists of about 200 monks" (ibid. p.461 lines 2-4: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.98).

In a few lines, sDe.srid Sangs.rgyas rgya.mtsho discusses the effects of the political situation created in mNgag.ris.stod with the taking over of Gu.ge by the La.dwags.pa-s. This is a showpiece of the close interdependence of political and religious affairs in the eyes of the dGa'.ldan pho.brang, but, more than that, of the strong religious implications involved in the earlier struggle between Gu.ge and La.dwags, which had brought the recently born dGe.lugs.pa and the 'Brug.pa theocracies into confrontation with each other. sDe.srid's judgment of the effects that bDe.ldan rnam.rgyal's rule had on Tho.ling are extremely negative. His criticism of bDe.ldan rnam.rgyal's mischievous obscurantism which left Tho.ling depopulate should be more appropriately addressed to Indra.bodhi rnam.rgyal who ruled Gu.ge and hence Tho.ling as well. The pathetic situation in which Tho.ling was languishing when the dGa'.ldan pho.brang took over also shows how ineffective was Indra.bodhi's 1653 bka'.shog to the people of Gu.ge ordering them to bear the burden of supporting Tho.ling (see below Appendix Seven). The poor outcome of his order may have been due to his own pro-'Brug.pa stance75 or to a defiant reaction of the Gu.ge.pa-s to a bka'.shog issued by a hostile authority which had usurped the right to rule. It is noteworthy that Indra.bodhi's order did not feasibly produce significant results while that of the dGa'.ldan pho.brang contributed sensibly to an increase in the monastic population of Tho.ling.

However matters may have been in the aftermath of the end of La.dwags.pa rule in Gu.ge, the fact remains that Tho.ling was on the verge of ending its centuries-old function of shedding spiritual and cultural light in mNgag.ris skor.gsum and elsewhere. By the evidence of the passages in Bai.ser, that undertaken in fire hare 1687 was a complete reorganization of the monastic community and of the religious practices rather than an actual renovation since it did not affect the structures of the temple complex. The taking over of Tho.ling by the dGa'.ldan pho.brang thus left the Tho.ling temples untouched. It is difficult to say how much the rule of the La.dwags.pa-s and in particular of Indra.bodhi, after that of his father Seng.ge rnam.rgyal, had changed religious practice at Tho.ling after the earlier dGe.lugs.pa period. It is possible that the state of abandon in which Tho.ling was languishing under the kings of La.dwags was related to an absence of religious practice rather than a substitution of the dGe.lugs.pa cults adopted at this monastery before Seng.ge rnam.rgyal's conquest. This seems to be confirmed as

75 He was the beloved disciple of sTag tshang rabs.pa, whose equanimous and impartial approach towards the dGe.lugs.pa-s and that of his patron Seng.ge rnam.rgyal, stressed in sTag tshang rabs.pa's rnam.thar and whole-heartedly accepted by Petech (The Kingdom of Ladakh p.70) should be questioned, given that it goes against the course of events that led to the subjugation of pro-dGe.lugs.pa Gu.ge.
well by the dGa’ldan pho-brang policy, undertaken by the great Fifth and the sde.srid, of taking charge of and controlling the activities (religious and secular) of all the monasteries, including those in flourishing state and those previously suffering neglect.

Tho.ling under the dGa’ldan pho.brang after sde.srid Sangs.rgyas rgya.mtsho

From the period of the 48th dGa’ldan khri.pa until that of the fifty-third, when these were the Byang.shar chos.rje-s, their available biographies do not permit one to ascertain whether or not they sat on the throne of Tho.ling.

Subsequently, Se.ra.byes bsam.blo Ngag.dbang mchog.ldan (1677-1751) became the abbot of Tho.ling for the years iron tiger 1710 to fire monkey 1716. He was obviously a figure of noteworthy prominence. After sitting on the throne of Tho.ling, he became the 54th dGa’ldan khri.pa. Khri.chen Ngag.dbang.dbang mc hog.ldan was the tutor of bsKal.bzang rgya.mtsho (1708-1758), the 7th Dalai Lama, and the first Rwa.sgreng. It is possible that, through the auspices of his tutor, the 7th Dalai Lama took an interest in the fate of Tho.ling, as the bk’a.shog issued by him in fire dragon 1736 (see Appendix Seven) indicates. It is also possible that the end of the ancient and glorious dynasty of Gu.ge, which was unfolding before the eyes of the 7th Dalai Lama, made him take steps in favour of this land and its main temple.

Other abbots, who sat on the Tho.ling throne during the life of bsKal.bzang rgya.mtsho, are mentioned in the autobiography of the Pan.chen rin.po.ché Blo.bzang ye.shes and the biography of his successor dPal.ldan ye.shes. They were Ngag.dbang chos.ldan and Don.grub rgya.mtsho during the life of the former Pan.chen rin.po.ché (Blo.bzang ye.shes.kyi rnam.thar (stod.cha) f.286a line 1 and f.387a line 2) and subsequently Don.grub rgyal mtshan, who is documented to have sat on the Tho.ling throne in water dog 1742 (dPal.ldan ye.shes.kyi rnam.thar p.72 lines 3-4). He was probably succeeded by Blo.bzang ’phrin.las, who is mentioned as the abbot of Tho.ling in 1744 and 1752 (ibid. respectively p.97 line 6-p.98 line 1 and p.188 line 2). dPag.bsam rin.po.ché snye.ma, the main biography of the 7th Dalai Lama, records the meeting of other two abbots with bsKal.bzang rgya.mtsho. They were Chos rgya.mtsho and Rin.chen bsKal.bzang. The second of the two was from Sera.byes and was appointed as the former’s successor in wood pig 1755, which means that Chos rgya.mtsho was the abbot of Tho.ling only for a brief period.

The end of the royal lineage of Gu.ge

The 1653 bk’a.shog by Indrabodhi rnam.rgyal to Tho.ling (see p.181-182) proves that La.dwags controlled Gu.ge, which is confirmed by sTag.tshang ras.pa rnam.thar and La.dwags rgyal.rabs. The 1736 bk’a.shog by bsKal.bzang rgya.mtsho, also addressed to Blo.bzang padma bkra.shis (see Appendix Seven), proves that, while another authority had been installed in Gu.ge (that of the Dalai Lama) following the La.dwags-dGa’ldan pho.brang war, a restoration of the royal family of Gu.ge had been performed, albeit partial, since members of the Guge genealogy resided in Gu.ge, while, during the periods of Seng.ge rnam.rgyal and his son Indrabodhi they were in exile in La.dwags.
Then, from the fifty-fifth padma, exercised in his land was no more than nominal, for he depended on the dGa’ldan pho.brang government, of which he was a representative in mNga’ris.stod.

Oral tradition links Blo.bzang padma bkra.shis to mDa’ba.rdzong as a local ruler. Dawa Lama Yugyal, a living authority on mDa’ba.rdzong, often mentioned this king to the author of the present work as the last ruler of this locality. The same bkra.shogs confirmed his connection with mDa’ba.rdzong. The notion in the edict that the mNga’ris.no.yon, who was an associate of Blo.bzang padma bkra.shis, was the protector of mDa’ba.rdzong links Blo.bzang padma bkra.shis to this locality. Moreover, an allusion in earth monkey 1728 found in dPal bsam rin.po.cher snye.ma (stod.cha f.243b line 3) to a king of mNga’ris mDa’pa may only refer to Blo.bzang padma bkra.shis.

Not much more is known about Blo.bzang padma bkra.shis. Petech (Kingdom of Ladakh p.45) says that, in 1692, he was living in IHa.sa, which he did until his death. In the biography of the 5th Dalai Lama that I have consulted (the same used by Petech), there is no reference to the fact that he was a resident of IHa.sa. The biography affirms that he came to pay a visit and brought rich gifts as was his custom78, but does not imply that he had become a resident of the Dalai Lama’s see. In fact, the bkra.shog issued by the 7th Dalai Lama shows that in 1736 Blo.bzang padma bkra.shis was active in mNga’ris.stod.

His status in Gu.ge notwithstanding, Blo.bzang padma bkra.shis was the last member of the Gu.ge royalty before this line came to an end. Reference is made in the bkra.shog to the fact that the royal genealogy of Gu.ge was facing extinction.

Tshe.dbang nor.bi (Bod.rje lha.btad.po’i gdung.rabs) confirms this fact: “In Gu.ge, which is in the centre of Zhang.zhung, the last king of the genealogy, which appeared in succession, was Padma blo.bzang bkra.shis. This one was born in the fire dragon year of the 11th rab.byung (1676). When he was sixty-eight, he died in the water pig year towards the end of the 12th rab.byung (1744), in a day of the sbo (sic for dbo) month. I did my share of offerings to various bla.ma’s in memory of the deceased on behalf of the central government when I was residing at rKong.yul gTsang.po mgo.dgu. Thereafter, the genealogy of Gu.ge came to an end. The younger of [his] two daughters married the king of Mar.yul La.dwags and had two sons” (ibid. p.75 lines 5-13: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.101).

Tho.ling in the period after the end of the Gu.ge dynasty

78. Du.ku la’i gos.bzang ’phros.yod.gsum.pa (f 69b line 6-f 70a line 3: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.103): “Prince Blo.bzang padma bkra.shis, the authentic scon of khri skyid.de Nyo.ma.mgon of the lineage of mNga’dbag dpal’khor btsan, who was the descendant of the Bod chos.rgyal-s, having arrived from mNga’ris, came to pay his respects to rje bla.ma. He was ceremoniously received. He brought respectful gifts. [When] he had come previously, his meeting gifts such as a large quantity of gold and silver as well as brocade, silk and cloths had been highly appreciated. We exchanged pleasantries according to [both] the elaborate and the simplified etiquette enquiring about each other”.

Then, from the fifty-fifth dGa’ldan khri.pa until the sixty-fifth, when they were the Byang.rtses chos.rje-s, no evidence from their biographies, that have come into the hands of the author of this work, helps to prove whether or not they were the abbots of Tho.ling.

The system of ascending the throne of Tho.ling before that of dGa’ldan is documented in the case of the next dGa’ldan khri.pa, the 26th. As a matter of fact, Se.ra.byges bsam.blo Byang.rtses chos.rje Ngag.dbang snyan.grags became the 66th dGa’ldan khri.pa after he was chosen to ascend the abbatial throne of Tho.ling.

The system of nominating the Tho.ling abbot from the ranks of the masters of Shar.byang seems to have lasted from 1692 until 1800, but no elements are at hand to ascertain who changed this custom.
Tho.ling during the 19th century

Around 1800, it seems that Tho.ling dgon.pa became a branch monastery of the grwa.tshang ("monastic college") of the persons who became the successive Se.ra.bytes' incumbent abbots.

According to the oral information of the elderly monks who lived in Tho.ling before its destruction, the dgon.pa passed under Se.ra.bytes from the time of Rwa.sgreng khris.chen bsTan.pa rab.rgyas (1759-1815).

It seems that those who became abbots from then on were given the right of having a keeper and an administrator as main assistants, together with over twenty other attendants.

During this period, the lands of mNga'.ris skor.gsum underwent a long season of decline, as the officers sent by the Dalai Lama governments did not take an interest in making the land and its people prosper and did not keep the temples in their previous flourishing state. As a matter of fact, the higher and lower sTod sGar.dpon, the rdzong.dpon-s ("governors") of rTsa.hrang and mDa'.ba.rdzong and their representatives, the ger.dpon ("administrators of the gold mines") and the trade officers did not exercise their duties properly, often being biased in the way administration and taxation were run. The monasteries were abandoned to their fate and lay in a state of decay, with the monastic population reduced to a minimum.

Another blow was given by the invasion of Zoravar Singh in the years 1841-1842, often known to the Tibetans as Lasing but to the rten.deb as 'Byor.ra.sing, which caused severe damage to Tho.ling. The newly appointed plenipotentiary of the area, gNod.sbyin phun.tshogs, took great care of Tho.ling dgon.pa. During the period 1847-1849 he visited mNga'.ris sGar twice. On these occasions he saw the pitiful condition in which Tho.ling was lying. Similar to the ordinance issued in the period of sGar.dpon Bu.chung and dGa'.ldan Tshe.dbang dpal.bzang, he issued an authoritative edict in fire sheep (1847) ordering all families of the region to give their middle sons to become monks at the dgon.pa-s, and not to create obstacles to those who had faith in the religion, so that they could renounce secular life (see Appendix Seven).

gNod.sbyin phun.tshogs was the one who, under the control of Se.ra.bytes, made a restoration of the dgon.pa in water ox 1853. He also introduced the system of keeping records of the dgon.pa's properties, of which the 1937 rten.deb is a later example.
Part Two

A study of the buildings composing the Tholing complex
Introduction
The inventories of the Tho.ling receptacles of body, speech and mind

One document, whose front page and hence its title is missing, is a collection of inventories of the religious properties of the temple complex of Tho.ling, historically the most important monastery of Gu.ge. In the closing lines of its introductory section, which explains the reasons for compiling these inventories before listing them in detail (see above p.5), the document is defined as a gran.deb ("book of properties"), which has to be corrected into a more consonant rten.deb ("book otherwise inventory of holy receptacles") (f.4a). The latter spelling will be used to identify it in the present work.

The document used for the reconstruction of Tho.ling is called the me.glang rten.deb (or "the fire ox (1937) inventory of holy receptacles") throughout its text. It comprises eighty-five written folios, in beautiful dbu.med script, and one hundred and five altogether including its blank pages, many of them hand-written only on the front side, which seems to indicate that space was left for future records79, the last of which dates to water dragon 1952 (rtan.deb f.25a). Its pages, measuring 60.5 by 28.5 cm, contain six lines of text. The manuscript has been marginally damaged by fire. The top and bottom lines of the first pages are unreadable. Classifications, corrections and additions are given legal status by means of the seal of the abbot of Tho.ling depicting a conchshell.

An extract of these official administrative papers has been previously made by bKra.shis tshe.ring in a document consisting of a few pages nervously scribbled in khyug.yig (for the translation of this document see below Appendix Three), which served as the basis for a preliminary short study by the present author before

79. But one should note that a line in cursive of the rten.deb (f.84a line 2) says: "From this folio on, which is from folio 85 until folio 98, twenty-four folios are missing (bston past tense of 'don pa, lit. "to take out")".
bKra.shis shes.ring obtained a copy of the original. A first work using some parts of the available documents and the recollections of the Tho.ling elders was then penned by bKra.shis shes.ring for the commemorative issue of Tho.ling's millenium, entitled Tho.ling dpal.dpe.med dbun.gyis grub.pa'i gsug.lag khang nas mTho.ling dgon.pa'i bar.gyi chags.rabs shin.tu bu'dus.pa srong.gro lam.stan in the commemorative volume Tho.ling dpal.dpe.med dbun.gyis grub.pa'i gsug.lag khang phyag.biab.nas lo gsig.stong khor.bai rjes.dran dus.deb. 

These inventories are not very old. After the campaign of Zoravar Singh, called in this document 'Byor.ra.sin.'g (ibid. f.2b), who invaded Gu.ge Pu.hrang in iron bird 1841, as the text correctly recounts, and meeting with his death in the same year, damage to the images of Tho.ling and the state of decay in which its properties in general were lying prompted the making of these inventories. They were introduced to improve the exercise of the functions delegated to the gNyer.tshang administrators of Tho.ling in keeping track of the religious objects in the various lha.khang-s and to facilitate the transfer of the duties from one temple caretaker (sku.gnya) to another (ibid. f.2b-4a).

Afterwards these inventories were undertaken frequently. Blank pages indicate that space was left so that they could be brought up to date. For instance, an update of the religious objects in one of the lha.khang-s (i.e. lha.khang 'Jig.rten.brgyan) was made in wood bird 1945 (ibid. f.72a).

Various other updates concerning several lha.khang-s of Tho.ling are found in the rten.deb, most of them stamped with the abbot's seal to give them legal validity, as follows:

'du.khang 'Dzam.gling.brgyan (f.24a-f.25a): "In fire ox 1937, mTho.ling mkhan.zur ('retired abbot') La.ba dge.bshes Byams.pa brton.'grus and mdzod.pa ('treasurer') rGyal.byed Byams.pa thub.bstan, these two, offered a vase made of red copper with a silver mouth. Written (f.24b) on the twenty-first day of the ninth month.

On the fifteenth day of the second month of water horse 1942, Dwa.bla Byams.pa (sic for Byams.pa?) rgya.mtsho offered the thirty-eight volume gsung.bum of rje rin.po.che and his two spiritual sons to the 'du.khang 'Dzam.gling.brgyan, with red and multicoloured wrappers, labels, made of brocade depicting lotuses, and cases.

On the fifteenth of the second month of fire ox 1937, mkhan.dzin ("present abbot") IHo.pa dge.bshes mkhyen.rab Dam.chos and mdzod.pa sBa.riti mkhyen.rab Ngag.dbang, these two, offered an umbrella made of silk-fringed orange brocade and a silver knob in the shape of a lotus, which is to be installed above the main image, the incomparable Thub.dbang Ghande.ma, the jewel of the crown bestowing peace and happiness. [They also offered] a banner to be used on the occasion of gser.tshogs smon.lam with hangings made of brown Chinese brocade with a red and yellow rainbow embroidery. Written on the second month of water sheep 1943.

(f.25a) In earth rat 1948, mkhan.po lHo.pa dge.bshes Blo bzang don.yod and mdzod.pa bKra.shis bde.legs, these two, offered to the Dus.gsum Sangs.rgyas, the main images of the 'du.khang chen.po, and to [the statue of] Mar.me.mdzad, four aprons in Indian silk; a good throne table to be used during smon.lam; a rnam.rgyal bsum.pa depicting the Rigs lnga and weighing sixty-four silver coins; a las.bum ("ordination vase"), its body in copper and the mouth in silver, four gan.byar-s ("under-robots") for the four statues mentioned above, and a mchod.stegs ("table for offerings"). Written on the third month. Sera.byes grwa.tshang offered a thang.ka of Chos.rgyal one floor in height with a brocaded frame.

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80. Many thanks go to him for taking so much trouble to obtain access to a copy of this document, which records the inventories of the Tho.ling chapels, receptacles, various paraphernalia and books kept in the temple complex before it was destroyed.

81. This work was published by the Tho.ling gtsug lag khang lo gsig.stong khor.ba' rjes dran mdzad sgo' i go sgriing tshogs.chung of Bod ljongs mthgar. 'ris ri gzhung goes skyong.khang at Dharamsala in 1996.

82. Apart from the gNyer.tshang-s, they were the 'Bri g.yag Zur-pa-s, the sbug pa-s (their names sometimes spelled slob.lugs pa-s as well), the Bla.brang-s and the Grwa.tshang-s.

83. In its pages the me gling rten.deb (f.66b, f.71a and f.71b) also records renovations and subsequent updates in the years before 1937, such as those in fire hare 1927 (f.71a), water monkey 1932 (f.71b) and fire rat 1936 (f.54b).
On the eleventh month of water dragon (1952), in dedication of the late dge Byams.pa rgya.mtsho, a thang.ka of rje yab.sras.gsüm, the gzhi.bdag lCam.sring and rgyal.chen Shug.ldan with a complete brocade frame including its red and yellow veil and silver knobs; as well as two ashi ("long scarves") were offered by dge.gzhon Blo.bzang "

(f.23b) On the lo.gsar of wood sheep 1955, Khu.nu Dhar.ma dbang.phyug offered a slightly damaged silver butterlamp with lotus decorations, seven gor high and four gor wide.

In the fire bird year 1957, in memory of Chu.ti (Chu.mur.ti) dpon bsTan.'dzin, four silver lamps were offered to be used on the three occasions and on [other] special occasions, weighing nine Indian coins. Their height is one khyi (i.e. the distance between the tip of the thumb and that of the little finger), their width being two and a half gor, with carvings on the bottom part. Written on the fifteenth of the eleventh month.

A snyan.shal ("long scarf around the neck and touching the ears") with a name of a person written on it was offered to the main image Thub.dbang Ghandi.ma (i.e Ghandema) by bsKras.sgang (i.e bKra.shis.sgang) sNgags.ram.pa rThogs.med rgya.mtshon.

Thug.rje Iha.khang (f.41a-f.42a): "In fire ox 1937, the recently restored Thugs.rje Iha.khang was offered a vase made of red copper with silver mouth, which was made with the fund of the renovation. Written on the 21st of the ninth month.

In memory of the late dpon.dman sGrol.dkar, one hexagonal silver gab was offered to 'jam.dbyangs ga'u.ma with a scarf, its attachment loop stamped with a seal.

In water horse 1942, mdzod.zur ("retired treasurer") Byams.pa thub.rtan (spelt as) offered an excellent nang.mdzod ("long horizontal hanging") to Thugs.rje Iha.khang. Written on fifteenth of the second month.

(f.42a) A robe, composed of the stod.lhe ("collar garment") made of blue and red brocade and an apron made of Mongolian spu.ma ("striped material") with appliqués, was offered to Thugs.rje chen.po; a robe was offered to Kha.gsar.spa.ni (spelt as), composed of a stod.lhe and a smad.lhe; a robe composed of a stod.lhe and a smad.lhe was offered to Byams.pa lding.sku ("the flying statue of Byams.pa"). A similar set of robes was offered to another statue.

A ceiling hanging made of Chinese white silk and thirteen butterlamps were offered to the Rigs.lnga Iha.khang. Written on the above mentioned day".

bSrung.ma.khang (f.64a-f.64b): "In fire ox (1937), mTho.lding mkhan.zur ("retired abbot") dge.bshes Byams.pa (f.64b) brtson.'grus and mdzod.pa rGyal.byed Byams.pa thub.bstan, these two, offered a new red copper bum.pa ("vase") with a silver beak... [Written in] fire ox (1937), twenty-first day of the ninth month".

rGyal.khang (f.68b): "In fire sheep 1907, bla.gnyer Thub.bstan bkra.shis offered one snyan.shal ("long scarf around the neck and the ears of the deity") with an inscription written on it".

(f.70b-f.71a): "In wood rat (1924), (f.71a) a beam cover (gdung.kheb) was given from the Grwa.tshang rin.po.ches...".

(f.71b line 1): "In water monkey (1932), cymbals, which are slightly damaged, were offered with funds for the renovations and by sku.gnyer Ngag.tshul".

(f.71b-f.72): "In fire ox (1937), [several offerings were made] with the funds for the renovation... . [written on] the twenty-ninth day of the second month. In fire
ox (1937), mTho.ling mkhan.zur La.ba dge.bshes Byams.pa brtson.'grus and mdzod.pa ("treasurer") rGyal.byed Byams.pa thub.bstan offered a new red-copper vase with silver beak. (f.72a) This should be kept well and added to the inventory. [Written on] the twenty-first day of the ninth month. In water monkey (1943), Gling Gra.rig Phrin.las offered one sword and its wooden scabbard. On the sixth day of the second month during lo.gar of wood bird 1945, a butterlamp was offered. Its height is six gsor, its width three and a half gsor. Li water cups, two gsor high and with a diameter of seven gsor; two brass butterlamps, five gsor high; a kapala with lid; a sword with a metal scabbard; one gar.segs; a golden thang ka of Phyag.rdo; a curtain with a fringe [were offered]. Written on the same date as above. On the seventh day of the fifth month of earth ox 1950, as a donation for the renovation of the rGyal.khang mGon[.po], one silver ladle weighing ten a half silver coins was offered by Thub.bstan blo.bzang.

In water dragon 1952, sKyed.lags rDo.rje offered one red copper plate, six gsor in diameter”. mKhan.po rin.po.che'i gzims.chung (f.76b): “In fire hare (1927), mdzod.pa Blo.bstan offered a red copper gserskyems '6ab.gzhong (i.e. a vessel) with a gilt brass mouth made [in the previous year] fire tiger (1926)”. Ibid. (f.76b-f.77a): “In water monkey (1932), a pair of cymbals was made with funds for renovations. [Written on] the twenty-ninth day of the second month. In fire ox (1937), mTho.ling mkhan.zur La.ba dge.bshes Byams.pa brtson.'grus and mdzod.pa rGyal.byed Byams.pa thub.bstan offered a copper vase with silver beak. This is entrusted to the successive caretaker and should be kept properly..., written on the twenty-first of the ninth month”. lHa.khang 'Jig.brten.rgyan (f.80b): “The twenty-ninth of the second month. Seven li water cups were offered in wood bird (1945)”.

The records of the religious properties in the rten.deb which has come down to us were written in the fire ox year 1937 by lDong.po bSod.nams stobs.rgyas during the abbotship of mkhan.'dzin lHo.pa (i.e. from Gu.ge lHo) dge.bshes Dam.chos while the treasurer was sBa.rti Ngag.dbang (f.24b). In 1937, they had succeeded mkhan.zur ("retired abbot") La.ba dge.bshes Byams.pa brtson.'grus44, who is mentioned in more than one case as the incumbent head of Tho.ling until the previous year (f.24a; f.64a-f.64b; f.71b; and f.77a) together with the treasurer during his tenure, i.e. mdzod.pa rGyal.byed Byams.pa thub.bstan (f.24a, f.64b, f.77a). lHo.pa dge.bshes Dam.chos and sBa.rti Ngag.dbang were still in charge of Tho.ling in water sheep 1943 (f.24b).

Although no murals are mentioned in the rten.deb, with the exception of a brief description of those in the gSer.khang and an isolated reference to one in the Srung.ma.khang, because the inventories could not be extended to the walls, the listing of the properties in each chapel is very meticulous. Their interest lies, apart from their accuracy, in the fact that the names of the various tha.khang-s composing Tho.ling at a late time are given. Their identification within the temple complex remains an arduous task given that Tho.ling has been destroyed and no extant dkar.chung of the temple, which could help to appraise them, is available to this author.

On the other hand, descriptions of the temples by early Western travellers are perforce very incomplete, because they were shown parts of the monastic complex with greatest reluctance by the incumbent monks. This is probably the major limitation of Tucci and Gherri's documentation of Tho.ling.

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84. See rten.deb (f.24b), where he is indicated as mkhan.'dzin ("incumbent abbot" of Tho.ling) in fire rat 1936, the year before the rten.deb was written.
A few identifications of temples could be attempted by using passages of the Rin.chen bzang.po and the Jo.bo.rje rnam.thar-s. These rnam.thar-s refer to an ancient period (dates for the life of Rin.chen bzang.po are 958-1055 and for that of Jo.bo.rje 982-1054). This information cannot therefore elucidate the shape Tho.ling later took in the time when the rten.deb-s were written and updated until soon before the destruction of the monastery. The scanty information given by the travelogues of early Western visitors to Tho.ling such as Young (“Journey to Toling and Tsaparang in Western Tibet”), Tucci (Cronaca della Missione Tucci nel Tibet Occidentale translated into English under the title of Secrets of Tibet, as well as Santi e Briganti del Tibet Ignoto), Lama Govinda and Li Gotami (The Way of the White Clouds), although significant in some cases, is too brief to be conclusive. Any identification would thus be extremely hypothetical and any such attempt has to be based on different grounds.

The oral contributions of the Tho.ling elders has thus proved to be crucial, given that they frequented the complex for many years before they left for exile and Tho.ling suffered irreparable damage during the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976).

85 A few attempts can be made which have a slightly higher possibility of being realistic. The 'du khang described by Young in his “Journey to Toling and Tsaparang in Western Tibet” p.191) is probably ‘Du khang Dzam gling,bryan. The one Tucci calls the main four-chapelled temple is the rNam snang iha khang. On them see below in the text.
Plate IV
Tho.ling dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa'i gtsug.lag.khang
Section One

English translation of the significant parts of the *rten.deb*

*rten.deb*

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The lha.khang-ś of Tho.ling are recorded one after the other in the inventories. Lists are given of everything contained in each of them. The main images in every temple are here excerpted, since a complete catalogue of all properties would be too long and not overly significant (a good number of them being of very little interest such as the number of couches found in a specific lha.khang). Hence, only the passages of the fire ox rten.deb recording the major receptacles of body, speech and mind have been translated while those concerning minor objects of worship and the paraphernalia decorating the Tho.ling lha.khang-ś have been omitted. Inclusion in the present text of the major images at Tho.ling is deemed necessary not only per se but also in view of some important historical implications.

"First of all, in ’du.khang ’Dzam.gling.brgyan, the main images are a medicinal clay statue of Sangs.rgyas [known] as Thub.dbang Ghande.ma, wearing a red and yellow robe with rainbow patterns [and] with an umbrella over its head. To its right and left are statues in the same material of Byams.pa and ’Od.bsrung, (f.4b) each with a similar robe, holding a bowl and with a gilt copper torana. Each of them has a turquoise as large as an egg studded in the uma. The Buddha-s of the Three Times are truly magnificent. [In ’du.khang ’Dzam.gling.brgyan there are also] a statue in medicinal clay of rGyal.dbang bSod.nams rgya.mtsho with a complete set of robes; two statues in medicinal clay of rJe rin.po.che [Tsong.kha.pa], the book cover of one of them being damaged; a statue in medicinal clay of Thub.dbang; a life-size statue in medicinal clay of ’St.e.dpag.med with a complete set of robes including a gan.shyar ("undershirt"), a stod.lhe ("collar garment") and a smad.lhe ("lower robe"); a clay statue of mkhan.chen Tre.bo mKhas.brton wearing a robe and a pandi.ta hat; a life-size statue in medicinal clay of Rin.chen ’byung.ldan...[lacuna]...(f.5a)...[lacuna]... a gilt copper statue of rJe rin.po.che, one floor high, wearing a brocade robe, a patched smad.lhe and a hat; a gilt copper statue of rJe rin.po.che, a little more than one floor high, wearing a patched robe made of two garments, an apron mounted with a precious border, and a pandi.ta hat; a gilt copper statue of Thub.dbang Seng.ge sgra.nga.ro ("roaring with a lion’s voice") on a lotus pedestal, six tho (sic for mtho) in height, one ear of which is missing."

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86 One mtho corresponds to the distance between the tip of the thumb and the middle finger. The rten deb often misspells this term, writing tho.
Ibid. (f.6b-f.7b): “The inventory of the paintings is as follows. An appliqué thang.ka in multicoloured brocade of Thub.dbang and rGyal.ba Seng-ge nga.ro...[lacuna]...[a thang.ka of] rDo.rje ’Jigs.byed painted with blood from the nose of rje Tsong.(f.7a)isha.pa, the banner of religion; a thang.ka of mGon.po with a veil, cloth frame and knobs; a thang.ka depicting the rGya.chen tshogs.gnyis with a veil, cloth frame and knobs; five thang.ka-s depicting sGrol.ma according to the system of Bla.med, with complete cloth frames; an old thang.ka depicting the mandala of gSang.dus; two thang.ka-s of rDo.rje ’Jigs.byed with a yellow veil and orange-red cloth frames; an old gold-painted thang.ka of sGrol.dkar; a thang.ka of sPyan.ras.gzigs bCu.gcig.zhal Phyag.stong sPyan.stong with a veil [and] a frame of dark blue brocade with red and yellow [stripes]; a thang.ka of the Po.ta.la paradise with a veil [and] a frame of finest blue silk; a thang.ka depicting the g.Yu.lo.bkod paradise with a veil [and] a frame of blue silk; two small thang.ka-s depicting the mandala-s of rDo.rje ’Jigs.byed and gSang.dus; an old mandala thang.ka of Thugs.rje chen.po with (f.7b) a frame of black brocade...”

Ibid. (f.8a-f.8b): “Two sets of bKa’ gyur rin.po.che, one old and one new. One is in nineteen volumes, with gleg.shing (“book covers”), gleg.thag (“book string”), with a bsgril.rdzas (“wrapper”) in various colours. [The other] one is with red string and wrapper, similar to the one above, and blue labels (gdong.dar), whose inside flaps are yellow and red and with a lining. The other [set] (i.e. the new set?) is in ninety-four volumes, with ninety-five labels made in red and yellow jas.kham.pa (?) and five [others], whose colours do not match; a brGyad.stong.pa and ’Bum phal.chen written on blue paper in fifty-one volumes; twenty-five volumes of various mDo and ’Bum on white paper complete with gleg.shing and gleg.thag, a brGyad.stong.pa Ghan.dho.ma (sic for Ghande.ma), [previously] kept at the brGya.rtsa Byang[.ma], written in gold [and] in two volumes, with gleg.shing, gleg.thag, bsgril.rdzas and lung.dmar (“red string”); a smAn.mdo rgyas.bya.pa, page fifty-two of which is missing, with gleg.shing [and] gleg.thag, (f.8b) a bKa’ thang shel.brag in 234 folios, the last folio being damaged, complete with a red and multicoloured border bsgril.rdzas; three volumes of grwa.togs.gser with bsgril.rdzas, the ’Jigs.byed dpa.bo gcig.pa sadhana in 177 folios and eighteen chapters offered by mkhan.chen Byams.pa dpal.ldan, with yellow bsgril.rdzas and the seal of the mkhan.po; a bsDom.gsum bsIab.bya nor.bu’i phreng.ba; a dpal gSang.ba ’dus.pa bskyed.rims in sixty-five folios; a rDzogs.rims in eighty folios; a Rab.gnas dge.legs.rgya.mtsho char.be in twenty-three folios. All these are put together in one bsgril.rdzas with a gdong.dar (“book label”) and with a spen.rtse in three padded layers, the middle one in yellow brocade, including an index, [and] with gleg.shing and gleg.thag, a Zhol edition of gZungs.bsdus offered by Se.ra.byes phyag.zur (“ex-treasurer”) with bsgril.rdzas;...[one line lacuna]; (f.9a)...[one line lacuna].

Ibid. (f.9a-f.9b): “The [articles belonging to] the category of thugs.rten [are as follows]. A one-floor high gdung.rten made of gilt copper; a gilt copper mchod.rten sgo.mang, one khru7 high, with studded stones, with the damage of missing sun and moon; a pad.spungs mchod.rten in khro.li ("mercurial bell metal" or "bronze") with the brha.shis rtags.bryad on the base; a sandalwood mchod.rten, about one khru high, with the sun, moon and stones missing; a life-size gdung.rten in clay studded with amber, some of which is missing; a lha. bab mchod.rten in clay about one khru high; a rnam.rgyal mchod.rten in clay, about one khru high; a byang.chub mchod.rten in clay, two tho and seven gsr (sic for sor)88 high; a pad.spungs mchod.rten made of li.rag ("brassy li"); (f.9b) another a

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78. One khru corresponds to the distance between the elbow and the fingertips.

88. One sor corresponds to the length of one finger. The rten deb has a plethora of misspellings of this, often occurring wrongly as gsr.
pad.spungs mchod.rten made of li.rag, again a Pad.spungs mchod.rten made of li.rag, ten gor high; a pad.spungs mchod.rten made of li.rag, ten and a half gor high; a gilt copper sgo.mang mchod.rten, two tho and ten gor high, with one deity missing.

brGya.rtsa lho.brgyud (rten.deb f.35a-f.41a)

lTung.bshags (sic for bshags) lha.khang (rten.deb f.35a-f.35b):

“The category of the rten.gum and the objects for worship in the brGya.rtsa lho.brgyud [is as follows]. The gilt copper statue of standing Jam.dbyangs ga'u.ma ("wearing a ga'u") on a lotus pedestal is, first of all, the main image here (i.e. in lTung.bshags lha.khang), which was in 'du.khang 'Dzam.gling.brgyans. This is one 'doms (sic for 'dom)⁹⁹ and three gor in height, has a necklace made of three strings of crystal beads in the shape of flowers, twisted together, and an urna. In the centre of the gtugs.tor ("ubnisha") and all around are turquoises, the size of grains. It is wearing a stod.lhe ("collar garment") and a smad.lhe ("skirt"). Its large ga'u, in excellent condition, is hexagonal;... a gilt copper statue of rDo.rje.'chang on a lotus pedestal, two mtho and three gor in size; [thirteen] statues of Thub.dbang made of gilt copper and other metals, which are little more than one mtho in size, slightly damaged; twenty statues of Thub.dbang made of li.ma and on a lotus pedestal, (f.35b) one mtho and one gor in size, slightly damaged; fifty-eight statues of Thub.dbang, sPyan.ras.gzigs, Jam.dbyangs and Byams.pa in various sizes on lotus pedestals with a chākra, [some] standing and slightly damaged, altogether fifty-eight [of them] either broken (chag), with missing parts (grum), cracked (gas) or damaged (skyon); 142 statues, large and small, on lotus pedestals such as rDo.rje.'chang, 'Od.dpag.med, rDor.sems, Tshe.dpag.med, Phyag.rdro, 'Jam.dbyangs, Byams.pa, sPyan.ras.gzigs, sGro1.ma, Jo.bo, Bla[.mai] sku etc., in gilt copper and various other materials”.

lha.khang bKra.shis 'Od.'bar (rten.deb f.35b-f.36a):

“The main image is that of Jo.bo bKra.shis 'od.'bar.ma on a lotus pedestal, made of gilt copper, four tho high, including its damaged throne; six gilt copper statues of Thub.dbang on a lotus pedestal, over two khrus in height; four gilt copper images of [Shakya] Thub[.pa] on a lotus throne, (f.36a) one khrusa high, some slightly damaged; fourteen statues of Thub.dbang in gilt copper with and without a lotus throne, one khrus and over one tho high, some slightly damaged; a gilt copper gtsug.tor ("reliquary stupa"), two khrus, one tho and one and a half gors high, slightly damaged”.

Thugs.rje lha.khang (rten.deb f.36a-f.36b):

“The main image is a li.ma ("bell metal") statue of bCu.geig.zhal said to have been made by Sangs.rgyas 'Od.srung⁹⁰, a little less than one 'dom high. A broken finger on its third left hand has been substituted with the present one, while two fingers on the fourth hand are missing. Likewise, the head crown and implements in many hands are missing. [The statue has] a golden torana with a depiction of the rgyan.drup ("six ornaments"). A standing statue of sPyan.ras.gzigs Kha.sar.pani in gilt copper wearing a crown of crystal beads, six tho high, [is located here]. Some of its hand implements are damaged or missing. [There are] also a rdzi.khyim statue of rgyal.tshab Mi.pham mgon.po sitting in Western posture, over two khrus high, with a robe and a tasselled apron (f.36b), a scarf and

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⁹⁹ One 'dom corresponds to the length of two outspread arms.

⁹⁰ Is this a sign that the statue was of the greatest antiquity? As will be mentioned below in the text, this lha.khang was the bedroom of Rin.chen bzang.po. The statue of the Eleven-Headed sPyan ras gzigs thus may not date to later than the mid 11th century (lo.chen died in wood sheep 1055).
two rosaries of conchshell and a rosary of pearls, with one rosary of fish (?) shell, two rosaries of turquoise and coral, four silver ga'u, one sdig.ra ("pin")?; a statue of Thub.dbang on a lotus throne, over two tho high; another image of Thub[pa] on a lotus throne, one kbru, one tho and a half gor high; a ldem.sku ("a standing image") on a lotus throne, two kbru high; another [statue] but smaller, one kbru high. All of them have damaged hands, feet and thrones. These [statues] number altogether ten. A gdung.ten ("reliquary") made of li, one kbru and eight gor in height [is also housed here]. There are also a white and red sandalwood statue of Thub.dbang, the statues of the gNas.brun bcu.drug ("the sixteen Arhat-s"), and the statues of the rGyal.chen sde.bzhi ("the Guardians of the four directions"), but those of one gnas.brun and of H.a.shang are missing. The place where they are kept is a wooden cabinet with seven columns and the mkhan.po's seal.

One book cover with the carving of one thousand images of Sangs.rgyas with ju.rise.ma ("a bright varnish"?), slightly cracked in the centre and very beautiful

sGrol.ma lha.khang (riten.deb f.36b-f.38b):

"Inside a wooden cabinet with an iron screen on the front, which is divided into three compartments (f.37a) that can be opened, with handles and a lock and key stamped by the mkhan.po's seal, there is a silver statue of rNam[.par] snang[.mdzad] on a lotus throne, one tho and eight gor high. Its urna is studded with a pearl surrounded by [a rim] of turquoises, some of which are missing; its slightly damaged lotus pedestal being two gor high; a silver sPyan.ras.gzigs with four arms on a gilt copper pedestal, one tho and almost four sor in height, with some stones missing in its belt at the waist; a gilt copper sPyan.ras.gzigs on a lotus pedestal, one tho and two and a half gor high, some stones of which are missing; a silver statue on a gilt copper lotus pedestal, one tho and half gor high, the knob of the crown and some stones being missing; a beautiful silver statue of standing Phyag.rdo, one tho and nine gor high, with major damage to the rdo.ye and the crown and with some missing stones; a silver statue of sPyan.ras.gzigs gRwa.drug sgrul ("which liberates the six classes of beings") standing on a lotus pedestal, one tho and seven gor in height, the tips of the fingers of its first and third left hands being mutilated, damaged at the back and with some cracks; a silver statue of Kha.sar.pa.ni on a lotus pedestal, (f.37b) ten and a half gor high; a Four-Armed sPyan.ras.gzigs, eight and a half gor high, on a lotus pedestal which is a little less than eight gor, two statues of sTon[.pa], three and a half gor high with some stones missing, both on a golden throne; one silver statue of Thub[pa] belonging to gNyer.tshang, ten gor high; altogether there are twelve silver statues.

Gilt copper statues of sGrol.ma dkar.ljang ("White and Green Tara") on lotus pedestals and with various ornaments, one kbru, one tho and two gor in height, [are placed here]. The sGrol.dkar[statue] is decorated with forty-three pearls and 154 turquoises, which are missing in some cases, and wearing three ga'u-s decorated with precious stones as a necklace; a gilt copper statue of sGrol.ljang on a lotus pedestal measuring one kbru and four and a half gor in height; a gilt copper statue of sGrol.ljang on a lotus pedestal measuring one kbru and three and a half gor in height; a gilt copper statue of sGrol.ma on a lotus pedestal measuring one tho and ten gor in height; a gilt copper gSang.dus yab.yum embracing and kissing each other, height of which is one kbru and four gor including its lotus pedestal, with [some] of the hand implements missing; a gilt copper rDo.rje.'chang statue on a lotus pedestal (f.38a), which is one kbru and about one gor high, with a grain-sized turquoise stone in the urna. [Some] stones
of the prog.zhu ("crown") are missing;... a sitting statue in li metal of Sems.nyid Pad. od, one khru and five gosor in height (see Tucci, *Cronaca della Missione Scientifica Tucci nel Tibet Occidentale* fig.231);... altogether nineteen statues in gilt copper, li.dmar and li.ser... a total of forty-three statues”.

rGyal.ba Rigs.Inga’i lha.khang (*rten.deb* f.38b-f.39a, also see f.39a-f.39b):
“... a large statue of Thub.dbang made of medicinal clay with the urna having a turquoise stone and wearing patched robes. To its right and left are the one-floor high standing statues of sMan.lha sde.gshegs.brgyad (i.e. the cycle of the eight Buddha-s of the Medicine), slightly damaged”.

[rGyal] Rigs.Inga’i lha.khang (again) (*rten.deb* f.39a-f.39b):
“Five life-size statues of the rGyal.ba Rigs.Inga in medicinal clay with slight damage [are the main images here] (see Tucci Archives accession number 6074/3)”.

Byams.khang (*rten.deb* f.39b):
“The standing statue of rGyal.ba Byams.pa in medicinal clay, three floors high, wearing a collar garment (stod.lho) [is the main statue in this lha.khang] (see Tucci Archives accession number 6035/15 and the picture accompanying Tucci’s article “Nel Paese dei Lama” on p.278, which shows this statue wearing the same garment).
Phyag.rdo.rje.lha.khang (rten.deb f.39b):

"The statue of Phyag.na rdo.rje in medicinal clay, two khru and one tho high, has to the right and left the statues of gTum.po gos.sngon and bla.sku ("images of bla.ma-s") in relief with some cracks and damage, altogether twenty-two images".

brGya.rtsa byang.ma (rten.deb f.48a-f.64b):

'du.khang 'Dzam.gling.brgyan (again) (sic) (rten.deb f.48a)91:

"The rten.gsum and objects for worship within the premises of the brGya.rtsa byang.ma [are as follows]. The main receptacle is the supreme image, the gilt copper statue of Jo.bo Sha.kya.mu.ne on a lotus pedestal, four tho high, which is kept in 'du.khang 'Dzam.gling.brgyan. Its urna has a red turquoise stone the size of a thumbnail and an ivory crown with a magnificent multicoloured rigs.lnga, damaged at the top. [This statue is] flanked by those of Mi.skyod.pa and Rin.'byung, the latter with a cracked back. Their hair is studded with turquoise arranged in lotus shape, some of which are missing, and with three emeralds, encircled by turquoise, corals and pearls, some missing and with the seal [proper] to a nang.rten (i.e. a statue, in memory of a deceased person, to be kept indoors). [They wear] na.bza', stod.lhe, smad.lhe, snam.sbyar, dar.phyang, lhung.bzed. The fingers, the dho-si (gos.khyud) [and] the thrones are slightly damaged. They are magnificent".

Bla.ma.khang (rten.deb f.48a-f.49b):

"[The main image is] a gilt copper statue of rje rin.po.che (Tsong.kha.pa) on a lotus pedestal and lion throne, one khru, one tho and nine gsr in height, with robe, under-robe and a pandi.ta hat and without damage; another statue in gilt copper of rje (Tsong.kha.pa) on a lotus pedestal (f.48b) and lion throne with a shining chakra, one khru, one tho and two and a half gsr; a gilt copper statue of rje (Tsong.kha.pa) on a lotus pedestal and lion throne, one khru and nine and a half gsr high; a listatue of Thub.dbang with those of Byams.pa and 'Jam.dbyangs to its right and left, with torana and a shining chakra on their li thrones with a lotus pedestal, one khru and one gsr in height, the foot of the statue of Byams.pa being damaged; ...a gilt copper statue of Rin.'byung on a li lotus pedestal, one tho and ten gsr high; a gilt copper statue of Jo.bo on a lotus pedestal, one tho and six gsr high; a gilt copper pad.spungs mchod.rten on a copper throne with the auspicious ... (f.49a) symbols, one tho and nine gsr high; a gilt copper statue of Thub.dbang rdo.gdan.ma on a lotus pedestal, one tho and five gsr high, and damaged".

'Jigs.brgyad [Iha].khang (rten.deb f.49a-f.49b):

"A li.dmar statue of 'Jam.dbyangs standing on a throne and lotus pedestal in gilt copper, two khru, one tho and four gsr high, the throne of which is damaged; a gilt copper Thub.dbang on a lion throne, one khru, two tho and a little less than four gsr in height; a li statue of Thub.dbang Grong.'khyer.ma (sic) on a throne, two khru and two and a half gsr high; a li statue of Thub.dbang Grong.'khyer.ma

91. The placing of 'du.khang 'Dzam.gling.brgyan among the Iha.khang-s of brGya.rtsa byang.ma is odd, to say the least, since this 'du.khang is located outside the brGya.rtsa complex."
on a throne with a shining chakra, one khru, one tho and ten and a half gor high; a li.dmar statue of Byams.pa with throne, one khru, one tho and six gor in height; a li.ser statue of standing Thub.dbang Grong.khyer.ma, one khru, one tho and eight gor high, with damaged toes; a li.dmar statue of Byams.pa on a throne, one khru, one tho and six gor high; a li.ser statue of standing Thub.dbang Grong.khyer.ma, one khru, one tho and eight gor high with a substitute (7) (mdzudsic for rdzun?) foot; a gilt copper statue of Thub[.pa] on a lotus pedestal and with a shining chakra, one tho and eleven and a half gor high; a gilt copper statue of Thub[.pa] on a lotus pedestal, one tho (f.49b) and five gor high; a gilt copper statue of Thub[.pa] on a lotus pedestal, one tho and a little over four gor high; a gilt copper statue of Thub[.pa] on a lotus pedestal, one tho and five and a half gor in height; altogether nine of them; a gilt copper statue of Thub[.pa] on a lotus pedestal with a shining lotus, a little over one khru high; a gilt copper statue of Thub[.pa] on a lotus pedestal; a gilt copper statue of Thub[.pa] on a lotus pedestal, one tho and ten gor high; a large sized (sic) gilt copper statue of Thub[.pa] on a lotus pedestal, one tho and eight and a half gor high; a gilt copper statue of Thub[.pa] on a lotus pedestal, one tho and ten gor high; a large sized (sic) gilt copper statue of Thub[.pa] on a lotus pedestal, one tho and more or less four gor high, with damage; a gilt copper statue of Thub[.pa] on a lotus pedestal, a little over one khru high; a gilt copper statue of sNang.mtha’ on a lotus pedestal, one tho and eight gor high; a gilt copper statue of Thub[.pa] on a lotus pedestal, one tho and ten gor high; a large sized (sic) gilt copper statue of Thub[.pa] on a lotus pedestal, one tho and a half gor high; a medium sized (sic) gilt copper statue of Thub[.pa] on a lotus pedestal, a little over ten gor high; a small sized (sic) gilt copper statue of Thub[.pa] on a lotus pedestal, nine gor high; altogether nine large and small statues with damage; a sGrol.ljang statue in gilt copper with a lotus pedestal, one khru in height; a gilt copper statue of sPyan.ras.gzigs “who liberates the six classes of sentient beings”, on a lotus throne, one tho and three gor high…”

gSung.chos lhakhang (rten.deb f.51b-f.53a):

“Inside a wooden cabinet with an iron screen which can be opened at the front (f.52a), with handles, and a lock and key stamped with the mkhan.pö’ s seal, are gilt copper statues of Thub.dbang on lotus pedestals in various sizes, the larger ones being about eleven gor in height, the middle ones seven gor, the smaller ones almost five gor, altogether fifty-three statues, slightly damaged; statues of Thub.dbang, rje rin.po.che (Tsong.kha.pa), rDo.rje.chang, sNang.ba mtha’yas, Tshe.dpag.med, Byams.pa, Jam.dbyangs, rDo.sems, sPyan.ras.gzigs, Phyag.tdar, Jo.bo and bla.sku (“images of bla.ma-s”) with lotus pedestals and in various sizes made of various alloys in three kinds of li, i.e. [li.]dmar, [li.]smug and [li.]gor (“red, dark and golden li”), mdö.li, khro.li (“mercurial bell metal”, or “brass”? as is given in the Dictionary of Das), copper, brass, in metals of good and poor quality, the larger ones each eleven gor in height, the middle ones each five gor, the small ones each four gor, with slight damage, altogether (f.52b) fifty-seven; li.dmar and li.smug (“red and dark bell metal”) statues of Thub.dbang Grong.khyer.ma, Byams.pa, sPyan.ras.gzigs, standing on lotus pedestals, the larger ones on lotus pedestals, one tho and four gor in height, the medium-sized ones on lotus pedestals, eight gor high; the small ones, over two gor high, damaged in various ways, altogether forty-three statues; a statue of sNang.ba mtha’[yas] gtso.khor.gsum (“a group of three images”) made of li.ma, which [previously was] in the ‘du.khang of brGya.rtsa lho.[brgyud], on a throne pedestal, eleven and a half gor high with a torana, whose top left part is missing; fourteen statues, made of khro.[li], brass, ti.tsha (“zinc”), li etc., in different sizes; a gilt copper statue of Thub[.pa]; various gdung.rten-s in khro.[li], the larger ones,
each one _sho_ and three _gsor_ high, the middle-sized ones eight and a half _gsor_ high, the smaller ones six _gsor_ each, slightly damaged, altogether ten _gdung rten-s_. [The images] classified according to the alphabetical system (_ka.rtags_) [are as follows].

Four large and small statues of _gDo.sde_, made of _khotri_; one [ _khotri_?] statue of _rDo.rje_.'chang; two [ _khotri_?] statues of _slob.dpon_; (f.53a) one [ _khotri_?] standing statue of _spyan.ras.gzigs_; one standing statue of _Tshe dpag.med_ in sandal wood; one gilt copper statue of _Tshog bdag_ Glang.sna (Ganesha), one and a half _gsor_ high with two missing arms.

Concerning books, 187 volumes of _Dul.ba_, _Bum.mDo.sde_, _Myang.das_, _bRgyad.stong.pa_, _gSer.od_, _Khor.lo bDe.mchog.rgyud_, _dBu.ma'i rnam.bshad_, the commentary on _mNgon.rtags.rgyan_ [are preserved here]. They are written in black ink on white paper and in silver or gold on dark blue paper, with and without wrappers, wooden book covers and ties, the number of folios of some of them are complete and of some incomplete. Fifty-two wooden blocks of _Tshad.ma rnamغمel_, root and branches; one gilt copper incense holder in the shape of a lion's body.

**Statues in medicinal clay ( _sman.sku_ ) in brGya.rtsa byang.ma ( _rten.deb_ f.53a line 5-f.56 line 5):**

'du.khang Thub.dbang bDud.'dul.ma (i.e. the assembly hall adjoining the brGya.rtsa lho.rgyud) ( _rten.deb_ f.53a-f.54b):

"The one floor high statue of Thub.dbang bDud.'dul.ma in medicinal clay with a yellow cotton patched robe and a begging bowl, turquoise stones inlaid in the _urna_ about a _rGya.tar_ 92 [is the main image of the _du.khang_.] To its right and left are the statues of Byams.pa and 'Jam.dbyangs. On a surrounding earthen platform the statues of the _Nyan.thos-s_ and _Rang.rgyal-s_ stand in high-relief, a little larger than life-size. (f.53b) To either side of the door are the large statues of Mi.g.yo.ba and rTa.mgrin; the life-size statue of 'Jam.dbyangs rl.gr.ma ("brandishing the sword") with collar garment and a tasselled apron; the statues of _Tshed.dpag.med_ and bla.sku ("images of _bla.ma-s_"), altogether nine life-size statues; the seated cycle of the Byams.pa deities [are in _du.khang_]. To their right and left are the over life-size statues of Byam[.pa] (sic for Byams.pa) and 'Jam.dbyangs; the seven Nye.ba'i ras; the statue which is a portrait of Ngag.dbang ye.shes; the life-size statue of Yum.chen.mo, altogether forty-nine statues, slightly damaged…".

rNam[.par] snang[.mdzad] lha.khang ( _rten.deb_ f.54a-f.55a):

"The main statue is the medicinal clay image of rNam.par snang-mdzad on a throne, one floor high. Inside the _blo.'bur-s_ ("side _lha.khang-s_") in the four directions [of the room in which the main statue is placed] and to the right and left [of the same statue] are the root deities of the Rigs.Inga classes 93 as well as a one-floor high _sGo.mang mchod.rten_. (f.54b) In the central [room] is a _mchod.bshams_ 94 with [the families of] the _pad.ma_ ("lotus"), _khor.lo_ ("wheel"), _nor.bu_ ("jewel") and _rdo.rje_ [in relief], as large as the previous ones, in the respective directions. The _blo.'bur-s_ [contain], as high-relief works protruding from the walls ( _logs.debs_ ), the fifty-four high-relief statues of the deities of the Rigs.Inga and of the deities of the Kun.tu rig.pa (i.e. _Kun.rig_), slightly smaller than life-size, with minor damage to their crown ornaments, hands, feet and implements, placed on relief-work lotuses. In fire rat (1936), during a renovation, new _stod.lhe_, _smad.lhe_

92. _rGya.tar_ is a term which escapes my understanding. It may refer to a measurement and is perhaps used in _rGya_ (possibly India?).

93. Reference to the deities of the Five Thatha-gata families being in the four directions and to the right and left of the rNam.par snang mdzad statue has to be read in the sense that the deities of the rNam.par snang mdzad cycle were to the right and left of the main statue, while the other four Thatha-gata families were placed inside the blo.'bur-s in the four directions.

94. This could refer to a sort of altar, but from the context it becomes clear that it is the well known tridimensional mandala or _blo bsangs skyi_. _khor_ is the _lha khang_ often mentioned by the Tho.ling notables in their accounts of the _gtsug lag khang_."
and \textit{nang.ldan} ("collar garment, lower garment and lining") made with shawls in multicoloured silk, coarsely painted in relief (\textit{gzan.gru tshos.tshog}), altogether fifty-four; the scarf around the ears (\textit{inyan.shal}) of the main image made of white silk shawl; one ceiling cover of blue cotton with thread decorations (\textit{kha.ri}); four pillar covers in red \textit{pho.la.li} [cloth], decorated, on the upper part, with four \textit{kyi.sna-s} ("dog nose", i.e. an intricately painted motif) [and] \textit{rgya.lcags (?)}, [were added]."

The \textit{rten.deb} continues with the classification of other \textit{lha.khang-s}, disregarding whether they are part of the \textit{gtsug.lag.khang} or located elsewhere.

\textbf{Mani lha.khang (\textit{rten.deb f.55a})}:

"A life-size statue of \textit{rje rin.po.che} [Tsong.kha.pa] in medicinal clay; an old \textit{thang.ka} of Thugs.rje.chen.po; a \textit{sa.gdung} ("an earthen reliquary") \textit{byang.chub mchod.rten} almost one floor high; a \textit{mani dung.bskor} ("prayer wheel"), one floor high, in red copper, with [bands] of yellow brass on top, in the middle and at the bottom and with a bell [are the main objects in this \textit{lha.khang}]."

\textbf{bSrung.ma.khang (\textit{rten.deb f.61a-f.61b})}:

"[Here] is a mural of \textit{bstan.srung rDo.rje che.mo} (sic for \textit{rDo.rje che.mo}) with her two attendants. The main image is a \textit{zhal.thang} (i.e. a \textit{thang.ka}) of \textit{lHa.mo}, with a veil and frame. To the right and left stand two \textit{rten.mdung-s} ("spears") with seals; a beautiful gilt copper statue of Thub.dbang rdor.gdan on a lotus pedestal, one \textit{tho} and two \textit{gsor} high; thirty-five statues of the \textit{bshegs.pa} (sic for \textit{bshegs.pa}, i.e. "the Buddha-s of Confession") made of the five precious metals, on a lotus pedestal and with a shining \textit{chakra}, one \textit{tho} high; a gilt copper statue of Four-Armed \textit{mGon.po} on a lotus pedestal, one \textit{tho} and four \textit{gsor} high, with the tops of the implements in the right and left hands missing; a gilt copper statue of Dam.can chos.rgyal on a lotus pedestal, two \textit{tho} high, which is magnificent; a gilt copper statue of Tsha.mundi, one \textit{tho} high, which is magnificent; a \textit{kbro.li} statue of Four-Armed \textit{bsPyan.ras.gzigs} on a lotus pedestal, one of its left hands missing, four \textit{gsor} high; two statues of Dzam.bha.lha (spelt as), [one in] \textit{li} [and one in] brass, two \textit{gsor} high; (f.61b) a \textit{pad.sprungs} \textit{mchod.rten} on a base, made of \textit{kbro}, a little less than eight \textit{gsor} high; a medicinal clay statue of \textit{yi.dam dPa’.gcig} (i.e. \textit{rDo.rje} 'Jigs.byed in the ekavira form), the size of an arrow in height. To its left is the statue of Six-Armed \textit{mGon.po}, the same size as the one above. The statue of Chos.rgyal, the size of an arrow in height; the statue of Four-Armed \textit{mGon.po} and six old \textit{thang.ka-s} with the complete cycle of the \textit{bstan.srung-s} ("protectors of the teachings"); a \textit{bsKangs.rdzas} \textit{thang.ka} [and] a \textit{bla.med.kyi bum.pa} ("Anuttara yoga initiation vase") with seal [are kept here]."

\textbf{rGyal.khang (\textit{rten.deb f.68a-f.68b})}:

"[The main images are] the statue of a \textit{bla.ma} in a painted cabinet with glass, a medicinal clay statue of rgyal.chen Shug.ldan (sic for Shugs.ldan), over one \textit{kbru} in size, with no damage and kept in a cabinet painted with a motif of skulls. To the latter's right and left is a motif of water lotuses. In the centre [of the panels] is the depiction of the face of a wrathful deity; [another] statue of Shugs.ldan in a box but without the lion throne, which was offered by \textit{A.chen mTsham.pa}; a
which is magnificent; a gilt copper statue of a mould for a statue; an old Tsong.kha.pa small gilt copper images of statues. It is damaged. Its robe is yellow and it wears a sun and moon missing; a mask of gold or silver on dark paper are also an old Thang.kha.pa. Moreover, there is a life-size statue of bzang.po, Mahakala in his crow-faced form) and the portrait of dMag.gzor.ma, dMag.gzor.ma, of dpa’.gcig armed prayers, a statue of mGon.dkar, three tho and nine gosor high; a statue of Six-Armed mGon.po; a statue of Dam.can chos.rgyal, three tho and ten gosor high; a thang.kha of Shugs.ldan gtsa.‘khor, with a cotton frame and a veil”.

Bla.brang mgon.khang (rtен.deb f.75a-f.75b):

“The main image is a one-floor high statue in medicinal clay of Jigs.byed dpa’ gcig (Jigs.byed “ekavira”, or solitary form without yum). To its right and left are the statues in clay of D.o.rje.chang, gSang.du (sic for gSang.dus), the cycle of gNod.swyin Dam.can chos.rgyal, the Four and Six-Armed mGon.po, dMag.gzor.ma, rDo.rje che.mo (sic for chen.mo), Bya.rog gdong.can (i.e. Mahakala in his crow-faced form) and the portrait of lo.chen [Rin.chen bzang.po], the latter made of medicinal clay and in flowing robes. All of them are life-size. Moreover, there is a life-size statue of Ngag.dbang grags.pa wearing a [monastic] robe and a pandi.ta hat. [There is also] a brass statue of rje Tsong.kha.pa with the lotus stems made of khro.li (“mercurial bell metal” or “bronce”), three tho and seven and a half sor in height. Its book implement is damaged. Its robe is yellow and [it] wears a pandi.ta hat. [Other] statues [are those] of Mar.me.mdzad on a lotus pedestal, over three tho in height; the statues of mnga’.bdag bSod.nams.rse, with slightly damaged fingers and bearing an inscription, and of mnga’.bdag Khri.sde (sic) with an inscription95; six large and small gilt copper images of sTon.pa (i.e. Shakayamuni); two images of bla.mas-s; (f.75b) rDo.rje.chang; rDor[rje] sens[.pa] and ’Jam.dbyangs, altogether three statues”.

mKhan.po rin.po.che’i gzims.chung (rtен.deb f.75b):

“[The main images are] the copper gilt statue of sTon.pa (i.e. Shakya.mu.ne) with those of Byams.pa and ’Jam.dbyangs to its right and left, with lotus pedestals and a shining chakra, two tho and two gosor in height, and wearing beautiful brocade robes. The urna-s have a turquoise stone as large as a pea; a list statue of rje on a lotus pedestal, one tho and seven gosor high, with a small hole in its knee, which is magnificent; a gilt copper statue of Byams.pa sitting on a lotus pedestal in Western posture, one tho and seven gosor high, with a chakra and robes. [There are also] an old thang.kha of the Thousand Buddha-s with a small fire spot; an old thang.kha of mGon.[.po]; a thang.kha of ’Jigs.byed. Thirteen books, written in gold or silver on dark paper (ngo.chos) as well as in black ink on white paper (skya.chos), some folios of which are missing, with wooden book covers (gleg.shing), are kept on shelves. A gilt copper gdung.rten, over one tho in height, its sun and moon missing; a mask of dGra.lha; two large moulds for tsha.tsha and a [mould] for a statue; an old bsKangs.rdzas thang.kha [are kept here]...”.

95. The presence of the statue of mnga’.bdag bSod.nams.rse in Bla.brang mgon.khang is concrete proof that the genealogy of Gu ge found in mNga’.bs ras rgyal ras is accurate, or at least in the portion referring to this king, since it includes him in the lineage of the kings of Gu ge who ruled from around the end of the 11th century immediately after the great early dynasty was ousted. The name mnga’.bdag Khri.sde (sic for Khri.id, a peculiarity often found in works from West Tibet) of the other statue does not appear in the royal genealogies of West Tibet in the texts available at present, unless he is the Pu.hrang king ghyua khris.id, the son of dPal.mgon.id, who both ruled in the 14th century (Vitali The Kingdoms of Gu ge Pu.hrang p. 458-460), but this is unlikely.
lha.khang 'Jig.rten.brgyans (rten.deb f.80a):

"The main image is the medicinal clay statue of Thub.dbang, one-floor high, with the sMan.bla bde.gshegs.brgyad to its right and left, all three [groups of images] (i.e. the central one and the two groups at the sides) wearing robes; [also here are] the two statues of sGrol.dkar and [sGrol.]ljang, in medicinal clay; the statue of bCu.gcig.zhal; as sgo.brung's ("door guardians") a large Chos.rgyal with hand implements on either side of the door; a byang.chub mchod.rten made of medicinal clay...".

'Bri.zur dge.slong.bZang.po'i mchod.khang (rten.deb f.83a-f.83a):

"The main images are the over life-size medicinal clay statue of Thugs.rje chen.po according to the system of dPal.mo (i.e. dge.slong.ma dPal.mo, the well known exponent of the Thugs.rje chen.po tradition. On her see below p.101); [which is a statue of] Phyag.stong spyan.stong ("Thousand-Armed and Thousand-Eyed Avalokiteshvara") without damage; a Thugs.rje chen.po tshogs.zhing ("genealogical tree"), with a fabric frame and veil; a thang.ka of bDe.can zbing.bkod (Sukavari) with a fabric frame and veil; a dGa'.ldan lha.brgya tshogs.zhing ("genealogical tree of the deities of dGa'.ldan") with a fabric frame and veil; a skyabs. 'gro ("taking refuge") tshogs.zhing, with a fabric frame and veil; a thang.ka of dPal mGon bdun.bcu rtsa.Inga (i.e. Ma.ha.kal and the assembly of seventy-four deities) with a fabric frame and veil; on book shelves, one volume of brGyad.stong.pa, one volume of gSer.od, one volume of sNgags.rims chen.mo with book covers, wrappers and ties [are kept here]...".

Byams.khang (rten.deb f.83b-f.84a):96

"The medicinal clay statue of Byams.pa seated in Western posture, one-floor high [is the main image]. [There are also] one table with carvings and three book covers depicting Sangs.rgyas and Byang.sems in relief and decorated with gold leaves".

gSer.khang (rten.deb f.85a):

"The core [structure of the] gSer.khang is tiered in four floors. At the base (‘og ma, lit. "the lowest level"), the successive births of Sangs.rgyas [and his] paradieses are depicted. On the three upper floors, the murals of the rGyud.sde.bzhi dkyil.khor-s and [their] assembly of deities have been painted with the gold water of the 'Dzam.bu.gling river. The four doors (i.e. the door of each floor) open to the east. Roundels with flames [and] syllables (gzungs sic for gzungs) are executed on the doors. An excellent banner in gilt copper [completes] the rgya.phibs ("pagoda roof") above the brick building. Since damage by water leakages (chub.skyon) and minor cracks (gas) [occurred] in this area [of the building], the successive sku.gnyer-s must take special care of it. The tenth day of the third month of fire ox (1937)".

96 This is the lha.khang outside the brGya.rtsa and should not be confused with the two lha.khang-s by the same name within the brGya.rtsa.
Section Two

Critical considerations concerning textual evidence

The inventories are divided into sections containing groups of lha.khang-s. Some of these sections seem to have been subdivided chronologically since their inventory was undertaken during different months of fire ox 1937. Others are clustered together since their inventories were completed in the same day of the same month. Hence, the prevailing structure of the rten.deb does not follow a criterion based on the sequence of lha.khang-s according to the physical location of the temples. The structural organization of the lha.khang-s in the rten.deb is as follows:

'du.khang 'Dzam.gling.brgyan
inventory completed on the twenty-first day of the ninth month of fire ox 1937 (f.24a-f.24b).

brGya.rtsa lho.brgyud (ITung.bshags lha.khang, lha.khang bKra.shis 'Od.'bar, Thugs.rje lha.khang, sGrol.ma lha.khang, rDo.rje 'Jigs.byed lha.khang, sMan.lha.khang, rGyal.ba Rigs.inga'i lha.khang, Byams.khang, Phyag.rdor lha.khang)
inventories completed on the twenty-first day of the ninth month of fire ox 1937 (f.41a).

Part of brGya.rtsa byang.ma (Bla.ma lha.khang, 'Jigs.brgyad lha.khang, gSung.chos lha.khang) plus some lha.khang-s outside it ('du.khang 'Dzam.gling.brgyan, 'du.khang Thu.dbang bDud.dul.ma, rNam.par snang.mdzad lha.khang, Mani lha.khang)
inventories completed on the twenty-ninth day of the second month of fire ox 1937 (f.55b).

bSrung.ma.khang
inventory completed on the twenty-first day of the ninth month of fire ox 1937 (f.64b).
rGyal.khang  
inventory completed on the twenty-first day of the ninth month of fire ox 1937 (f.72a).

Bla.brang mgon.khang and mKhan.po rin.po.che'i gzims.chung  
inventories completed on the twenty-first day of the ninth month of fire ox 1937 (f.77a).

Iha.khang 'Jig.brten.rgyan  
inventory completed on the twenty-first day of the ninth month of fire ox 1937 (f.80b).

'Bri.zur dge.slong bZang.po'i mchod.khang and Byams.khang  
inventories completed on the twenty-ninth day of the second month of fire ox 1937 (f.84a).

gSer.khang  
inventory completed on the tenth day of the third month of fire ox 1937 (f.85a).

Another criterion adopted in the structure of the rten.deb, apart from chronology, is that the metal and the clay statues in the temple complex are classified separately, as in the case of the rGyal.ba Rigs.lnga'i lha.khang, which contained both metal alloy and clay statues. Moreover, the existence of the 'Jigs.byed lha.khang, for instance, which is remembered by all the Tho.ling elders as one of the temples of the brGya.rtsa, is only hinted at in the rten.deb when the clay statues inventories mention the one storey-high stucco statue of rDo.rje 'Jigs.byed, which was the main image of this lha.khang. 

Given that not all the lha.khang-s of the brGya.rtsa contained clay or metal statues, the inventories do not list the lha.khang-s of the brGya.rtsa in their actual sequence, but normally first exhaust the lha.khang-s with statues in various types of metal alloy and then those with clay statues. Finally, their location in the complex according to the circumambulation in the Buddhist processional order (i.e. clockwise) is the last criterion adopted in the rten.deb to introduce those lha.khang-s which were inventoried together and contained images in the same material.

The inventories of the me.glang rten.deb contain some omissions and inconsistencies, as will become apparent below. They start from the south-east of the complex where the 'du.khang 'Dzam.gling.brgyan is still found. They proceed from the brGya.rtsa lho.brgyud ("southern wing") and then the brGya.rtsa byang.ma ("northern wing") (see immediately below for an assessment of these wings of the main temple of Tho.ling), interrupting the inventory of its lha.khang-s to deal with the central nucleus of the complex. Subsequently, they resume the classification of the northern wing and go on with the next temple on the northern side of the Tho.ling complex, which is the lHa.khang 'Jig.brten.rgyan (exactly where the lHa.khang dkar.po still stands, which is another coincidence indicating that these are different names for the same temple). The inventories continue the catalogue of the religious properties of other temples and come to an end with a description of the gSer.khang, which is the lha.khang farthest from the dPal.dpe.med lhun.grub.pa or its external enclosure of lha.khang-s known as brGya.rtsa on its distant north-east.
The plan of the dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa’s gtsug.lag.khang, which existed until the time of its destruction during the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), had a central core made by a cruciform structure containing a central area to which four lha.khang were attached as arms in the four directions. This sacred nucleus was surrounded by an enclosure of lha.khang-s on all four sides in the shape of the citadel of the mandala (see pl.vii). This is the reason why Tho.ling came to be recognized by Tibetan tradition as a chos.skor. The enclosure of lha.khang-s is called brGya.rtsa, a name which is not applied to the central section of the temple as wrongly assumed by a Western art historian (Luczanits “A Note on Tholing Monastery”, Orientations June 1996) and therefore did not refer to the entire main temple of Tho.ling. As is amply shown by the rten.deb, the brGya.rtsa enclosure is divided into brGya.rtsa lho.brgyud and brGya.rtsa byang.ma or respectively “the southern and northern wings of the brGya.rtsa”97. Each wing consisted of three major lha.khang-s and six minor lha.khang-s, altogether nine lha.khang-s. Two major lha.khang-s were located at the extremities of the wing, the third in its centre. Hence, the brGya.rtsa numbered a grand total of eighteen lha.khang-s before its destruction (but originally numbering twenty, see below p.125)98.

Four mchod.rten-s are found in the four intermediate directions, surmounting the external wall of the brGya.rtsa, which is also the boundary wall of the main temple of Tho.ling. They are of different types: the south-eastern, the south-western and the north-western are mchod.rten bka.‘ris shis sgo.mang (with doors arranged in two rows), while the north-eastern is a lha.bab mchod.rten (“stupa with stairs”) (for sketches of the gtsug.lag.khang’s interior and exterior see respectively pl.vii and pl.iv).

Inconsistencies in the inventories, which become apparent in a critical analysis of the rten.deb without the need for an inspection of the monument, amount to a few yet significant weaknesses.

The listing of the lha.khang-s contained in the surviving 1937 rten.deb is not exhaustive of all the chapels composing the brGya.rtsa.

1. The enumeration of the lha.khang-s in the brGya.rtsa lho.brgyud is complete, although not in the order in which they were physically located in the complex. This is evident from the mention of the assembly hall known as ‘du.khang Thub.dbang bDud.’dul.ma, found at the entrance of the brGya.rtsa enclosure and normally included in the brGya.rtsa lho.brgyud, which is illogically positioned among the lha.khang-s of the brGya.rtsa byang.ma.

2. A number of lha.khang-s are missing from the inventories of the 1937 rten.deb for the brGya.rtsa byang.ma. In fact, four of its lha.khang-s are not inventoried in the extant copy of the rten.deb99.

3. The sequence of the lha.khang-s in the brGya.rtsa byang.ma is interrupted by the mention of the religious objects kept in the rNam.par snang/mdzad lha.khang (i.e. the core of the temple). Immediately after the rNam.par snang/mdzad lha.khang, the Mani lha.khang is inventoried, which was outside the dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa/brGya.rtsa complex. The treatment of the lha.khang-s in the brGya.rtsa resumes with the bSrung.ma lha.khang, which was part of the brGya.rtsa lho.brgyud, and is followed by the rGyal.khang, which was outside it. From this point on, the holy rooms listed in the inventories together with their belongings are located outside the dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa complex.

97. The name dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa for the main temple of Tho ling, founded by Ye.shes‘od, is not used at present. The elders are adamant in saying that the name brGya.rtsa refers only to the sacred precinct of lha.khang around the rNam.snang lha.khang and not to the latter, which was the nucleus of the temple. The term brGya.rtsa, standing for a large amount of anything, applies well to the conspicuous number of lha.khang-s composing the outer enclosure around the dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa.

98. Tucci (Cronaca della Missione Scientifica Tucci nel Tibet Occidentale p.316) says that the brGya.rtsa contained twenty temples. This was possibly based on the supposition that the temple had a symmetrical number of lha.khang-s on the four sides of the building. As will be shown below in the text (p.125), two lha.khang-s were incorporated in the ‘du.khang bDud.’dul.ma, which reduced the number of the lha.khang-s to eighteen. There is no ready explanation for this belief of Tucci’s: either he calculated them incorrectly or, as is probable, was not allowed access to all of them and assumed, for reason of symmetry, that there were twenty.

99. A religious object of remarkable importance, recorded in the inventories as one of the main thang ka-s, was a gos.sku (i.e. a thang ka for outdoor display), which, according to the Tho.ling elders, was unrolled on a single occasion during the year (see below p.116). It was three-storey high and its main image depicted ‘Gyal ba Seng.ge nga.ro (“Shakyamuni, the Lion’s Roar”)’. It was kept in the ‘du.khang Odzam gling gnyan (rten.deb I 66) but did not survive the destruction of Tho.ling’s religious objects. The way this gos.sku is inventoried in the rten.deb does not help to identify it manifestly as the most important thang ka for display outdoors. It rather communicates, at a first glance, the false notion that it has been omitted from the document.
A hypothesis for the absence of some lha.khang-s of the brGya.rtsa byang.ma from the 1937 inventory is that they may have been recorded in some previous inventory and therefore, if the properties did not undergo changes in the meantime, the previous records must have remained valid. It would not be surprising to find that these lha.khang-s of the brGya.rtsa byang.ma missing from the 1937 rten.deb were included instead in one of the rten.deb-s made in 1907, 1927 and 1932. One lha.khang omitted in the 1937 rten.deb is the Tshe.dpag.med lha.khang, whose existence is confirmed by the elders of Tho.ling. This lha.khang is documented by the pictures in the Tucci Archives (accession numbers 6097/11, 6097/12 and 6097/13). The existence of individual inventories shows that some temples of Tho.ling were registered separately and therefore were not included in the rten.deb of fire ox 1937. An example is provided by the inventory of the objects of gNas.bcu lha.khang, whose partial translation is given in Appendix Four.

Otherwise some lha.khang-s may have been omitted from the inventories because they had been deserted in the meantime, but this hypothesis goes against the statement of the Tho.ling elders who say that religious practice was performed in all the lha.khang-s that existed in Tho.ling during their youth.

Hence, the way in which the lha.khang-s composing the dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa'i gtsug.lag.khang are introduced in the rten.deb does not follow the sequence of their physical location in the complex when one tours them processionally.

This contradiction is confirmed after comparing the literary outline of these lha.khang-s contained in the rten.deb with the planimetry of the complex. In order to assess the complex in its entirety, one must supplement the information provided by the rten.deb with monumental evidence which is not easily available, given the dilapidated condition of Tho.ling at present. As will be shown in the following, fortunately this is not an impossible exercise, but it might have become hopeless had the task of symbolically reconstructing the temple complex been delayed any longer, in which case the present generation of Tho.ling elders would have disappeared (see Section Three immediately below for an analysis of how literary evidence combines with monumental evidence).
PLATE V
The monastery of Tho.ling
(a tentative reconstruction)

Plan by Bianca Visconti and Atelier Golok

1. gTsuglag khang
2. Rn cher bzang po’i gzims chung ('Bri Hyur dge slong rdo rje chung)
3. gsumo choa ba
4. Byams khang
5. gNas bcu lha khang
6. Dar shing
7. Bka brang
8. gTres khang
9. mgon dga'
10. lha khang dkar po
11. Dar shing
12. 'Bri g yag
13. gNyer zur dge slong lha skyahts
14. Do gsham
15. Gwa tshang
16. sDug pa
17. Rong stod
18. gGyal khang
19. 'Du khang
20. gNye tshang
21. sPyi khang
22. Ma ni lha khang
23. Fol mo'i khang
24. gDung ren ring mo
Section Three

A classification of the Tho.ling temples based on both textual and oral evidence

The temples of Tho.ling according to oral accounts concerning the monumental conception of the temple complex, gathered in 1997, can be finally classified as follows:

Tho.ling dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa'i gtsug.lag.khang, composed of

rNam[.par] snang[.mdzad] lha.khang with four glo 'bur-s (or "side chapels"):
Mi.skyod.ba (east)
Rin.'byung (south)
'Od dpag.med (west)
Don.yod grub.pa (north)

brGya.rtsa lho.brgyud:
1. 'du.khang Thub.dbang bDud.'dul.ma
2. 'Jigs.byed lha.khang
3. lTung.bshags lha.khang
4. lha.khang bKra.shis 'od.'bar
5. sMan.lha.khang
6. Thugs.rje lha.khang
7. sGrol.ma lha.khang
8. rGyal.ba Rigs.Inga'i lha.khang
9. bSrung.ma lha.khang

brGya.rtsa byang.ma (some lha.khang-s which are missing in the 1937 rten.deb are here supplemented with the help of the accounts of the Tho.ling elders):
1. Byams.khang
2. Phyag.rdor lha.khang
3. Byams.pa ngal.gso lha.khang ("Sitting Byams.pa lha.khang").
4. Bla.ma lha.khang

100 A preliminary monumental reconstruction was attempted in 1996 in a series of meetings with the elders of Tho.ling. An outline of those findings follows, which is very close to the final reconstruction of 1997. This indicates that there was ample and consistent convergence of opinions among them. The temples of Tho.ling were classified at that time as:
rNam[.par] snang[.mdzad] lha.khang with four glo 'bur-s (or "side chapels"):
Mi.skyod.ba (east)
Rin.'byung (south)
'Od dpag.med (west)
Don.yod grub.pa (north)

brGya.rtsa lho.brgyud:
1. lha.khang Thub.dbang bDud.'dul.ma
2. 'Jigs.byed lha.khang
3. lTung.bshags lha.khang
4. lha.khang bKra.shis 'od.'bar
5. sMan.lha.khang
6. Thugs.rje lha.khang
7. sGrol.ma lha.khang
8. rGyal.ba Rigs.Inga'i lha.khang
9. bSrung.ma lha.khang

brGya.rtsa byang.ma:
1. Byams.khang
2. Phyag.rdor lha.khang
3. Yum.chen mo lha.khang
4. Bla.ma lha.khang
5. Byams.pa ngal.gso ("Sitting Byams.pa") lha.khang
6. Tshe dpag.med lha.khang
7. 'Jigs.brgyad lha.khang
8. gSung.chos lha.khang
9. 'Jam dbvangs lha.khang

Others:
Byams.khang (north)
gNas.bcu lha.khang (north)
Rin.chen bzung po'i gzhims.chung, which became dge.slong 'Brzur mchod.khang (north-west)
gSung.chos ra.ba (north-west)
lha.khang gSar.kar.po otherwise known as lha.khang 'Jig bsten.rgyan (north-east)
gSer.khang (north-east)
Bla.brang (north-east) containing: mgon.khang
mkhan po rin po che'i gzhims.chung 'du.khang 'Dzam.gling brygan otherwise known as 'du.khang Thub.dbang Ghande.ma (south-east)
rGyal.khang (south-east)
Mani lha.khang (south)
(for a grand total of thirty-four lha.khang-s plus several mchod rten-s)
5. Yum.chen.mo lha.khang
6. Tshe.dpag.med lha.khang
7. 'Jigs.brgyad lha.khang
8. gSung.chos lha.khang
9. 'Jam.dbyangs lha.khang

These lha.khang-s composed the brGya.rtsa, to which a little wooden structure sustaining the rgya.phibs of the rNam.snang lha.khang has to be added. The Tho.ling elders say that it contained embalmed animals.

Others

Rin.chen bzang.po'i gzims.chung, which became the dge.slong 'Bri.zur
mcchod.khang
gSung.chos ra.ba
Byams.khang
gNas.bcu lha.khang
lHa.khang dKar.po otherwise known as lha.khang 'Jig.brten.rgyan
gSer.khang
Bla.brang containing:
  Bla.brang mgon.khang
  mKhan.po rin.po.che'i gzims.chung
  'du.khang 'Dzam.gling.brgyana otherwise known as 'du.khang Thub.dbang
  Ghande.ma
rGyal.khang
Mani lha.khang
(for a grand total of thirty-four lha.khang-s plus several mchod.rten-s)

By cross-checking the indications from literature and oral information with monumental evidence, the temple complex can be ideally reconstructed with a fair degree of accuracy. The Tho.ling complex is introduced here starting with the major temple, followed by the other religious buildings. The way the lha.khang-s of the dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa are catalogued is in accordance to the processional circumambulation of the temple. The same processional order is respected for the rest of the sacred edifices.

DPal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa'i gtsug.lag.khang

brGya.rtsa lho.brgyud
("the south side of the dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa")

1. 'du.khang Thub.dbang bDud.'dul.ma

This is the main 'du.khang at the entrance of the dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa, which is considered to be part of the brGya.rtsa lho.brgyud. The main image was a medicinal clay statue of Thub.dbang bDud.'dul.ma over one floor high flanked by the life-size clay statues of Byams.pa and 'Jam.dbyangs, and by the larger than life-size clay statues of the Nyan.thos-s and Rang.rgyal-s. To the right and left of the door were huge clay statues of Mi.gyo.ba and rTa.mgrin. Other clay statues were those of 'Jam.dbyangs with the sword, Tshe.dpag.med, images of bla.ma-s, the cycle of Byams.pa chos.'khor.ma flanked by those of Byam.pa (sic for Byams.pa?)
and 'Jam.dbyangs, the Nye.ba.'i sras.bdun, Ngag.dbang ye.shes and Yum.chen.mo, all life-size.

At this stage the processional circumambulation was interrupted in order to enter the central lha.khang of the temple.

rNam[.par] snang[.mdzad] lha.khang
The main image was a medicinal clay statue of rNam.par snang.mdzad, one floor high, together with the root deities of the Rigs.Inga and a sgo.mang mchod.rten, all one floor high. A tridimensional representation (blo.sangs dkyil.khor) of the families of the deities of pad.ma, khor.lo, nor.bu, rdo.rje (i.e. the cycles of the other four Tathagata-s) in relief work covered the rest of the walls. In the side lha.khang-s, opening to the four directions, the complete cycle of life-size stucco images of the other deities of the Rigs.Inga (Mi.skyod.ba in the east, Rin.'byung in the south, 'Od.dpag.med in the west, Don.yod grub.pa in the north) and the Kun.tu rig.pa (i.e. Kun.rig) gods were placed.

2. 'Jigs.byed lha.khang
A clay statue of 'Jigs.byed dpal.bo.gcig ("ekavira"), one floor high, was the main image of this lha.khang, together with the statues of Four Armed sPyan.ras.gzigs and Chos.rgyal Ma.he gdong.can. The stairs leading to the roof of the building, which, in turn, brought one to the rgya.phibs ("the pagoda roof"), were located in front of the entrance of this lha.khang.

3. 'lTung.bshags lha.khang
The main image was a gilt copper statue of 'Jam.dbyangs ga'u.pa ("wearing a gau"), which previously was in the 'du.khang 'Dzam.gling.brgyan. Some elders hold that this lha.khang was also named A.tsa.ra lha.khang, since it contained the robe of an a.tsa.ra, whom I am unable to identify, for 'cham.

4. lha.khang bkra.shis 'od.'bar
The main image was a gilt copper statue of Jo.bo bkra.shis 'od.'bar.ma. Other receptacles were six gilt copper images of Thub.dbang and a number of similar statues in various smaller sizes, as well as a gilt copper gdung.rten ("reliquary stupa").

5. sMan.blags lha.khang
The main image was a large size Thub.dbang made of medicinal clay flanked by the life-size statues of the sMan.lha (spelt as) sde.gshegs.brgyad.

6. Thugs.rje lha.khang
The main image was a gilt copper statue of bcu.gcig.zhal, said to have been made by Sangs.rgyas 'Od.srung (is this a sign that it was of greatest antiquity?), with a golden torana. Another important image was a rdzi.khyim statue of rgyal.tshab Mi.pham mgon.po in the western posture and various others, such as Thub.dbang, the gNas.brtan bcu.drug and the rGyal.chen sde.bzhi.

7. sGrol.ma lha.khang
The main images were the gilt copper statues of White and Green sGrol.ma. Other important images were statues of sGrol.ma, gSang.dus yab.yum, rDo.rje.'chang, etc., and silver statues of rNam.snang and Four Armed sPyan.ras.gzigs inside a cabinet.
8. Rigs lnga’i lha.khang

The main images were the life-size statues of the rGyal.ba Rigs lnga in clay. Other images were a li.dmar statue of rNam.par snang.mdzad, flanked by statues of Thub.dbang; a li.dmar Thub.dbang; a li s’yan.ras.gzigs Kha.sar.pa.ni; a li.ser Kha.sar.pa.ni; a li s’yan.ras.gzigs; a li mnga’i bdag bSod.nams rtse with a throne (see above p.75); a mdo.li Byams.pa “which bestowed protection from the waters” and a li.ser lha. ’bab mchod.ten.

9. bSrung.ma.khang

The main image is a thang.ka of the protector of the teachings rDo.rje chen.mo with her retinue 101, which is a form of lHa.mo. On its right and left were sten.mdung-s (“spears”). A statue of Chos.rgyal (the size of an arrow) was also placed in this lha.khang.

At the back of Srung.ma.khang was a rose tree. Concerning this tree, a legend holds that two sisters from Srib.skyes (this is the place in Gu.ge Rong.chung with the well known pass by the same name), known as the Srib.skyes bu.mo spun.gnyis, appeared and planted here their walking sticks, which were both made of a shaft of rose tree, and the rose tree sprouted from these. The two sisters disappeared vanishing in what became the Srung.ma.khang. They are considered to have been the transformations of srung.ma rDo.rje chen.mo. This tree is the bla.shing (“soul tree”) of the srung.ma.

Here it has to be noted that in Zhang.zhung srid.pai’i gre.gyur (p.32-33), a source dealing with the popular traditions of West Tibet, the Hreb.skyyid (spelt as) bu.mo spun.gsum rather than the bu.mo spun.gnyis are mentioned. This text narrates the legend of their coming to Tho.ling.

Zhang.zhung srid.pai’i gre.gyur (p.32-33) reads: “There was a big wild rose soul-tree (lha.shing sic for bla.shing) to the south side of Gu.ge mTho.ling dgon lha.khang brGya.rtsa in mNga’ris rTsa.mda’.rdzong. This was an unusually large wild rose tree, larger than any other. Many groups of local lay people and monks used to circumambulate and prostrate to it. Annually, when irrigation of the fields begins, the first bit of water is made to flow to this wild rose tree. Likewise, what is the reason for so much devotion and interest? In antiquity, in the place known as Hreb.skyyid (sic Hrib.skyyed) were stod.smad.bar settlements, these three, with some one hundred families. In this area also were many people (sic). This land is not too elevated, is warm and the wind blows mildly. Its crops are abundant. Each year it produces two crops.

In antiquity, in this land were three sisters. The youngest (p.33) advised and convinced [the other sisters]. They set out on their way singing a rgyang.glu (“song sung while leaving”) in accordance with their conversation that there was a reason to go and see mTho.ling dgon.pa and give their prayers. Compassion had grown in them to obtain enlightenment for the six classes of existence since people folded their two hands and shivered with their hair straightening up in faith for the triple door, the great dPé.med lhun.gyis grub.pa’i gtsug.lag.khang and the excellent la.tsa.ba, the omniscient Rin.chen bzang.po, the ornament of the crown of the masters of the Snowland. Then, when they arrived at the place at some four kilometres [from their dwelling place], which is a plain ground known as Glang.thang.kha, the eldest sister had to go back from this place due to an obstruction. [The place] is known as Glang.shu thang.kha (“the plain of the miserable ox”), bearing punishment (la.yog.can). It is said that it is from this place that the eldest sister had to go back, [while] the two younger sisters proceeded on.

Subsequently, coming up, when they arrived at the top of the high pass Shing.rang, as the middle sister also had an obstruction, she had to go back. [The
place] is known as Shing.rang pass, bearing punishment (la.yog.can). The elder [of the younger] sisters herself, since she thought about nothing else than the wish to fulfill the need of going to mTho.ling dgon.pa, by using a walking stick made of a wild rose tree and by carrying melted butter inside a brass vessel on her back, she went on [with the youngest sister]. Since at last they arrived at mTho.ling dgon.pa, they sang a song: "We take refuge in the triple jewel. Prostrating kyed kyed kyed we prostrate thrice. May the defilements of bad karma be cleansed. Prostrating kur kur kur we prostrate thrice. May the obstructions created by negative accidents be removed. Doing this well or not, we prostrate thrice. May the six classes of existence obtain enlightenment. We forgot in Byang a small piece of yellow butter made of 'bri [milk]. We forgot in Rong white butter made of goat milk. We have a brass vessel full of melted butter. We each have a wild rose tree (p.33) walking stick which stands up [by itself] (key). May these words be beneficial for the happiness of all the sentient beings of the three worlds. May they be free from suffering". Since this prayer was excellently offered, they (i.e. the two sisters) disappeared [from Tho.ling] like a rainbow in the sky. However, following their disappearance, the walking sticks held in their hands were found planted [in the soil] in the south of mTho.ling dgon.pa. The wild rose walking sticks, which had been not only seen but also recognized as such, miraculously started to grow leaves one by one. People, moved by great faith, introduced the custom of prostrating to and circumambulating [the wild rose tree]".

mNga.ris skor.gyum.gyi lo.rgyus bel.gtum (p.247 line 22-p.248 line 3) says that the main images of bSrung.ma.khang were a one floor high statue in clay of rDo.rje 'Jigs.byed, a gilt copper life-size statue of Chos.rgyal yab.yum, and a life-size statue in clay of rDo.rje chen.mo, but this statement does not find confirmation in the inventory of this lha.khang found in the 1937 rten.deb and in the accounts of the Tho.ling elders. However, from the fact that, in antiquity, Rin.chen bzang.po installed here an image of rDo.rje chen.mo one can assume that the statue of this deity was lost at an unspecified date.

brGya.rtsa byang.ma
("the north side of the dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa")

1. Byams.khang
The main image of this lha.khang is described in the rten.deb as a three-floor high standing statue of Byams.pa. Monumental evidence shows, though, that this temple, which was the tallest in the brGya.rtsa enclosure, was some one and a half to two storey high. It seems then the Byams.pa statue in its interior, which has been smashed into pieces, must have had a height close to that of the lha.khang in order to fit into it.

2. Phyag.rdo.rlo lha.khang
The main image was a statue of Phyag.na rdo.rje in medicinal clay (two khrus and one mtho in height). On its right and left were various statues, including those of gTun.po gos.sngon-s, placed over the petals of tridimensional lotus flowers.

3. Yum.chen.mo lha.khang
Its main image was a medicinal clay life-size statue of rje.btsun sGrol.ma. This lha.khang contained a number of small statues (information provided by the Tho.ling elders).
4. Bla.ma lha.khang
The main image was the statue of rje rin.po.che (Tsong.kha.pa), together with a gilt copper statue of rje rin.po.che, another gilt copper statue of rje rin.po.che, li statues of lHo.brag Nam.mkh'a rgyal.mts'han and rje rin.po.che, and a gilt copper statue of Thub.dbang, flanked by Byams.pa and 'Jam.dbyangs, with torana.

5. Byams.pa ngal.gso lha.khang ("the lha.khang of the sitting Byams.pa")
Its main image was an over one floor high statue of Byams.pa sitting on a throne (information provided by the Tho.ling elders).

6. Tshe.dpag.med lha.khang
Its main image was a statue of Tshe.dpag.med over one floor high with the cycle of his deities at his sides (information provided by the Tho.ling elders).

7. 'Jigs.brgyad.khang ("chapel of the eight fears")
The main image was a li.dmar statue of standing 'Jam.dbyangs, a gilt copper statue of Thub.dbang, a Thub.dbang grong.khyer.ma and a li.dmar Byams.pa.

8. gSung.chos lha.khang (i.e. the library of the brGya.rtsa)
187 volumes of 'Dul.ba,' Bum, mDo.sde, Myang.das, brGyad.stong.pa, gSer.od, 'Khor.lo bDe.mchog.rgyud, dBu.ma'i rnam.bshad, the commentary on mNgon.rtags.rgyan as well as fifty-two volumes of Tshad.ma rnam.grel, root and branches, were preserved in this lha.khang together with a group of fifty-three small statues, another of fifty-seven and a third of forty-three.

9. 'Jam.dbyangs lha.khang
Its main images were a statue of 'Jam.dpal.dbyangs, one floor high, as well as some three hundred smaller statues (information provided by the Tho.ling elders).

Temples outside the gtsug.lag.khang

1. Rin.chen bzang.po'i gzims.chung ("residence"), which became the mchod.khang ("prayer room") of Bri.zur dge.slong bZang.po
The main image was a life-size clay statue of Thugs.rje chen.po according to the tradition of dge.slong.ma dPal.mo. Other important images were an over-size statue of Phyag.stong spyan.stong and various thang.kas.

2. gSung.chos ra.ba ("the walled area where religious discourses were usually given")
The throne of lo.chen Rin.chen bzang.po was kept here. On the brick wall at the back of the throne the images of rje yab.sras.gsum (i.e. Tsong.kha.pa, rGyal.tshab.rje and mKhas.grub.rje) were painted.

3. Byams.khang
The main image was a one floor high medicinal clay statue of Byams.pa.

4. gNas.bcu lha.khang
The statue of Thub.pa dbang.po, surrounded by the gNas.brtan bcu.drug, was housed in this temple with four pillars, together with murals of the Buddha-s of the Bhadrakalpa, the history of Sadaprarudita and the kings of sTod. This temple is
not included in the rten.deb, but a separate inventory exists, entitled gNas.bcu lha.khang gi sprod.stong gcig.‘hus.kyi deb, which concerns the statues and other objects kept inside it rather than its wall paintings, as is always the case of these records. The gNas.bcu lha.khang gi rten.deb is published in Appendix Six.

5. Bla.brang mgon.khang
The main image was the one floor high statue in medicinal clay of ‘Jigs.byed dpa.gcig with the life-size statues in clay of rDo.rje.‘chang; gSang.dus; the cycle of Dam.can; Four and Six-Armed mGon.po; dMag.gzor.ma; rDo.rje lHa.mo; Bya.rog gdong.can; Rin.chen bzang.po, made of medicinal clay. Moreover, a life-size statue of Ngag.dbang grags.pa, the statues of mnya’.bdag bsod.nams rtse and mnya’.bdag khri.sde (sic) both with inscriptions were kept in this mgon.khang.

6. mKhan.po rin.po.che’i gzims.chung
A small triad composed of Shakya.mu.ne with Byams.pa and ‘Jam.dbang on his right and left was the most sacred receptacle in this lha.khang. A few thang.kas and a number of books were also preserved here.

7. lha.khang ‘Jig.brten.brgyan102
The main image is a clay statue of Thub.dbang one floor high flanked by those of Od.bsrung and Byams.pa. Other images in clay were two statues of sGro.lkar and sGro.ljang, a BCu.gcig.zhal, a Chos.rgyal on each side as sgo.srung-s, and a one floor high clay byang.chub mchod.rten.

8. gSer.khang
The paradise of Sans.rgyas and his twelve deeds were depicted on the walls of its basement. The murals of rGyud.sde.bzhi dkyil.khor-s were painted on the three upper floors.

9. ‘du.khang ‘Dzam.gling.brgyan
The main image was the medicinal clay statue of Thub.dbang Ghande.ma flanked by those of Od.bsrung and Byams.pa. Among the other monumental statues (some of them cannot be included here since the document, in poor condition, has lines missing in these pages) were those in medicinal clay of bsod.nams rgya.mtsho, rje rin.po.che (Tsong.kha.pa) and another depicting him, Thub.dbang, Tshe.dpag.med, Tr.cu.bKhas.brton, Rin.chen ‘byung.ldan, a one-floor high statue of rje rin.po.che, and a rje rin.po.che of similar size in gilt copper.

Another particularly holy image was the life-size statue of Sang.dar Jo.bo, in gilt copper on a lotus pedestal, which had a reddish turquoise the size of a nail in its urna, a multicoloured rigs.inga and an ivory crown studded with precious stones.

The elders of Tho.ling describe the structure and contents that ‘du.khang ‘Dzam.gling.brgyan had before the change in the political situation of Tibet in a way which is fundamentally similar to the inventory of the fire ox 1937 rten.deb. This ‘du.khang has thirty-six pillars. Its main images were a triad of the Dus.gsum Sans.rgyas, each one floor high.

The central image (that of Shakya thub.pa), called Thub.dbang Ghande.ma, derived its name from the fact that it was decided to place it where a ghande (‘gong’) would land after been thrown in the sky.

In front of the Dus.gsum Sans.rgyas triad were the life-size statues of rje Tsong.kha.pa yab.sras (i.e. with his two main disciples rGyal.tshab.rje and mKhas.grub.rje); a life-size statue of Mi.la ras.pa; a life-size statue of Guru Padma;
a one-floor high statue of Mar.me.mdzad in rdei.khyim; the so called Sang.dar Jo.bo; a life-size statue of ’Jam.dbyangs in gilt copper and a life-size statue in medicinal clay of Rin.chen bzang.po.

In the gtsang.khang, with six pillars, the main image was the so called rTse.lha Nyi.ma.mgon.gyi Shakya Thub.pa’i sku in gilt copper and fifteen khru in height, with a complete set of bKa’gyur and bsTan.gyur placed inside it. Each finger joint contained a volume. As consecratioal material, the statue of Shakya Thub.pa also contained the complete weaving set of Seng.lcam ’Brug.mo.

This statue was called so because Nyi.ma.mgon built a castle on top of the Tho.ling hill named Shingsgra (i.e. on Shing.sgra rtse.mo) where he possibly founded a temple. Here he placed this statue, which became known as Nyi.ma.mgon’s image of Shakya Thub.pa (Nyi.ma.mgon.gyi Shakya Thub.pa’i sku), which is the deity on the peak of the hill (rtse.lha). The statue was moved later to the Tho.ling plain and kept in the ’du.khang.chen.mo. In front of this image was a mchod.rten in medicinal clay, one ’dom in height. Among the books kept in this ’du.khang, the most precious was a brGyad.stong.pa, consisting of 800 chapters written in golden letters. It became known as brGyad.stong.pa Ghande.ma, since it was placed on a stand next to Thub.dbang Ghande.ma after it was moved from its previous location in the brGya.rtsa Byang.ma. At the ’du.khang door were the rGyal.chen sde.bzhi, one floor high.

10. rGyal.khang
Its main image was a statue of Shugs.ldan. A bla.ma statue in a glass cabinet and various statues of Shugs.ldan were placed here.

11. Mani lha.khang
The main image was a life-size statue of rje rin.po.che (Tsong.kha.pa) in medicinal clay. A sa.gdung byang.chub mchod.rten and a mani dung.skor (i.e. a monumental prayer wheel), both one floor high, were also placed here103.

103. The Mani lha khang was obviously located outside the brGya.rtsa. Its placement at this point of the inventories defies any explanation except that its inventory was completed in the same day of the same month as other lha khang-s which were in the brGya.rtsa. Tucci’s description of this temple (Cronaca della Missione Tucci nel Tibet Occidentale p. 318) is very useful since it mainly refers to the murals which are not classified in the rten.deb. He says that on the walls of this lha.khang the depictions of Shakya Thub.pa, Avalokitesvara, Tara and the Buddha-s of the Bhadrakalpa were painted.
PLATE VI
The plain of Tho.ling

1. The monastery of Tho.ling
2. mChod.rten khra.bo
3. dge.slong.ma dPal.mo'i gdung.rten
4. mChod.rten grol.ya.rta
5. lhak 'bab mChod.rten
6. Zangs.kyi gdung.rten
7. Byang rta.sgo bridge
8. Glang chen kha.'babs

Map by Atelier Golok
Plate vii:
Tho.ling dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa'i gtsug.lag.khang

1. sGo khang
2. rNam.par snang mdzad Iha.khang with four go's bu'ri's (or "side chapels")
3. Mi'yed ba lha khang
4. Rin. 'byung lha khang
5. Od.dag med lha khang
6. Don yod grub pa lha khang
7. MG skyod ba lha khang
8. Rin.'byung lha khang
9. 'Od dpag.med lha khang
10. Don yod grub pa lha khang
11. sMan lha khang
12. Thugs ur Ra khang
13. yul Ra lha khang
14. rGyal ba Rigs Inga lha khang
15. lOd.ing ma lha khang
16. brGya rita byang ma
17. Bu'ri khang
18. Phyug.dor lha khang
19. Beams pu rgyal lha khang
20. Bs ma lha khang
21. Yum.chen ma lha khang
22. Tsho dpag med lha khang
23. sGon bsam chos lha khang
24. 'Jam dbyangs lha khang

Drawing by Bianca Viscomi
Plate VIII
Tho.ling gSer.khang
(as it would have been without the attached monastic quarters at the front)
Section Four

Final reconstruction of the temple complex
(being a plan in words)

Religious and lay edifices of Tho.ling

The religious buildings

Before its destruction during the Cultural Revolution, Tho.ling offered to the eyes of its residents and visitors a majestic view. The arrangement of its temples, which can be partially detected from the old pictures but which is elucidated with better precision with the help of the accounts of the Tho.ling notables and written sources, was roughly as follows.

On the western side of the complex stood:
The imposing dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa'i gtsug.lag.khang (opening to the east) (destroyed), which was originally founded by lha.bla.ma Ye.shes.'od in fire monkey 996, consisting of:

the rNam.par snang.mdzad lha.khang (opening to the east), being the cruciform core structure of the head temple, surrounded by:

the brGya.rtsa lho.brgyud and byang.ma, i.e. the enclosure of eighteen lha.khang-s, among them the 'du.khang Thub.dbang bDud.'dul.ma and Thug.rje lha.khang, the latter being lo.chen Rin.chen bzang.po’s residence (gzims.chung). The statue of Thub.dbang bDud.'dul.ma, from which the 'du.khang at the entrance of brGya.rtsa lho.brgyud derived its name, was two-storeys high and was enclosed inside a small room separating the statue from the rest of the assembly hall. There was also a small zhal.ras.khang which allowed a close view of the face of the Thub.dbang bDud.'dul.ma statue. This zhal.ras.khang can be seen in a photograph by Li Gotami (Tibet in Pictures vol.11, plate on p.148). Its door was sited on the roof of the brGya.rtsa lho.brgyud above the 'du.khang Thub.dbang bDud.'dul.ma. In front of 'du.khang
Thub.dbang bDud.'dul.ma stood the entrance room (sgo.khang) of the brGya.rtsa, where the monumental clay statues of the rGyal.chen sde.bzhi were located (see Tucci Archives accession number 602/5).

Further details on the architectural features of the gtsug.lag.khang have to be added to its general conception outlined above (see p.78-79). The two structures, often referred to in this work, which composed the main temple (i.e. the inner cruciform building, conceived as four wings departing in the four directions from a central core, known as the rNam.par snang.mdzad lha.khang, and the surrounding enclosure of lha.khang-s, known as the brGya.rtsa) in the shape of the mandala were joined together by means of a roofed area, the internal walls of which were covered with murals.

A door led from the brGya.rtsa to the rNam.par snang.mdzad lha.khang. This door was situated in the south-western corner of the 'du.khang Thub.dbang bDud.'dul.ma, which gave access to the roofed corridors in order to enter the rNam.par snang.mdzad lha.khang from the side of the south-eastern corner of the latter's inner core. The same door in the rNam.par snang.mdzad lha.khang led back into the roofed corridors.

Stairs to the roof of the building and to the small cubicular room under the gilt-copper rgya.phibs (“pagoda roof”) were located in the same south-eastern corner of the inner core of the rNam.par snang.mdzad lha.khang. Inside the room and under its roof embalmed animals, for which Tho.lin is famous, were kept as relics. The 15th century mural depicting Tho.lin, reproduced in the modern thang.kha (pl.iii), shows that the roof of the major temple was different from the gilt pagoda roof of later times. After having completed a full circumambulation of the lha.lkhang-s of the brGya.rtsa along the roofed corridors, a symmetrical door on the other side (i.e. the north-western corner) of the same 'du.khang Thub.dbang bDud.'dul.ma allowed one to return to it. The complex could be exited from 'du.khang Thub.dbang bDud.'dul.ma across the sgo.khang (“antechamber”) (for the conception of the gtsug.lag.khang see pl.vi).

The ’cham.ra (“courtyard for dances”) was the open area in front of the main temple. Its boundaries were defined by a number of edifices which enclosed it, i.e. the dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa in the west, the gSung.chos raba in the north, the gDung.rten rlng.mo and the Rol.mo'i khang in the east, the Mani lha.khang in the south (for some of these buildings see soon below in the text and the general plan of Tho.lin on pl.v)104.

In the north-western quarter of the complex were:
Rin.chen bzang.po'i gzims.chung (“Rin.chen bzang.po’s residence”) (opening to the south-east), which later became the dge.slong ’Bri.zur mchod.khang (“the prayer room of ’Bri.zur dge.slong”) (destroyed).

To the immediate west of the latter was the one-storey high gSung.chos raba (“the walled area where religious discourses were usually given”) (opening to the south), located at the north-eastern corner of the dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa’i gtsug.lag.khang, gSung.chos raba was where lo.chen Rin.chen bzang.po used to impart teachings. Jo.bo.rje also resided here (destroyed).

A small portico with a shrine where a pile of tsha.tsha-s was placed between the latter two temples (facing south). Two stone steps gave access to it (see the picture by

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104. Indian sadhu-s were authorized to stay at the khyams of the ‘du khang Thub.dbang bDud.’dul.ma, the Rol.mo'i khang of the gDung.rten rlng.mo and the gSung.chos raba without being obliged to obtain permission from the Tho.lin authorities.
A curtain was often drawn across this portico entrance (see Tucci, *Cronaca della Missione Scientifica Tucci nel Tibet Occidentale* fig. 216) (destroyed).

On the northern side of the complex were:

Byams.khang (destroyed), located to the south of the gNas.bcu lha.khang. It had a gtsang.khang ("inner lha.khang") in its western side. Its gtsang.khang was taller than the rest of the building, which was one floor high. This temple opened to the east.

gNas.bcu lha.khang (i.e. the gNas.brtan bcu.drug lha.khang or "the lha.khang of the sixteen Arhat-s")\(^{105}\) (destroyed), to the north of the Byams.khang. This was a structure with a height corresponding to at least two storeys, with the upper floor tapering from the lower one. This temple again opened to the east.

Bla.brang (destroyed), located to the east of the Byams.khang, containing:

Bla.brang mgon.khang (on the stengs.khang or "top floor" of the front side of the Bla.brang building, which was composed of three storeys) (facing south);

mKhan.po rin.po.che'i gzims.chung (located on the stengs.khang or "top floor" at the back of the central section of the Bla.brang building, which was composed of four storeys) (facing south).

In the north-eastern quarter of the complex were:

lha.khang 'Jig.rten.brgyan or lHa.khang dkar.po (opening to the south), sited to the east of the Bla.brang towards the extremity of the temple complex in this direction. This temple has forty-two pillars. The medicinal clay statue of Thub.dbang was flanked by the sMan.bla sde.gshegs.brgyad. Other important statues were those of sGrol.dkar and sGrol.ljang, bCu.gcig.zhal and the door guardians. Its murals are extant as well as the main statue and a byang.chub mchod.rten, although damaged.

gSer.khang (opening to the east), sited to the north of lHa.khang dkar.po and to the north-east of the Bla.brang (destroyed). The gSer.khang, built in the 15th century in substitution of the original constructed by Zhiba.'od in 1067-1071, and existing until its destruction during the Cultural Revolution, did not contain statues, its religious cycles consisting exclusively of deities painted on the walls.

In the south-eastern quarter were:

'du.khang 'Dzam.gling.brgyad otherwise known as 'du.khang Thub.dbang Ghande.ma (opening to the south). This is the assembly hall located to the southeast of the dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa. The temple is composed of an assembly hall proper and a spacious gtsang.khang opening to it. It is extant to this day but deprived of all its monumental sculpture, while the cycle of murals are preserved in the main with some damage and widespread signs of wearing.

rGyal.khang (opening to the north), a small mgon.khang located on the southern side of the kyams.ra ("courtyard") of 'du.khang 'Dzam.gling.brgyad (destroyed).

\(^{105}\) Tucci says that rough late statues of the Arhat-s were housed in the gNas.bcu lha.khang together with murals of the Buddha-s of the Bhadrakalpa, the history of Sadaprarudita and the kings of sTod (Cronaca della Missione Tucci nel Tibet Occidentale p. 320-322). This is unique information since the murals in the gNas.bcu lha.khang are not inventoried in the separate 1926 rten.deb dedicated to it.
In the south-western side of the complex was: Mani lhakhang (opening to the north) (destroyed), located with the spyi.khang (see below) in the area between the dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa and the 'du.khang 'Dzam.gling.rgyan.

The foremost temple in use before Tho.ling was lost to Buddhist practice seems to have been 'du.khang 'Dzam.gling.brgyan rather than the 'du.khang Thub.dbang bDud.'dul.ma (the main lhakhang and only 'du.khang of the brGya.rtsa) or the lhakhang dkar.po, by virtue of the evidence provided by the inventories that an extraordinarily large number of religious paraphernalia was contained in the premises of 'du.khang 'Dzam.gling.brgyan. This 'du.khang is quite spacious and thus fit to house a conspicuous array of receptacles, but, despite its dimensions, the above mentioned quantity of objects kept there before the Cultural Revolution overwhelmingly out-numbers that of any other temple in Tho.ling. 'Du.khang Thub.dbang bDud.'dul.ma was only second to the 'Dzam.gling.brgyan in terms of religious activity commonly performed on its premises during the late period before its destruction.

mChod.rten-s

A great number of mchod.rten-s populated the Tho.ling plain, both inside and outside the holy area, limited by the boundary wall (lcags.rì).

The most important mchod.rten-s were:

The so called gDung.rten ring.mo (destroyed), which was a mchod.rten over five storeys high and having a seven-stepped bang.rim 106. The Tho.ling elders recollect that, in the period before its destruction, the steps of the mchod.rten or bang.rim were painted in different colours. This large mchod.rten stood in the centre of the Tho.ling temple complex between the brGya.rtsa in the west and the group of the dGe.lugs.pa buildings in the east ('du.khang 'Dzam.gling.brgyan, gSer.khang, Bla.brang etc.) (see Tucci Cronaca della Missione Tucci nel Tibet Occidentale fig.216, Gotami Tibet in Pictures vol.11, plate on p.147).

It would be historically significant to know whose gdung.rten ("funerary stupa") gDung.rten ring.mo was. Unfortunately no tradition is preserved about the relics contained in this stupa. Given the monumentality of the building and its central location in the complex, one would expect that the reliquary contained the remains of some very important personality linked to Tho.ling. Further research is badly needed on this matter.

The Rol.mo'i khang of the gDung.rten ring.mo, which was a porch adjoining the west side of the rmangs ("base") of this stupa. The Rol.mo'i khang was an elongated portico extending from the Dung.rten ring.mo to the south. Music was played in the Rol.mo'i khang on the occasion of the 'cham performed in the so called 'cham.ra, i.e. the open space between the brGya.rtsa and the gDung.rten ring.mo. A curtain was often drawn along the length of the porch.

Another mchod.rten (destroyed), which had a four-stepped bang.rim, was adjoining the gDung.rten ring.mo to its eastern side (see Gotami Tibet in Pictures vol.11, plate on p.148).

Four mchod.rten-s were placed outside the four main corners of the dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa in the four intermediate directions.

106. This statement of the elders finds corroboration in the external views of Tho.ling taken by Rawling in 1904 and by Li Gotami over forty years later.
Plate IX

lHa.'bab mchod.rten
(the *stupa* outside the boundary wall of Tho.ling in the north-east)
PLATE x

mChod.rten khra.bo
(the *stupa* outside the boundary wall of Tho.ling in the south-west)
Two more mchod.rten-s of considerable size were located between the Byams.khang and gNas.bcu lhA.khang to their west and the Bla.brang to their east. The two mchod.rten-s were aligned on the north-south axis. The rear (i.e. more northerly) mchod.rten was taller than the other even before the latter's top part above the bum.pa had been lost.

The most distinctive mchod.rten-s placed outside the boundary wall were four big stupa-s at the intermediate points of the compass:

In the north-east is the Iha.bab mchod.rten. Various kinds of consecrational material were placed in the bum.pa of this mchod.rten. They included the relics of Sangs.rgyas which kept ever-forming as much as a gan.dhe (“gong”) bre (“the amount of a measure which can be contained in a gong”?) , a statue of Sangs.rgyas in crystal the size of one khrus, auspicious butterlamps and water cups. On propitious days, worthy people used to find relics of Sangs.rgyas inside its bum.pa.

In the south-east is Zangs gdung.rten (“the copper funerary stupa”), another Iha.bab mchod.rten.

In the south-west is mChod.rten khra.bo (“the multicoloured stupa”), which is again a Iha.bab mchod.rten.

In the north-west was dGe.slong.ma dPal.mo’i gdung.rten mchod.rten (“the stupa which is the funerary reliquary of dGe.slong.ma dPal.mo”), a fourth Iha.bab mchod.rten. dGe.slong.ma dPal.mo was the well known nun from Kashmir who was particularly revered in the Kathmandu Valley, famous for being a major master who initiated a tradition of Skyen.ras.geggs and myung.gnas (“fasting”) practices associated with it. The elders have no explanation for the fact that the robe of dGe.slong.ma dPal.mo was preserved inside this mchod.rten. Her main biography, which I have rather hopelessly consulted to ascertain this matter, has obviously nothing to say on the subject, since it is probable that, if ever anything is written on the matter, it must pertain to the successive holders of her lineage. The rnam.thar-s of those exponents I have consulted up to now do not contain any element which could be of some help. Further research is needed on this issue.

In the same area where dGe.slong.ma dPal.mo’i gdung.rten was located the elders remember a sEng.ge mchod.rten (i.e. a stupa with a lion throne) of particular importance.

A mchod.rten brgya.rtsa (“row of a hundred and eight mchod.rten-s”), made of tsa.thas-s, is located to the north-west of the temple complex, near the precipice giving way to the Glang.chen kha.babs. It is said that the personal rosary of Rin.chen bzang.po is kept inside this row of stupa-s.

Three more mchod.rten brgya.rtsa-s are sited in various locations to the north of the boundary wall (see pl.vi).

Clusters of mchod.rten-s are close to the boundary wall, particularly in the south-west and north-east corners.

One more mchod.rten of some monumentality, whose top part above its bum.pa was already missing in the 1920s (see the picture by Ludlow [1923-1926] kept at the India Office Library, accession number 943/9 (241)) was located in front of the south-eastern corner of the dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa outside the boundary wall.

107 A traditional belief holds that Tho ling gtsug lag khang was built on a song mo sleeping supine. This is obviously a recurring theme initially adopted for the foundations of temples by Stong byas sgam po and applied ubiquitously in Tibet in different periods of its history. The Tho ling temple built on her forehead was the Iha khang bDud. ’dul ma, while that built on her heart was the rNam par snang mdzad Iha khang. On the four limbs the four nang gnon mchod.rten-s (“internal mchod.rten-s to suppress the shin mo”), i.e. those at the four corners of the dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pal and the four phy gnon mchod.rten-s (“external mchod.rten-s to suppress the shin mo”), i.e. those outside the boundary wall) were built.

108 This is the stupa mistakenly considered by Tucci (Cronaca della Missione Tucci nel Tibet Occidentale p 301) as the reliquary monument containing some remains of Rin.chen bzang.po This confusion is rather incomprehensible since this Iha.babs mchod.rten contained relics other than those of lo.chen. It is also unlikely that the relics placed inside the dGe.slong.ma dPal.mo’i gdung.rten (see immediately below in the text) have been attributed to this mchod.rten, since the two stupa-s cannot be easily confused.

109 Bre is a measurement for liquids, grains or powder.

110 See dGe.slong.ma dPal.mo’i rna mtha’ nges byung rgyud la skyed ba’i chos gnam; and the account of the events in her life contained in Skyen.gnas bila ma rgyud.pa’i rnam thar by jo gdan bSod namz bzang po (1341-1431) recently published by the dPal. Idan phar khang Iha sa. I wish to thank Matthew Akester for giving me a photocopy of the latter text.
The lay edifices

Inside the boundary wall of the religious complex was a number of secular edifices mainly located in the eastern side of the holy area. A few elements contributing to their identification help to complete a tentative mapping of the site, which is a very difficult enterprise in the present condition of Tho.ling, where these old buildings have been dismantled and obliterated by modern houses.

Here follows a list of monastic quarters and lay residences whose location in the complex can only be indicated with sound approximation rather than with certainty.

Buildings in the south-east of the holy area were:

sBug.mdzod grwa.tshang or the residence of the sBug.pa family of Tho.ling notables (rebuilt). It was two storeys high and located in the extreme south-east corner of the monastery, attached to the south-eastern wing of ’du.khang ’Dzam.gling.brgyan and overlooking the khyams.ra of this temple. It thus was part of the monumental complex of this ’du.khang. It adjoined the house of the Rong.stod.pa-s (see immediately below) on its own south side. Attached to sBug.mdzod grwa.tshang were a storeroom and a kitchen belonging to it.

The house of the Rong.stod.pa-s (“people from the territory of Rong.chung”, at the westernmost extremity of Gu.ge and bordering sPi.ti on the right bank of the Glang.chen kha.’babs) (rebuilt) was attached to the south-east side of ’du.khang ’Dzam.gling.rgyan, adjoining that of the sBug.pa administrators on its own north side (i.e. the south side of the latter building).

The residence of the sde.pa (“heads of the community”) gNyer.tshang (destroyed) had three floors and sixteen rooms. It stood to the south of ’du.khang ’Dzam.gling.rgyan and to the south-west of the house of the Rong.stod.pa. Monks’ quarters were found in this area.

In the south:

The sPyi.khang (lit. “public house”, i.e. a building for the lay community and the monks) (destroyed), known as sPyi.khang rgyan.brgya (“with one hundred decorations”), had three floors and was located towards the south side of the complex to the immediate east of Mani lha.khang and to the immediate west of the ’du.khang ’Dzam.gling.rgyan.

Buildings in the north-eastern direction within the boundary wall were:

The Bla.brang grwa.tshang (destroyed). This was an imposing building articulated in two wings (i.e. the longer on the east-west axis and the shorter on the south-north axis) joining at a ninety-degree angle. A picture of this edifice shows that it consisted of three floors (Tucci Cronaca della Missione Scientifica Tucci nel Tibet Occidentale fig. 240). However, some elders are adamant in saying that it was three-storeyed in the front, four-storeyed in the central section (i.e. the longer wing on the east-west axis) and five-storeyed in the rear side (which again only existed in the longer wing). Others affirm that the bla.brang was four-storeyed. As a matter of fact, Tucci’s picture frames only the front of this building. On the rear, the longer wing of the Bla.brang was more elevated, which lends credence to the elders’ view. A very small portion of this further floor or floors can be marginally seen in the upper left corner of the same image. That it was a building with different levels, its
tallest being five floors, is confirmed by a picture taken by Rawling in 1905 (Royal Geographic Society, accession number PR 073437). The front of the Bla.brang was painted white, while the back was painted red.

The various wings contained a number of rooms. Among them, the longer wing of the Bla.brang contained a mgon.khang in its front section and the mKhan.po rin.po.ch'i gzims.chung in the rear section, which later was the assembly hall of the Bla.brang. They have both been mentioned above (see p.89). The shorter wing contained the quarter of the gnyer.pa-s ("keepers"), and the kitchen.

The residence of the sde.pa ("head of the community") 'Bri.g.yag (destroyed), which was in the north-eastern corner of the complex, to the south-east of the gSer.khang.

The mNgon.dga' residence for the monks (destroyed), placed to the immediate west of 'Bri.g.yag grwa.tshang and to the immediate east of the gSer.khang.

gNyer.zur dge.slong lha.skyabs (i.e. a sort of dharamsala for monks) (destroyed), to the east of lHa.khang dkar.po and the house of the 'Bri.g.yag people. Some other monks' quarters were placed in this area.

In the east:
The residential quarters of the people from Do.gsham (destroyed) was two storeys high and was found on the eastern side of the complex, sited to the north of the residence of the sde.pa Grwa.tshang.

The residential quarters of the Grwa.tshang notables of Tho.ling (destroyed). It was two storeys high and was located to the immediate north of the house of the sBug.pa-s. The house of the keepers (gnyer.khang), the storerooms (mdzod.khang) and the principal kitchen also were in this area.

In fact, concerning the residences of the Tho.ling notables, the elders of Tho.ling say that there existed five grwa.tshang-s situated in four buildings. Bla.brang grwa.tshang, 'Bri.g.yag grwa.tshang, Grwa.tshang, and gNyer.tshang grwa.tshang had separate residences, the fifth being sBug.pa grwa.tshang, which was in the premises of 'du.khang 'Dzam.gling.brgyant. These buildings were the residences and offices of the four main notable families of Tho.ling and of the abbot as well as monastic colleges.

From the above outline of the buildings inside the sacred precinct of Tho.ling it becomes evident that the administrative quarters were concentrated in the eastern part of the temple complex, which was the more modern or dGe.lugs.pa section of Tho.ling, while the western part was occupied by the ancient dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa'i gtsug.lag.khang.

The leags ri or boundary wall (destroyed) had substantially a rectangular pattern or rather like a trapezoid. A gate was placed on every side of this wall. The Tho.ling elders say that their doors were closed at night.

In the surroundings of Tho.ling
lHa.khang dkar.po, lHa.khang dmar.po, sGrol.ma lha.khang and 'Jigs.byed lha.khang (all destroyed) were, in later times, the temples located on the slopes of
PLATE XI

Byang rta.sgo
(the bridge of Tho.ling)
the conglomerate Shing-sgra hill, which stands to the south-west of Tho.ling dgon.pa at a distance of a short horse ride.

On top of Shing-sgra hill, where the palace of mNga'.ris chos.rgyal Nyi.ma.mgon was situated in antiquity, a locality subsequently known as the bDe.mchog blos.blang dkyil.'khor, were ruins of monasteries and houses.

In the area at the foot of this hill, routes lead to the four directions. Tradition believes that, near the hill, one can hear the echo of 100,000 men. This is the locality where the town of Tho.ling was established. From Shanti.pai tnam.thar one gleans that the area where the town was situated (and is still partially situated at present) was known in the 16th century as Tshig.mda'111.

Finally, the iron bridge of Tho.ling (located to the north-east of Tho.ling dgon.pa) (see pl.xi) is known as Tho.ling zam.pa Byang rta.sgo ("the northern horse door", i.e. Byang[.ngos] rta.sgo or "the horse door to [Gu.ge] Byang[.ngos]?"). The Tho.ling bridge, in fact, gives way to the road leading to Gu.ge Byang.ngos or Gu.ge’s northern territory (see a picture of the bridge taken in 1904 by Rawling, Royal Geographic Society accession number PR 073416).

111. Shanti.pai tnam.thar (I.33a line 1: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.102): "On that occasion, on the dancing ground on the Tshig.mda’ road, youthful girls with white complexion like the moon, singing very melodious songs with words like nectar, performed the plays typical of Zhang.zhung".
Plate XII
Inside the monastery of Tho.ling

Section from the west

Section from the south

Drawing by Laura Boulwell
Section Five

A study of the organization of Tho.ling

The branch monasteries of Tho.ling

The identification of the *dgon.lag* ("branch monasteries") of Tho.ling varies considerably in the sources dealing with them. They are indicated in the collective volume *mNga'ri.ris skor.gsum lo.rgyus 'bel.gtam* (p.254) in a way similar to the enumeration found in *Chos.dbyings rdo.rje's mNga'ri.ris skor.gsum sngon.byung gi lo.rgyus* (p.188), which has twenty-five of them. The only difference between the two lists is that the former source includes mDa'.ba 'Gram dgon.pa, while the latter contains mDa'.ba bKra.shis lhun.po, the famous dGe.lugs.pa monastery in Gu.ge. As for the rest of the list, the collective volume follows *Chos.dbyings rdo.rje* even in questionable spellings such as rTsa.rang Klu.steng, with very few deviations.

mDa'.ba bKra.shis lhun.po or, alternatively, mDa'.ba 'Gram dgon.pa
Ma.nam Byang.chub.gling;
gSer.ti Dam.chos.gling;
rTsa.rang Klu.steng;
Bye.dkar rNam.rgyal lha.rtse;
Shang.rtse Rab.brtaN Byams.pa.gling;
Ri.dgon Byang.chub.gling (*mNga'ri.ris skor.gsum lo.rgyus 'bel.gtam: dGon ri*);
bKa'.phags bKra.shis bsam.gling (*mNga'ri.ris skor.gsum lo.rgyus 'bel.gtam: dKar.phags*);
sNu bKra.shis chos.gling;
Blugs Brag.steng mgon.dga' (*mNga'ri.ris skor.gsum lo.rgyus 'bel.gtam: Lugs*);
I.Dong.bo Rab.brtaN lhun.grub;
gZha.yas bKra.shis chos.gling;
Shang dGa'.ldan rab.rgyas.gling;
Khyung.lung dGa'.ldan lha.btsan (sic);
mDun.chu dgon;
Dung.dkar bKra.shis chos.gling;
Bar.kyog Phun.tshogs rab.bltan.gling (mNga'.ris skor.gsum lo.rgyus 'bel.gtam: Bar.skyog);
Rong.chung ’Phur.ril dgon;
Be lHun.grub chos.gling;
Do.shang Mu.dkar chos.rdzong (mNga'.ris skor.gsum lo.rgyus 'bel.gtam: rDo.gsham);
Ri.ba bKra.shis dga’.phel;
IHo sTeng Thub.dbang mtho.lding;
Za.rang sGro.lma sgang.'og;
Ri.ti.sgang bKra.shis chos.gling;
Chu.ze dBu.rtses.mkhar.

Tho.ling gtsug lag khang sngon. ’gro lam.ston wisely warns that the lists of the Tho.ling dgon.lag-s, a version of which is also given in it, has to be read with due caution, since it is unclear when these monasteries passed under dGa’.ldan pho.brang. These lists cannot take into consideration the period and the circumstances in which this happened (in some case, the circumstances of their passage under the dGe.lugs.pa-s are unknown) and is, thus, a flat enumeration of dgon.pa-s without historical perspective. In fact, they are only meaningful in assessing the temples under Tho.ling at a time soon before the destruction of the head dgon.pa. Some of these monasteries had been dGe.lugs.pa since the time of their foundation. Given that Tho.ling was the head dGe.lugs.pa monastery in West Tibet from the early 15th century, some of its dgon.lag-s listed above, being founded after this period by proven dGe.lugs.pa exponents, were dGe.lugs.pa since their establishment. Some others were built in earlier periods and passed under the dGe.lugs.pa-s at an unspecified time.

These various unhistorical enumerations of the Tho.ling dgon.lag-s lead to an almost immediate shortcoming. After the land of Gu.ge was taken away from the kings of La.dwag and brought under the control of IHa.sa during the military campaign of 1679-1683, the number of dgon.pa-s composing the network of monasteries under Tho.ling, which retained its role of head dgon.pa in Gu.ge, was quite conspicuous. sDe.srid Sangs.rgyas rgya.mtsho in the second volume of his biography of the 5th Dalai Lama (Du.ku.la’igos. ’phros.pod gnyis.pa) says that alms and tea for the monastic assemblies were provided by the Iha.sa government for the twenty-eight [dGe.lugs.pa] dgon.pa-s in Gu.ge.112

No further detail is given in the passage, thus it is unclear whether one should include Tho.ling among them, and far from certain whether the organization of the Tho.ling dgon.lag-s was established at that time or dates to an earlier period. However, the number of monasteries under Tho.ling in the time of sDe.srid chen.po was slightly greater than is recognized by modern literature which is unable to assess it to any specified period.

Tho.ling gtsug lag, khang sngon. ’gro lam.ston (p.112 lines 6-14) contains the names of monasteries not found in the list mentioned above.

mDa’.ba bKra.shis lHun.po;
Khyung.lung dGa’.ldan lHa.rtses;
Mang.nang Byang.chub.gling;
Be lHun.grub chos.lding;
Ri.dgon bKra.shis dge’.phel;
’Steng mThong.ba don.ldan;
Mda’.ba lDong.bo Rab.bltan lHun.po;

112. Du ku.la’igos. ’phros.pod gnyis.pa (f.43a line 4: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.103). I wish to thank Lobsang Shastri for this reference.
A study of its organization

Shang.rtse Lang.kar chos.sde and Rab.brtan Byams.pa.gling;
\( \text{rTsa.hren Blos.steng;} \)
Shang dGa.idan lhun.po;
Do.gsham Mu.dkar chos.rdzong;
Bye.dkar rNam.rgyal.rtse;
sNu dGa.idan lhun.po;
\( \text{tHug Brag.steng mgon.dga'.ba;} \)
Chu.xe dBu.rtse.mkhar;
Gum.phug (or sGom.phug) dgon;
Rab.rgyas.gling;
Phyi.dbang rGya.gling.thang;
Dung.dkar bKra.shis chos.gling;
Yi.ri (or Yi.ti) dgon;
Sung.ngur dgon.

Among the dgon. lag-s under Tho.ling listed in Tho.ling gtug.lag.khang sngon.gro lam.ston, five of them did not belong to the dGe.lugs.pa-s. This seems to indicate that the authority of Tho.ling went beyond sectarian affiliation, a fact mentioned in the edict of earth horse 1738 (see below p.186). These non-dGe.lugs.pa monasteries were Phyi.dbang rGya.gling.thang (Sa.skya.pa/Ngor.pa); Gum.phug dgon.pa (Sa.skya.pa/Ngor.pa); Rab.rgyas.gling (Sa.skya.pa/Ngor.pa); Yi.ri dgon.pa ('Brug.pa); Sung.ngur dgon.pa ('Brug.pa). mKhar.rtse dgon.pa is another Sa.skya.pa/Ngor.pa monastery which has to be added.

Combining the information from different works mentioned above, one should count thirty-one rather than twenty-five monasteries, but this solution is merely a literary compilation which may not correspond to the actual situation of the past. mDa'.ba bKra.shis lhun.po, built by Shanti.pa Blo.gros rgyal.mtshan (1487-1567) during the reign of Jig.rten dbang.phyug pad.dkar.lde in the first half of the 16th century;
Khyung.lung dGa.idan lha.rtse;
Mang.nang Byang.chub.gling;
Be lHun.grub chos.lding;
Ri.dgon bKra.shis dge.'phel (otherwise known as Ri.dgon Byang.chub.gling), possibly built by grub.chen rDo.rje.'bum;
sTeng mThong.ba don.ldan (also spelled as sTang dgon.pa, famous for his Jo.bo), near Za.rang at the extreme western limit of lHo.smad close the present border with India;
mDa'.ba lDong.bo Rab.brtan lhun.po (otherwise known as lDong.bo Rab.brtan lhun.grub);
Shang.rtse Lang.kar chos.sde and Rab.brtan Byams.pa.gling, built by Maitri.pa who was the paternal uncle of Shanti.pa Blo.gros rgyal.mtshan;
\( \text{rTsa.hrang Blos.steng otherwise known as rTsa.hrang bKra.shis bde.rgyas.gling, built by Ha.se 'Phags.pa brTson.drus seng.ge during the reign of the Gu.ge king Khri Nam.mkhai dbang.po phun.tshogs.lde (on the throne 1424-1449);} \)
Shang dGa.idan lhun.po (otherwise known as Shang dGa.idan rab.rgyas), built by Gu.ge Sang.thar.ba Seng.ge rgya.mtsho;
Do.gsham Mu.dkar chos.rdzong, built by grub.chen dKon.cog dpal.mgon, a direct disciple of mKhas.grub.rje (1385-1438);
Bye.dkar rNam.rgyal.rtse (otherwise known as Bye.dkar rNam.rgyal lha.rtse), converted to the dGe.lugs.pa sect by Ngag.dbang grags.pa's disciple slob.dpon Grags.pa bzang.po113;
PLATE XIII
Tholing and its branch monasteries
The hierarchy of Tho.ling

The religious heads who were in charge of maintaining Tho.ling dgon.pa were the bum.'dzin (i.e. the regent abbot) and the dbu.mdzad (i.e. the head officiating bla.ma). Under them in the hierarchy of Tho.ling were three families of assistant administrators:

- the sde.pa gNyer.tshang-s, who were organized in a hierarchy of a chief and two assistant officers;
- the 'Bri.g.yag-s, who were organized in a hierarchy of a chief and an assistant officer, and
- the sBug.mdzod-s, who were organized in a hierarchy of a chief and two assistant officers.

Tho.ling bla.brang had a mkhan.po ("abbot") and various treasurers, altogether a chief and four assistant officers.

The bla.ma-s of the monasteries appointed to be under the authority of those of Tho.ling were:

- the bla.ma of mDa'ba bKra.shis lhun.po;
- the bla.ma of Ma.nam (i.e. Mang.nang) Byang.chub.gling;
- the bla.ma of Be lhun.grun chos.lding;
- the bla.ma of Ri.pa;
- the bla.ma of Da.phan;
- the bla.ma of Chos.ze;
- the bla.ma of Bye.dkar;
- the bla.ma of sTengs;
- the bla.ma of IDong.bo;
- the bla.ma of Shang.rtse.
the bla.ma of rTsa.hrang Blo.srang; moreover:
the lDong.bo zhing.gnyer ("administrator of the lDong.bo fields"),
the Dung.dkar zhing.gnyer ("administrator of the Dung.dkar fields"), the latter
two having to undertake their duties under the authority of Tho.ling.

The head bla.ma-s of Tho.ling dgon.pa were:
the incarnation of lo.chen Rin.chen bzang.po,
the incarnate from mDun.chu, and
the incarnate from Be lHun.grub chos.lding.

The annual ceremonies held at Tho.ling

The ceremonies held at Tho.ling during the course of the year are introduced in this
section quoting bKra.shis tshe.ring, Tho.ling gtsug.lag.khang sngen.'gro lam.ston,
verbatim: "A presentation of the ceremonies of mTho.ling dgon.pa follows. On
the twenty-fourth of the twelfth month on the occasion of the rTsa.hreng lo.mjug
("end of the year") at rTsa.hreng.rdzong, the castle of the king of Gu.ge, the three
dbu.chos-s ("head religious instructors") of Grwa.tshang; the keepers and the monks
responsible for tea, conchshell, rgya[.gling] ("telescopic trumpet") and service to
the monastic assembly (tshogs.rgyugs) have to hold the ritual of
dgu.gtorgtorrgyag ("ritual of displaying and disposing of
gtor.mal") annually on the first day of the
first month, as prescribed by the government" (ibid. p.114 lines 6-10: Tibetan text
in Appendix Eight, p.104).

The same work continues saying: "The ceremonies and [related] expenditures are
as follows. On the twenty-fifth of the ninth month, after completing their break,
all monks must gather at the dgon.pa and accumulate lHa.mo gtor[.ma-s] for five
days until the twenty-ninth [when] gtor.rgyag ("displaying and disposing of the
gtor.ma") is performed. All expenses for these offerings have to be borne by sde.pa
gNyer.tshang. Following this, when dgun.chos is started, the gNyer.tshang must
offer two tea services while the assembly [is gathered] and debate sessions (chos.ra)
are continuously held.

On the eighth day of the tenth month, the rituals of sGrol[.ma] and sMan.lha
have to be held as prescribed by the government. (p.115) The Kun.rig grub.mchod
has to be performed for eight days next to the Kun.rig blo.s.blang dkyil.khor ("tridimensional Kun.rig mandala" in the central lha.khang of the dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyis
grub.pa), including the offerings to the gNas.brtan-s. Means for the ceremony have
to be excellently supplied as much as possible including all the instruments for
the fire ritual [and] the worship [performed by] the five head bla[.ma-s]. Consequently,
the gNyer.tshang and the Grwa.tshang, these two, must bear the cost of the
dGa'.ldan bzhis.mchod and lnga.mchod. The gtor[.ma] accumulation for the
chos.rgyal should be made for four days and gtor.rgyag should be held on the ninth
day.

Until the eighth day of the eleventh month, the rituals of sGrol[.ma] and
sMan.lha, rdor.spyod [and] bzang.spyod must be performed. Their cost must be
borne by the Grwa.tshang. The appeasement of the various protectors, and thus the
accumulation of gtor[.ma-s] for mGon.po, must be performed for six days and, on
the twenty-ninth, gtor.rgyag must be held. The cost of the ceremony of the nine-
teenth [day] must be borne by the Grwa.tshang.

The rehearsing of `cham should be started from the first of the twelfth month.
The elders must perform the sGrol[.ma] ritual and sMan.lha. The gtor.bzlog
Records of Tho.ling

("gtor.ma-s to avert incidents") to the king [should be made] and, on the twenty-ninth, gtor.gyag must be performed. The cost of the accumulation of gtor.ma-s must be borne by the Bla.brang.

On the second of the first month, the religious ceremonies of gier.tshogs smon.lam chen.mo [are held]. On the occasion of [the gathering of] the great assembly of the monks of mTho.lding, the mother monastery, and of the twenty-five children monasteries, the smon.lam chen.mo is held every five times and the abbot [of Tho.ling] gives [his] religious sermon at gSung.chos ra.ba. At the time when the bestowing of vows is performed, the assembly of abbots [of the other dgon.pa-s] arrives and the ritual of bestowing purification to avert harm to others and the ritual of bestowing purification to grant auspiciousness are held, [which] each bla.ma must perform starting from the mDa'.ba bla.ma.

On the seventeenth of the first month, the accumulation of gtor.ma-s should be performed day and night to purify the sixteen iron leags.mkhar-s ("walking sticks") as preparation for the preliminaries of 'cham. As for the ceremony of the fifteenth day, the gathering of the abbots takes place at the assembly, which is fasting, in front of the bDud.dul Thub.dbang chen.po. The ceremony starts at about seven in the evening and lasts until ten, during which an elaborate offering is made. (p.116) Prayers are offered [when] the conchshells and rgya.gling-s ("telescopic trumpets") are blown for a long time from the roof of the bDud.dul, the roof of the 'du.khang and the roof of the bla.brang. The lha.khang-s of the brGya.rtsa must be anointed and consecrated. Sixteen 'cham performers must perform 'cham for two whole days. On the twentieth day in the morning, only after the three-storey high gos.sku depicting rGyal.ba Seng.ge'i nga.ro ("Victorious Roaring Lion") is unrolled for display, the Byams.pa [image] is brought out. Around midday, horse races, annointments and consecrations are held in the four directions.

After the end of smon.lam on the twenty-third of the first month, the annual accounts are closed when ritual bestowing is performed on the thirtieth day, and the [new] duties of work are assigned by the Grwa.tshang.

On the eighth of the second month, as the sa cho ga and the thig choga of dpal gSang.ba 'dus.pa are performed for three days, the sgrub.mchod must be completed by the second Tibetan month. During this period, people trained to make the thig.mtshon ("sand mandala-s") and [to blow] conchshells and rgya.gling-s must show the results of their work. In this period, the results of the 'cham training must also be shown.

During the third month, sa cho ga [and] thig choga of the thirteen deities of the 'Jigs.byed [cycle] [to be held] for three days and sgrub.mchod for one month must be completed [and], at the end, dge.legi char. bebs ("the rain of excellent virtue falling") as well as the fire ceremony zhi.rgyas.dbang ("extensive empowerment of the peaceful deities") have to be offered. The cost of the above mentioned offerings to gSang.ba 'dus.pa must be borne by sde.pa Bri.g.yag.

During the fourth month the cost of the Thugs.rje chen.po sgrub.mchod [lasting for] twenty-six days must be borne by the Grwa.tshang.

During the fifth month the bKa'.gyur rgyal.ba rin.po.ched must be correctly read.

On the fourth day of the sixth month, elaborate offerings must be made to all the lha.khang-s. The cost must be borne by sde.pa gNyer.tshang.

From the fifteenth of the sixth month onwards, [the rules of] dbyar[.gnas] have to be administered and Tantra texts must be correctly read.

(p.117) On the thirtieth of the seventh month, dbyar[.gnas] is over and during the eighth month Grol[.ma] cho.ga, sMan.lha, gNas.bcu must be completed and their cost be borne by the Grwa.tshang.
On the occasion of the *lha.babs dus.chen* ("ceremony of the descent from heaven") during the ninth month, a sixteen day *Thugs.rje chen.po'i sgrub.mchad* should be performed and, on the occasion of *lha.babs dus.chen*, elaborate rituals should be given. The cost of these must be borne by the Grwa.tshang (bKra.shis tshe.ring, *Tho.ling gtsug.lag.khang sgon'gro lam.ston* p.114 line 15-p.117 line 6: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.105).
Historical implications arising from the monuments of Tho.ling

Tho.ling gtsug.lag.khang (i.e. the structure founded in 996)

The structure of Tho.ling gtsug.lag.khang, laid out at its foundation in the year of the monkey 996, remained practically unchanged for over nine and a half centuries until its destruction. A few aspects of the phases that marginally modified this structure (especially in its interior) need to be discussed.

Its conception is briefly dealt with in a remarkable passage of mNga'.ris rgyal.rabs, which mentions the main statues placed in its interior during the foundation phase. The passage reads: "As for sku.rten, [the statue of] the supreme lord [surrounded] by [the statues of] the four great Keepers of the Precepts was made for the Tho.ling monks. The head division of eighty monks was appointed to be incumbent" (Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.17).

From this passage one can evince that the main image placed at Tho.ling gtsug.lag.khang at the time of its foundation was rNam.par snang.mdzad, surrounded by the other four deities of the Rigs.Inga. The 1937 rten.deb confirms that a statue of rNam.par snang.mdzad was the main image of the temple, but it cannot be ruled out that the main image of the gtsug.lag.khang in the 20th century did not correspond to that of the end of the 10th century.

The fact that five statues were made at Tho.ling at the time of its foundation suggests that they were intended for the famous gling.bzhis ("four temple divisions") and the central lha.khang of the Tho.ling temple. The deities to which the four wing lha.khang-s, opening to the central core of the rNam.par snang.mdzad lha.khang, were dedicated, were, according to the 1937 rten.deb, the other four Tathagata-s. Again, it remains to be ascertained whether these images, in the period when these inventories were written, were or not the original ones.

Rin.chen bzang.po'i rnam.thar 'bring.po confirms that Ye.shes.'od established the twelve gling.phran-s ("temple divisions") of Tho.ling. This biography of lo.chen attributes Kha.char to lHa.lde, Tho.ling and Nyar.ma to Ye.shes.'od, somewhat eulogistically adding that they were all built with the collaboration of Rin.chen
b bzang.po. Rin.chen bzang.po'i rnam.thar 'bring.po says: “Then bla.chen lHa.lde requested [Rin.chen bzang.po] to build Khwa.char gsung.lag.khang. [The latter] went to Gu.ge and built the twelve mTho.ling gsung.phran-s with lha.bla.ma Ye.shes.'od. They built Nyar.ma in Mar.yul, these three [temples]. Their foundations were laid in one day” (ibid. p.88 line 5-8.9 line 2: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.106; Vitali, *The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Ph.brang* p.262).

This passage in Rin.chen bzang.po'i rnam.thar 'bring.po corroborates the notion found in mNga.'ris rgyal.rab's that Tho.ling gsung.lag.khang consisted of four major lha.khang-s around a central lha.khang, because the gling.phran bcu.gnyis plan is conceived as four buildings forming the wings of a central structure, to which eight lesser buildings are attached.

Combining the evidence of Rin.chen bzang.po'i rnam.thar 'bring.po with that of mNga.'ris rgyal.rabs, it ensues that the original structure of Tho.ling, consisting of twelve glings-s, had its centre in the cruciform lha.khang in which the statue of rNam.par snang.mdzad was centrally placed with those of the other rGyal.ba rigs.inga in the four directions, amounting thus to four glings opening to a core space.

The other eight glings have to be traced within the roofed enclosure of lha.khang-s around the temple in the centre or rNam.par snang.mdzad lha.khang, since, in the peculiar mandalistic structure of Tho.ling gsung.lag.khang, the surrounding lha.khang-s are part of the same structure of the temple core.

They thus symbolically complete the mandalistic conception, according to which the four central lha.khang-s, opening to the four points of the compass like the fortress of the mandala, are surrounded by a further eight in the intermediate directions. The plan of the gsung.lag.khang is too thoroughly rigorous in its mandalistic shape to allow for any later intervention without disassembling its external structure, which, furthermore, is documented by Rin.chen bzang.po'i rnam.thar 'bring.po to have been mandalistic from the time of foundation.

Given that the complex mandalistic structure of the temple could not have been altered in the periods after its foundation without irremediably compromising its conception, it becomes evident that the idea of the twelve glings of Tho.ling is symbolical to refer to the gsung.lag.khang as a tridimensional mandala.

The notion contained in the literature that Tho.ling was structured as a chos.skor or a temple in the shape of a mandala may have given rise to the opinion found in later sources that Tho.ling was shaped after the plan of bSam.yas, the great chos.skor of bstan.pa snga.dar.

On the grounds of the above mentioned considerations, the statement in the literature that bSam.yas purportedly is the conceptual and architectural model of Tho.ling, hence hinting at a similarity in the ancient plans of Tho.ling and bSam.yas, does not seem to be based on an analysis of the structures of Tho.ling dpal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa'i gsung.lag.khang and bSam.yas dbu.rse. The glings-s of Tho.ling were part of the same main edifice while those of bSam.yas were separate from its main edifice (e.g. see practically all the chos.byung-s and, for a planimetry, the map accompanying Buffetrille, “Questions soulevées par la restoration de bSam.yas”).

I rather think that, if an analogy exists, which is quite feeble, it may refer to the position of the central structure in relation to the four surrounding mchod.rten-s. In both cases, they were placed at the intermediate points of the compass. The names of the mchod.rten-s in Tho.ling have only been partially preserved since those in the south-east and south-west, respectively called Zangs.kyi gdung.rten and mChod.rten khra.bo, seem to be their actual ones, while the names of the stupa-s in the north-east and north-west, respectively called lHa.'bab gdung.rten

114. Ngog.chos.byung (p.262 line 4: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.107) says that Tho.ling was built “similar [in plan] to bSam.yas.” Sum.pa mkhan.po, dpag.bsam ljon.bzang (p.357 lines 19-20) says: “He (Ye.shes.'od) built Tho.ling gser.khang of Gu.ge Zhang zhung in imitation of bSam.yas”. Sum.pa mkhan.po makes a historical error in considering the gser.khang as the temple built by Ye.shes.'od. As has been shown above (pp.29-30), the gser.khang was constructed several decades later and lha.bla.ma’s temple at Tho.ling was the one which later became known as dpal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa. Padma dpal.po chos.byung (p.259 lines 12-15) reads: “Later, when he saw bSam.yas, he (Ye.shes.'od) exclaimed: ‘My ancestors verily left a sign of their power over the whole of Tibet, while mine is nothing more than an establishment of a small barbarian kingdom’. This narrative has the air of pious storytelling because Ye.shes.'od is not credited with a journey to bSam.yas to visit the temple he allegedly considered a model.
mchod.rten and dge.slong.ma dPal.mo'i gdung.rten, obviously are not. The two original names of the Tho.ling mchod.rten-s resemble those of the bSam.yas mchod.rten-s, named after their colour (dkar.po, dmar.po, srong.po and nag.po)\(^\text{115}\).

The plans of Tho.ling and bSam.yas are conspicuously different. The most evident divergent points concern their main temples. While that of Tho.ling gtsug.lag.khang is a not particularly elevated tridimensional mandala, bSam.yas dbu.rten is square and multi-storeyed. The boundary wall at Tho.ling was conceived more or less as a rectangle or rather like a trapezoid, while the boundary wall at bSam.yas was conceived as a circle. The most monumental mchod.rten-s at the intermediate points of the compass are placed at Tho.ling outside the boundary wall. At bSam.yas, in contrast, they are internal to the lcags.ri. However, more diminutive stupa-s are placed inside the boundary wall at Tho.ling in the four directions around the main temple, which remind those of bSam.yas.

As a whole, Tho.ling is a mandala twice, i.e. one mandala is inscribed inside another. One is the gtsug.lag.khang itself, the other is constituted by its general structure, in which the temple is surrounded by a lcags.ri with external mchod.rten-s in the intermediate directions. bSam.yas is a mandala once. Its central temple, with a rather squarish plan, is surrounded by a round lcags.ri with internal mchod.rten-s in the intermediate directions.

As mentioned above (p.29-30), the name gSer.khang or gSer.gyi lha.khang, which cannot identify any structure at Tho.ling but the gSer.khang originally built by Zhi.ba.'od and later rebuilt by IHa.dbang blo.gros, is often erroneously attributed to the Tho.ling complex as a whole otherwise to its major temple.

The IHa.'bab mchod.rten outside the boundary wall in the north-east is a likely candidate to be the mchod.rten on which the rays of the sun were reflected at dawn towards the main temple. The name gSer.khang for the main temple allegedly derives from this phenomenon according to Ngor chos byung and Padma dkar.po chos.byung\(^\text{116}\). If the existence of this mchod.rten during the time of Ye.shes.'od can be credited in itself and apart from being at the origin of the misinterpreted denotation of Tho.ling gtsug.lag.khang, then it would seem that at least one external mchod.rten existed at the time of the foundation of Tho.ling or soon after it, if not all of them.

A reference to the mchod.rten in the north-east of the boundary wall contained in Shanti.pai' rnam.thar seems to identify it beyond doubt, but it is definitely much later. Shanti.pai' rnam.thar (f.33b line 5; Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.110) reads: “Again in a dream [of Shanti.pai’s], many monks carrying flags and parasols appeared between the gdugs.rten (sic for gdung.rten) chen.mo of the east and the table land with buildings (thang.bteg, lit. "plain" and "to pitch, to erect" or "high, elevated, raising up") of the west which was an indication that the Hor would not come”.

Shanti.pai' rnam.thar is thus useful to document its existence to some time before earth pig 1539, the year in which Shanti.pa returned to Gu.ge and the terminus post quem for this statement in his biography. The north-eastern mchod.rten known to the tradition as a gdung.rten and famous for having contained especially holy relics and statues in its bum.pa, thus predates the second quarter of the 16th century but its date cannot be fixed with any better precision. Its style, a criterion often too unreliable, does not point to an early time of making, but it cannot be ruled out that it was renovated at a late period, thus assuming a less ancient appearance.

115. Ngos byung. Iha khang (p.129 lines 8-14. Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.108) describes the four mchod.rten-s of bSam.yas in the following way: “Concerning the four mchod.rten-s, the [mchod.rten] known as dkar.po dga.'ba ("white happiness") symbolises the Nyen thos-s. Since it contains four relics of rgyal ba Shakya Thub pa as much as one [phul (1/5 of a bire)] placed inside the knob (rtog) of the mchod.rten, it bestows great blessings. It was entrusted to cho skyong gnod sbyin skar md’o stong ("shooting star"). The [mchod.rten] known as dmar.po pad ma brtsegs.pa ("the red pole of lotuses") symbolises the Byang chub sems dpas-s. It was entrusted to gSes mig dmar (i.e. the planet Mars). The [mchod.rten] known as nag.po bika shis brtsegs.pa ("the black pole of auspiciousness") symbolises the Rang Sangs.rgyas-s (Pratyekha Buddha-s). It was entrusted to gnod sbyin lCa.gshu. mchu can ("with an iron beak"). The [mchod.rten] known as srong po yon tan brtsegs.pa ("the blue pole of qualities") symbolises the De bzhin gshes-pa-s. It was entrusted to gnod sbyin Ny ma’i gdung ("with the sun face"). mKhas.pa IDe’u cho skyong (p.354 lines 9-20) says: “mChod rten dkar.po is decorated with an ornamentation of lions. It is entrusted to cho skyong dkar.zla stong. mChod.rten dmar.po is decorated with one thousand lotuses. It is entrusted to rta.mchos. mKha. gdra ba mchu can ("with iron beak"). mChod.rten srong.po is decorated with one thousand Iha khang-s (i.e. a bkra shis sgo bang). It is entrusted to cho skyong gnod sbyin nyi ma gdung can ("with a sun face"). mChod.rten dkar.po, in the south-east, symbolises the Shnya thos-s. The [mchod.rten] in the south-west symbolises the Byang chub sems dpas-s. The [mchod.rten] in the north-west symbolises the Rang rgyal-s. The [mchod.rten] in the north-east symbolises Rang Sangs.sgyas.

The white one is the dga.’ba bsegs pa’s mchod.rten ("pile of happiness"). The red is padma bsegs pa ("pile of lotuses"). The black is bkra shis bsegs pa ("pile of auspiciousness"). The green is yon tan bsegs pa ("pile of qualities"). Again, the way the white one [is made] is like the Rk.rb. The way the red [is made] is like one thousand lotuses. The way the black [is made] is with one thousand Iha thos-s. The way the green (sic blue) [is made] is in the shape of a sgo mang rdo ye byungs”.

116. Ngos byung. Iha khang (p.262 lines 4-5) and Padma dkar.po chos byung (p.259 lines 9-12. Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.109) say in the same words: “In particular, he (Ye.shes ’od) built a large mchod.rten in the east. When the sun rises, as golden light is reflected by this [mchod.rten], all the Iha khang-s are wonderfully radiant with golden colour [This is why] it became known as mTho.iding gSer.khang”.
dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa'i gtsug.lag.khang
(i.e. the same structure completed in 1028)

As said above (see p.22), mNga'ris rgyal.rabs (p.53 lines 8-10) is most valuable in affirming that Tho.ling gtsug.lag.khang was completed in earth dragon 1028 to become known as the Tho.gling dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa'i gtsug.lag.khang, for which it was famous in antiquity. It has also been shown above (p.23) that the same source provides evidence to identify in lHa.lde the Gu.ge Pu.hrang king who had become monk by the time of the completion and was involved in this phase.

Given that the mandalic structure of the dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa was laid out in 996, it is hardly possible that it was achieved some thirty years later. It thus seems that the completion in 1028 concerned the interior of the dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa. It cannot be ruled out that the 996 structure, called the gling.phran bcu.gnyis in Rin.chen bzang.po'i rnam.thar 'bring.po and thus consisting of twelve lha.khang-s, was completed with the opening of other lha.khang-s to make a total of twenty, which was the capacity of the mandalic structure in its interior.

In fact, if one examines the plan of the gtsug.lag.khang, the enclosure surrounding the central part in the shape of the fortress of the mandala, (later) known as brGya.rtsa, originally contained space to arrange twenty temples rather than eight. In total, the dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa originally numbered twenty-five lha.khang-s, of which four were in the central core (plus the space for the rNam.snang on which they opened) and twenty were in the brGya.rtsa (ten in the brGya.rtsa lho.brgyud and ten in the brGya.rtsa byang.ma).

That work on the temples was often resumed to make them more and more excellent houses of the gods is testified to by this great completion of Tho.ling gtsug.lag.khang. The temple reached its complete form, for which it has become famous, some thirty years after its foundation. Building and artistic activity possibly continued between 996 and 1028, the dates mentioned in mNga'ris rgyal.rabs, a new impetus arriving with the thirty-two Kha.che artists in 1001 (Vitali, The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.hrang p.271). Rin.chen bzang.po'i rnam.thar 'bring.po reads: “Six years after [Rin.chen bzang.po had left], he came [back from Kha.che] with thirty-two artists” (ibid. p.94 line 2: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.111).

The evidence on the circumstances that led Rin.chen bzang.po to appoint rDo.rje chen.mo as the bsrung.ma (“protectress”) of Tho.ling and the installment of this deity in the gtsug.lag.khang helps to fix a tentative date for the establishment of the bSrung.ma.khang in the brGya.rtsa of the dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa. This may have taken place soon after the cult of rDo.rje chen.mo was introduced to Tho.ling in the ox year 1001.

The opening of the lha.khang for rDo.rje chen.mo is an instance which proves that the Tho.ling gtsug.lag.khang had not been completed during the foundation phase
in 996 and that its expansion into dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa continued until it was completed in earth dragon 1028.

The location of the bSrng.ma.khang did not change any more, given that a tradition says that a wild rose tree grew in the south-west of the brGya.rtsa near the bSrng.ma.khang, on its outside, during the time of Rin.chen bzang.po. This is where the bSrng.ma.khang was located at least until fire ox 1937, as is documented in the rten.deb, and most probably until the destruction of the gtsug.lag.khang during the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976).

The position of the bSrng.ma.khang was next to the Byams.khang of the brGya.rtsa byang.ma in the south-west but it was still part of the brGya.rtsa lho.brgyud (see pl. vii).

Thus, two kinds of external evidence are available to prove that the statement of mNga:ris gyal.rabs concerning the completion of the Tho.ling gtsug.lag.khang in 1028 is correct. One pertains to Kha.che artists invited to Gu.ge Pu.hrang to work in its temples, the second that a lha.khang in Tho.ling gtsug.lag.khang was built after the Kha.che artists reached this kingdom in the same year when the building of the Srung.ma.khang was probably planned (i.e. the ox year 1001).

The completion in earth dragon 1028 did not modify the original structure. It seems, from the evidence of the opening of the Srung.ma.khang in 1001, that the organization of the lha.khang-s in the interior of the gtsug.lag.khang underwent a modification, with the addition of holy rooms that had not existed before, so that the entire space inside the temple became a house of the gods.

The oral belief that the so called Thugs.rje lha.khang (one of the lha.khang-s of the sacred enclosure around the central nucleus) was the gzims.chung ("apartment/bedroom") of Rin.chen bzang.po, apart from the building called Rin.chen bzang.po'i gzims.chung located outside Tho.ling gtsug.lag.khang, may bear the significant implication that Tho.ling was originally conceived as an Indian vihara. It could have been a structure in which cells for the monks were found much in the same way as in lHa.sa Jo.khang.

Given the location of Thugs.rje lha.khang, which is next to the byang.ma forming two kinds of external evidence are available to prove that the statement of mNga:ris rgyal.rabs concerning the completion of the Tho.ling gtsug.lag.khang in 1028 is correct. One pertains to Kha.che artists invited to Gu.ge Pu.hrang to work in its temples, the second that a lha.khang in Tho.ling gtsug.lag.khang was built after the Kha.che artists reached this kingdom in the same year when the building of the Srung.ma.khang was probably planned (i.e. the ox year 1001).

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Given the location of Thugs.rje lha.khang, which is to be one of the two lha.khang-s immediately flanking the central lha.khang of brGya.rtsa lho.brgyud (i.e. sMan.lha.khang) (Thugs.rje lha.khang actually being the one to the west of sMan.lha.khang) (see pl. vii), it is possible that the location of the gzims.chung-s for the monks was next to the four central lha.khang-s on the four sides that the brGya.rtsa lho.brgyud and brGya.rtsa byang.ma form joining each other.

When the number of the lha.khang-s was expanded during the phase that ended in 1028, at least some gzims.chung became chapels (for instance the gzims.chung of Rin.chen bzang.po became the Thugs.rje lha.khang by installing here the ancient statue of bCu.gcig.zhal).

Given the documents presently available, it is very difficult to say when the enclosure of lha.khang-s around the inner core of the main temple of Tho.ling became known as brGya.rtsa. The name brGya.rtsa is not found in the colophons of the texts of the early period, which were translated at Tho.ling gtsug.lag.khang, called dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa in them. On the other hand, the name dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa for Tho.ling gtsug.lag.khang is never found in the rten.deb. Around the mid 16th century, during the time of Shanti.pa Blo.gros rgyal.mtshan, Tho.ling gtsug.lag.khang is still called mTho.lding dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa'i gling in his biography (Shanti.pa'i rnam.thar f.32b line 6). Hence, it seems that, with the advent of the dGe.lugs.pa-s, the ancient gtsug.lag.khang name was not forgotten.
A few comments on the religious works (mainly murals) contained in the *lha.khang-s* of Tho.ling have to be added here since they are meaningful as they offer clues to attempt a few historical considerations concerning renovation phases at Tho.ling.

Monumental evidence can be usefully cross-analysed on the basis of the historical treatment found in the recently recovered *mNgag.ris rgyal.rabs* written by Gu.ge mkhan.chen Ngag.dbang grags.pa (see this text in Vitali, *The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.hrang*)\(^{117}\), which is the only hitherto known source systematically dealing with the history of Gu.ge Pu.hrang. In fact, this text contains most significant evidence on Tho.ling. While it is significant that no religious works sited in the major temple and dating to *bstan.pa phyi.dar* can be detected in the old visual documentation, two major renovations affecting the dPal.dpe.med lhon.gyis grub.pa can be traced from the sources available at present and a few monumental hints dating to a time before the temples were destroyed:

the first is the renovation of Tho.ling by the king of Gu.ge Grags.pa.lde some time in the years 1265-1277;

the second is the one which coincided with the advent of the disciples of Tsong.kha.pa to diffuse their master's teachings in Gu.ge. As stated above, since it was Ngag.dbang grags.pa who was responsible for the renovation and expansion of the ancient temple complex of Tho.ling, which became known as *chos.sde gsar.ma* ("the new monastery"), he is a likely candidate to have been the protagonist of this activity.

Visual evidence documenting whether *lha.khang-s* of the main temple of Tho.ling contained, before destruction, wall paintings or monumental sculpture (i.e. any non-movable religious images) going back either to the 13th or the 15th century renovation, can establish during which of these two renovation phases they were restored.

By cross-checking with old pictures the inventories of the religious properties of the *lha.khang-s* of the Tho.ling gtsug.lag.khang classified in the *rten.deb*, it is possible to identify some of these holy rooms which had murals or sculptures in the Tibeto-Pala style popular in the 13th century.

The murals in these *lha.khang-s* were executed with remarkable influences of Newar origin. The rendition of the murals is close to that used in the bKa'gyur lha.khang, also known as bSe.sgo.ma\(^{118}\), inside Zhwa.lu gSer.khang in Myang.smad, which is the most conservative of all those employed at this temple around 1307 and thus closely following original Newar prototypes\(^{119}\).

The presence of these particular wall paintings in the main temple of Tho.ling is consistent with the statement in *mNgag.ris rgyal.rabs* that the Gu.ge king Grags.pa.lde (1230-1277) renovated the temple. This renovation phase at Tho.ling can be assessed to have taken place in the years between 1265 and 1277, which are the regnal years of this king (see Vitali, *The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.hrang* p.437-445).

In fact, the Tibeto-Pala style of the dPal.dpe.med lhon.gyis grub.pa'i gtsug.lag.khang is close to that found on the western wall of Klu.ril kBar.'bum phug.pa, a bKa'brgyud.pa cave in Glo.stod (probably painted soon after 1275). This makes it more likely that Grags.pa.lde's renovation at Tho.ling took place in the years between 1265 and 1277. Its closeness to the rendition employed at Klu.ril, which is purely Newar, reinforces the possibility that the murals patronized by Grags.pa.lde in the dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa were also contributed either by artists from the Kathmandu Valley or by Tibetan disciples working in this idiom.
The style of the renovation by Grags.pa.lde, for the years in which it took place, may be a not too distantly documented example of that brought by Aniko to Sa.skya in 1261.

Judging by the pictures in the Tucci Archives, it seems that the Tibeto-Pala style was lavishly employed, thus letting one presume that Grags.pa.lde’s renovation affected almost the entire old temple. This is the the case with the picture of a mural depicting Stro.ral (accession number 6097/14), which was located in the Jigs.brgyad lha.khang of the brGya.rtsa byang.ma. Moreover, other old photographs show that at least the main lha.khang of the brGya.rtsa byang.ma, i.e. the Tshe.dpag.med lha.khang, (accession numbers 6097/11, 6097/12 and 6097/13) was renovated during Grags.pa.lde’s phase.

It is also significant that sMan.lha.khang, the major lha.khang of the brGya.rtsa lho.brgyud, was the object of an intervention during the same phase, as shown both in terms of monumental clay statues (Thub.dbang and the sMan.bla sde.gshegs brgyad) and wall paintings by a picture in the Tucci Archives (accession number 6074/3).

Other lha.khang-s of the brGya.rtsa, which had images in a similar rendition, were:
- lHa.khang bKra.shis ’od.bar in the brGya.rtsa lho.brgyud, as shown by a mural of sPhyan.ras.gziigs phyag.bzhi.pa and another painted deity, which is unidentifiable (ibid. accession number 6074/2).
- rGyal.ba Rigs lnga’i lha.khang, as proven by a stucco statue of rNam.par snang.mdza and deities painted on the walls (ibid. accession number 6077/5).

One has to note that, on the basis of the stylistic evidence provided by the Tshe.dpag.med lha.khang and sMan.lha.khang, made in the 13th century Newar rendition, the restoration of the Gu.ge king Grags.pa.lde must have affected the gling.phran bcu.gnyis (“the twelve temple divisions”) founded by Ye.shes.’od. Given the preeminent position that these lha.khang-s occupied in the building (see pl.71), Tshe.dpag.med lha.khang and sMan.lha.khang must have been among the original holy rooms of bstan.pa phyi.dar.

By looking at the pictures documenting the temple before it was dismantled, one can attempt a suggestion concerning when the sacred enclosure of the Tho.ling was founded by Ye.shes.’od.

A preliminary assessment of a group of pictures of Tho.ling gtsug.lag.khang indicates that the ’du.khang Thub.dbang bDud.’dul.ma (i.e. the ’du.khang of the brGya.rtsa) contained works in the Gu.ge style of the 15th century (Tucci Archives accession numbers 6035/11, 6035/12 and 6035/13). Given that this ’du.khang incorporated the space of the two lha.khang-s flanking it on both sides and that this expanded holy room contained the above mentioned 15th century images, it cannot be ruled out that it was conceived, following the advent of the disciples of Tsong.kha.pa, in the shape that existed until a few decades ago. This seems to imply that the number of the lha.khang-s, which seems to have been twenty until the period in which the dGe.lugs.pa-s took hold of Tho.ling, may have been reduced to eighteen in the 15th century.

This was the first structural modification that affected the (internal) walls of Tho.ling gtsug.lag.khang from the year of the monkey 996, when it was founded.

120. The only likely candidate for the statue of rTa.mgros, at the back of which Bon ston Hum. ’bar extracted gter.ma-s (see above p.22), is that in the ’du.khang Thub dbang bDud.’dul.ma, which, until recent times, bore evidence of being renovated by the dGe.lugs.pa-s. This does not rule out the possibility that the clay statue of rTa.mgros, which the rTen.deb says, was located near the door, dated back to bstan.pa phyi.dar. Otherwise one has to surmise that the rTa.mgros associated with the rediscovery of Bon ston Hum. ’bar did not survive until five or 1937 when the rTen.deb was written.
It has to be stressed here that the outer wall of the dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa also underwent a minor modification. Four mchod.rten-s at the intermediate points of the compass are placed on the external wall of the gtsug.lag.khang (see above p.100 and pls.1, V, VI).

On the basis of their architectural style, they cannot be of Kha.ye origin and dating to the late 10th-early 11th century, but are significant examples of the type of stupa that became popular throughout Gu.ge with the advent of the disciples of Tsong.kha.pa. At the latter time, mud mchod.rten-s were often surmounted by a chos.skor (the spire of a stupa composed of thirteen discs above the bre) in fired clay. The four mchod.rten-s therefore date to no earlier than the 15th century.

Probably, mchod.rten-s originally surmounted the same wall at the time when the gtsug.lag.khang was founded, however their typology, which makes them a product of the 15th century, indicates that the original ones were substituted with the advent of the dGe.lugs.pa-s in Gu.ge.

The exterior of the Tho.ling gtsug.lag.khang seems thus to have been very marginally modified during the 15th century phase with the substitution of the mchod.rten-s placed on the four buttresses which were an integral part of the structure of the temple, laid out by the ancient members of the Gu.ge royal family at the time of the foundation. This 10th century feature bears the consequence that the two consecutive walls, which adjoins each buttress sustaining a mchod.rten, are shorter than the others and that a further basis in the highly angular structure of the temple is added (see pl.vii).

Hence, in the period during which disciples of Tsong.kha.pa were active diffusing their master's teachings in mNga'.ris.stod, Tho.ling gtsug.lag.khang underwent changes for the first time, although not too major, both on its inside and outside.

Other lhakhang-s, which were renovated during the dGe.lugs.pa phase, were:

The entrance room (sgo.khang) of the brGa.rtsa, as exemplified by a mural depicting Tho.ling in the 15th century, but which is no more extant (this wall painting is reproduced in the modern thang.ka) (see pl.111); Byams.khang in the brGa.rtsa byang.ma, whose main image is, as said above, the monumental stucco statue of Byams.pa in the 15th century Gu.ge style (Tucci Archives accession number 6035/15, and the picture accompanying Tucci's article "Nel Paese dei Lama" on p.278)121.

Hence major lhakhang-s in both the brGa.rtsa lho.brgyud and brGa.rtsa byang.ma were adapted to the newly incoming needs of the proto-dGe.lugs.pa disciples of Tsong.kha.pa.

Finally, a statement in Shanti.pa'i rnam.thar, referring to the activity of Shanti.pa, indicates that the 'Jigs.byed lhakhang existed at least in the 16th century122. It is difficult to assess whether this lhakhang was established by the dGe.lugs.pa-s, thus substituting some other deity previously occupying this holy space, given the importance rDo.rje 'Jigs.byed has in their system, or whether it predated their period.

The changes that affected the rNam.par snang.mdzad lhakhang were rather more complex. Again, a few old pictures illustrate that the statues in this group of lhakhang-s in the centre of the temple had definite 13th century traces, but, judging from their style, they underwent a renovation in the 15th century.

Of special importance is the fact that at least one of the lhakhang-s, which are the glo.'bur-s ("wing chapels") of the rNam.par snang.mdzad temple, had clay statues and murals in these two distinctive renditions. See, for instance the statue of Rin.chen 'byung.ldan and glimpses of murals in the southern lhakhang named

121. On the other hand, a few tridimensional images of wrathful and peaceful deities protruding from lotus medallions in the background testify that the Phyag rdor lhakhang in the brGa.rtsa byang.ma underwent a late renovation (Tucci Archives accession number 6097/7 and 6097/8).

122. Shanti.pa'i rnam.thar (f.39b lines 1-2: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.112): "Once, when he was in the 'Jigs.byed lhakhang [of the brGa.rtsa], [Shanti.pa] imparted Dus.'khor bsdu.system; Grel chen Dri.med 'od and the great lha.khang of Dus.'khor, written by mKhas grub.rje, to a few slob dpod-s such as slob dpod Phyag.rdor dPal.bzang."
after this deity and containing it (Tucci, *Cronaca della Missione Tucci nel Tibet Occidentale* fig.229). This stucco statue of Rin.chen 'byung.idan shows a stylistic matrix dating to the 13th century and being Tibeto-Pala with Newar influences, but it is painted in the same way as the surrounding murals which are in that rendition of the 15th century. Its throne has feasibly assumed 15th century features. This significantly indicates that the nucleus of the entire complex underwent renovation first during the 13th century and then during the beginning of the dGe.lugs.pa phase in Gu.ge. Two other statues, manifestly belonging to the Kun.rig cycle placed in the rNam.par snang.mdzad lha.khang, have similar characteristics (see fig.7 on plate XIII, wrongly identified as Tsaparang, in Tucci, "Tibetan Book Covers", and plate on p.275 in Tucci, "Le Vie del Mondo").

A passage in *Nyung.ral chos. 'byung* allegedly illustrates the structure of Tho.ling during the time of Ye.shes.'od.

After reporting its foundation by Ye.shes.'od, *Nyung.ral chos. 'byung* describes Tho.ling in the following exaggerated way, which nonetheless testifies to the complexity of its structure: "There are sixty-four lha.khang-s, ornamented with gandzira-s ("decorated finials on the roofs"), inside the lcags.rig ("boundary wall") of this gsug.lag.khang" (ibid. p.461 lines 10-12: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.113). Could this be a reference to the structure that Tho.ling had during the period in which *Nyung.ral chos. 'byung* was written (late 12th century)? This is hardly tenable given that the temples of the Tho.ling complex, in its late days before it was destroyed, did not reach this number, although lha.khang-s were added during the dGe.lugs.pa period.

*bShad.mdzod yid.bzhin nor.bu* records what the text claims to be the structure of Tho.ling during the time of rTse.lde. This text says: "As for who is the lord of these people, this is mnga'.bdag rTse.lde, the king of the land of sPu.rang. He built the 'Dzam.gling.rgyan gsug.lag.khang as the innermost essence of his ancestral lineage. Inside the [Tho.ling] boundary wall are seven lha.khang-s with Khyung heads" (ibid. p.190 lines 2-4). As mentioned above, 'Dzam.gling.rgyan was the name of Tho.ling gSer.khang, the temple built by Zhi.ba.'od during the reign of rTse.lde.

If one has to read historically the combined information provided by these two sources, one should conclude that the number of lha.khang-s at Tho.ling was drastically reduced in the period from the end of the 12th century to the 15th century. This is hardly possible.

While the statement of *bShad.mdzod yid.bzhin nor.bu* that Khyung heads decorated the lha.khang-s is a stereotype often applied to temples, that concerning the Tho.ling boundary wall needs to be discussed, since one has to discriminate between the external wall of the dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa and the wall surrounding the temple complex. On the one hand, the term lcags.rig commonly addresses a boundary wall. On the other, it is to be ruled out that reference is made to the dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa, since twelve gsug.lag-s rather than seven lha.khang-s composed the structure laid out at the time of foundation and further lha.khang-s were completed in the successive period within the same edifice.

It thus becomes evident that *bShad.mdzod yid.bzhin nor.bu* does not refer to the external wall of the dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa but to the boundary wall of the complex and that the seven lha.khang-s are seven different temple structures, among which the ancient gsug.lag.khang has to be included.

I think that the notion in *bShad.mdzod yid.bzhin nor.bu* may refer to the shape Tho.ling assumed in the period in which this text was written (some time in the 15th century). This was the beginning of the dGe.lugs.pa period, marked by the presence at Tho.ling of the direct disciples of Tsong.kha.pa and further disciples.

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123. Tucci, *Cronaca della Missione Tucci nel Tibet Occidentale* p.312, says that this lha.khang was the personal residence of Rin.chen bzang.po and that this link may have been built up by the similarity between the names Rin.chen bzang.po and Rin.chen 'byung.idan. The elders of Tho.ling, who still propagate an oral account similar to that which Tucci personally heard when he was in Tho.ling, are adamant in affirming that the 'private apartment' of lo.chen was the so-called Thugs.rje lha.khang in the brGya rtsa lho brgyod (see in the text p.4-5, p.8 and p.15).
The number of *lha.khang*-s mentioned by *bShad.mdzod yid.bzhin nor.bu* corresponds to that contained in a modern work (*Chos.dbyings rdo.rje*, *mNga’.ris skor.gsum sngon.byung gi lo.rgyu* p.185 lines 18-21), which is, however, reductive. I hardly think that Tho.ling in the 15th century had only seven *lha.khang*-s inside its boundary wall, given the shape the complex took with the advent of the *dGe.lugs.pa*-s.

A sheer guess regarding the seven temples to which *bShad.mdzod yid.bzhin nor.bu* refers is that they were the *dPal.dpe.med* lhu.n.gyis grub.pa, the gSung.chos ra.ba, the Rin.chen bzang.po’i gzims.chung, the ‘*jig.rten.brgyan*, the *dGe.lugs.pa*-s’ gSer.khang, the ‘*du.khang*’ Dzam.gling.brgyan, the seventh temple being more difficult to assess (the most probable candidate is the *Bla.brang* with its *lha.khang*-s inside it, another one being the gNas.bcu lha.khang).

That *bShad.mdzod yid.bzhin nor.bu* mentions the existence of the boundary wall is no cause for surprise, given its 15th century date. In order to surround so accurately the buildings erected by the *dGe.lugs.pa*-s, the Tho.ling lcegs.ri, in the shape which had before destruction, could not not have predated their construction.

**gSung.chos ra.ba**

The same two renovation phases ascertained to have taken place in the rNam.par snang.mdzad lha.khang and the *lha.khang*-s of the brGya.rtsa in the dPal.dpe.med lhu.n.gyis grub.pa are documented in the gSung.chos ra.ba, where tradition holds that Jo.bo.rje gave religious discourses, by cross-referenced monumental and literary evidence.

Some murals date to the 13th century renovation, as is proved by the row of masters, among them various Tibetan *lo.tsa.ba*-s who attended the 1076 Tho.ling chos.khor (see above p.32). Legible inscriptions identify ’Bum.phrag gsum.pa, gSer.gling.pa, Myal lo.tsa.ba, Sa.skya lo.tsa and Ar Byang.chub (Tucci Archives accession number 6071/1, 6071/2 and 6071/3). In fact, inside this ruined structure it is still possible to read the name gSer.gling.pa in the same *dbu.can* calligraphy that can be seen in these pictures. Pale painted traces of the rows of masters earlier depicted on its walls can also be detected.

A mural of Tsong.kha.pa yab.sras at the back of Rin.chen bzang.po’s throne and rows of masters on its main walls testifies to the second monumental phase that took place in the gSung.chos ra.ba. The latter wall painting cannot obviously be earlier than the 15th century given the depiction of Tsong.kha.pa between his two main disciples.

**gNas.bcu lha.khang**

A picture of Tucci/Ghersi taken inside the gNas.bcu lha.khang and depicting the religious kings of Gu.ge Pu.hrang frames two accompanying inscriptions (accession number 6571/3). They read: “lha.btsun.pa De.ba.pra.bha’i zhal.nga.nas” and “Byang.chub sems.dpa’ sems.spa’ can.po (sic) lha.bla.ma Ye.shes.od.kyi zhal.nga.nas”. The third image (and related inscription) of what supposedly must have been a triad (the third personage is outside the picture) must have portrayed Na.ga.pra.bha. De.ba.pra.bha was the name that De.ba.ra.dza, the son of Ye.shes.od, took when he received the *bsnyen.rdzo* vows (i.e. the final monastic vows) (see *mNga’.ris rgyal.rabs* in Vitali, *The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.hrang* p.60 line 19-p.61 line 1 and p.113). This was also the case of Na.ga.ra.dza, who became known as Na.ga.pra.bha.
when he took the same vows. Thus, they should not be identified, like Tucci does, as the 'od.gsum (i.e. the three members of the Gu.ge royal family bearing the word 'od in their name: Ye.shes.'od, Byang.chub.'od and Zhi.ba.'od) (Tucci, *Cronaca della Missione Scientifica Tucci nel Tibet Occidentale* p.169).

'du.khang 'Dzam.gling.brgyan

At an unspecified period, the statue made by Nyi.ma.mgon, called rTse.lha Nyi.ma.mgon.gyis Thub.pa's sku (see above p.90), was brought to the plain and placed in the 'du.khang 'Dzam.gling.brgyan. Given that this temple is a dGe.lugs.pa *opus*, the transfer of the statue to the 'Dzamg.gling.brgyan could not have taken place before the 15th century.

Another tradition says that the same Shakya Thub.pa statue was a nang.ren (i.e. a statue in his memory to be kept indoors) of gNam.lde 'Od.srung, the grandfather of Nyi.ma.mgon. Both these accounts, recounted by the majority of the elders, are useful to dismiss the belief according to which the throne of Nyi.ma.mgon was kept at Tho.ling, a mistaken notion which confuses the alleged existence of Nyi.ma.mgon's throne with the actual existence of the [Shakya] Thub.pa sponsored by Nyi.ma.mgon.

Another statue, that of Sang.dar Jo.bo, was one of the most sacred images of Gu.ge (see above p.89). This statue was originally kept at the temple of Sang.dar, located in the valley by the same name which adjoins the area of Tho.ling in the north-east. The sources available at present do not allow one to ascertain the period in which it was made.

This statue of Jo.bo was transferred to Tho.ling from Sang.dar at an unspecified time since no evidence is extant to establish when it was taken to the main temple of Gu.ge. One could assume that this transfer took place during the dGe.lugs.pa period since the image is housed in the 'du.khang 'Dzam.gling.brgyan but, as in the case of Nyi.ma.mgon's Shakya Thub.pa mentioned immediately above, there is no reason to rule out that it was placed elsewhere in Tho.ling before it was moved to the 'du.khang.

The style of the murals in the 'du.khang 'Dzam.gling.brgyan is rather similar to that of the dGe.lugs.pa wall paintings of the dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa. As a matter of fact, all these religious works seem to have been executed according to the style diffused in Gu.ge during the 15th century and seem thus to belong to the same phase.

gSer.khang

One phase is documented by monumental evidence. All its murals appear to be in the Gu.ge style developed by the dGe.lugs.pa-s in the second half of the 15th century since it is consistent with the historical mentions of the reconstruction of Tho.ling gSer.khang, performed by IHa.dbang blo.gros, a disciple of mKhas.grub.rje (Vitali, *The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pa.brang* p.525-528 and n.896).

The feature of mantra-s carved on the entrance door of each floor, recorded in the rten.deb for Tho.ling gSer.khang, is typical of 15th century wooden portals of temples in West Tibet. Extant examples are those of the mChod.khang dmar.po at Tsa.brang built in the third quarter of the 15th century by Don.grub.ma, the wife of the Gu.ge king Blo.bzang rab.bstan, and of Thub.chen lha.khang at Glo sMos.thang, completed in water dragon 1472 (see Vitali, “On Byams pa and Thub.chen lha khang of Glo sMos thang”).

124 gSer.khang ground floor: gSang 'dus dkyil 'khor. Mural. (Tucci Archives accession number 6004/27); bDe mchog dkyil 'khor. Mural. (accession number 6004/28); a dkyil 'khor. Mural. (accession number 6004/29); Kye rdo re. Mural. (accession number 6004/30); 'Khor lo sdom pa. Mural. (accession number 6004/31); mGon.po phyag drug pa. Mural. (accession number 6004/32). gSer.khang basement, northern wall: a dkyil 'khor. Mural. (accession number 6007/33); a dkyil 'khor. Mural. (accession number 6007/36); a dkyil 'khor. Mural. (accession number 6007/37); a dkyil 'khor. Mural. (accession number 6007/38).
The notion of the fire ox rten.deb that the gSer.khang had four floors contradicts the information deriving from a view of this building found in an old picture taken in 1933, (see Tucci, Cronaca della Missione Tucci nel Tibet Occidentale fig.239), which apparently documents that the gSer.khang in the 1930s, the same decade in which the rten.deb was written, was composed of three floors, a concept reiterated by Tucci in his text.

Given the authority of the rten.deb, a legally binding record of the monastery, the statement contained in the inventories dismantles a belief by now deeply sedimented in Western studies. As will be shown immediately below, the same statement does not go undisputed in the literature recently published in Tibet. One may surmise that the confusing pieces of information concerning the structure of the gSer.khang could depend on the fact that very often and especially in the late period the dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa’s tgsug.lag.khang was wrongly considered to be one and the same as the gSer.khang and the name of the latter was applied to the former (Padma dkar.po chos.byung p.259 lines 9-12 and Ngor chos.byung p.262 lines 4-5). This exchange of names and identities seems hardly acceptable in the light of the rten.deb, given the nature of this document, which is a thorough record of every religious object kept in the Tho.ling complex. The dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa never was, at any period of its history, a four-storeyed structure. Photographic evidence provided by Li Gotami soon after that of the Tucci mission and before the gSer.khang underwent destruction would seem to confirm once more that the temple was three-storeyed (Li Gotami, Tibet in Pictures vol.11, plate on p.151).

The passage in the rten.deb (f.85a) stating that a pagoda roof (rgya.phib) and a banner in gilt copper surmounted the brick building should be read in the sense that a banner had the function of topping the pagoda roof of the building (see above p.76), otherwise this statement would add to the confusion existing in the literature between these two Tho.ling temples, given that the dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa was surmounted by a rgya.phib as again documented by Li Gotami (Tibet in Pictures vol.11, plates on p.147-148). Moreover, the location of the passage in the rten.deb rules out the possibility that the description refers to the dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa since it is not included in the inventories of the lhakhangs of this temple.

That, on the one hand, the gSer.khang had three floors is suggested by its description found in sTod mNgas.ris skor.gsum.gyi lo.rgyus ’bel.glam (p.250 lines 4-10), given that this passage says that the murals of three classes of Tantric deities including those of Bya.rgyud were painted on the walls of the gSer.khang’s top floor and that the bar.khang (“middle floor”) contained the murals of the deities of the Bla.med.rgyud. The paintings in gold of the latter’s deities were used as models by the 5th Dalai Lama Ngag.dbang blo bzang rgya.mtsho to renovate the paintings on the middle floor of the lHa.sa Jo.khang (see above p.50). Given that sTod mNgas.ris skor.gsum.gyi lo.rgyus ’bel.glam is a modern work, it cannot be ruled out that memory of the gSer.khang was not preserved with its authors in an entirely correct way.

On the other hand, the notables of Tho.ling are adamant in confirming the rten.deb version that Tho.ling gSer.khang was composed of four floors (actually three floors and a base). They add that each storey had its outer walls painted in a different colour (as can be gleaned by Tucci’s 1933 picture). Describing them from the top floor to the base, they affirm that the top floor represented Bya.rgyud and was painted white; the second floor represented sPhod.rgyud and was painted yellow; the first floor represented rNal.byor.rgyud and was painted red; the base represented rNal.byor bla.med.rgyud and was painted blue. However, the 15th century mural
on the wall of the dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa, reproduced in the modern thang.ka (pl.111), shows that the gSer.khang had a monochrome paint externally. It is unclear when, after the 15th century, the colours specific to the classes of Tantra-s were adopted.

The notion of the elders that the gSer.khang had four floors, each of them dedicated to a class of Tantra, is partially contradicted by the rten.deb, which makes it clear that the rGyud.sde.bzhis were illustrated on the walls of three floors, while the base of the gSer.khang contained the previous lives of the Buddha and the paradises of桑桑.rgyas. The wall painting of the previous lives of the Buddha must have been painted on the base’s western wall. As a matter of fact, a photographic reconstruction of the murals on this storey, undertaken at IsMEO, shows that the other three walls in this holy chamber were occupied by the depiction of the paradises of桑桑.rgyas, thus leaving no alternative to the fact that the previous lives of the Buddha were painted on the above mentioned western wall126. The arrangement of the four classes of Tantra, distributed on three floors, is confirmed by桑桑.rgyas ye.shes, a well known A.mdo.ba expert of iconography, who affirms that the second floor dkyil.khor-s in the gSer.khang all belong to rNal.‘byor.rgyud. This class of Tantra, according to the elders, should be met with on the first floor.

An explanation is available for the contradicting notion that the gSer.khang was four-storied despite the fact that the available old pictures apparently show the gSer.khang to be three-floored. They have been taken from an angle which frames the gSer.khang as if its ground floor were a solid base. This would then remind one of the pagoda temples of the Kathmandu Valley, in which the multi-storied and multi-roofed structures often lay on solid bases or of the sKu.‘bum at Cung Ri.bo.chhe, a monument roughly contemporary to the Tho.ling gSer.khang founded by lHa.dbang blo.gros in the 15th century, which has a solid base surrounded by a skor.khang (“processional corridor”) with murals. But, in the case of the gSer.khang, this is not so and it is surprising that visitors to Tho.ling failed to realise the exact structure of the temple. The alleged solid base of the gSer.khang actually was its lowest level containing a holy room, as has been correctly mentioned in the rten.deb.

A part of the first floor of the gSer.khang is the only area of this temple which has escaped destruction. Here murals in the distinctive Gu.ge style of the 15th century are extant, in particular one of mGon.po Phyag.drug.pa and partially defaced mandala-s. What remains today of this storey is considerably raised up from the ground, indicating that the building had a level below it. In fact, in order to gain access to the small extant part of the gSer.khang, which belongs to what was once its first floor, one has to walk up on a little mound of plastered mud. At the foot of this protruberance, a diminutive modern door opens to a walled space with faint traces of murals in its interior, which makes one think that this was the lowest level of the temple.

A few conclusive considerations must be made in order to describe the monument according to the accounts of the Tho.ling elders who preserve a vivid memory of its structure, which is authoritatively corroborated in its broad lines by the description of this temple found in the rten.deb.

The building was made of four floors, with the first floor smaller than the base and each successive storey of more reduced dimensions than the one below it. On the gSer.khang’s exterior, the base had, on the eastern side, a porch with two columns and intricated woodwork, while the other three storeys had balconies with similar colonnades and woodwork on all four sides. These balconies on all floors had a small parapet. Each door of the three floors and the base opened to the east.

126 All the pictures of the gSer.khang found in Tucci’s Archives refer to the two lowest floors in this temple. In detail, the three walls of a gSer.khang storey, which have recently been visually reconstructed at IsMEO, collating pictures of the Tucci Archives taken in 1935, belonged to the basement. The rest of Tucci’s photographic documentation of the gSer.khang, mainly consisting of dkyil.khor-s, refers to the gSer.khang’s floor above it. Some of these pictures (gSang ‘dus dkyil.khor (accession number 6004/27), bDe mchog dkyil.khor (accession number 6004/28), ‘A.‘byor.rgyud (accession number 6004/29), Kye rdo.rje (accession number 6004/30), ‘Khor.lo sdom.pa (accession number 605/32) and another dkyil.khor (accession number 6007/36)) can be identified with assurance since they are related to a painting of mGon.po phyag.drug.pa (accession number 6007/33), which is still extant and located on the first floor.
and ladders on the same side led to the storey above. The well known portal with mantric syllables inscribed in lotus roundels and a sculpted framework was the base entrance, which was reached by a flight of a few steps (see Li Gotami, *Tibet in Pictures* plate on p.150).

Attached to the eastern side of the gSer.khang base (this being the side in which the entrance to the temple was placed) was a two-storeyed building, articulated in two parts, which housed monastic quarters (grwa-shag). However, the first floor of this annexe building was separated from the first floor of the gSer.khang given the stepped shape of this temple, in which every floor was smaller than the lower one, and thus the first floor was smaller than the base. Access to the gSer.khang door was through a narrow corridor which intersected the the two parts of the grwa.shag starting from the south and then turning at a right angle to the west straight towards the gSer.khang entrance (see pl.v).

The plain of Tho.ling

The name of the plain on which the temple complex of Tho.ling, founded by lha.bla.ma Ye.shes.'od in 996, stood before it underwent irreparable damages during the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) is mentioned in *rnNga'.ris rgyal.rabs*, almost a hundred years after its establishment, in connection with the struggle for the throne following the developments of rTse.lde's assassination. rTse.lde's son and heir, lha.btsun dBang.'od, was assassinated at Tho.ling Thang.gi.'od (“the Light of the Plain”) by bSod.nams.rtse, the son and successor of 'Bar.lde/dBang.lde, who usurped the throne after rTse.lde’s death. lHa.btsun dBang.'od and bSod.nams.rtse are indicated in the text as khu.dbon (“the uncle and nephew”). *rnNga:ris rgyal.rabs* says: “Finally, when there was a dispute between khu.dbon, dbon mga’.bdag bSod.nams.rtse assassinated him [lha.btsun dBang.'od] at Tho.gling Thang.gi.'od” (ibid. p.74 lines 13-14: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.114).

Another work, i.e. *Shanti.pa’i rnarn.thar* (f.33b line 5), calls the Tho.ling plain *thang.bteg* or the plain where buildings stand (*thang.bteg*, lit. “plain” and “to pitch, to erect” otherwise “high, elevated, raising up”) (see above p.121). This is obviously not the proper name of the plain but a description of the table land where the Tho.ling complex had been built.
Appendixes
Appendix One

Records of Mang.nang
A brief attempt at a literary and visual reconstruction of its temples

A DOCUMENT WRITTEN in dbu.med is the inventory of Ma.nam (i.e. Mang.nang) Byang.chub.gling, which is the 'du.khang of the Mang.nang monastic complex. This 'du.khang should thus not be confused with Byang.chub dge.gnas.gling gtsug.lag.khang and its twin Byams.pa.'phel.gyi gtsug.lag.khang, which were the temples founded here by lha.bla.ma Byang.chub.'od for Jo.bo.rje in the years between fire ox 1037 and iron snake 1041 (rnNga':ris rgyal.rabs p.62 lines 9-10, and ibid. p.62 lines 16-17: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.115. See Vitali, The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.hrang, respectively p.115 and p.116).

As a matter of fact, it seems problematic that 'du.khang Byang.chub.gling was erected in the same period when the other two temples of Mang.nang were built by Byang.chub.'od, since no reference at all is made in any source to him being responsible for the foundation of this 'du.khang.

Although it seems that sDe.srid Sangs.rgyas rgya.mtsho, in a passage of Bai.ser¹²⁷, wrongly considers Byang.chub.gling to be the same temple as that where Jo.bo.rje resided (i.e. the Byang.chub dge.gnas.gling), this passage at least indicates that, by the time this work was written in earth tiger 1698, Mang.nang was known as Byang.chub.gling. It cannot therefore be ruled out that the 'du.khang bearing the same name, which may have something to do with the fact that the entire temple complex became known as Mang.nang Byang.chub.gling, had been founded in the meantime.

A mere possibility is that 'du.khang Byang.chub.gling was built by the dGe.lugs.pa-s, but the silence in the sources concerning its foundation does not even allow one to propose this suggestion with a minimum of evidence.

The Byang.chub.dge.gnas.gling and Byams.pa.'phel were located to the north of 'du.khang Byang.chub.gling. Both are at present in a dilapidated condition. Some receptacles are still preserved in 'du.khang Byang.chub.gling, whose structure, differently from the two above mentioned temples, has not undergone destruction. However, it is possible that some religious objects had been transferred from the Byang.chub.dge.gnas.gling and Byams.pa.'phel to the 'du.khang Byang.chub.gling before the inventories of the latter temple were undertaken.

¹²⁷ Bai.ser (p.275 lines 16-17: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.116) says: "Ma.nang Byang chub gling. Formerly, it was founded by lha.bla.ma Byang.chub.'od. The great pandita Di.pamka ra resided [there] for a while. I hear that images, texts and [religious] objects, many nang.rten-s, are placed [there]."
The elders of Mang.nang ignore the names Byang.chub dge.gnas.gling and Byams.pa.'phel which refer to the two lhA.khang-s built by Byang.chub.'od. They know them under the names lhA.dkang dkar.po and lhA.khang dmar.po, the former being the one to the west of the latter. This seems to be another instance of the 15th century habit of identifying temples in West Tibet by the colour of their outer walls, examples of which are given above (n.14). This is probably a dGe.lugs.pa notion, introduced when the first representatives of the sect reached sTod. It sadly obscures, in the case of Mang.nang, the physical identity of the two temples so that it is unclear which of the two names refers to the Byang.chub dge.gnas.gling or Byams.pa.'phel. Judging by the traces of haloes behind the presently lost sculptures, it is possible that the Byams.pa 'phel.gyi gtsug.lag.khang (more probably housing sculptures such as the cycle of Byams.pa in its interior rather than the other temple) was to the west of the Byang.chub dge.gnas.gling (see Vitali, The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.hrang p.304). This would make it the lhA.khang dmar.po, while the Byang.chub dge.gnas.gling would be the lhA.khang dkar.po.

The elders hold a mistaken view that even 'du.khang Byang.chub.gling dates to the 11th century. This is denied not only by the conspicuous absence of a mention of the 'du.khang in all the sources but also by the monumental contents of this assembly hall, which do not show any trace of such antiquity.

The temples built in the 13th century by La.ga, the king of Gu.ge Byang.ngos, have again been forgotten by the oral tradition of the local elders and it is not even possible to suggest an area of Mang.nang where they may have stood.

The large mchod.rten at Mang.nang village, which flanks to the east the temples of Byang.chub dge.gnas.gling and Byams.pa.'phel, is known as gSer.gyi mchod.rten. Tsha.tsha-s of the great pandit ta sMri.ti Dznya.na were placed in this mchod.rten. It is unclear whether they are still preserved here. This is possible because, although the mchod.rten has suffered damage, it is not to the extent of having been dismantled like the two temples founded by lha.bla.ma Byang.chub.'od. Another mchod.rten of large dimensions (destroyed) was located in the village. Its identity and the circumstances, under which it was built, are nowhere to be traced.

Finally, another important religious and secular structure has to be remembered here. This was Seng.ge.rdzong, a famous fort with a dgon.pa annexed to it, which was located at the entrance of the Mang.nang Valley, where the Mang.nag.chu flows, coming from mDa.'ba.rdzong. Not even ruins of it are visible at present. The rdzong stood on the top of a sandy cliff at the south-east corner on entering the Mang.nang Valley (see Tucci, Santi e Brigant nel Tibet Ignoto).
PLATE xiv
The temples of Mang.nang
(from the north)

1. IHa khang dkar po (anciently known as Byang chub dge gnas gling gi gtsug lag khang)
2. IHa khang dmar po (anciently known as Byams pa 'phel gyi gtsug lag khang)
3. gSer gyi mchod rten
4. 'Du khang Byang chub gling

Drawing by Bianca Visconti
MANG.NANG SPROD.DEB
entitled
*Me.byi Ma.nam dgon Byang.chub.gling gis sku.rten 'dzin.dngos gang.ci sprod.len byed.pai's grn.deb* (sic for rten.deb) dge

"The fire rat (1936) inventory of the statues, receptacles and properties of Ma.nam dgon Byang.chub.gling to facilitate their handing over [from one sku.gnyer to another]"

A translation of the most relevant passages of the Mang.nang rten.deb follows. This is a manuscript numbering fifteen pages, measuring 31.5 by 17.5 cm, of which fourteen (i.e. until f.14a) are written in dbu.med with black ink on white paper. They bear the seal of the Tho.ling mkhan.po on important passages to give legal status to the work, which shows that Mang.nang was under the authority of Tho.ling at that time. Folio 11a confirms this when it says that the inventory was issued from Tho.ling Bla.brang. Folios 11b, 12b and 13b are blank, while folio 6a-b has been cut away. The Mang.nang sprod.deb is at present in the possession of Tsering Chömphel who was so gracious as to lend it to us. Our gratitude goes to him.

The Mang.nang inventory dates to fire rat 1936, one year before the Tho.ling me.glang rten.deb was written. Given that the Byang.chub dge.grn.gling and the Byams.pa.'phel are not incorporated in the former inventory, the records of Mang.nang are not complete, unless these temples were no more used for religious practice during the period in which the Mang.nang rten.deb was compiled.

*Mang.nang sprod.deb* (f.2b-f.6a) reads: "The old inventories of Ma.nam Byang.chub.gling dgon, a branch monastery of Gu.ge mTho.ling, the latter being under S.rab.yes grwa.tshang, which catalogue the statues, receptacles and the religious decorations in its interior, are [at present] completely deteriorated. Moreover, some thoughtless sku.gnyer-s (f.3a) neglected the care of these objects and most of them are lying without consecration formulae [inside them], and the furniture and decorations are in a similar state [of abandonment]. No clue will remain to find out about the original possessions. On this occasion, the necessary consecration formulae have been installed in the various statues. [The objects] have been stamped with a seal in order to facilitate their handling by future sku.gnyer-s, the transfer of their responsibility [to the successive sku.gnyer], and to attract followers. The present inventory, which is in accordance with the former one, is as follows.

The main image is the medicinal clay statue of Mi.pham mgon.po, wearing a cotton robe, with earrings, two kha.btags- ("scarves") around the neck, and a snyan.shal kha.btags- ("long scarf around the neck and reaching the ears"), three of them; the nang.rten of Byang.chub.'od (i.e. a statue in his memory to be kept indoors) in medicinal clay with a snyan.shak- (f.3b) [and] a gilt copper sku.gdung- ("reliquary stupā") of A.ti.sha with a shining red cloth and eight seals on it.

The nang.rten are as follows: the patched robe of Jo.bo.rje and a damaged woven [thang.ka-] of the Rigs.lnga; one damaged ivory seal; the skull of Byang.chub.'od [known as] mTho.dpa ris.mo.ma (sic for Thod.pa ris.mo.ma, "the painted skull"); four gnarn.lcags rdo.rjes- ("rdo.rjes- in meteoritic iron") with some missing prongs; a shining conchshell, including its box; a nam.lcags statue bestowing great blessings; silver statues of Thub.dbang, Tshe.dpag.med, sGrol.ma and 'Jam.dbyangs; the stone statue of dTsh.dpa, which was Jo.bo.rje's thugs.rten- ("receptacle of mind"); a li.ma statue of Thub.dbang (f.4a) and gilt copper statues in various sizes, slightly damaged, altogether eighty-two. Two of the bigger ones are wearing robes. Two statues of lTung.bshags (sic for bshags) are made of ti.tsa (Thig.med zod chen.mao: "a bluish shining metal like silver", i.e. zinc). The li.gser image of rje bla.ma
which was in charge of the handover of property. The highest monk officer (sTyin.pa, Phya.g, rDo.rje) was subordinate to the family of notables from Tho.ling, which ensues from the last Inventory.

Concerning the gsung rten ("receptacles of speech"), [they are] a bKa';'gyur rin.po.chhe in 115 volumes with book covers and ties. The rest of the assorted books of the dgon.pa, the sNyan.shal and necklaces of [Tho.ling?] Sprung.ma.khang and a thang.sku, although they are not [here] inventoried in detail, have to be taken care of as much as the other ones. Concerning the thugs.rten-s, [there are] four large and small gdung.rten in li.ge.s with damage.

Ibid. (f.11a): "The gsung.rtsa (i.e. funds given to the monastery to be administered by it in order to generate some yearly interest) of grwa.spyi (lit. "grwa.tshang and the spyi.pal" i.e. the monastic community and the officer taking care of public property), these two, in grain, cash and animals, have to be calculated on the basis of the separate earth snake 1929 'khol.deb ("inventory of assets") at the end of each year by the Grwa.tshang, which should assess income and expenses and submit them to the highest monk officer (mTho.blas). Therefore, each officer has to take good care of the receptacles and the other properties which have been mentioned above, the handover of whatever is there [from one sku.gnyer to another] has to be performed without negligence. Whatever loss or addition may occur, this has to be clearly mentioned [in this inventory] and a seal should be stamped on it. No other signature and seal are accepted. This has to be done without any negligence. [Issued] from mTho.lding Bla.brang in fire rat (1936), on the seventh day of the eleventh month [sealed]" 128.

The Mang.nang rten.deb (ibid. f.8a-f.9a) also records the ritual objects, said to be the belongings of the Grwa.tshang, and other holdings (dzin.chas) such as utensils and furniture (ibid. f.9a-f.11a) kept in the Byang.chub.gling. The inventories confirm that Mang.nang was subordinate to Tho.ling, which ensues from the list of the Tho.ling dgon.lag-s. They provide more specific evidence when they state that the sde.pa Grwa.tshang, the family of notables from Tho.ling, was the one which was in charge of the Byang.chub.gling.

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128 Like the Tho.ling me glang.rten.deb, also in the Mang.nang spro.dedeb several up-datings are found. They read as follows: (Mang.nang rten.deb f.11a-f.14a), "In iron dragon (1940), the old f.12a since f.11b is blank) spyi.pal ("public officer") offered a Newar made silver lamp, with its mouth in the shape of a rgya.gling ("trumpet") and a four petalled lotus, weighing twenty-two English coins, a set of silver water cups, weighing forty-one English coins, a yellow and multicoloured rgam.rum ("carpet") payed against a loan given by the Grwa.tshang, a new curtan; a new big table with dragon designs; another table with dragon designs, but smaller in size; a La dwags table, a big copper and brass vessel. These are added to the inventory and should be accounted for in the next handover. (f.13a, since f.12b is blank) In water snake 1943, at the time of the hand-over to a [new] sku.gnyer, a copper vessel, not included in the [previous] inventories, and another similar vessel, but bigger; a small brass vessel; a set of three copper vessels; a silver lamp with gold on its beak, gson [not indicated] in height, which are not catalogued in the last inventory; three sets of seven big water cups, one khyr in diameter and gson [not indicated] in height, a silver lamp in the shape of an egg received at the time of the handing over (of duties) in water snake 1943, (f.14a, since f.13b is blank) weighing six coins, a small silver lamp, weighing five coins, two aluminium sets of cooking pots, another aluminium cooking pot with lid are additions to the inventory to be brought to the attention of the next officer".
Appendix Two

Records of mDa’ba rdzong
a brief attempt at a reconstruction of its temples based on literary and oral evidence

The monastery of mDa’ba rdzong consisted of four different areas, which were mDa’ba bKra.shis lhun.po; a cave complex for meditation in an eroded hill known as mTshams.phug.ri; Jo.mo.rdzong, which was meant for lay occupancy; and mDa’ba mKhar.rtse. All four of them were located on the range of sandy cliffs known as Rin.chen spungs.pa.

mDa’ba bKra.shis lhun.po was the westernmost, while mDa’ba mKhar.rtse was the easternmost. Jo.mo.rdzong was located between the two, while mTshams.phug.ri was slightly towards the back on the hill immediately behind mDa’ba bKra.shis lhun.po in the northern direction. Hence, these four areas consisted of three hills and a flatter zone, where mDa’ba bKra.shis lhun.po was built. It will be shown in the following that this is the way the site is described in Shanti.pa’i rnam.thar, the biography of the founder of mDa’ba bKra.shis lhun.po.

mDa’ba bKra.shis lhun.po, the most important temple of mDa’ba rdzong, was founded by Shanti.pa Blo.gros rgyal.mtshan (fire sheep 1487-fire hare 1567), possibly the most prominent dGe.lugs.pa master of Gu.ge.pa origin who was active in loco. His biography reads: “The following day, all the mchod.yon (i.e. the king of Gu.ge, together with his entourage, and Shanti.pa together with his disciples) went there. As they inspected [the site], seeing that the peak of the central of the three mountains resembled the mouth of a conchshell, as they thought, having agreed, to build the bla.brang here, they planned it. All the mchod.yon sat here. rJe dpon.slob prepared tea. In the presence of gong ma yab.sras, a big [white] flag in a single piece of cloth was unrolled and stretched around the edges [of the area], extending for a long distance. When yab.sras took it down from there to Tsa.hrangs (spelt as), since they offered this roll of cloth to many people as present, all of them cut it into pieces and it happened that the market became a white spot” (Shanti.pa’i rnam.thar f.35b lines 4-6: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.117).

Shanti.pa’i rnam.thar continues: “[Shanti.pa] said that the idea [of building a monastery] was an auspicious conjunction of events. On the same day they laid the foundations of the bla.brang on the slopes of this protruding mountain (ri.’bur).
On the wide space connecting the two mountains, here [they built] the 'du.khang with sixteen pillars including the gtsang.khang; the mgon.khang with two pillars as well as the mchod.khang with four pillars and the kitchen. The slope of the mountain where the bla.brang is (bla.brang dang bstun.pa’s ri.ldebs), which is the right side of Rin.chen spungs.pa, and, in brief, all the sides of the three mountains were filled with buildings. To the dgon.pa (f.36a) the name bkra.shis lhun.po was given” (ibid. f.35b line 6-f.36a line 1: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.118).

The year of foundation is not given in Shanti.pa’s rnam.thar. No better approximation can be attempted than to consider it to have occurred in the period after 1339, when Shanti.pa returned to Gu.ge, and before 1565, the first available date in the rnam.thar following the foundation of mDa’ba bkra.shis lhun.po 132.

Subsequently in the text, Shanti.pa’s rnam.thar adds information that would seem to have been preliminary to the foundations. Wood for the buildings was fetched from the area of Garhwal immediately south of mDa’ba rdzong. 130.

Following the foundation of the dgon.pa, Beg.tse was chosen as the protector of the mDa’ba temple complex because Shanti.pa had a dream, in which this wrathful deity appeared to him and offered himself to be the guardian of the new monastic establishment 131.

A few details concerning the receptacles placed at mDa’ba rdzong by Shanti.pa and his royal supporters are given in Shanti.pa’s rnam.thar. His biography concentrates on the main receptacles that were placed inside some of the Lba.khang’s built by him. The text is not very clear in its description and leaves the reader with doubts on the actual location of some of the images it introduces.

Given that the mgon.khang was part of the ‘du.khang complex, it is somewhat noteworthy that no description of its contents is found in the biography, which, instead, gives those of the ‘du.khang and the mchod.khang with four pillars at some length.

The main image of the ‘du.khang (or gtsug.lag.khang as it is called in the passage) was a statue of Tsong.kha.pa together with those of mKhas.grub.rje and rGyal.tshab.rje, made by Newar artists (for a picture see Tucci, Santi e Briganti nel Tibet [gnoto])132.

The main images of the mchod.khang were those of Tsong.kha.pa and two statues of the Dalai Lama in his youth and old age. Given that the 3rd Dalai Lama, bSod.nams rgya.mtsho (1543-1588), was then too young to be depicted as an old man (the 3rd Dalai Lama was twenty-five when Shanti.pa died in 1567), the statues placed in the mDa’ba mchod.khang must have been those of the 2nd Dalai Lama, dGe.dun rgya.mtsho (1475-1542). Other receptacles kept here were several books, a stone statue of dPal.bo as a brahmin and a thang.ka of the deities of the rGyud.sde.bshi133.

Subsequently, Shanti.pa’s rnam.thar records the main wrathful images in the mchod.khang. They were a wooden mGon.po, another wooden image of dMag.zor.ma and a red sandalwood rTa.mgrin134.

The monastic population of the temples of mDa’ba bkra.shis lhun.po soon after the death of its founder Shanti.pa amounted to over one hundred incumbents and over two hundred if the non-resident monks are included 135. Bats.ser (p.276 line 6) says that around the time of writing this work (completed in 1698) there were 161 monks at mDa’ba rdzong, which means that over one hundred years after its foundation the size of the monastic population of mDa’ba bkra.shis lhun.po had remained substantially unchanged.

While the foundation date of mDa’ba bkra.shis lhun.po is surprisingly absent in Shanti.pa’s rnam.thar, a work which is seemingly not overly concerned with
fixing the year in which events in the life of Shanti.pa occurred, this biography is more accurate in the case of the last building of which Shanti.pa laid the foundations at mDa’.ba just before dying: “When autumn of the same year arrived (1566), this great being went to dgon.pa dpal bKra.shis lhun.po. He spread [grains] from his hands (i.e. consecrated) the foundations of the new gtsug lag khang that had been laid. He supervised the making of the images and in particular since he gave detailed instructions concerning the way to prepare the material (rgyu cha rkyen) for the receptacles, again he went to gzim.khang bDe.ba.can of rTsas.hrang, the palace of chos.rgyal” (ibid. f.44b lines 6-7: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.126).

Following Shanti.pa’s death, Shanti.pa’i nam thar adds: “When a master artist was needed to make the nang rten (i.e. a statue in memory of Shanti.pa to be kept indoors), while one of the best artists from Ne.pal was proceeding to Ngam.ring after leaving sKyi.d.grong\(^{136}\), he met an a tsa.rat (i.e. an acharya) on the way. The latter said: “Where are you Nepalis going?” when he answered: “We are considering whether to go to Ngam.ring”, [a tsa.rat] said: “This is not advisable. Since a great bla.ma has died in mNga’.ris.stod, there is much work to be done for his funerary rites. A great reward will come to you if you go there”. Hearing this, some master Newar artists arrived exactly in time (skabs.jsu babs.par) without obstacles on the way. Then, in the central gtsang khang of the new gtsug lag khang, which was excellently built as well (i.e. like the earlier ones), the statue of rgyal.ba Byams.pa made in gilt copper, which is the nang rten of rje, with hundreds of zho of gold painted on its face and the body studded with precious stones as decoration, was completed quickly [and] without hindrance. In the upper and lower part of the statue various blessings, many books and the five kinds of jewels were placed. A great ceremony was held for the consecration. All the Newar artists were remunerated. Wages and gifts were given to their satisfaction” (ibid. f.44b lines 1-4: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.127).

This was the most important lha khang at mDa’.ba. The beginning of the works for the new gtsug lag khang at mDa’.ba bKra.shis lhun.po dates to fire tiger 1566 or soon after. Hence this new religious building was the brainchild of Shanti.pa, who did not see its completion. The monumental statue of Byams.pa dates to fire hare 1567, the year in which Shanti.pa died, because it was made as his nang rten immediately after his death. It is then quite likely that the Byams.pa and the gtsug lag khang were completed not long after his demise, since the text says that it took less time than expected to finish the colossal statue.

The Newar workmanship of the colossal Byams.pa is noteworthy, especially in the light of the fact that, since the advent of the dGe.lugs.pa-s in West Tibet, a new Gu.ge style for religious works, introduced by members of this sect in Gu.ge and adjoining lands of sTod, had been flourishing. The choice of Newar artists seems to prove the high esteem in which they were held by the dGe.lugs.pa-s\(^{137}\).

As a matter of fact, the main statues of both the phases at mDa’.ba bKra.shis lhun.po (the foundation phase and that which led to the construction of Byams.pa lha.khang) were both the opus of Newar–s. From the available visual documentation (see the pictures in Tucci, Santi e Briganti nel Tibet Ignoto) the murals of the various mDa’.ba bKra.shis lhun.po temples were executed in the style which had been developed in West Tibet. Interestingly, the main statues were Newar, the murals were mNga’.ris stod.pa.

To sum up, the complex of mDa’.ba bKra.shis lhun.po, soon after the death of its founder Shanti.pa, included the bla.bnang, the ’du khang and the Byams.khang. Information derived from the literature is confirmed by the accounts of the mDa’.ba elders with a notable difference as follows.

conceive, and moreover many smaller statues in the styles of East and West India, Bal.po, China etc. and a mandala thang ka depicting the cycle of deities of the rGyud sde bzhin, a set of texts on mDa skhangs by rje yab sras (Tsong.kha.pa and his two main direct disciples), and, moreover, very many manuscripts (phyag dpel) of the commentaries to the doctrines of India and Tibet and the stone statue, self originated from the waters, of dpal in the body of a braham, the image of the thug dam chos skyong of this rje, which is extraordinary, [were placed here].

134. Shanti.pa’i nam thar (f 36b line 7-f.37a line 2: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.124): “A statue of Ye shes mGon po phyag drag pa, seemingly self-originated and made of wood, which bestows blessings, a statue of dpal ldan dMag zor gnyi rGyal mo, made of black a ka ru, which is great for the signs and omens of bestowing blessings, a red sandalwood statue of rGya mgam gsang sgrub, which bestows blessings, were placed here”.

135. Shanti.pa’i nam thar (f 36b line 1: Tibetan text in Appendix Eight, Tib.125): “At present those who continuously reside [here] are some sixty bshnyen rdo rgyas.pa-s and each of them has at least one dge thul (“novice”), which makes over 100 residents. The general assembly numbers over 200 altogether (i.e. including residents and non-residents)”.

136. The text wrongly reads: “sKyi.d.grong nas thon ting Ma ring”, but it is Ngam.ring.

137. See, inter alia, Jackson, Tibetan Paintings (especially Chapters One and Two) for an assessment of the presence and role of Newar artists in Tibet before the modern Tibetan styles were born; and Vitali, Early Temples of Central Tibet p.133 and n 66 for an earlier reference in dGe ’du gnub’ nam thar (p.268), according to which dGe ’du gnub (1391-1474) summoned in earth snake 1461 a Newar artist active at dGa’ ldan.
A sketch of mDa’ba.rdzong

mDa’ba bKra.shis lhun.po
1. Byams khang
2. 'Du khang
3. Bla ma khang
4. Bla brang
5. A row of five mchod rtens, the last of which, to the right, named rGyal po’s mchod rten

mKhar.rtse
6. Byams khang
7. Srum ma khang

mTshams.phug.ri
8. mTshams.phug.ri

Jo.mo.rdzong
9. Jo.mo.rdzong

rDzong khang, the house of the mDa’ba rdzong.dpon
10. rDzong khang, the house of the mDa’ba rdzong.dpon
11. Rab brtan khang.sar
12. Houses
Religious buildings

mDa'ba bKra.shis lhun.po, the main area of the mDa'ba rdzong monastic complex, comprised before its destruction (from west to east) the Byams.khang, the 'du.khang, the Bla.ma.khang and the bla.brang. It seems, therefore, that the temple known as Bla.ma.khang was not contemporaneous with the others constructed in two phases (one during the lifetime of Shanti.pa; the second begun at the time of his death and completed soon after), but it was built at an unspecified date after the death of Shanti.pa.

The Byams.khang of mDa'ba bKra.shis lhun.po was one storey high with a pagoda roof and had a zhal.ras.khang which allowed a close view of the face of its famous Byams.pa statue (see Li Gotami, Tibet in Pictures vol.11, plate on p.126 and p.128; for a picture of the monumental Byams.pa see Tucci, Santi e Briganti nel Tibet Ignoto). Inside the Byams.khang of mDa'ba bKra.shis lhun.po was a gdung.rten which contained the bum.pa ("sacrificial vase") of Jo.bo.rje Ati.sha. The wooden door giving access to this Byams.khang was decorated with roundel motifs and other ornamental patterns (Tucci Archives accession number 6047/29), typical of West Tibet during the dGe.lugs.pa diffusion in these lands. Inside the Bla.ma.khang a statue of Shanti.pa Blo.gros rgyal.mtshan was preserved.

A row of five mchod.rten-s of considerable size, two of them being of even larger scale, was located in the complex (see the picture in Tucci, Santi e Briganti nel Tibet Ignoto). One of these two mchod.rten-s was called rGyal.po'i mchod.rten, although it is unclear which of the larger two this was. Probably rGyal.po'i mchod.rten was the last in the row, which was the only mchod.rten zlum.po ("round") of the two larger stupa-s (for the other one see Li Gotami, Tibet in Pictures vol.11, plate on p.129).

At mKhar.rtse, the sandy spur at the other extremity of mDa'ba bKra.shis lhun.po to the east, was another Byams.khang and a bSrung.ma.khang (see Li Gotami, Tibet in Pictures vol.11, plate on p.129).

This Byams.khang contained three gdung.rten-s ("funerary stupa-s"), all one-storey high. One of them was that of mDa'ba chos.rgyal Blo.bzang padma bkra.shis (on him see above p.54-55), while the other two were of mDa'ba exponents, whose identity is no longer documented. In the same temple a triad of statues of historical significance was preserved. They were about medium-sized and depicted the same mDa'ba chos.rgyal Blo.bzang padma bkra.shis, a royal patron of mDa'ba rdzong; Shanti.pa Blo.gros rgyal.mtshan, the founder of mDa'ba bKra.shis lhun.po; and an unidentified member of Blo.bzang padma bkra.shis' royal family, said by some elders to be the latter's son.138 This seems to prove that, again in the case of these three statues, the correct identity of these rulers is confirmed, for the sources do mention that Blo.bzang padma bkra.shis had male offspring (see below p.182).

The hill of mTshams.phug.ri is dotted with a number of caves on the eroded slopes, which were used for meditation as its name implies (for a portion of the hill see Li Gotami, Tibet in Pictures vol.11, plate on p.128).

138 Tucci in his Santi e Briganti nel Tibet Ignoto (p.119) says that the latter was the brother of an ancient king of Gu.ge; this assessment he collected at mDa'ba rdzong, and is not dissimilar to the one still held by the elders of this locality to this day.
Lay buildings

Jo.mo.rdzong. No religious buildings are reported to have existed here according to the information gleaned from the elders.

At the foot of the sandy spur, on top of which stood Jo.mo.rdzong, was the rdzong.khang or house of the mDa ба rdzong.dpon (“district officer”).

At the foot of mTshams.phug.ri was sPyi.khang (lit. “public house”, i.e. a building for the lay community and the monks) Rin.chen bum.pa (“Vase of Jewels”).

Another edifice of some importance in mDa ба rdzong was the residence called Rab.brtan khang.gsar, which was sited at the foot of the eroded mKhar.rtse hill (Li Gotami, Tibet in Pictures vol.11, plate on p.130).

In the vicinity of mDa ба rdzong a few ruins of buildings, whose structure made Tucci conjecture that their plan was of the “Rin.chen bzang.po type”, stand on the plain adjoining the mDa ба.chu and extend as far as mDa ба rdzong.

The elders of mDa ба rdzong had no suggestion to offer, these buildings having been destroyed long since, and did not attempt an identification, not even to the extent of whether they were lay or religious structures; nor did they express a view as to their antiquity. However, they provided the names of these localities with some hesitation. One, which raised some doubts, is sMan.lung (Tucci Archives accession numbers 6003/1 and 6003/6), the other, identified with assurance, is Kha.sar (rather than Khang.gsar as Tucci says in Santi e Brigant nel Tibet Ignoto).
Appendix Three

A document being a synopsis of the Tho.ling \textit{rten.deb}

(compiled by bKra.shis tshe.ring)

This document reads as follows:

"brGya.rtsa lho.brgyud ("the south side of the temple complex"): 
1. 'Du.khang 'Dzam.gling.brgyan: 235 images; 
2. lHa.khang bKra.shis 'od. 'bar: 26 images; 
3. Thugs.rje lha.khang: 17 images; 
4. sGrol.ma lha.khang: all kinds of receptacles of speech, altogether 188 volumes; 
5. rGyal.ba rigs.lnga'i lha.khang: a statue of mnga'.bdag bSod.nams.rtse, made of \textit{li.ma} and inscribed on the base, with a lotus and a shining \textit{chakra}, 1 \textit{khru} and 6 \textit{sor} in height, damaged: 15 images; 
6. sMan.bla.khang: 9 images; 
7. Rigs.lnga'i lha.khang: 6 images; 

In fire rat 1936, a restoration (\textit{nyams.gros}) was carried out:
brGya.rtsa byang.ma (the north side of the temple complex): 
1. Bla.ma lha.khang: 14 images; 
2. 'Jigs.brgyad.khang ("chapel of the eight fears"): 85 images; 
3. gSung.chos lha.khang (i.e. the library of the brGya.rtsa):
   various collected works: 187 volumes; 
   \textit{Tshad.ma rnam}. \textit{grel} rtsa.ba yan.lag, woodblock edition vols. kha-nya: 52 volumes; 
   a statue of Ngag.dbang ye.shes; 
4. rNam[.par] snang[.mdzad] lha.khang: 51 images; 
5. Mani lha.khang: 1 image; 
6. bSrung.ma.khang ("chapel of the Protectors"): 35 Buddha-s of the Confession made of the five precious materials; 

In water monkey 1932, a restoration (\textit{nyams.gros}) was carried out:
1. rGyal.khang: 'A.chen mTshangs.pa;
2. Bla.brang mgon.khang:
   a life-size statue of rje Ngag.dbang grags.pa in medicinal clay wearing a set
   made of robes and a pandi.ta's hat;
   a statue of mnga'.bdag bSod.nams.rtse inscribed with his name and having a
   finger with minor damage;
   a statue of mnga'.bdag Khri.lde inscribed with his name;
   13 volumes, receptacles of speech;
3. lHa.khang 'Jig.brten.rgyan: 14 images;
4. mchod.khang ("prayer room") of 'Bri.zur dge.slong bZang.po: 1 image;
5. Byams.khang: 1 image;

The main gSer.khang has four floors. On the ground floor the paradise of Sangs.rgyas
[and his] twelve deeds [are depicted]. On the three upper floors the murals of the
rGyud.sde.bzhi dkyil.khor-s and [their] Assembly of Deities are painted in gold
water of the 'Dzam.bu.gling river. The four doors (i.e. the door of each floor) open
to the east. Complete sets of auspicious mantra-s are executed on the doors. An
excellent banner in gilt copper [having the function of a] rgya.phibs ("pagoda roof")
is above the brick building".
Appendix Four

Tho. ling gNas.bcu
lha.khang sprod.deb
entitled
gNas.bcu lha.khang gi sprod stong gcig 'thus.gyis (sic) deb
"The book that enables the handing over
of the innumerable objects of gNas.bcu lha.khang"

These records are contained in a manuscript numbering ninety-two pages, which measure 33.5 by 12.5 cm. Seventeen of these pages are written in dbu.med only on their recto (their verso being blank) with black ink on white paper. Pages from eighteen to ninety-one are left blank for future use as well as page two. The most significant passages are translated here as follows.

gNas.bcu lha.khang sprod.deb (f.3a-f.6a) reads: “In fire male tiger (1926), on auspicious consecutive days, a renovation of gNas.bcu lha.khang was made, and, on this occasion, (f.4a) an inventory was written which includes the medicinal clay statue of Thub.dbang, over life-size, as the main image. Its urna has a white stone about the size of a grain. To its right and left are the statues of the sixteen 'Phags.pa gNas.brtan chen.po, complete with their hand implements. To the north side of the door (i.e. to the right upon entering) is Nyan.thos chen.po, standing alone, and on the south side [of the door] is dGe.bsnyen chen.po in the same material as above. All these statues have received a coat (bzo.bkod) of fresh paint. This gtsug.hg.khang has four pillars. The entrance faces east. The fittings cast in fire, which are mounted on the door, were also made anew. Above (i.e. on the roof) are a banner and two thug-s (“roof decorations”). The sku.gnyer-s and the monks’ inspectors, whoever is appointed [to this task], must look after the [receptacles] and take care of them without any negligence. Responsibility for the handing over and taking charge of duties without any lapse by each incumbent sku.gnyer and inspector must rest with the successive dbu.chos (“head instructors”) of [Tho.ling] Bla.brang. Fire tiger year (1926) (f.5a) month and day (illegible) [sealed].

The fire tiger year being over, in [the previous] fire dragon year (1917), as it was previously shown that [receptacles] were missing, three 'bru.kha1-s and twelve 'bre-s of barley were given in compensation (stong.bson) to be kept with the dbu.chos as offerings to the gNas.brtan-s. The above capital [in grains] should be properly preserved”.

Ibid. (f.6a): “In the tiger year (1926?), in dedication of Phy.i.dbang bla.ma 'Phags.pa chos.'phel, one young female 'bri, one male g.yag and one female calf were offered to fill the butterlamps continuously [sealed].
Ibid. (f.12a-f.13a): “In fire tiger (1926), during the renovation, some objects were received for the gNas.bcu lha.khang as follows. A sku.thang of Jo.[bo.rje], [rNgog] Legs.[pa'i shes.rab] [and] 'Brom[ston.pa], these three, with a blue and rainbow-coloured frame including a veil in yellow and red as well as with orange strings and thang[.ka] knobs in yellow brass; and another one having the same subject [were given]. The fabric of its cloth frame is dark blue with yellow and red stripes, the veil being in yellow and red with orange strings and the thang[.ka] knobs in yellow brass; a sku.thang of dGa'.ldan lha.skya with a brown synthetic (dzus sic for rdzus) brocade frame with red and yellow stripes (lia sic for 'ja) and blue go.skag (?), the veil as those above, this being an old thang[.ka] without knobs; a sku.thang of Thub.dbang lTung.gshegs (sic for gsags) with a Mongolian brocade frame and go.skag (?) in dark blue rgyan.gzhi brocade, the veil being in yellow synthetic silk and (f.1~~1 its strings in orange colour. The thread at the edge is red. The strings are red and the knobs are in iron. The latter [thang[.ka] is neither old nor new. One volume of gZung.bsdus printed at Zhol, complete with wooden book covers, ties, wrappers and label; one volume of brGjad.stong.pa, complete with wooden book covers, ties, wrappers and label; of Ma.ni bka'.bum in one volume; Bai.dkar in one volume; one volume of bKa:gdams Pha.chos Bu.chos, complete with wooden book covers, ties, wrappers and label; one set of seven small water cups, two of them with some damage”.

Ibid. (f.15a-f.17a): “In memory of the late mes 'Grug.pa, one li metal butterlamp was offered. In memory of sKye.lag Ru.shod Padma, a thang[.ka depicting rje yab.sras.gsum, Jo.bo chen.mo (sic) and lo.tsa.pa (sic) with a blue brocade frame with red and yellow stripes, a yellow veil and orange strings and a black lining. (f.16a) dGe.slong bsTan.'dzin shes.rab offered a complete gNas.btan rtog.brjod (“biographies of the Arhat-s”) with a white cloth wrapper.

In fire hare (1927), the old treasurer of mTho.lding Bla.brang, namely Tre.hor dge.zur Blo[.bzang] bsTan[.dzin], offered a copper butterlamp with an inscription.

In earth tiger (1938), the Gra[.tshang and] sBug[.pa families] offered 120 yellow butterlamps.

(f.17a) In wood bird (1945), on the sixth of the second month, on the occasion of handing over of [duties], two sets of a five-pronged rdo.rje and dril.[bu], one pair of tables, a butterlamp in red wood and a ceiling cover made of printed cotton were offered”.

Ibid. (f.92): “This book has ninety-two pages”.

Appendix Five

Temples in Gu.ge, Pu.hrang, sGar.rdzong, Ru.thog, dGe.rgyas, sGer.rtse and mTsho.chen

Temples of Gu.ge

In the area of lHo.stod (Tho.ling):
1. Tho.ling dgon.pa (dGe.lugs.pa);
2. rTsa.rang Blo.stengs (dGe.lugs.pa);
3. Bye.dkar dgon.pa (dGe.lugs.pa);
4. mKhar.rtse dgon.pa (Sa.skya.pa);
5. Mang.nang dgon.pa (dGe.lugs.pa).

In the area of lHo.stod (mDa'.ba):
6. gDong.bo dgon.pa (dGe.lugs.pa);
7. Khyung.lung dgon.pa (dGe.lugs.pa);
8. mDa'.ba bKra.shis lhun.po (dGe.lugs.pa)
9. mDa'.ba 'Gram dgon.pa (dGe.lugs.pa).

In the area of lHo.smad (Za.rang):
10. Do.gsham dgon.pa (dGe.lugs.pa).
11. La.yi dgon.pa (dGe.lugs.pa);
12. sTeng 'Phags.pa dgon.pa (dGe.lugs.pa);
13. Chu.ze dgon.pa (dGe.lugs.pa);
14. Ri.sde.sgang dgon.pa (dGe.lugs.pa);
15. Za.rang dgon.pa (dGe.lugs.pa);
16. Ri dgon.pa (dGe.lugs.pa).

In the area of Byang.ngos (Dung.dkar):
17. Be sDong.po dgon.pa (dGe.lugs.pa);
18. Dung.dkar dgon.pa (dGe.lugs.pa);
19. Phy.i.wang dgon.pa (Sa.skya.pa).
In the area of Byang.ngos (Shang.rtse):
20. Rab.rgyas.gling dgon.pa (Sa.skya.pa);
21. Ga.rtse dgon.pa (bKa'.brgyud.pa);
22. Shang.rtse dgon.pa (dGe.lugs.pa);
23. Shang dgon.pa (dGe.lugs.pa);
24. Shes.shod dgon.pa (Sa.skya.pa);
25. gZha.yas bKra.shis chos.gling (dGe.lugs.pa);
26. Sung.ngur dgon.pa (Brug.pa).

In the area of Rong.chung:
27. Ti.yag dgon.pa (bKa'.brgyud.pa);
28. 'Phur.ri dgon.pa (dGe.lugs.pa);
29. Rad.nis lha.khang (bKa'.brgyud.pa);
30. Yi.ri dgon.pa (Yi.ri dgon) (bKa'.brgyud.pa);
31. gSer.gong lha.khang (bKa'.brgyud.pa);
32. lCug.pa lha.khang (bKa'.brgyud.pa);
33. Srib.skyes lha.khang (bKa'.brgyud.pa);
34. Rong.stod dgon.pa (rNying.ma.pa);
35. lHug 'Phags.dgon.pa (rNying.ma.pa);
36. Ma.yang klu.khang (bKa'.brgyud.pa);
37. sGom.phug dgon.pa (bKa'.brgyud.pa);
38. sNu dgon.pa (dGe.lugs.pa).

In the area of Chu.gsum:
39. Byang.chub.gling dgon.pa (dGe.lugs.pa);
40. Bar.lcog (or Bar.skyog) Phun.tshogs rab.brtan.gling (dGe.lugs.pa);
41. gSer.ti dgon.pa (dGe.lugs.pa);
42. Tsho.rub lha.khang (dGe.lugs.pa);
43. Kha.rag dgon.pa (dGe.lugs.pa);
44. sMan.rtsa lha.khang (dGe.lugs.pa).

Temples of Pu.hrang

In the area of sTag.la.mkhar:
1. Kha.char dgon.pa (Sa.skya.pa/Ngor.pa);
2. Zhi.sde dgon.pa (Sa.skya.pa/Ngor.pa);
3. Khrus.sgo dgon.pa (dGe.lugs.pa);
4. 'Go.'dzugs dgon.pa (dGe.lugs.pa);
5. dGung.phur dgon.pa (bKa'.brgyud.pa);
6. rTsa.bu lha.khang (Sa.skya.pa/Ngor.pa).

In the area of Bar.kha:
7. rGyang.grags (bKa'.brgyud.pa);
8. Nyan.po.ri rdzong (bKa'.brgyud.pa);
9. 'Bri.ra.phug (bKa'.brgyud.pa);
10. rDzu. phrul.phug (bKa'.brgyud.pa);
11. Bye'u dgon.pa (bKa'.brgyud.pa/rNying.ma.pa);
In the area of Hor.chu:
13. gSer.ra.lung (bKa' brgyud.pa).

Temples of sGar.rdzong

In the area of Mon.mtsher:
1. Pre.ta.puri (Bon.po/bKa' brgyud.pa);
2. Gurgyam dgon.pa (Bon.po);
3. mDun.chu dgon.pa (dGe.lugs.pa).

In the area of sGar:
4. bKra.shis.sgang (dGe.lugs.pa);
5. Gyam.smug lha.khang (bKa' brgyud.pa).

Temples of Ru.thog

In the area of Ru.thog:
1. lHun.grub chos.gling (dGe.lugs.pa);
2. O.byang btsan.khang (dGe.lugs.pa).

In the area of Ra.bang:
3. rTs'a'u mani lha.khang (dGe.lugs.pa).

In the area of Rog.gsum:
4. mTshe.lung lha.khang (dGe.lugs.pa).

Temples of dGe.rgyas

In the area of Tshwa.kha:
1. bKra.shis chos.gling dgon.pa (bKa' brgyud.pa).

In the area of 'Bong.pa:
2. Brag.skya dgon.pa (bKa' brgyud.pa);
3. 'Phri.ra.phug dgon.pa (bKa' brgyud.pa).

In the area of gShung.pa:
4. Shang klu.khang (bKa' brgyud.pa);
5. sKya.bo lha.khang (bKa' brgyud.pa).

Temples of sGer.rtse

In the area of Mar.mig:
1. Mar.mig dgon.pa (rNying.ma.pa).

In the area of Khang.thog:
2. Brag.gyam dgon.pa (bKa' brgyud.pa).
In the area of Dung.mtsho:
3. Lo.bo bDe.chen dgon.pa (bKa'.brgyud.pa);
4. Dung.mtsho lha.khang (dGe.lugs.pa).

Temples of mTsho.chen

In the area of Tshi.phri:
1. sMan.sdong (bKa'.brgyud.pa);
2. mTsho.chen Jo.mo dgon.pa (bKa'.brgyud.pa);
3. sPen bla lha.khang (bKa'.brgyud.pa).

In the area of mDa'.gzhung:
4. 'Bur.dkar dgon.pa (bKa'.brgyud.pa).
Appendix Six

Tibetan text of the documents relevant to the reconstruction of Tho.ling

Tho.ling rten.deb
रेकर्ड ऑफ थोंलिङ
ཐོལིང་རྒྱུན་དཔེ་

[10b] སྣོས་དྲ་ཐེག་ཆེ་ཞིང་བཤད་ཆོས་རྣམ་བཤད་ཟབས་བཤད་སྤྲོད་དོ་སྒྲིག་མི་དྲ་བལ་
དུ་དང་རྒྱུན་དུསྡེ་ོང་། བྲོན་པོ་ལྟ་བསྟན་དེ་ཤེས་པར་མ་ནོ་བུ་བྱུང་དོན་སྔོན་མོང་
དོན་མོང་པོ་དེ་ཤེས་པར་མ་ནོ་བུ་བྱུང་དོན་སྔོན་མོང་པོ་དེ་ཤེས་པར་མ་ནོ་བུ་བྱུང་

down
RECORDS OF THO.LING
[16a] བོད་ལུག་དོན་དོན་བོད་ལུག་དོན་དོན་མི་བོད་ལུག་dB
བཤེས་ལུང་ཐེ་ཆོས་བོད་ལུང་ཐེ་ཆོས་བོད་ཀྱི་བོད་ལུང་ཐེ་ཆོས་བོད་ཀྱི་ཟིན་ི་ཨེར་བོད་ལུང་ཐེ་ཆོས་བོད་ཀྱི་ཟིན་ི་ཨེར་

[243] རྒྱས་པའི་ཐོན་སྤྲིིང་གི་བོད་ལུང་ཐེ་ཆོས་བོད་ཀྱི་བོད་ལུང་ཐེ་ཆོས་བོད་ཀྱི་བོད་ལུང་ཐེ་ཆོས་བོད་ཀྱི་ཟིན་ི་ཨེར་

[244] ཡི་ཨེར་བོད་ལུང་ཐེ་ཆོས་བོད་ཀྱི་ཟིན་ི་ཨེར་

[245] ཡི་ཨེར་བོད་ལུང་ཐེ་ཆོས་བོད་ཀྱི་བོད་ལུང་ཐེ་ཆོས་བོད་ཀྱི་ཟིན་ི་ཨེར་

[246] ཡི་ཨེར་བོད་ལུང་ཐེ་ཆོས་བོད་ཀྱི་ཟིན་ི་ཨེར་

[247] ཡི་ཨེར་བོད་ལུང་ཐེ་ཆོས་བོད་ཀྱི་ཟིན་ི་ཨེར་

[248] ཡི་ཨེར་བོད་ལུང་ཐེ་ཆོས་བོད་ཀྱི་ཟིན་ི་ཨེར་
RECORDS OF THO.LING
བོད་གི་དོན་དང་ཕྱིར་དོན་དང་བོད་གི་དོན་དང་ཕྱིར་དོན་དང་བོད་གི་དོན་དང་ཕྱིར་དོན་དང་བོད་གི

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བོད་ལྡན་བོད་ཀྱི་ཐ་སྟོན་པར་གྲོགས་པ་དེ་ཐ་སྟོན་པར་གྲོགས་མི་ཐོབ་པ་ཡིན་བཤད་པས་ཕྲུལ་པའི་ཐབས་ཐོག་བཏང་བྱི་མོ་རྒྱུ་ེ་མི་ན་ལེན་མི་འབུལ་བ་ཡིན་པ་འདེབས་ཐབས་གྱི་ཐོག་པ་དང་ཐོག་པ་ཡིན་པ་ཐོག་པ་དེས་བསོད་ནམས་དགེ་བའི་ཐབས་ཐོག་པ་དང་ཐོག་པ་དེ་བསོད་ནམས་དགེ་བའི་ཐབས་ཐོག་པ་དང་ཐོག་པ་དེ་བསོད་ནམས་དགེ་བའི་ཐབས་ཐོག་པ་དང་ཐོག་པ་

[42a] དུས་དཔལ་དཔལ་བོད་ཀྱི་ཐབས་ཐོག་པ་དེར་བསྟོན་པ་ནི་བསོད་ནམས་བཅོས་སྤྱོད་ཀྱི་ཐབས་ཐོག་པ་དེར་བསྟོན་པ་ནི་བསོད་ནམས་བཅོས་སྤྱོད་ཀྱི་ཐབས་ཐོག་པ་དེར་བསྟོན་པ་ནི་བསོད་ནམས་བཅོས་སྤྱོད་ཀྱི་ཐབས་ཐོག་པ་

[44b] དུས་དཔལ་དཔལ་བོད་ཀྱི་ཐབས་ཐོག་པ་དེར་བསྟོན་པ་ནི་བསོད་ནམས་བཅོས་སྤྱོད་ཀྱི་ཐབས་ཐོག་པ་དེར་བསྟོན་པ་ནི་བསོད་ནམས་བཅོས་སྤྱོད་ཀྱི་ཐབས་ཐོག་པ་

[49a] དུས་དཔལ་དཔལ་བོད་ཀྱི་ཐབས་ཐོག་པ་དེར་བསྟོན་པ་ནི་བསོད་ནམས་བཅོས་སྤྱོད་ཀྱི་ཐབས་ཐོག་པ་

[49b] དུས་དཔལ་དཔལ་བོད་ཀྱི་ཐབས་ཐོག་པ་དེར་བསྟོན་པ་ནི་བསོད་ནམས་བཅོས་སྤྱོད་ཀྱི་ཐབས་ཐོག་པ་

[49b] དུས་དཔལ་དཔལ་བོད་ཀྱི་ཐབས་ཐོག་པ་དེར་བསྟོན་པ་ནི་བསོད་ནམས་བཅོས་སྤྱོད་ཀྱི་ཐབས་ཐོག་པ་

[49b] དུས་དཔལ་དཔལ་བོད་ཀྱི་ཐབས་ཐོག་པ་དེར་བསྟོན་པ་ནི་བསོད་ནམས་བཅོས་སྤྱོད་ཀྱི་ཐབས་ཐོག་པ་
RECORDS OF THO.LING
RECORDS OF THO.LING
174 | RECORDS OF THO.LING
Mang.nang sprod.deb


178 | Records of tholing
6a-b missing
180 | RECORDS OF THO.LING
Appendix Seven

A few edicts concerning Tho.ling issued during the late period of the Gu.ge dynasty and afterwards

The 1653 edict of the La.dwags king Indra.bo.dhi to the people of Gu.ge

entitled

chos.rgyal.nas khral.rigs.skor rtsal.ba'i bstan.tshig
“A word of instruction from the chos.rgyal on the types of taxation”

The edict issued by Indra.bodhi rnam.rgyal in water snake 1653 confirms the statement of other sources (see above p.47-49) that he was the member of the royal family of La.dwags, to whom control of Gu.ge was assigned. From the viewpoint of the contents of the bka:shog, two legal clauses are given special emphasis. The first is that the burden on the people of Gu.ge phyi.nang of maintaining Tho.ling was retained. The second is that Indra.bodhi rnam.rgyal abolished a number of collateral burdens imposed on his Gu.ge subjects before his time. It is not clear whether these had been enforced during the reign of his father Seng.ge rnam.rgyal in Gu.ge (1630-1642), after he had conquered this kingdom and brought the rule of the Gu.ge dynasty to an end. That it was the new La.dwags.pa order which imposed them seems to be proved by the statement in the bka:shog that “this practice is an unpleasant and oppressive burden not existing before” and thus that it had recently been introduced.

Another significant notion of the edict is a reference to Gu.ge phyi.nang, often found elsewhere, which needs thorough investigation in the future. A possibility is that the term stands for the quite near morphological division of its land. Nang (“internal Gu.ge”) seems to be the lower and more rugged territory of mainland Gu.ge composed by four main areas, two of them to the north of the Glang.chen kha.babs (Rong.chung in the west and Byang.ngos in the east), the other two to the south of the same river (lHo.smad in the west and lHo.stod in the east). Chu.mur.ti and Chu.gsum, the area were Bar.skyog is located, are the two northernmost districts of Gu.ge nang, respectively to the north-west and north-east of Rong.chung. Phy'i (“external Gu.ge”) seems to correspond to the higher wasteland
to the east of mainland Gu.ge and adjoining Men.rtser in the south to bKra.shis.sgang in the north, thus being, principally, the huge and long valley of the sGar.chu which opens, in the south, into the plain in front of gangs Ti.se.

THE EDICT OF FIRE DRAGON (1736) issued by the 7th Dalai Lama bSKal.bzang rgya.mtsho

A few points arising from the 1736 edict are worth emphasizing. Possibly the most significant notion of the edict is the evidence that the Gu.ge royal lineage was restored to a nominal degree of authority under the control of IHa.sa. The rule of the local king Blo.bzang padma bkra.shis (1676-1744) was limited by a few officers who had local duties. Given that Blo.bzang padma bkra.shis' power was conferred upon him by dGa'.ldan Tshe.dbang dpal.bzang, he was the sole ruler of Gu.ge appointed after the removal of the La.dwags.pa control of this land and before the extinction of the Gu.ge dynasty (according to Kah.thog rig.dzin Tshe.dbang nor.bu in his Bod.rje lha.btsad.poi gdung.rabs, the royal family of Gu.ge came to an end with his death in 1744 (see above p.55)). This makes the statement found in the biography of Panchen Lama Blo.bzang ye.shes that the abbot of bKra.shis lhun.po was visited by Gu.ge chos.rgyal yab.yum.sras.gsum (Blo.bzang ye.shes.kyi rnam.thar.f.384b line 4) particularly significant. It seems from the passage mentioned above that Blo.bzang padma bkra.shis and his wife Tshe.ring bu.khrid (for her name see ibid. f.384b line 5) had a son, but he must have met an untimely death, given that he is no longer mentioned in 1744. Feasibly, Blo.bzang padma bkra.shis had a long spell in Gu.ge under the dGa'.ldan pho.brang. Given that he was empowered by dGa'.ldan Tshe.dbang dpal.bzang (d.1687; see Petech, The Kingdom of Ladakh p.79) following the taking of Gu.ge by the troops of IHa.sa in 1679-1690, he may have been the member of the royal family of Gu.ge delegated with restricted power by the Dalai Lamas from some time before 1687 to 1744.

The organization of the dGa'.ldan pho.brang government in Gu.ge, at least in 1736, seems to have consisted of a nominal king (Blo.bzang padma bkra.shis residing at mDa'.ba.rdzong rather than at one of the historical capitals of this land: Tho.ling, Dung.dkar, Mang.nang, rTsas.rhang); a senior no.yon, namely 'Gyur.med ye.shes tshe.brtan rgya.mtsho, who was the supreme officer in charge of Gu.ge appointed by the dGa'.ldan pho.brang; an u.ching nang.so, who was higher than the king in the local hierarchy; and the sGar.dpon named O.pa.shi. One point is
adamant in the edict and pertains to the fact that the local authorities, including king Blo bzang padma bkra.shis, were ordered to support, the latter even financially, the diffusion and prosperity of the Yellow Hats.

The bka’ shog is structured in an interesting way. Every time a matter of important concern, such as that of trading rights and the taxes to be collected, the regulation of grazing lands, compulsory labour, the duties of the monastic community etc. arises, it is interspersed in the text with the indications of the places, which marked the extension of the lands belonging to the various localities of Gu.ge.

The bka’ shog states that it was issued from sGar.thog near the great monastery of bKra.shis lhun.gyi grub.pa, and signed and sealed by the 7th Dalai Lama at gZhis.[ka.]rtse. If, as it seems, bKra.shis lhun.gyi grub.pa is dPal.dpe.med lhun.gyis grub.pa (i.e. Tho.ling) and sGar.thog the well known seat of the sGar.dpon, then it would ensue that the edict was issued locally and given authority in distant gTsang. That the contents of the edict, extremely detailed in terms of local knowledge, were outlined in mNgag.ris skor.gsum is not surprising since knowledge of the people and the territories they inhabited seems to be prima manu.

The edict contains several classifications of areas inhabited by local clans and their rights. Their minute treatment often poses insurmountable problems of identification. Even in the case of better known localities of Gu.ge, the indication of their land defies an understanding for anyone who is not aware of the individual names of fields, streams, passes, mountains etc. in these specific localities. Other (less well known) people, territorial divisions and place names are even more obscure.

Further important items pertain to issues of local interest such as trade, dwelling places for horses during winter, compulsory allocation of people from different religious community must have for the lay community. A few are abridged in the following.

It seems that, in two separate cases, the people called Hor.Sog-s proved to be a problem for the local administration. In one case, they were granted the land of Phun.rtse khang.rgyas, a mere name to me (possibly a 'brog or "pasture land") while the Hor.pa nomads, who previously had held rights over it, were assigned a new land called Zha.ti (unidentified). The passage is significant in establishing a differentiation between the well known Hor.pa-s and the Hor.Sog-s. In the other instance, the skor.pa-s of the Hor.Sog-s, who worked under nomad owners by moving from place to place to graze their animals (this is how I tentatively decode the obscure use made in the bka’ shog of this term), did not have a place to stay. In a further instance, regulated by the bka’ shog, the localities assigned to some skor.pa-s are sanctioned, which indicates that they were people in charge of cattle.

The sites of Men.rtser, Rab.bzang, Brag.rtse, Gang.sag and Chod.bzhis grub.bsam.pa were off-limits (possibly for the people of Khyung.lung; in fact this locality is near Men.rtser to its west), but the reasons behind their impracticability remain obscure since no explanation is given for the prohibition.

The edict discusses numerous terms of trade. Especially interesting is the trade between West Tibet, including Byang.thang, where salt was extracted from its fields, and the Mon.pa lands across the passes of Nye.ri (i.e. Nyi.ti, the pass to the south of mDa.ba.rdzon.g, sKyo.nam (Kumaon) and Sha.’og (Garhwal). These traders, who dealt in goods from India against the products of the brog.pa lands, used to come to Gu.ge lHo.Byang for commerce.

A case of ’u.lag (“corvée work”) is regulated in the edict. It pertains to the people called Ka.ru.ba who were inhabitants of Ho.’dra, helping with agricultural work
at Phyi.wang and rTsa.brang during spring and autumn. Ho.'dra, spelt as Hor.'dra, appears in other sources. The context of the latter passages seem to imply that Hor.'dra addressed some sort of warriors or special troops, but the use of Ho.'dra in the bka.'shog could not be more different. Elsewhere, the terms of the compulsory loading service in the area of the dGe.thang.pa-s and Be lDong.po are fixed by means of a bka.'shog.

The edict also sanctioned the summer and winter chibs. 'brog-s (“grazing grounds for horses”) within the divisions of Gu.ge lHo.stod and Byang.gnos, where skor.pa-s of these territories had to take the animals. The situation was more difficult for those of sGar, belonging to the Hor.Sog-s, since the 'brog.pa owners of the animals had no specific place in which to keep their animals.

Curiously, the bka.'shog also fixes military duties. The soldiers in charge of the security of Gu.ge were recruited from the ranks of servants and nomads and a tax corresponding to 129 rkang-s (“a tax levied according to the dimensions of one’s plot of land”, which is a remarkably large tax) was collected to maintain them.

The confirmation made in the edict of the grant of the sa.lam and sa.brgyud (lit. “the road of the land” and “the range of the land”: are they place names?), which are rather mysterious localities for an outsider, to A.la.lang.dar and the lineage of the three Kha.che Dza.yid brothers in the territory seems to indicate that a Muslim enclave inhabited an area of very difficult identification.
The edict of earth horse (1738)

The edict of earth horse 1738 was issued by the 7th Dalai Lama bsKal.bzangrgya.mtsho in order to enforce ban.khral ("monk tribute") among the population of mNgal.ris skor.gsurn so that each family had to send their middle son to the monastery to become a monk. The duty of enforcing the orders contained in the edict was assigned to the abbot of Tho.ling and to the senior sGar.dpon, in charge of secular affairs in Gu.ge on behalf of the dGal.ldan pho.brang.

The bka'.shog issued by gNod.sbyin phun.tshogs in fire sheep 1847

The bka'.shog issued by gNod.sbyin phun.tshogs in fire sheep 1847 is another instance in which, some one hundred years after that of 1738, orders were issued that
the families of mNga'.ris skor.gsum must send their middle sons to the monaster-
ies to become monks.

The difference in the two dates recorded in the edict (one being fire sheep 1847,
the other wood monkey 1884) is accounted for by the fact that the edict was again
circulated years after it was issued. Is this proof that the order issued in 1847 had
not been wholeheartedly honoured by the population?

This edict has an interesting initial part, in which people and localities of
mNga'.ris skor.gsum are indicated. This is relevant to the issue of the ancient geog-
raphy of these lands which is especially obscure in the early period of its history.141

While it is almost impossible to identify a number of ancient localities going
back to the early history of West Tibet, a few remarks can be attempted concern-
ing the localities mentioned in documents in the later periods.

With the bka'.shog of 1847 one reaches more familiar ground. A few remarks can
be attempted concerning the localities mentioned in this document, as its place
names are closer to the notions of the cultural geography which have survived to
this day, although some of them included in this edict are by no means easy to
identify. It seems that the localities and people of Gu.ge, to which the edict is
addressed, are grouped in it according to territorial divisions typical of the land, in
a sequence based on reasons of contiguity, although this is not openly stated. Two
names are the exception, since they are those of two of the highest authorities
in this land (the sgar.dpon of mNga'.ris skor.gsum and the rdeong.dpon of
rTsa.'mda'.rdzong).

The first grouping includes Khyung.lung, lDong.po, mDa'.ba, the sGra.ma.ba-s,
Phyugs.tshang.ba-s, Ma.nam.pa-s, Gling.skyled lag.pa-s and Khris.pa-s, and
rTsa.hreng sger.gzhung ("noblemen and government officers"). This area stretches
from south-east to north-west along the Glang.chen kha.'babs. Hence, some of the
less known localities and people included in this classification are within this ter-
ritory, which has, at its extremities, Khyung.lung and rTsa.hrang, being thus the
land of Gu.ge lHo.smad.

Another group comprises Do.gshams, mKhar.rtse, sPur, Ri.gang, Ri, Chu.ze, dKar
'Phags, rTsa.hreng (otherwise known as Za.rang), sTeng 'Phags.pa, and Bye.dkar.
These localities are all in lHo.smad, which is the part of Gu.ge to the south-west
of the Glang.chen kha.'babs, extending from beyond rTsa.hrang to the border with
Khu.nu and sPi.ti.

Rong.chung yul.tsho.drug ("six divisions"), sNu, lHug and Rong.stod are in
Rong.chung, which is the region of Gu.ge to the north of the Glang.chen kha.'babs, bordering on the Shib.pe.la in the west and Gu.ge Byang.gnos in the east.

Another subdivision includes the district of Chu.rti (i.e. Chu.mur.ti) as well as
sTeng.rag, Ri (i.e. gSer.ti?), Bar.skyogs and Shar.lang, which are in the area of
Chu.gsum, the district north-west of Rong.chung proper.

The localities of Rab.rgyas.gling, Jog.zur, Dra'ud, Sarga, A.btsan, Khyim.sbug,
Rukhyim, Shang.rtse, Zha.ye and Shang are in north-west Byang.gnos, which has
Shang.rtse in its centre.

Phyi.dbang and Dung.dkar, and Be lDong.po.ba-s are located in central
Byang.gnos.

141 Hence, the present author felt unable to
attempt to locate sites of relevance for the
early history of these lands since too many
escape even the faintest approximation, while
those which could be identified would have
been too obvious. This is the main reason why
this author did not envisage the possibility of
including a map of West Tibet in his The King-
doms of Gu.ge Pu hrang.
The gNam.ru.ba-s, sGar.khongs chu.spe, Ga.ga, bKra.shis.gang chos.sde.ba-s, gTso.gso.ba-s and rGya.smug have to be classified as belonging to the area of sGar and farther north until the Seng.ge kha.'babs.

Ma.mtshan is in sGer.rtse, while 'Brong.stod is part of dGe.rgyas.

Finally, the location of Ru.thor (i.e. Ru.thog) lHo.Byang is self-evident.

A geographical concept, referring differently to the same territory, i.e. that of Rong.chung.brgyad ("eight divisions") found in sTag.tshang ras.pa'i rnam.thar (f.34a line 1) and that of Rong.chung yul.tsho.drug ("six divisions of the land") in the edict by gNod.sbyin phun.tshogs under examination need to be cross-analysed by means of better evidence, not available at present.
བོད་ལྷ་ཚོ་བོ་བུ་བདེན་པའི་ཐོབ་མི་བུག་བོད་ལྷ་ཚོ་བོ་བུ་བདེན་པའི་ཐོབ་མི་བུག་བོད་ལྷ་ཚོ་བོ་བུ་བདེན་པའི་ཐོབ་མི་བུག་བོད་ལྷ་ཚོ་བོ་བུ་བདེན་པའི་ཐོབ་མི་བུག་བོད་ལྷ་ཚོ་བོ་བུ་བདེན་པའི་ཐོབ་མི་བུག་
Appendix Eight

Tibetan text of the passages translated in the present work
(documents other than those published in Appendix Six and Seven)

Tib.1: Bai.ser (p.273 lines 6-9) (see n.1): “ཐེས་རི་འཛིན་གྱི་སྲིད་དྲི་བསལ་བརྙན་པོ་ནི་རྩ་བས་ཀྱིས་ཐེན་པོ་བརྙན་པོ་ལས་ཁ་ཐུབ་ཀྱི་སྲིད་དྲི་བསལ་གཉིས་པ་ནི་སྐེལ་བ་ཐོབ་པར་ཐེན་པོ་ལས་ཁ་ཐུབ་ལོ། །།”

Tib.2: Nyang.ral chos.byung (p.457 line 20-p.458 line 7) (see p.10): “བོད་དོན་དུན་ལས་སྟེགས་བ་སྟེགས་བའི་རྩ་བས་ཀྱིས་ཐེན་པོ་ལས་ཁ་ཐུབ་ལོ། །།”

Tib.3: mNga:ris skor.gsum 'bel.gtam (p.174 lines 13-18) (see p.10): “ཐེན་པོ་ལས་ཁ་ཐུབ་པར་ཐོབ་པའི་སྟེགས་བ་སྟེགས་བའི་རྩ་བས་ཀྱིས་ཐེན་པོ་ལས་ཁ་ཐུབ་ལོ། །།”

Tib.4: mNga:ris skor.gsum 'bel.gtam (p.116 lines 1-6) (see n.5): “ཐེན་པོ་ལས་ཁ་ཐུབ་པར་ཐོབ་པའི་སྟེགས་བ་སྟེགས་བའི་རྩ་བས་ཀྱིས་ཐེན་པོ་ལས་ཁ་ཐུབ་ལོ། །།”

Tib.5: mNga:ris skor.gsum 'bel.gtam (p.116 lines 7-17) (see n.5): “ཐེན་པོ་ལས་ཁ་ཐུབ་ལོ། །”
Tib.6: mNga\'ris skor.gsum lo.rgyus 'bel.gtam (p.157 lines 8-12) (see p.10-11): "དབང་པོར་
མངོན་ཕྲག་མཐོང་ངོ་བོ་སྡེ་བསར་མེག་བྱུང་བསྒོད། བྱང་ཆུབས་ཨེ་བོ་འདི་འཛིན་
བྱུང་བསྒོད། ནང་མིང་ཐོབ་ཀྱི་མངོན་ཕྲག་མཐོང་ངོ་བོ་ཀྱི་བྱང་ཆུབ་
མཐོང་ངོ་བོ་འདི་འཛིན་བྱུང་བསྒོད། བྱེད་པ་ཐེབས་དུས་དུ་བཏངས་པ་མཐོང་ངོ་བོ
འུ་བསྒོད། བྱུང་བསྒོད།"
Tib.12: **IDeu jo.sras chos byung** (p.146 lines 16-17) (see n.7): “**滇楚理札布**

ibid. (p.147 line 2): “**湖維都土**

Tib.13: **mKhas.pa IDEu rhos 'byung** (p.381 lines 6-7) (see n.8): “**都楚理札**

ibid. (p.381 lines 13-14): “**湖維都土**

Tib.14: **Jo.bo dngul.sku mcheg dkar.chag** (f.9b line 6-f.10a line 1) (see n.20): 

Tib.15: **Kho.char dkar.chag** (f.16a = p.54 line 17-p.55 line 1) (see n.20): “**都楚理札**

Tib.16: **Ngag.dbang grags.pa, mNga’ris rgyal.rabs** (p.53 lines 7-8 and Vitali, *The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.brang* p.109) (see n.9): “**秋瑟維札同布和楚理札理札那札布理札**

ibid. (p.54 lines 8-12 and Vitali, *The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.brang* p.110): “**都楚理札**

Tib.17: **mNga’ris rgyal.rabs** (p.54 lines 12-14 and Vitali, *The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.brang* p.110) (see n.20): “**都楚理札同布和楚理札理札那札布理札**

Tib.18: **mNga’ris rgyal.rabs** (p.56 lines 3-7 and Vitali, *The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.brang* p.111) (see n.21): “**都楚理札同布和楚理札理札那札布理札**
Tib.19: Guru bKra.shis chos.byung (p.504 line 24-p.505 line 3) (see p.22): "\[\text{藏文} \] "

Tib.20: gTer.ston brgya.rtsa rnam.thar (p.481 lines 3-5) (see p.22): "

Tib.21: mNga'.ris rgyal.rabs (p.53 lines 8-10 and Vitali, The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.brang p.109) (see p.22): "

Tib.22: mNga'.ris rgyal.rabs (p.61 lines 8-14 and Vitali, The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.brang p.115) (see p.23): "

Tib.23: mNga'.ris rgyal.rabs (p.59 lines 16-18 and Vitali, The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.brang p.113) (see p.23): "

Tib.24: Bod.rje lha.btsad po'i gdung.rabs (p.74 lines 1-3) (see n.16): "

ibid. (p.74 lines 9-11): "

Tib.25: Jo.bo dngul.sku mched.gsum dkar.chag (f.1oa lines 1-2) (see p.24): "

Tib.26: Jo.bo dngul.sku mched.gsum dkar.chag (f.1oa line 1) (see p.24): "
Tib.27: Blo.bzhang bzod.pa, Rin.chen bzung.po'i rnam.thar (p.15 lines 3-5) (see p.24): 
“…”

Tib.28: Blo.bzhang bzod.pa, Rin.chen bzung.po'i rnam.thar (p.14 lines 1-6) (see n.19): 
“…”

Tib.29: Jo.bo dngul.sku mched.gsum dkar.chag (f.10a lines 2-3) (see p.25): 
“…”

Tib.30: Marlung pai' rnam.thar (f.15a line 5-f.15b line 2) (see n.21): 
“…”

Tib.31: mNga'.ris rgyal.rabs (p.62 lines 1-2 and Vitali, The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.hrang p.115) (see p.25): 
“…”

Tib.32: Ngor chos.'byung (p.262 lines 2-4) (see p.25): 
“…”

“…”

Tib.34: mNga'.ris rgyal.rabs (p.63 lines 2-3 and Vitali, The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.hrang p.116) (see p.26): 
“…”

Tib.35: Nyang.ral chos.'byung (p.467 lines 14-19) (see n.25): 
“…”
Tib.36: mNga'.ris rgyal.rabs (p.64 lines 11-15 and Vitali, The Kingdoms of Guge Pu.brang p.117-118) (see p.27): "དེ་ཐམས་ཅད་དག་དགམ་རང་ལེགས་ཀྱི་རྣམ་ཐབས་ཀྱི་ལོ་ཁན་རྫོང་དགའ་མི་ནི་ཐེག་ཆེན་པོ་དང་དགོས་སུ་བཞིན་གྱི་རྣམ་ཐབས་ཀྱི་ལོ་ཁན་རྫོང་དགའ་མི་ནི་ཐེག་ཆེན་པོ་དང་དགོས་སུ་བཞིན་གྱི་རྣམ་ཐབས་ཀྱི་ལོ་ཁན་རྫོང་དགའ་མི་ནི་ཐེག་ཆེན་པོ་དང་དགོས་སུ་བཞིན་""

Tib.37: tDo.rje mdzes.'od, bKa'.brgyud rnam.thar chen.mo (p.270 lines 1-3) (see n.26): "དེ་བདོ་ནས་བོད་ཀྱི་སྤྲུལ་གྲྭ་ཐབས་དང་དགན་ཏེ་དག་ཡང་ལྔ་བཞིན་བྱུང་གཙོ་བོ་རྒྱུ་ཙྲི་མོ་དེ་རཱི་གྱུར་ཕྱི་རྗེ་བཙོ་སྤེལ་བུ་དྲུག་གཙོ་བོ་རྒྱུ་ཙྲི་མོ་དེ་རཱི་གྱུར་ཕྱི་རྗེ་བཙོ་སྤེལ་བུ་དྲུག་གཙོ་བོ་རྒྱུ་ཙྲི་མོ་དེ་རཱི་གྱུར་ཕྱི་རྗེ་བཙོ་སྤེལ་བུ་དྲུག་གཙོ་བོ་དེ་རཱི་གྱུར་ཕྱི་རྗེ་བཙོ་སྤེལ་བུ་དྲུག་གཙོ་བོ་དེ་རཱི་གྱུར་ཕྱི་རྗེ་བཙོ་སྤེལ་བུ་""

Tib.38: Nyang.ral chos.byung (p.467 lines 4-11) (see 11.27): ""བོད་ཀྱི་མི་ནི་ཙླེ་བོ་མི་ནི་ཙླེ་བོ་མི་ནི་ཙླེ་བོ་མི་ནི་ཙླེ་བོ་མི་ནི་ཙླེ་བོ་མི་ནི་ཙླེ་བོ་མི་ནི་ཙླེ་བོ་མི་ནི་ཙླེ་བོ་མི་ནི་ཙླེ་བོ་མི་ནི་ཙླེ་བོ་མི་ནི་ཙླེ་བོ་མི་ནི་ཙླེ་བོ་མི་ནི་ཙླེ་བོ་མི་ནི་ཙླེ་བོ་""

Tib.39: mNga'.ris rgyal.rabs (p.64 line 19-p.65 line 4 and Vitali, The Kingdoms of Guge Pu.brang p.118) (see n.28): ""དེ་བདོ་ནས་བོད་ཀྱི་སྤྲུལ་གྲྭ་ཐབས་དང་དགན་ཏེ་དག་ཡང་ལྔ་བཞིན་བྱུང་གཙོ་བོ་རྒྱུ་ཙྲི་མོ་དེ་རཱི་གྱུར་ཕྱི་རྗེ་བཙོ་སྤེལ་བུ་དྲུག་གཙོ་བོ་རྒྱུ་ཙྲི་མོ་དེ་རཱི་གྱུར་ཕྱི་རྗེ་བཙོ་སྤེལ་བུ་""

Tib.40: mNga'.ris rgyal.rabs (p.65 lines 5-7 and Vitali, The Kingdoms of Guge Pu.brang p.118) (see n.29): ""དོན་བདུན་ལྔ་བཞིན་བོད་ཀྱི་རྣམ་ཐབས་ཀྱི་ཐེག་ཆེན་པོ་དྲུག་གཙོ་བོ་རྒྱུ་ཙྲི་མོ་དེ་རཱི་གྱུར་ཕྱི་རྗེ་བཙོ་སྤེལ་བུ་""

Tib.41: Khyung po rnal byor gyi rnam.thar (p.104 line 4-p.105 line 3) (see n.30): ""དེ་བདོ་ནས་བོད་ཀྱི་སྤྲུལ་གྲྭ་ཐབས་དང་དགན་ཏེ་དག་ཡང་ལྔ་བཞིན་བྱུང་གཙོ་བོ་རྒྱུ་ཙྲི་མོ་དེ་རཱི་གྱུར་ཕྱི་རྗེ་བཙོ་སྤེལ་བུ་ནི་ལྔ་བཞིན་བྱུང་གཙོ་བོ་རྒྱུ་ཙྲི་མོ་དེ་རཱི་�ྱུར་ཕྱི་རྗེ་བཙོ་སྤེལ་བུ་""

Tib.42: Jo bo yab.sras sprod.pa'i skyes.bu'i bstan.rtsis (f.12a line 6-f.12b line 3) (see n.32): ""དེ་བདོ་ནས་བོད་ཀྱི་སྤྲུལ་གྲྭ་མི་ནི་ཐེག་ཆེན་པོ་དང་དགོས་སུ་བཞིན་གྱི་རྣམ་ཐབས་ཀྱི་ལོ་ཁན་རྫོང་མི་ནི་ཐེག་ཆེན་པོ་དང་དགོས་སུ་བཞིན་གྱི་རྣམ་ཐབས་ཀྱི་མི་ནི་ཙླེ་བོ་གྱི་རྣམ་ཐབས་ཀྱི་མི་ནི་ཙླེ་བོ་གྱི་རྣམ་ཐབས་ཀྱི་""
Tib. 43: Ngor chos 'byung (p.262 lines 4-5) and Padma dkar po chos 'byung (p.259 lines 9-12) (see n.35): “\[ ... \]

Tib. 44: mNga'.ris rgyal.rabs (p.66 lines 1-12 and Vitali, The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.hrang p.119) (see p.29): “\[ ... \]

Rin.chen bzang po'i mum.thar 'bring po (Dharamsala ed. p.29 line 13-p.30 line 4) (see n.36): “\[ ... \]

Tib. 45: bShad.mdzod yid bzhin nor.bu (p.190 lines 2-4) (see p.29): “\[ ... \]

Tib. 46: mNga'.ris rgyal.rabs (p.65 lines 12-15 and Vitali, The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.hrang p.118) (see p.30): “\[ ... \]
Tib.47: lDe’u Jo.sras.chos. byung (p.149 line 1-2) (see p.30): “ེད་ཤེས་བུ་ཐོབ་པར་ཐོན་པ་དེ་ མཐོང་བི་གཉིས་པ་ལ་ངོ་བྱ།”

Tib.48: mKhas.pa lDe’u chos. byung (p.383 line 12-13) (see p.30): “ིག་ཆུང་ལེགས་ ང་ དེ་མཐོང་བི་གཉིས་པ་ལ་ངོ་བྱ།”

Tib.49: mNga’ris rgyal.rabs (p.65 lines 19-66 line 1) (see p.32): “ིག་ཆུང་བུ་ཐོན་པ་དེ་ མཐོང་བི་གཉིས་པ་ལ་ངོ་བྱ།”

Tib.50: mNga’ris rgyal.rabs (p.67 lines 8-10) (see p.32): “ིག་ཆུང་བུ་ཐོན་པ་དེ་ མཐོང་བི་གཉིས་པ་ལ་ངོ་བྱ།”

Tib.51: mNga’ris rgyal.rabs (p.67 lines 10-12) (see p.32): “མཐོང་བི་གཉིས་པ་ལ་ངོ་བྱ།”

Tib.52: mNga’ris rgyal.rabs (p.75 lines 5-6) (see p.33): “མཐོང་བི་གཉིས་པ་ལ་ངོ་བྱ།”

Tib.53: mNga’ris rgyal.rabs (p.74 lines 17-18 and Vitali, The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.brang p.126) (see n.42): “མཐོང་བི་གཉིས་པ་ལ་ངོ་བྱ།”

Tib.54: mNga’ris rgyal.rabs (p.76 lines 5-6 and Vitali, The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.brang p.127) (see n.43): “མཐོང་བི་གཉིས་པ་ལ་ངོ་བྱ།”

Tib.55: mNga’ris rgyal.rabs (p.76 lines 7-8 and Vitali, The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.brang p.127) (see n.44): “མཐོང་བི་གཉིས་པ་ལ་ངོ་བྱ།”

Tib.56: Bri.gung Ti.se lo.rgyus (f.42b lines 1-5) (see n.47): “མཐོང་བི་གཉིས་པ་ལ་ངོ་བྱ།”
Tib.57: mNga'ris rgyal.rabs (p.77 lines 15-16 and Vitali, The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.brang p.128) (see n.48): “विक्रमादित्य अपानान्नकाननेश्वरुप सुप्रसिद्धिलक्ष्मीस्वरूपी अर्जितेः”

Tib.58: Deb.ther dmazpo (p.148 lines 6-11) (see p.35): “देवता भूमिभंगा भवताय सर्वाय प्रवेश्य सुवर्णास्तिनिः जगत्तिष्ठति भवति भविष्यवाती गुरुभविष्यवाती

Tib.59: mNga'ris rgyal.rabs (p.78 lines 16-17 and Vitali, The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.brang p.128) (see n.50): “विक्रमादित्य अपानान्नकाननेश्वरुप सुप्रसिद्धिलक्ष्मीस्वरूपी अर्जितेः”

Tib.60: Si.tu bka'.chems in rLangs Po.ti.6se.ru (p.323 lines 16-20) (see p.36): “विक्रमादित्य अपानान्नकाननेश्वरुप सुप्रसिद्धिलक्ष्मीस्वरूपी अर्जितेः”

Tib.61: Si.tu bka'.chems in rLangs Po.ti.6se.ru (p.345 lines 9-11) (see n.51): “विक्रमादित्य अपानान्नकाननेश्वरुप सुप्रसिद्धिलक्ष्मीस्वरूपी अर्जितेः”

Tib.62: mNga'ris rgyal.rabs (p.81 lines 5-6) (see n.53): “शुभकारणीश्वरुप अपानान्नकाननेश्वरुप सुप्रसिद्धिलक्ष्मीस्वरूपी अर्जितेः”

Tib.63: Thang.stong rgyal.po'i rnam.thar (p.172 line 19) (see p.37): “शुभकारणीश्वरुप अपानान्नकाननेश्वरुप सुप्रसिद्धिलक्ष्मीस्वरूपी अर्जितेः”

Tib.64: Thang.stong rgyal.po'i rnam.thar (p.155 lines 2-3) (see p.37): “शुभकारणीश्वरुप अपानान्नकाननेश्वरुप सुप्रसिद्धिलक्ष्मीस्वरूपी अर्जितेः”

Tib.65: Bai.ser (p.460 lines 9-12) (see n.54): “शुभकारणीश्वरुप अपानान्नकाननेश्वरुप सुप्रसिद्धिलक्ष्मीस्वरूपी अर्जितेः”
Tib.66: Bai.ser (p.272 lines 11-13) (see n.55): “...”

Tib.67: Bai.ser (p.277 lines 23-25) (see n.56): “...”

Tib.68: mNga'.ris rgyal.rabs (p.84 lines 10-11 and Vitali, The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.brang p.133) (see n.57): “...”

Tib.69: Bai.ser (p.273 line 25-p.274 line 4) (see n.58): “...”

Tib.70: bKa' gdam gsar.rnying choi.byung (p.195 line 6) (see p.38): “...”

Tib.71: Bai.ser (p.278 lines 13-16) (see n.59): “...”

Tib.72: Shanti.pai’ rnam.thar (f.32b line 5-f.33a line 1) (see p.43): “...”

Tib.73: Shanti.pai’ rnam.thar (f.33a lines 6-7) (see p.44): “...”
Tib.74: Shanti.pai' rnam.thar (f.34b lines 1-4) (see p.44-45): “I hold into the heart as if it were my life. I do not want to go back on it. I want to make it just like that. I want to know it just now. I want to be like that.”

Tib.75: Shanti.pai' rnam.thar (f.34b line 6-f.35a line 1) (see p.45): “I hold into the heart as if it were my life. I do not want to go back on it. I want to make it just like that. I want to know it just now. I want to be like that.”

Tib.76: bKra.shis tshe.ring, Tho.ling gtsug lag khang sngon. gro lam.ston (p.102 line 19-p.103 line 3) (see n.61): “I hold into the heart as if it were my life. I do not want to go back on it. I want to make it just like that. I want to know it just now. I want to be like that.”

Tib.77: g.Yang.pa chos.rje, dGe.'dun rgya.mtshoi' rnam.thar (f.144b line 6-f.145a line 4) (see p.45-46): “I hold into the heart as if it were my life. I do not want to go back on it. I want to make it just like that. I want to know it just now. I want to be like that.”

Tib.78: Bai.ser (p.273 lines 16-17) (see n.62): “I hold into the heart as if it were my life. I do not want to go back on it. I want to make it just like that. I want to know it just now. I want to be like that.”

ibid. (p.274 lines 22-23): “I hold into the heart as if it were my life. I do not want to go back on it. I want to make it just like that. I want to know it just now. I want to be like that.”

Tib.79: Blo bzang chos.kyi rgyal.mtshan, sPyod.tsul gsal.bar bstan.pa nor.bu'i phreng.ba (bKra.shis lhun.po ed. p.63b line 4-p.65a line 2) (see p.46-47): “I hold into the heart as if it were my life.”
Tib.80: *Tag.tshang ras.pa'i rnam.thar* (f.33a lines 5-7) (see n.63): “...”

Tib.81: *Tag.tshang ras.pa'i rnam.thar* (f.45a lines 1-3) (see n.64): “...”
ibid. (f.43a lines 5-7): "In the same manner, in some other passages from the great book of the great dharma, the same meaning is repeated."

ibid. (f.45a lines 5-7): "ayqw.qr;gwq$.?r;q.I.byqqq.T~qyw

ibid. (f.46a line 17-p.57 line 1): "In the same manner, in some other passages from the great book of the great dharma, the same meaning is repeated."

Tib.82: *La.du.gi rgyal.rabs* (p.56 lines 12-14) (see n.65): "In the same manner, in some other passages from the great book of the great dharma, the same meaning is repeated."

Tib.83: *sTag tshang ras pa'i rnam.thar* (f.47b lines 3-4) (see n.66): "In the same manner, in some other passages from the great book of the great dharma, the same meaning is repeated."

Tib.84: *sTag tshang ras pa'i rnam.thar* (f.33a lines 2-4) (see n.67): "In the same manner, in some other passages from the great book of the great dharma, the same meaning is repeated."

Tib.85: *Mi.dbang rgyal.briod* (p.36 lines 10-13) (see n.68): "In the same manner, in some other passages from the great book of the great dharma, the same meaning is repeated."

Tib.86: *Ngag.dbang tsh.he.ring gi rnam.thar* (vol.1 p.71 line 4-p.72 line 5) (see n.69): "In the same manner, in some other passages from the great book of the great dharma, the same meaning is repeated."
Tib.87: Ngag.dbang tshe.ring.gi rnam.thar (vol.1 p.73 lines 2-3) (see p.49): “Ngag.dbang

Tib.88: See the article on Tho.ling by Ri.'bur Ngag.dbang rgyamtsho in Bod.ljongs

Tib.89: bKra.shis tshe.ring, Tho.ling gsug.lag.khang.sngon, gro lam.ston (p.105 lines

Tib.90: Bai.ser (p.273 lines 9-25) (see p.50-51): “Bai.ser

Tib.91: bKra.shis tshe.ring, Tho.ling gsug.lag.khang.sngon, gro lam.ston (p.107 line

These are excerpts from a document discussing various historical and cultural references. The text includes references to specific volumes and pages, and it seems to be discussing historical records and their significance.
Tib.92: bKra.shis tshe.ring, *Tho.ling gsung lag kho'gan 'gro lam ston* (p.106 lines 6-20) (see n.73): """

Tib.93: dBal.mang dKon.mchog rgyal.mshan, bKra.shis.dkhyil.gyi gdan.rabs (p.19b lines 3-6) (see p.52): """

Tib.94: Du.lu.kai'gos bzang 'phros.pod gnyis.pa (f.231 line 3) (see p.52): """

Tib.95: Du.lu.kai'gos bzang 'phros.pod dang.po (f.277a lines 5-6) (see n.74): """

Tib.96: Bai.ser (p.460 lines 13-15) (see p.52-53): """

Tib.97: Bai.ser (p.460 lines 19-22) (see p.53): """
Tib.98: *Bai.ser* (p.461 lines 2-4) (see p.53): “अन्य यहाँ काल्पनिक मद्दत के संदर्भ में उल्लिखित कुछ गुणों के लिए रूपांतरण करके प्राप्त हुए; तथा सामान्य तौर पर ज्ञान के लिए स्वयंप्रकट होने वाला कुछ विशेष भाषा में स्पष्ट करना चाहिए।”

Tib.99: *dPal bsam rin.po che snye.ma* (smad.cha p.357 line 4) (see p.77): “अन्य यहाँ काल्पनिक मद्दत के संदर्भ में उल्लिखित कुछ गुणों के लिए रूपांतरण करके प्राप्त हुए; तथा सामान्य तौर पर ज्ञान के लिए स्वयंप्रकट होने वाला कुछ विशेष भाषा में स्पष्ट करना चाहिए।”

ibid. (smad.cha p.365 lines 4-5): “अन्य यहाँ काल्पनिक मद्दत के संदर्भ में उल्लिखित कुछ गुणों के लिए रूपांतरण करके प्राप्त हुए; तथा सामान्य तौर पर ज्ञान के लिए स्वयंप्रकट होने वाला कुछ विशेष भाषा में स्पष्ट करना चाहिए।”

Tib.100: *Du.ku.la'i go.bzang 'phros.pod gsum.pa* (f.69b line 6-f.70a line 3) (see p.78): “अन्य यहाँ काल्पनिक मद्दत के संदर्भ में उल्लिखित कुछ गुणों के लिए रूपांतरण करके प्राप्त हुए; तथा सामान्य तौर पर ज्ञान के लिए स्वयंप्रकट होने वाला कुछ विशेष भाषा में स्पष्ट करना चाहिए।”

Tib.101: *Bod.rje lha.btad.po'ig gdung.rabs* (p.75 lines 5-13) (see p.55): “अन्य यहाँ काल्पनिक मद्दत के संदर्भ में उल्लिखित कुछ गुणों के लिए रूपांतरण करके प्राप्त हुए; तथा सामान्य तौर पर ज्ञान के लिए स्वयंप्रकट होने वाला कुछ विशेष भाषा में स्पष्ट करना चाहिए।”

Tib.102: *Shanti.pa'i rnam.thar* (f.33a line 1) (see p.111): “अन्य यहाँ काल्पनिक मद्दत के संदर्भ में उल्लिखित कुछ गुणों के लिए रूपांतरण करके प्राप्त हुए; तथा सामान्य तौर पर ज्ञान के लिए स्वयंप्रकट होने वाला कुछ विशेष भाषा में स्पष्ट करना चाहिए।”

Tib.103: *Du.ku.la'i go.bzang 'phros.pod gnyis.pa* (f.43a line 4) (see p.112): “अन्य यहाँ काल्पनिक मद्दत के संदर्भ में उल्लिखित कुछ गुणों के लिए रूपांतरण करके प्राप्त हुए; तथा सामान्य तौर पर ज्ञान के लिए स्वयंप्रकट होने वाला कुछ विशेष भाषा में स्पष्ट करना चाहिए।”

Tib.104: *bKra.shis tshe.ring, Tho.ling gzugs.lag.khang sgon.gro lam.ston* (p.114 lines 6-10) (see p.115): “अन्य यहाँ काल्पनिक मद्दत के संदर्भ में उल्लिखित कुछ गुणों के लिए रूपांतरण करके प्राप्त हुए; तथा सामान्य तौर पर ज्ञान के लिए स्वयंप्रकट होने वाला कुछ विशेष भाषा में स्पष्ट करना चाहिए।”

Tib.105: *bKra.shis tshe.ring, Tho.ling gzugs.lag.khang sgon.gro lam.ston* (p.114 line 15-p.117 line 6) (see p.115-117): “अन्य यहाँ काल्पनिक मद्दत के संदर्भ में उल्लिखित कुछ गुणों के लिए रूपांतरण करके प्राप्त हुए; तथा सामान्य तौर पर ज्ञान के लिए स्वयंप्रकट होने वाला कुछ विशेष भाषा में स्पष्ट करना चाहिए।”
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Tib.106: Rin.chen bzang po'i rnam.thar 'bring.po (p.88 line 5-p.89 line 2) (see p.120):

"..."
Tib.107: Ngor chos. byung (p.262 line 4) (see n.114): "བོད་ཡི་ཤི་ཤི་ཤི་".
Sum.pa mkhan.po, dPal btam ljon bzang (p.357 lines 19-20): "དོན་སེམས་ནག་ཤིབ་མི་ཤི་ཤི་ཤི་ཤི་ཤི་ཤི་ཤི་".
Padma dkar.po chos. byung (p.259 lines 12-15): "ཟོད་ལས་ཤིསུ་ཤི་ཤི་ཤི་ཤི་ཤི་ཤི་ཤི་".

Tib.108: lDe'u Ja.rnas chos. byung (p.129 lines 8-14) (see n.115): "བཀྲ་ཤིས་བོད་ལས་ཤི་ཤི་ཤི་ཤི་ཤི་ཤི་ཤི་ཤི་ཤི་ཤི་ཤི་ཤི་ཤི་ཤི་ཤི་ཤི་ཤི་".

Tib.109: Ngor chos. byung (p.262 lines 4-5) and Padma dkar.po chos. byung (p.259 lines 9-12) (see n.116): "དོན་སེམས་ནག་ཤི་ཤི་ཤི་ཤི་ཤི་ཤི་ཤི་ཤི་ཤི་ཤི་ཤི་ཤི་ཤི་ཤི་ཤི་ཤི་".

Tib.110: Shanti.pa'i rnam.thar (f.33b line 5) (see p.121): "བཀྲ་ཤིས་བོད་ལས་ཤི་ཤི་ཤི་ཤི་ཤི་ཤི་".

Tib.111: Rin.chen bzang.po'i rnam.thar 'bring.po (p.94 line 2) (see p.122): "བཀྲ་ཤིས་བོད་ལས་ཤི་ཤི་ཤི་ཤི་".

Tib.112: Shanti.pa'i rnam.thar (f.39b lines 1-2) (see n.122): "དོན་སེམས་ནག་ཤི་ཤི་ཤི་ཤི་ཤི་ཤི་".

Tib.113: Nyang.ral chos. byung (p.461 lines 10-12) (see p.127): "བཀྲ་ཤིས་བོད་ལས་ཤི་ཤི་".

Tib.114: mNga'.ris rgyal.rabs (p.74 lines 13-14) (see p.132): "བཀྲ་ཤིས་བོད་ལས་ཤི་ཤི་".
Tib.115: mNga′ris rgyal.rabs p.62 lines 9-10) (see p.135): “"ཟིམ་མའི་སྲུང་བུ་འབུམ་བཟང་པོ་ལྡན་པ་བཞི་བཞི་""
ibid. (p.62 lines 16-17): “"སངས་ཐོས་ལ་འེས་བི་གཞིའི་སྤོད་ལེགས་""

Tib.116: Bai.ser (p.275 lines 16-17) (see n.127): “"ངོ་རི་ཕྱོག་པའི་ལྷ་ནུས་ཤེས་""

Tib.117: Shanti.pa'i rnam.thar (f.35b lines 4-6) (see p.141): “"མཐའ་པོ་བོད་ཀྱིས་རྒྱང་ཁྲི་ལས་སྐྱེ་ཅུན་ོེ་སྦྱེ་ཁྲི་སྐྱེ་ཅུན་ོེ་སྦྱེ་ཁྲི་སྐྱེ་ཅུན་ོེ་སྦྱེ་ཁྲི་སྐྱེ་ཅུན་ོེ་སྦྱེ་ཁྲི་སྐྱེ་ཅུན་""

Tib.118: Shanti.pa'i rnam.thar (f.35b line 6-f.36a line 1) (see p.141-142): “"ཆི་ཤེས་པར་བོད་ཀྱིས་སྲུང་བུ་འབུམ་བཟང་པོ་ལྡན་པ་བཞི་བཞི་""

Tib.119: Shanti.pa'i rnam.thar (f.40b line 7-f.41a line 1) (see n.129): “"དེ་ཐུབ་ནས་དུ་སྲུང་བུ་འབུམ་བཟང་པོ་ལྡན་པ་བཞི་བཞི་ལས་་ཚུགས་ལྗོངས་འཁོར་ལེན་པོ་ལྷ་ནུས་ཤེས་""

Tib.120: Shanti.pa'i rnam.thar (f.36a line 7-f.36b line 1) (see n.130): “"དེ་ཐུབ་ནས་དུ་སྲུང་བུ་འབུམ་བཟང་པོ་ལྡན་པ་བཞི་བཞི་ལས་་ཚུགས་ལྗོངས་འཁོར་ལེན་པོ་ལྷ་ནུས་ཤེས་""

Tib.121: Shanti.pa'i rnam.thar (f.36a lines 5-6) (see n.133): “"རིན་པོ་ཆེའི་ལོ་བོད་ཀྱིས་སྲུང་བུའི་ལས་སྐྱེ་ཅུན་ོེ་སྦྱེ་ཁྲི་སྐྱེ་ཅུན་ོེ་སྦྱེ་ཁྲི་སྐྱེ་ཅུན་ོེ་སྦྱེ་ཁྲི་སྐྱེ་ཅུན་ོེ་སྦྱེ་ཁྲི་སྐྱེ་ཅུན་ོེ་སྦྱེ་ཁྲི་སྐྱེ་ཅུན་ོེ་སྦྱེ་ཁྲི་སྐྱེ་ཅུན་ོེ་སྦྱེ་ཁྲི་སྐྱེ་ཅུན་ོེ་སྦྱེ་ཁྲི་སྐྱེ་ཅུན་""

Tib.122: Shanti.pa'i rnam.thar (f.36b lines 2-5) (see n.132): “"དེ་ཐུབ་ནས་དུ་སྲུང་བུ་འབུམ་བཟང་པོ་ལྡན་པ་བཞི་བཞི་སྲུང་བུ་འབུམ་བཟང་པོ་ལྡན་པ་བཞི་བཞི་སྲུང་བུ་འབུམ་བཟང་པོ་ལྡན་པ་བཞི་བཞི་སྲུང་བུ་འབུམ་བཟང་པོ་ལྡན་པ་བཞི་བཞི་སྲུང་བུ་འབུམ་བཟང་པོ་ལྡན་པ་བཞི་བཞི་སྲུང་བུ་འབུམ་བཟང་པོ་ལྡན་པ་བཞི་བཞི་""
Tib.123: *Shanti.pai* rnam.thar (f.36b lines 5-7) (see n.133): “མིམ་པ་མཚན་པར་མཐོང་
མི་རིག་ཆེ་མིང་གི་མ་རིག་བཞི་མི་མིང་པོ་མི་མིང་བཞི་མི་མིང་བཞི་
མི་མིང་པོ་མི་མིང་བཞི་མི་མིང་བཞི་མི་མིང་བཞི་མི་མིང་བཞི་
མི་མིང་པོ་མི་མིང་བཞི་མི་མིང་བཞི་མི་མིང་བཞི་མི་མིང་བཞི་
མི་མིང་པོ་མི་མིང་བཞི་མི་མིང་བཞི་མི་མིང་བཞི་
མི་མིང་པོ་མི་མིང་བཞི་

Tib.124: *Shanti.pai* rnam.thar (f.36b line 7-f.37a line 2) (see n.134): “མིམ་པ་མཚན་པར་
མི་རིག་ཆེ་མིང་གི་མ་རིག་བཞི་

Tib.125: *Shanti.pai* rnam.thar (f.36b line 1) (see n.135): “མིམ་པ་མཚན་པར་

Tib.126: *Shanti.pai* rnam.thar (f.41b lines 6-7) (see p.143): “དེར་བཟི་བཟི་བཟི་བཟི་

Tib.127: *Shanti.pai* rnam.thar (f.44b lines 1-4) (see p.143): “དེར་བཟི་བཟི་བཟི་བཟི་

Tib.128: *Shanti.pai* rnam.thar (f.44b lines 5-7) (see n.136): “དེར་བཟི་བཟི་བཟི་བཟི་

Tib.129: *Shanti.pai* rnam.thar (f.44b lines 8-10) (see n.137): “དེར་བཟི་བཟི་བཟི་བཟི་

Tib.130: *Shanti.pai* rnam.thar (f.44b lines 11-14) (see n.138): “དེར་བཟི་བཟི་བཟི་བཟི་

Tib.131: *Shanti.pai* rnam.thar (f.44b lines 15-17) (see n.139): “དེར་བཟི་བཟི་བཟི་བཟི་

Tib.132: *Shanti.pai* rnam.thar (f.44b lines 18-20) (see n.140): “དེར་བཟི་བཟི་བཟི་བཟི་
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gTer.ston brgya.rtsa rnam.thar: 'Jam.sgom Kong. sprul Bl. gros mtha'. yas, Zab. mo gter dang gter.ston grub. thob. ji. ltar byon. pa'i lo. rgyus m dor. bs dus. bkod. pa rin. chen baidurya'i 'phreng bzhes. bya. pa bzhugs.so, in Rin.chen gter. mdzod. chen. mo vol. Ka, Ngodrub and Sherab Drimay eds., Kyichu monastery, Paro 1976.

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