

Wangdü Chöling Dzong: The Masterpiece of Gongsar Jigme Namgyel

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Abstract

Due to political and spiritual significance, Dzongs hold a special place in the minds of the Bhutanese people. Unlike any other dzongs in Bhutan, Wangdü Chöling Dzong in Bumthang Shamkhar is quite unique due to factors like (1) the builder who was the father of Monarchy in Bhutan, (2) the accomplishment of victory over Jakar Dzongpön Tsöndrü Gyaltshen and (3) the place being used for Buddhist teachings by lama Je Jangchub Tsondrü. Constructed with elaborate Bhutanese architectural designs, it is said to have been built by Gongsar Jigme Namgyel himself in 1857, particularly the Utse. This paper attempts to figure out the significance and role of this well-known historical structure besides throwing some lights on establishment of the dzong and its renovation. It also tries to present other information related to this Dzong through available written and oral sources. Besides researching on written sources, interviews were conducted with Lam Jampel Dorje, Wangdü Chöling Lam, Agäy Rinzin Dorje, 84 (2010) and Agäy Sherub Wangdü, 76 (2010) who shared valuable information.

Introduction

Dzongs in Bhutan have special significance both politically and spiritually. In olden days, Dzongs were built mainly to signify a seat of certain religious institutions to

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flourish in that vicinity. Some were also built for security purposes, and others still were built in order to mark victories in warfare. Hence, *Dzongs* are revered as important historical monuments in the country. Likewise, Wangdü Chöling Dzong (*dBang dus chos gling rdzong*) in Bumthang has its own significance and history.

Wangdü Chöling Dzong is located on the broad floor of Chökor valley below the Jakar Yügyal Dzong (*Bya dkar gyul rgyal rdzong*) in Bumthang *Dzongkhag* in central Bhutan. Bumthang was known for five *khar* (mkhar; house) namely; Gyalkhar, Chamkhar, Gongkhar, Chagkhar, and Shamkhar. Before the establishment of Wangdü Chöling Dzong, the place was commonly known as Shamkhar. Though the Dzong served as a private residence of the Trongsa Pönlop *Gongsar* Jigme Namgyel (1825–1881) since its founding, it became a Royal Palace when *Gongsar* Ugyen Wangchuck (1862–1926) was proclaimed as the first Monarch of the Kingdom of Bhutan in 1907. Since then, it served as the Royal Court for the successive Kings until the third King Jigme Dorji Wangchuck (1928–1972) who shifted the Royal Court to Paro Ugän Pelri Palace and eventually to Thimphu Dechencholing, following the death of the second King Jigme Wangchuck (1905–1952). However, the descendants of *Ashi* Pem Dechen (1918–?) resided in the *Dzong* until they left for the capital city, Thimphu. Currently, Wangdü Chöling Dzong, the masterpiece of the *Gongsar* Jigme Namgyel, houses a monastic school (*sLob-drwa*) for novice monks that was established in 2004 as a branch of Trongsa *Rabdey*.

Establishment of the Dzong

Gongsar Jigme Namgyel became the Trongsa Pönlop when Tshoki Dorje of Ugän Chöling (Bumthang) retired in 1853. The succession was in reward for his bravery and loyalty in rescuing the latter from an assassination plot three years earlier in Punakha, the then seat of central administration. During the succession, there was an implicit understanding

that he would relinquish the post after three years in favour of the outgoing *Pönlop*'s son, Jakar *Dzongpön* Tsöndrö Gyaltshen. However, Jigme Namgyal showed no sign of retiring when the time finally came.

As a result, Tsöndrö Gyaltshen took up arms against the Trongsa *Pönlop* in 1857. The armies of both the parties clashed on the field of Shamkhar below Jakar *Dzong*. When the battle proved indecisive, the Jakar *Dzongpön* and the former *Pönlop* Tshoki Dorje sought help from Druk *Desi* Künga Pelden (rg. 1856–1860). The confrontation continued till the negotiating team of *Je Khenpo* Yönten Gyaltshen (rg. 1851–1858) and Zhabdrung's *Zimpon* Drachung came to negotiate a truce in 1858. The peace settlement ended at Kurjey (Bumthang) with a nominal promotion of the Jakar *Dzongpön* to the post of Jakar *Pönlop*, with Lhuntse and Mongar *Dzongkhags* under his authority, whereas Jigme Namgyel retained the post of Trongsa *Pönlop* with an additional supremacy over the *Dzongkhags* of Zhemgang and Trashigang. It was a sign of the emergence of Jigme Namgyel as an indisputable figure with power and authority.

Since the post of Trongsa *Pönlop* was then one of the most coveted, for its power, fame and authority, Jigme Namgyel proved his legitimacy on its possession with the moral victory over his contender. So, to mark the victory in the tussle, he constructed Wangdü Chöling Dzong in the battlefield of Shamkhar where he had built a military camp before. According to varied sources, Wangdü Chöling Dzong was believed to have been built to mark the victory in the battle with the Jakar *Dzongpön* and his allies. Although the negotiation ended in 1858 only, the construction of the *Dzong* most likely started in 1857 at the site of the military camp when the battle was entering into a stalemate.

Name of the Dzong

The Dzong then built was known as Wangdü Chöling Dzong. The term *Wangdü* means victory achieved after taking

over all groups of adversaries under his single power. The additional term *Chöling* probably stemmed from Lam Jangchub Tsöndrö (*byang-chub brtson-grub*; 1817–1856) who blessed the place by giving Buddhist teachings. In due time, the *Dzong* attained its full name; Wangdü Chöling Dzong, 'Fortress of the Land of Dharma and Victory.'

Founder of the Dzong

Gongsar Jigme Namgyel was born to Pila Gönpö Wangyal and Sonam Pelzom of Dungkar *Chöje* of Kurtö in 1825. The Dungkar *Chöje* originated from the descendants of *Khedrup* Künga Wangpo, the son of *Tertön* Pema Lingpa (1450–1521). At the age of fifteen, he moved towards Bumthang and Mangdelung (Trongsa) to seek his fortune, inspired as he was by his repeated dreams. On the way, he spent some months with the headman of Narut village in Tang valley of Bumthang, looking after herds of cows and sheeps. Yet again, driven by the divine prophesy, he set out towards Trongsa, where he met Buli Lama Shakya Namgyal in Chumê valley, a person who featured repeatedly in his dreams. The Lama gave him shelter and clothing, and in fact arranged his travel to Trongsa, dispatching his servant Urup Döndrup.

Trongsa *Pönlop* Ugän Phuntsho was at an archery game when they arrived. Urup Döndrup presented the young Jigme Namgyel to the Trongsa *Pönlop*. After enquiring about his home and family, he was accepted as a *Tozep*, the lowest level of retainers in the service of Trongsa Dzong, and was allowed to have access to food from the common kitchen.

In 1843, he was promoted as a *Zimgap* (attendant) by his new master Tshoki Dorje. Likewise, he rose through various posts such as *Zimnang* (junior chamberlain), *Darpön* (chief of attendants), Trongsa *Tshongpön* (trade master), and in 1848, he became the Trongsa *Zimpön* (chamberlain of Trongsa), a position that signified the extent of trust and confidence that was bestowed on him. Because of his loyalty and outstanding service and courage, he was promoted to the post of Trongsa

Drönyer (guest master of Trongsa) in 1850. During his tenure as Trongsa *Drönyer*, he crushed all revolts of central and eastern Bhutan, which paved his way to the post of Trongsa *Pönlop*. He eventually became the Trongsa *Pönlop* when Tshoki Dorje retired in 1853. This generous retirement and award of the post on Jigme Namgyel rather than to his own son was a sign of gratitude owed to Jigme Namgyel who saved the life of his master. However, the Trongsa governorship had rested on an understanding that Jigme Namgyel should vacate the post after three years for the son of his master, Jakar Dzongpön Tsöndrö Gyaltshe. Since Jigme Namgyel disregarded the agreement to vacate the post as agreed, the forces of Jakar Dzongpön and Trongsa *Pönlop* clashed which proved indecisive. However, the seat of Trongsa *Pönlop* undisputably fell on *Gongsar* Jigme Namgyal that encouraged him to construct the Dzong in celebration of his apparent victory.

However, he continued to be engaged in various internal strifes, apart from facing external threats from the British in India. He proved invincible in all these, and so in 1870, Jigme Namgyel ascended to the throne of the Druk *Desi*, the supreme ruler of Bhutan. He was fully supported by the Lhengä Zhung Tshok and the Central Monk Body. Finally, at the age of 56 in 1881, he passed away in Semtokha Dzong, few days after falling off from the yak he was riding at Hungtsho, near Dochula in Thimphu.

Significance of the Dzong

Wangdü Chöling Dzong, built in the mid 19th century by the father of the Wangchuck Dynasty, Trongsa *Pönlop* Gongsar Jigme Namgyel, is one of the finest examples of domestic architecture in the country, exclusively designed for secular affairs and for his family. It bears striking differences from the other *Dzongs* of the country that were built for the dual system of religious and temporal affairs by Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyel (1594–1651). The *Utse* (central tower) was

personally built by *Gongsar* Jigme Namgyel during his tenure as the Chötse (Trongsa) *Pönlop*. The original structure and architecture can be seen even today without any modifications. The architectural features of Wangdü Chöling Dzong are quite unique from that of the other *Dzongs* and the manor houses that are ubiquitous in Bhutan. It portrays a masterful blend of innovative architectural features present in the *Dzongs* as well as in the manor houses, in sync with the lifestyle of the time. Karma Ura (1995) fortifies the concept of the rich architectural heritage of the *Dzong* along with that of the two other Royal Palaces of Kinga Rabten (Trongsa) and Domkhar (Bumthang), all of which were not only hubs of Royal activities then, but which were also showpieces of the architecture of that era. The *Dzong* now stands as the oldest of all the structures that were built by the Monarchs of the country. Hence, it is a masterpiece of *Gongsar* Jigme Namgyel.

The *Dzong*, originally used as a private residence of *Gongsar* Jigme Namgyel, became the first Palace of the Wangchuck Dynasty. It was the place where the First King *Gongsar* Ugyen Wangchuck and the Second King Jigme Wangchuck held their Royal Courts. Similarly, it was also the place where the Third King Jigme Dorji Wangchuck grew up and absorbed the lessons of statecraft and court procedures alongside the common retainers at the court of the Second King. Therefore, Wangdü Chöling Dzong is a historic seat of the country's revered Wangchuck dynasty.

The Dzong and its purpose

Initially, Wangdü Chöling Dzong was built by *Gongsar* Jigme Namgyel to serve as his family residence. Later on, it became the Royal Court of the early Wangchuck Monarchs.

It was in this *Dzong* that *Gongsar* Jigme Namgyel took his wife *Ashi* Pema Chöki, the daughter of *ex-pönlop* Ugän Phuntsho of the Tamzhing *Chöje* family. All their children were born at Wangdü Chöling including the future King *Gongsar* Ugyen Wangchuck in 1862.

After Jigme Namgyel, *Gongsar* Ugyen Wangchuck began to pursue his father's strategy of strengthening his political position through family ties and alliances. He married his first cousin *Ashi* Rinchen Pem and appointed her elder brother Chime Dorje as *Jakar Dzongpön*, and gave in marriage his own sister, *Ashi* Yeshe Chödrön (1864–?), to Chime Dorje. After the death of his mother in 1884, Ugyen Wangchuck bequeathed the Wangdü Chöling Palace and its other valuable assets to his sister and her husband.

After that, *Gongsar* Ugyen Wangchuck spent his time at Lamai Gönba Dzong Phuntsho Pelri, Künzang Chöling Gönba above Lamai Gönba and Thrinle Rabten above Jamba Lhakang, devoting his time predominantly in prayers and religious functions, besides shaping the country simultaneously.

In 1890, the 8th Peling *Sungtrul* Künzang Dechen Dorje [Tenpai Nima] passed away. To commemorate his death and also to accelerate the rebirth of the succeeding Peling *Sungtrul* in Bhutan, Ugyen Wangchuck left for Lhalung and initiated feast-offering for six weeks. As a result, the 9th reincarnation of Peling *Sungtrul* was born to his own sister Yeshe Chödrön in Wangdü Chöling Dzong in 1894. The *Sungtrul* was named as Tenzin Chöki Gyaltshen (1894–1925).

Gongsar Ugyen Wangchuck introduced modern education though there was the predominance of monastic learning in the country. As the first steps towards this development, he opened the first modern school of Wangchuck Lhodzong at Hâ in 1914, and in the following year, the Thrinle Rabten School, attached to Wangdü Chöling in Bumthang, was also opened. The Crown Prince Jigme Wangchuck was also given formal education in the latter school, along with several children of the attendants and nobilities. The students were taught Hindi and English languages apart from traditional Bhutanese subjects. These schools were improved and upgraded later by King Jigme Wangchuck.

On the death of the second queen *Ashi Tsöndrö Lhamo* in 1922, *Gongsar Ugyen Wangchuck* promised to offer ten thousand butter lamps (*sTong-mchod*) at Kurjey and Jampa Lhakhang. But the pledge became ineffectual when *Ashi Peldron* of Lamai Gönba Dzong, the daughter of Ugyen Wangchuck's first consort *Ashi Rinchen Pem*, was not able to arrange the items required such as buckwheat, wheat, butter, rice and so on during the grave period. During that difficult time, *ex-drönyer* Dorje Rabden of Wangdü Chöling Dzong, the son of Ugyen Wangchuck's sister *Ashi Yeshe Chödrön*, had generously offered not only the essential items but also every help and services required to fulfil that pledge and other activities. Thereafter, although Dorje Rabden was a retired personnel, *Gongsar Ugyen Wangchuck* had given him due recognition and trust that ultimately led to his increased influence in the Royal Court of the First King. However, due to some dubious acts by *zamsungpa* Namgyal, the relation between the *ex-dronyer* and Prince Jigme Wangchuck was strained.

However, later on, the *ex-drönyer's* mother *Ashi Yeshe Chödrön* solicited King Jigme Wangchuck to marry *Ashi Pem Dechen*, the younger sister of queen *Phüntsho Chödrön*, and also submitted the Wangdü Chöling Dzong of which *Ashi Pem Dechen* was the ultimate inheritor from *Ashi Yeshe Chödrön*. Consequently, in 1932, His Majesty accepted the proposal and married *Ashi Pem Dechen*, thereby, resolving the strained relation with the *ex-drönyer*. Simultaneously, His Majesty also took over Wangdü Chöling Dzong and established his Royal Court therein.

After the completion of the construction of *Künga Rabten Palace* in Trongsa in 1929, Wangdü Chöling Dzong became the Summer Palace. Hence, the Royal Entourage spent six months of spring and summer in Wangdü Chöling after which the Royal Court moved to *Künga Rabten Palace* to avoid the bitter chill of Bumthang's winter. The Royal Court routinely

moved to its winter residence in Kunga Rabten in the ninth month of the Bhutanese calendar and returned to Wangdü Chöling by the third month every year.

Over the course of time, the Second King bequeathed Wangdü Chöling Palace to the younger queen *Ashi Pem Dechen* along with the Kunga Rabten Palace that was located on the Mangdechu river valley and which became his favoured residence.

His Majesty passed away at Kunga Rabten Palace in 1952. A month later, another tragic incident took place when Wangdü Chöling *Mayum Ashi Yeshe Chödrön* expired. So, their bodies were cremated together at Bumthang Kurjey. After the funeral rites, His Majesty Jigme Dorji Wangchuck became preoccupied with moving his Royal Court from Wangdü Chöling to Paro Ugän Pelri. The retainers at the court expected a hectic time packing some of the moveable properties of the late King found in Wangdü Chöling Dzong, though the younger Queen Mother *Ashi Pem Dechen* had decided to stay back. To the relieve of the retainers and as a sign of generosity, His Majesty gave the keys of the Treasure House of Wangdü Chöling to the younger Queen Mother and did not want to own anything save four boxes of swords and some guns that was in the palace of Wangdü Chöling.

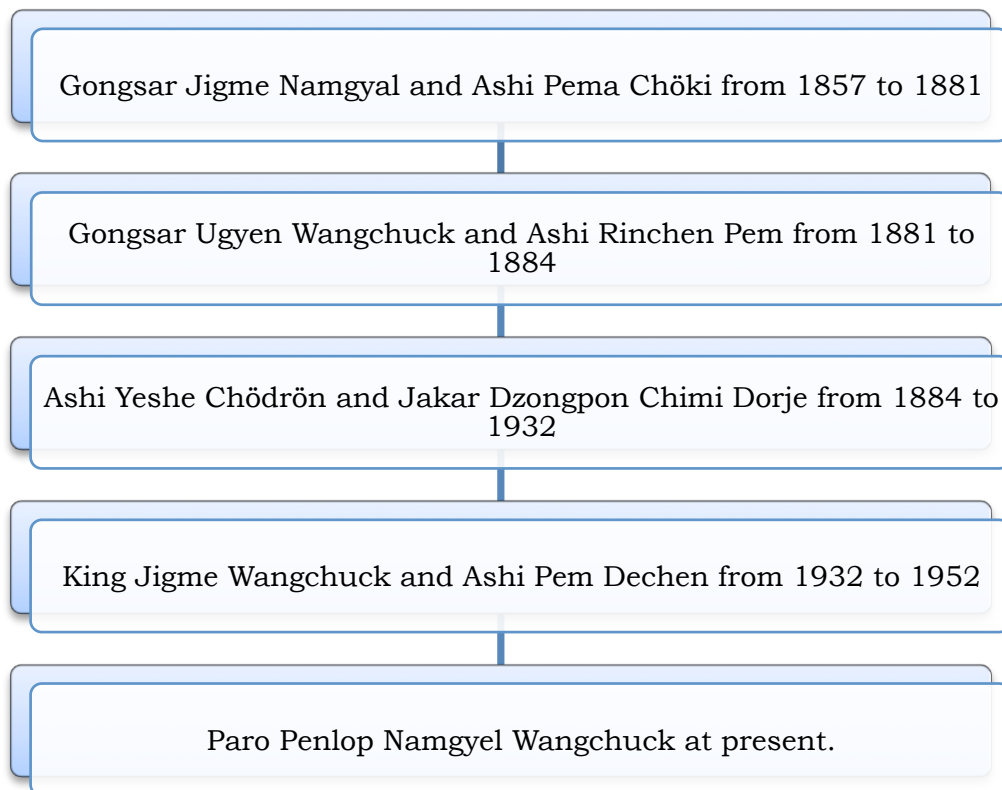
The departure of the Royal Family and the change of the location of the capital from central to western Bhutan not only made the Wangdü Chöling Dzong lonely and desolate, it also cast a mood of gloom over the public of Bumthang and Trongsa. The changes were made in the larger interest of the country, and therefore, the public was eventually reconciled to the changed reality. However, the Palace was never the same again.

Since then, *Ashi Pem Dechen* lived there with her son Prince Namgyal Wangchuck and three princesses who were the subsequent and ultimate dwellers and estate holders of the *Dzong*. As there were an increasing number of Tibetans

fleeing to Bhutan during the Chinese occupation of Tibet, with many people coming to Bumthang, the local people feared that they too might need to leave the place for safer havens. In addition, the increasing developmental activities in Thimphu convinced the estate holders to shift their base to Thimphu. Thereafter, the management and supervision of the massive estate of the *Dzong* fell partially on the government.

Under the charge of the government, nothing significant happened until the community was in dire need of monks for religious ritual ceremonies to be performed. So, in 2001, when Jampel Dorje was appointed as the *Kangjup* at the *Dzong* from Trongsa Rabdey, people living nearby expressed their interest in instituting a monastic school for the benefit of the community. Therefore, under the initiative of *Kangjup* Jampel Dorje, a monastic school with 15 novice monks was established on 13th April, 2004. Currently, headed by Lam Jampel Dorje, the monastic school is upgraded with 30 monks and has classes till 4th standard, after which the monks have to continue their higher education at Trongsa *Dratshang*. However, even before the establishment of the monastic school and the appointment of a *Lam*, there was a *Kunyer* for daily *sölkha* and *lhachö* performance in the *Dzong*.

Figure 1. Family estate holder of Wangdü Chöling Dzong



Treasures of the Dzong

Even though the *Dzong* in itself is one of the most invaluable treasures of the country for its unique architecture and the history it holds, it contains some precious relics belonging to the early Wangchuck Monarchs. Besides, the *Dzong* also houses the *Utse Gönkhang* and *Chakdzö Lhakhang*, displaying valuable *kuten*, *sungten*, *thukten* and other valuable objects.

Utse Gönkhang

The main tutelary deity of the *Utse Gönkhang* is *Dralha Chegu*. It also accommodates *kusung thuktens* such as *Düsum Sangye* (past, present and future Buddhas) as its main statue along with *Chenrezi* and *Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyel*. The *kuten* also includes a statue of *Guru Rinpoche*

which used to be carried along during the migration to Künga Rabten in Trongsa. It also has a Dröma statue and other relics.

Sungten consists of Bum ('Bum; Pranjaparamita sutra; Perfection of Wisdom Sutra in One Hundred Thousand Lines), Domang (*mDo mangs*; Anthology of sutras), *Kathang De 'nga*, Gätom (*brGyad stongpa*; Pranjaparamita sutra in eight hundred verses) in gold scripts and other *sungchö* texts. It also has Deshek Chöten Gä (*bDe-gshegs mchodrtten brgyad*; Sugata stupa; Eight types of stupa depicting eight events in the life of Buddha Shakyamuni), stupa of Tshelha 'Namsum (*Tshe lha rnam gsum*; *Tshe dpag med*, *sGrol dkar* and *rNam rgyal ma*), Ashi Wangmo's Kudung Chöten (*sKu gdung mchod rten*; Stupa of body remains), and Sidok Chöten (*Sri bzlog mchod rten*; Stupa for repelling evil).

Chakdzö Lhakhang

Chakdzö Lhakhang or Treasure House temple houses Tsheringma and Namsê, the gods of wealth and prosperity.

With regard to other valuable objects in the two lhakhangs, Lam Jampel Dorje confirmed that there were no objects of great value like gold and silver. There was however a pair of small butter-lamp vase made of silver. As the *Dzong* was of great significance, the Royal Family members contributed religious objects and at present, the lhakhangs have nine silver vases for butter-lamp offering.

Kuchö Bumdé and festivals in the Dzong

Besides other religious ceremonies at Wangdü Chöling Dzong, there was a great public fair held in the seventh lunar month every year which rivalled Punakha Domchöe. The fair was instituted first in 1937 to celebrate the completion of Domkhar Palace in Bumthang, but it became so popular that it became an annual event of Wangdü Chöling Dzong.

However, at present, besides the daily ritual and *yarngo marngo tshechu*, three days of *Dralha Pangtö* is carried out

from the 14th to 16th, and *Göm Bangrim* on 17th of the fifth month. Additionally, two days of *Göm Bangrim* is held on the 30th day of the ninth month and the first day of the 10th month annually.

Renovation and extension of the Dzong

After the end of Duar War (1864–65), Jigme Namgyel retired in 1866, passing on the seat of the Trongsa *Pönlop* to Dungkar Gyaltshen, his elder brother. During his brief retirement, he spent his life at Wangdü Chöling with his family, embarking on renovation and extension of Wangdü Chöling Dzong, and several other religious activities including offering of *sertô* at Bumthang Jampa Lhakhang. However, this period was interrupted when he had to intervene between *Puna Dzongpön* Drang Tashi and ex-Wangdü *Dzongpön* Darlung Tobgay, and incumbent Dzongpön Künlek Dorje and Thimphu Dzongpön Kawang Makhel in 1869.

The central tower (*Utse*) is the work of Jigme Namgyel but other extensions were carried out by *Gongsar* Ugyen Wangchuck. Later on, during the time of the Second King Jigme Wangchuck, he planned to completely demolish and reconstruct Wangdü Chöling Dzong. To this effect, His Majesty dispatched a writ to the *garpas* of Mangde, Punakha, Hâ, Kurtö and Trongsa to come for reconstruction works. In response to the writ, about three hundred *garpas* came for the reconstruction work. However, Trongsa Neten Dranglapa Dargä, who was a trusted and favoured courtier, counselled and pleaded with the King not to modify the *Utse* of the Dzong, though rest of the complex was to be renovated, as it represented the original workmanship of Chötse *Pönlop* Jigme Namgyel.

The *garpas* were deployed under the charge of Zhemgang Dzongpön Thrinle Namgyal, half brother of the queens, to extract timber from the mountains of Chökor for an entire summer. Some of the *garpas* floated the timber down the Chamkharchu where it was trapped at Wangdü Chöling. By

the end of the summer, the meadows of Wangdü Chöling were blanketed with logs, beams and planks. However, the planned reconstruction was never launched as the events took a different turn.

Other historical monuments at the Dzong Site

Linga Lhakhang

Linga Lhakhang has *ku sung thuktens* (*sKu gsung thugs rten*) which comprise of khenlop chösum (*mKhan slob chos sum*); Khenchen Boddhisattva (*mKhan chen zhiba 'tsho*), Lopön Pema Jungne (Guru Rinpoche; *sLob-dpon pad-ma 'byung-gnas*) and Gäpo Thrisong Deutsän (*rGyal-po khri srong lde'u btsan*) of which the Guru Rinpoche statue at the centre was believed to have a right horn of the sheep that prevented falling rocks at Luggi Raw Lhakhang at Chökortö (Bumthang). The other statues include Tshe-lha Namsum. It also has Buddhist canon, kanjur (*bKa'-'gyur*) as its holy scripture (*gSung-rten*).

With regard to religious ceremonies, a week long Sidô Khorlo (*Sri bzlog 'khor lo 'bar ba*) is carried out starting on the 21st day of the ninth month every year. This was instituted by the successive Kings. This ritual was known to have been carried out for months on end in the olden days at the Linga Lhakhang according to the Lam Jampel Dorje.

Linga Thang archery range

Linga Thang was the place where the great fair of Wangdü Chöling used to be held during the time of the Second King. Although it served for multiple activities, it was initially created for archery that the successive Kings used to relish for weeks on end.

Chukhor Mani

There are five *Chukhor Mani* just below the Linga Lhakhang. Although the first one (next to the gate), was as old as the *Dzong*, the four others were built by *Ashi Chöki*, according to

Agay Rinzin Dorje who is 84 years old (in 2010) and from the Wangdü Chöling locality.

Kabra

Although Kabra is not attached to Wangdü Chöling Dzong, it is very much a part of the *Dzong* since the time of ex-*Drönyer* Dorje Rabden. It is the Tsänkhang (*bTsan khang*; deity house) of Tseu Marpo (*Tse'u dmar po*), a protective deity. Dorje Rabden was believed to have discovered treasures as he was known for Terdak (*gTer-bdag*; Treasure Guardian) of Tseu Marpo. So, the Kabra served as his personal Lhakhang where he even instituted 15 monks.

Conclusion

The historic Dzong of Wangdü Chöling has endured the vagaries of the weather and climate, standing majestically firm and high in the valley of Shamkhar in Bumthang Chökor. The *Dzong* which once bustled with activities of the Royal Court, with footfalls of hundreds of men, now wears a dreary look. Since its Royal inhabitants have left for the new Capital, the *Dzong* has become defunct and is now in a state of disrepair.

However, there is hope in the near future with planned renovation involving international conversation experts. The Palace today serves the curiosity of the international and regional tourists, as they take a glimpse of the glorious history of our Monarchy. The *Dzong* is a majestic masterpiece, bearing a unique architectural, and conceptual design and purpose. Preserving the *Dzong* today will help cement the legacy of our early Monarchs, thus ensuring its survival for the posterity which will be much richer for it.

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