

PLACES OF PILGRIMAGE IN THAG (THAKKHOLA)

Tibetan Manuscripts

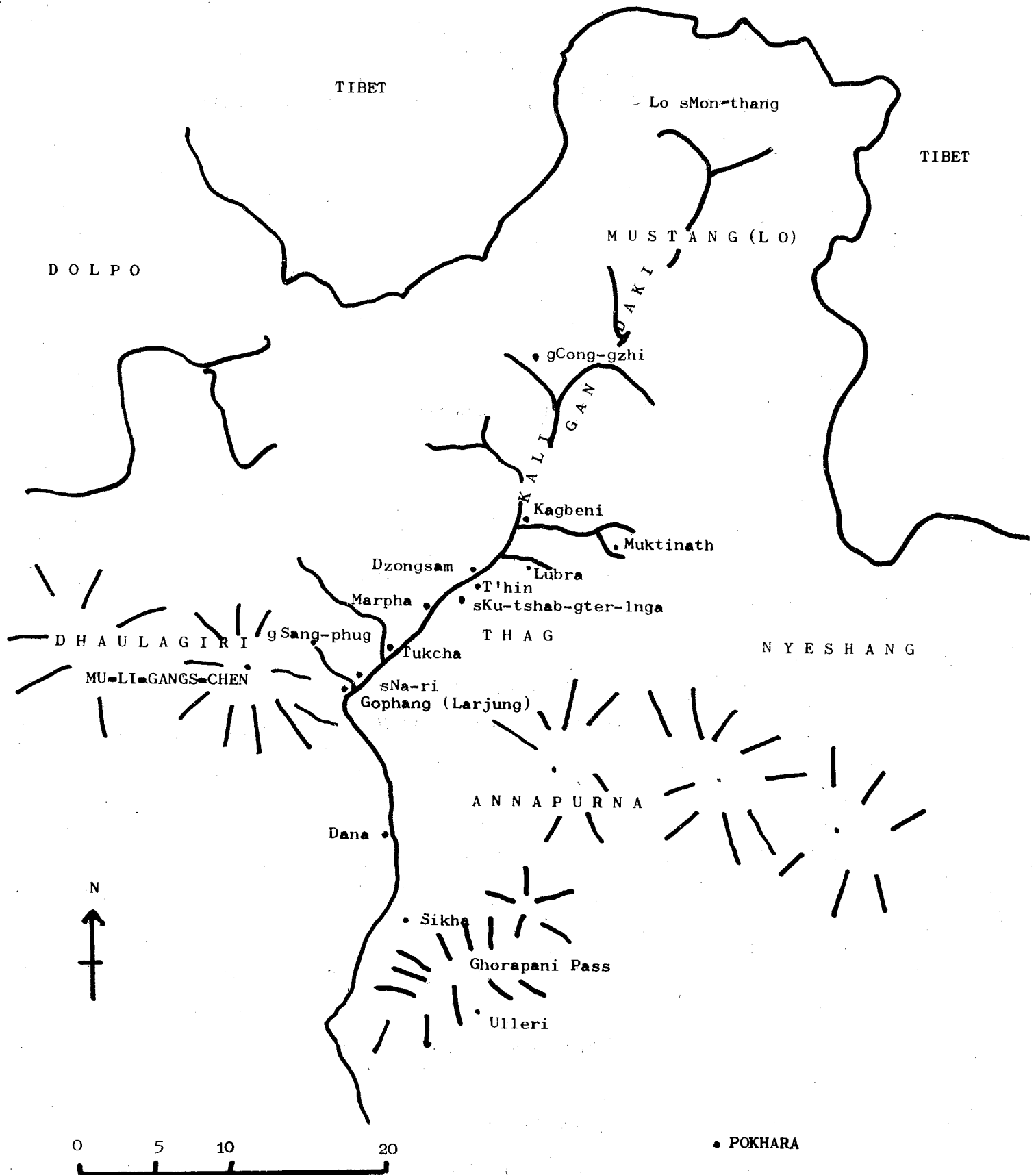
Produced by

Tshampa Ngawang of Drumpa

Editing and Translation

by

David Snellgrove



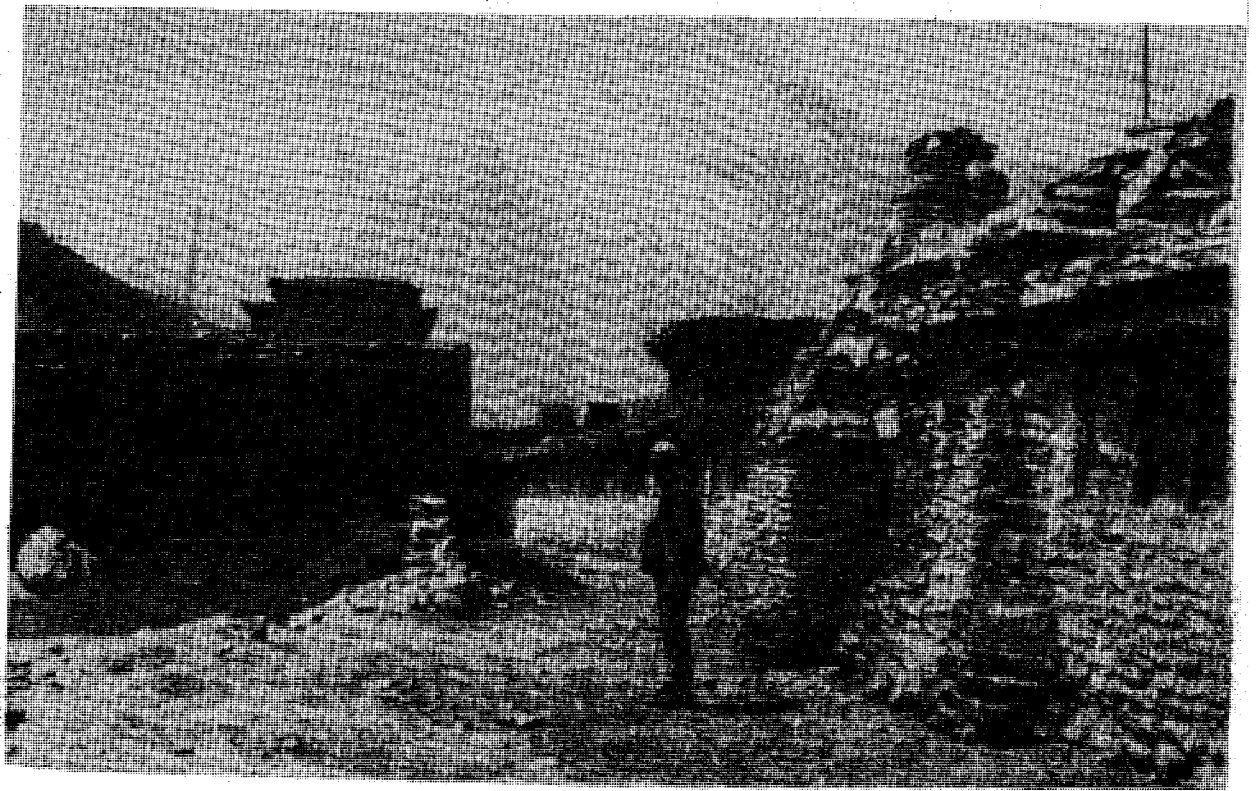
INTRODUCTION

The Tibetan texts presented here together with their English translation relate to various religious sites in the land of Thag (pronounceable as 'Tark' for English-speakers), which is now included in the Mustang District of Nepal with the chief administrative centre at Jomosom. Until the Gorkha conquest of Nepal, which was completed by the end of the 18th century, Thak was one of many of the petty mountain-kingdoms scattered over the more fertile parts of these higher Himalayan regions. Her two most powerful neighbours were the kingdoms of Mustang (Lo) to the north and of Jumla ('Dzum-lang) to the west. Depending upon their geographical situation these various kingdoms were penetrated more or less by Tibetan religion and culture coming from the north and by Nepali and Hindu culture which advanced steadily up the lower valleys from the south. Thus while Jumla, more easily accessible from the south had become Nepali speaking and largely Hindu in culture long before the Gorkha conquest, Mustang because of its close proximity to Tibet remained and has remained to this day largely Tibetan in language and culture. This strong Tibetan influence extended down the Kali Gandaki Valley, retaining until the last century considerable strength at least as far as Larjung (Gophang), six or seven miles south of Tukcha.

Very little historical material concerning this whole area prior to the conquest has so far come to light and such

details as can be gleaned come mainly from the biographies of famous lamas who lived or travelled in these parts. Thus for example it is possible to gain some colourful impressions of life in Dolpo, that high upland region to the west of Mustang, between the 15th and 18th centuries from the biographies of certain famous lamas of Dolpo, which I edited and translated several years ago. These Tibetan-speaking areas of north-western Nepal are rich in such literary traditions and it would be of great benefit to the cultural life of modern Nepal if the Research Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies would take an active interest in studies such as these.

In April 1979 I visited my friend and old travelling companion, Pasang Khambache Sherpa, at the Government Agricultural Farm at Marpha, of which he is in charge. We first stayed in Marpha together in 1956, when this pleasant little town provided an ideal resting-place half-way through the long eight-month journey which we made that year through the main Tibetan-speaking regions of north-western Nepal. We were there again in 1960 and 1961 on our journeys in and out of Dolpo. Thereafter I did not go again until the summer of 1978, when I made a five day journey through the monsoon-rains and over the leech-infested Ghorapani Pass to spend just one week with Pasang on his fruit-farm. That short visit revived all my happy memories of the past, and so in the spring of 1979 I took the opportunity of returning. Thanks to Pasang I came to know Ngawang of Drumpa, the 30-year son of Amchi Pemba, who was renowned as a Tibetan religious scholar and local practiser of medicine, and who has passed much of his learning onto this particular son. Son and father and an uncle as well are all known by the title of Tshampa (correctly spelt: *mTshams-pa*) as referring to one who is known to have



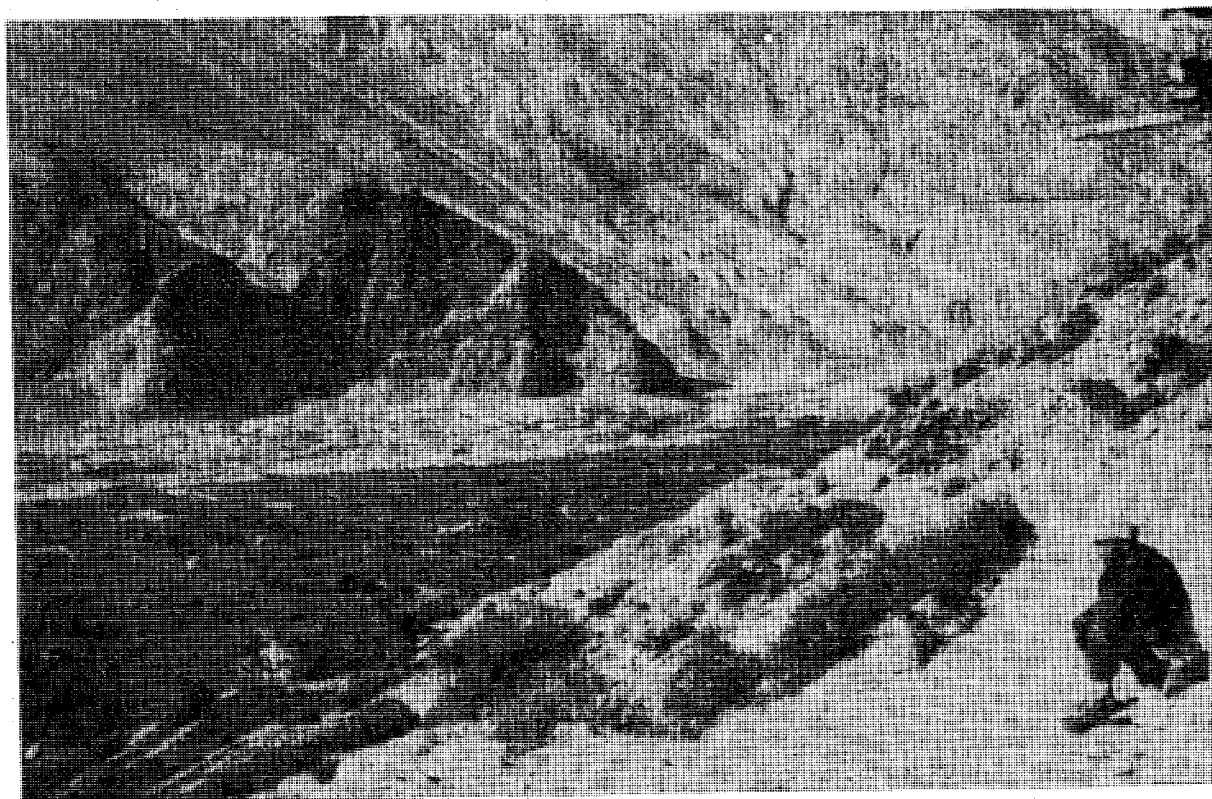
1. Mu-li-gang (Dhaulagiri Massif) as seen from Tukcha



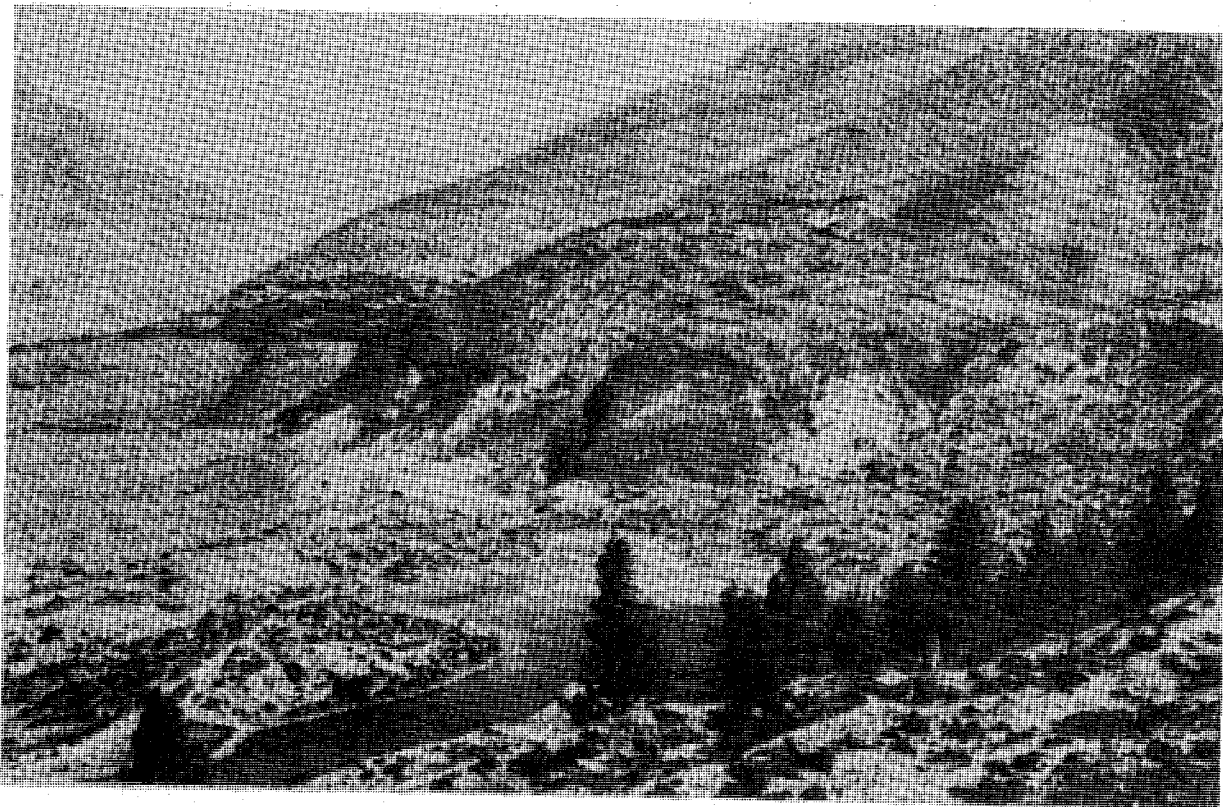
2. Tshampa Ngawang and Pasang Khembaché Sherpa



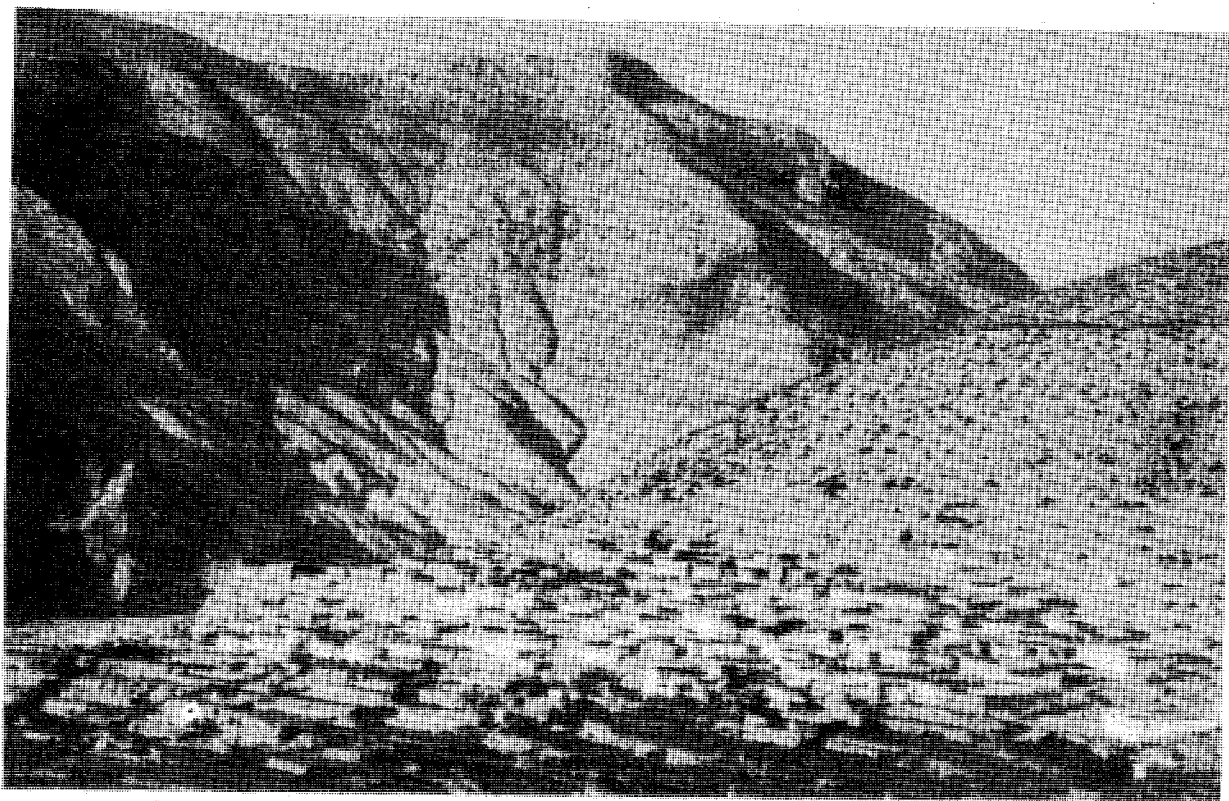
3. The extensive ruins of Sum Garab Dzong ('Old Thinigaon')



4. Dzongsam (Jomosom), the 'New Fort', as seen from Thinigaon.



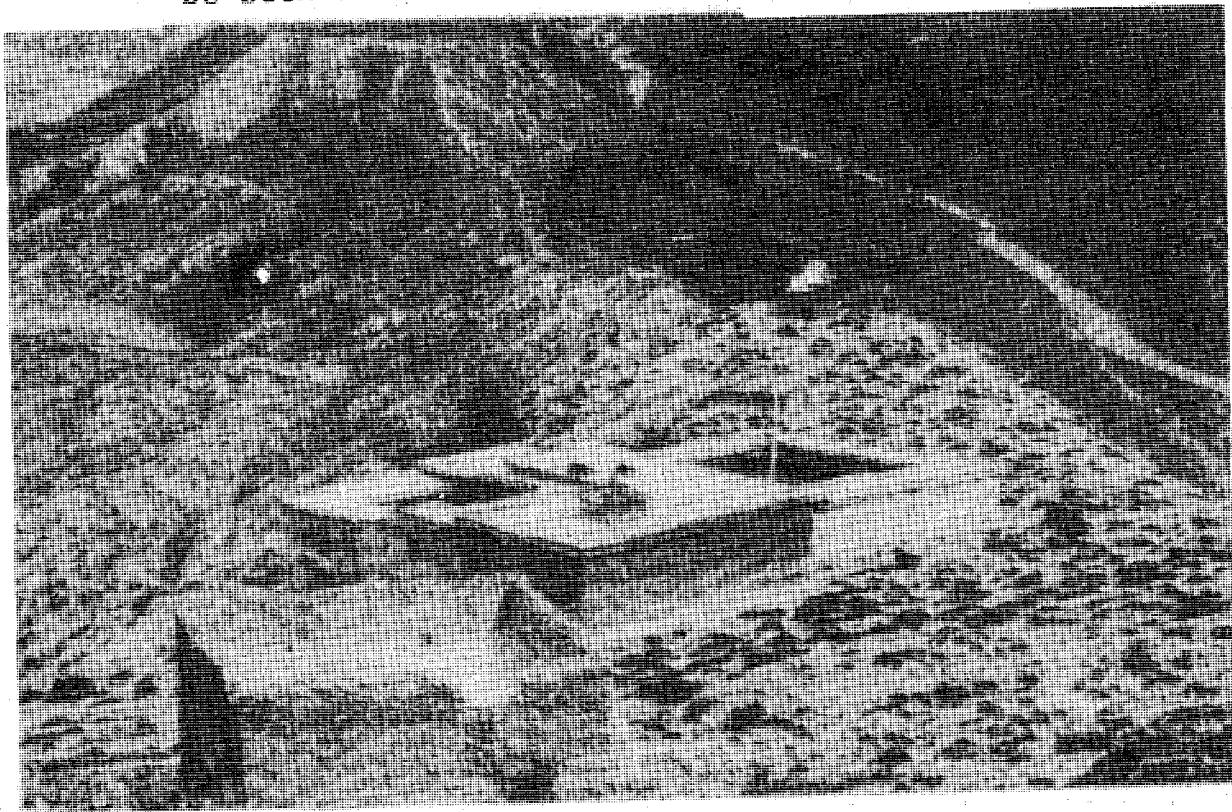
5. View northwards from just below Ku-tsab-ter-nga Monastery. Thinigaon can be seen towards the left background and the ruins of Sum Garab Dzong on the hill-top above the lake.



6. General view of Thinigaon. The Bonpo Temple can be seen separate from and just above the village.



7. The Monastery of Ku-tsab-ter-nga on its summit ridge. The lake below is the one which can be seen also in Illustration 5.



8. The black boulder enshrined and the sacred juniper tree by Ku-tsab-ter-nga Monastery. The black boulder was one of the identification marks given as guidance to Urgyan dPal-bzang.

spent many years in religious retreat (*mTshams*) which involves also in their case retreat for study purposes. The father, who died in 1978, was very attached to the Lama of Shang, a Tibetan lama who with true missionary zeal did much to encourage a revival of Buddhism in the north-western parts of Nepal during the 1950s. Pasang and I met him on one of his missionary journeys in 1956 at Kagbeni and again at Pi in Nyeshang (Manangbhot). It was he who raised funds for the repair and redecorating of the Monastery of Ku-tsab-ter-lnga (*sKu-tshab-gter-lnga*) on its hill-top half-way between Marpha and Jomosom (Dzongsam), and when we visited this monastery that year, the work was just being completed. Amchi Pemba, whose home was then at Chhonkhor just below Muktinath, as a devotee of the Lama of Shang, was also interested in the progress of the work, and just at that time his wife conceived a son, whose birth coincided with the completion of repairs and decoration at Ku-tsab-ter-nga. Seeing auspicious associations in these events, Amchi Pemba bought some land and built a house at Drumpa just below the monastery, maintaining the two small estates for ten years or so, when he sold off his property in Chhonkhor and settled permanently at Drumpa, where his son Ngawang continues to look after his own property as well as that of his mother. Thus it came about in April 1979, when I was looking around for surviving local literary works, that Ngawang offered to make a copy for me of his manuscript of 'The Record of the Five Representative Treasures' (*sKu-tshab-gter-lnga*), a name which refers both to the collection of relics and to the monastery which was built to house them. Ngawang also made a copy for me of a short 'Record of Muktinath' which he possessed in manuscript form, and later we borrowed from the elderly Tshampa Tshering of Putra Village in Dzar-Dzong the complete manuscript of a work entitled in Tibetan:

"A Description of Muktinath, the Place of Promenade, (the Monastery of) Ku-tsab-ter-nga, the Great Mount Mu-li (=Dhaulagiri), the Guru's Hidden cave, the Lord of sNa-ri, and such-like wonderful places". Ngawang copied this too, simply omitting the first part concerning Muktinath, which corresponded with the short work which we already had. As all these places were known to me from earlier travels and are all to be found within the limits of the old land of Thag with the one exception of the 'Self-Produced Place of Promenande' (*gCong-gzhi rang-byung*), we decided to make corrected versions of these texts and publish them together with an English translation. We hope that this small work may encourage other local residents of the area to bring out into the light of day other texts of local interest which they must surely possess.

Passing through Delhi a month later, I was advised by our friend Gene Smith of the existence of two published versions of the work describing Muktinath and the several other places, one in a volume of unedited reproductions of Tibetan texts, published in Delhi in 1976 with the title of *Rare Tibetan Texts from Nepal*, and the other being a carefully romanized edition of our text in a variant version, which was made by Alexander Macdonald in 1974, and which fortunately for us he has just published in *Studies in Pali and Buddhism, a memorial volume in honour of Bhikku Jagdish Kashyap*, edited by A.K. Narain, Delhi 1979, and of which he kindly gave me a copy. The manuscript which was reprinted in Delhi has several folios missing towards the end. Our MS like the one seen by Alexander Macdonald, is complete, but in the process of earlier copying some folios have been displaced, which would have caused us some very teasing problems without the help of the other two

versions. Thus the text which we reproduce here is substantially Ngawang's manuscript but with the contents correctly ordered once more. As for the manuscript of the "Record of the Five Representative Treasures," this is the only version available to date, so we have simply reproduced it, amending obvious errors in grammar and spelling. However, in this case too, Gene Smith was very helpful in drawing my attention to the full extent of the recent reprints of many of the works of the great discover of hidden texts, bDud-'dul rDo-rje, who is credited in our story with the rediscovery of the sacred treasures which were kept until recently at the Monastery of Ku-tsab-ter-nga.

The naming of bDud-'dul rDo-rje (1615-72) as the one who discovered the relics and then gave them to his disciple Urgyan dPal-bzang with instructions to found a monastery to house them, gives the sole historical support on which to base the whole story. Accepting this story as substantially true one may fairly surmise that the Monastery of Ku-tsab-ter-nga was founded about the middle of the 17th century. The prophecies contained in our story belong to a set of rediscovered texts entitled *Dam-chos sPrul-sku sNying-thig* (the holy scripture, Heart-Drop of Transformation-Body), which are to be found in volumes 3-5 of *The Collected Rediscovered Teachings of sPo-bo gTer-chen bDud-'joms rDo-rje*, reproduced from the manuscript collection from the library of Dudjom Rinpoche, Darjeeling (West Bengal), 1976. Unfortunately, for reasons known to himself, Dudjom Rinpoche has omitted from this reprinted edition the prophecies of this section, as well as of other sections. Thus we have no immediate means of identifying the prophecies which occur in our texts as genuinely attributable to bDud-'dul rDo-rje. However, once our text is published, the identification can be made at some later date.

Our 'Record of the Five Representative Treasures' clearly belongs to a period before the Gorkha conquest of this part of Nepal, when the chief 'citadel' of Thag was the great fort of Garab Dzong (*dGa'-rab rDzong*), also known as Sum (*gSum*) Garab Dzong from its close association with the village of Sumbo (T'hin, now known as Thinigaon) nearby. At some time, maybe even before the Gorkha conquest, the fort was abandoned and T'hin assumed a kind of primacy in the area, which in fact it retains to this day, despite the establishment of the new administrative head-quarters at Jomosom, which is a corruption of Dzongsam, meaning the 'new fort', as distinct from the old hill-top ruin. Our text informs us that Garab Dzong had four monasteries in its charge, and these include the Bon-po Temple at T'hin as well as Ku-tsab-ter-nga. The other two are lost except for the ruin of one at the foot of the hill below Garab Dzong. It is not possible to fix the date of the composition of our text, although the Tibetan date of 'Monday in the 3rd month of the Fire Horse Year' is given at the end. According to the 60-year cycle, this year could be 1607, 1667 or 1727. It is unlikely to be earlier or later. The existence of a flourishing monastic community is assumed. When Pasang and I visited the monastery in 1956 there were still three or four monks there, and we were shown the relics. Now the whole place remains closed and locked except for about half an hour every afternoon when a villager, dignified with the title of 'sacristan' (*sku-gnyer*), comes up from T'hin to light a butter-lamp and say a few prayers before the images. The relics and all records of the place are locked away in T'hin village, where few westerners are likely to gain access to them. There certainly should be some record of the lama named as the composer of our text and it is also possible that a biography of Urgyan dPal-bzang exists. It is certainly referred to in

our text. Tactful approaches may bring such information to light in due course.

The second short work reproduced and translated here, entitled 'A Description of Muktinath (*Chu-mig-brgya-rtsa*), the Place of Promenade Self-Produced (*gCong-zhi rang-byung*), Ku-tsab-ter-nga (*sKu-tshab-gter-lnga*), the Great Mount Mu-li (*Mu-li-gangs-chen*), the Guru's Hidden Cave (*Guru gSang-phug*), the Lord of sNa-ri (*sNa-ri jo-bo*) and such wonderful places,' is concerned largely with Mount Mu-li (=Dhaulagiri) and Padmasambhava's 'Hidden Cave'. This mountain is mentioned once in the Ku-tsab-ter-nga Record, where it is spelt *rMu-gling*, which gives the meaning of 'Sky-Realm' and it quite likely to be the correct name, of which Mu-li is a mere phonetic simplification. The cave remains a popular place of pilgrimage for Buddhists. It is on the north-eastern side of the mountain and is approached easily up the side-valley west from Larjung (Gophang).

Muktinath is so famous nowadays, as well known to western tourists as to Hindu and Buddhist pilgrims, that perhaps little needs to be written here. I gave a brief description of the place many years ago in *Himalayan Pilgrimage* (pp. 199-201). It is certainly an ancient place of pilgrimage, although nothing particularly ancient is to be seen on the surface. It attracted wonder and still attracts wonder from those who know nothing about the existence of natural gases underground, on account of the flames that burn 'from water, from stone and from earth'. This wonder is associated with the great tantric pair of divinities, Samvara and his spouse. The water-spouts are associated with the Eighty-Four Great Magicians (*Siddha*) of late Indian Buddhist tradition, and they are watched over by a Serpent-Divinity known as Gawo Jogpa (*dGa'-bo 'Jogs-pa*), who

is identified by Hindus as Vishnu or Narayan. Despite the vast concourse of pilgrims who visit this place, it remains in a rather sad state of dereliction except for the small tiered-roof temple in honour of Vishnu/Gawo Jogpa.

The Self-Produced Place of Promenande' (*gCong-gzhi rang-byung*) is in Mustang (Lo) and not in Thag, and its inclusion with these other places here is a little incongruous. For a description of it one may refer to *Himalayan Pilgrimage*, p. 189. Our text, as originally conceived, was clearly concerned with just three places, the Mountain (Mu-li-gang), the Hidden Cave and the Lord of sNa-ri, for these three are commended as the essential ones at the end of the work. The Lord of sNa-ri is a small alabaster image of Avalokitesvara in the sNa-ri (Narshang) temple just above Larjung (Gophang). Here again one may refer to *Himalayan Pilgrimage*, p. 181. Tibetan dates of visions are given in the text, but we have no means of fixing these apart from recurring 60th years of the regular 60-year cycles, and there is no indication of when the work may have been put together.

Perhaps one should emphasize that this local literature still represents a living tradition. With the notable exceptions of Tukcha, whose leading trading families have deliberately cultivated Hinduism to the detriment of Buddhism in their village, Buddhism in its Tibetan form continues to provide the cultural background and social framework for the whole of the Kali Gandaki Valley north of Larjung (Gophang). Nepali is now firmly established at Jomosom (Dzongsam) as the language of administration and of projects of economic development, but while it has an essential part to play as the *lingua franca* of a united Nepal, it makes no contribution in these areas to the

cultural life of the people. In Thag the people continue to use amongst themselves Thag dialects of Tibetan and from Kagbeni northwards Tibetan dialects approximate ever closer to dialects of central Tibet. All local literature and all historical records have been written now for many centuries in literary Tibetan, although often with locally corrupted spellings, and thus there remains throughout these northern regions of Nepal a strong living tradition of Tibetan culture. The recent arrival of a modern kind of education in the form of government schools, a highly desirable development in itself, may undermine Buddhist beliefs to some extent, but since it replaces them with no alternative system, the older generation of believers has no real cause for lament. Occasionally one hears such laments, but these are surely self-defeating. The vast majority of the local people are at least nominally Buddhist, calling upon local lamas for ceremonies in case of need, and a little more encouragement and guidance given by those who are qualified in Buddhist teachings will easily ensure the prevalence of Buddhism in these areas for a long time to come.

David Snellgrove

THE RECORD OF THE FIVE REPRESENTATIVE TREASURES

at (the Monastery of) *sku-tshab-gter-lnga* (Ku-tsab-ter-nga) as associated with the Holy Scripture *sPrul-sku-snying-thig* (Heart-Drop of Transformation-Body), namely (i) the image (of Padma-sambhava) known as 'Good to see', (ii) the image of *rDo-rje Gro-lod* (Adamantine Sagging Belly), (iii) the image of the *Dākinī Ye-shes mtsho-rgyal* (Queen of the Lake of Wisdom), (iv) the upper garment of the Precious Master, and (v) his genuine slipper.

Previously during an intermediate good kalpa the Great Master of Knowledge-Holders Padmasambhava, the Second Buddha Lotus-Born, came together with his subordinates and associates, all of them, in the centre of the Tiger's Den, Lion Perfectioner of Thought, that special place of meditation in the Hidden Land in the so-called Northern Snowy Mountainous Land. A vast circle of offerings was prepared, and having revealed that profound and holy scripture *Heart-Drop of Transformation Body* which is the essence of all thought-realization, the Master opened up the maṇḍala of Adamantine Sagging Belly, and then early in the morning of the 10th day in the first half of the month just as the sun was rising, the Master Padma himself flew magically up into the sky. 'O where has he gone, where has he gone?', with these words manifesting their amazement, the whole lordly entourage¹ was afraid, sorrowful and tearful,

1. The compound term *rje-'bangs* used throughout this section of the text would normally be translatable as 'lord and entourage', but the context does not permit this.

and while they were making many supplications, the Master (travelling) by his magical power to the Land of Urgyan and other places, the ten resorts of Heruka, the eight great cemeteries, Bodhgayā, the Vulture Peak, Magadha and Kushinagara in India, Pharping, Svayambhu and Bauddha in Nepal, and all the great places of the Hidden Land, gathering scatterings of earth and scatterings of water, and furthermore (3) from snowy white Meru, from the snow lands of Tibet, the threefold realm of Ngari in the west, the four divisions of Ü and Tsang in the centre and all the six mountainous regions of Amdo and Khams in the east, from these he gathered in all directions scatterings of earth and water and transported them. Then from behind the image of Śākyamuni at Bodhgayā in India, that special place in the upper part of the Southern Continent he brought a great treasure, a crystal casket (sparkling) with five colours, from the inside of a red sandal-wood pillar, and so he came dancing and darting by his magical power through the sky. All his entourage was amazed at the sight, and making extensive offerings and many obeisances, they said: 'Did the Master himself conceal it when he was in India before?' He replied smilingly: 'It was not the Buddha who did it'.

Then from inside that precious casket (he took) the white and red essences of the Lord Amideva, Pāṇḍuravāsini, Ākāśarāja, Guhyapati, Padmasambhava and his two goddess-companions, Mandārava and the Dākinī Queen of the Lake of Wisdom, mixing them all together with relics of the sixteen heroes of buddhahood, a representation of the Religious King Great-Bravery all the live-bestowing pellets of all the Knowledge-Holders and recluses who have gained power over life, a measure of the bodily remains of the Buddha Dīpaṅkara, the relics of the Noble Śāriputra, of Maugalyāyana, pure Brahmans

and especially the relics of his own (4) chief teacher, the Brahman Prabhāhati and the blood of the great Knowledge-Holder Humkāra. He pounded all kinds of beneficial herbs, dissolved the scatterings of earth and water, moulded them with the herbs and clay, blessed them and said: 'Tomorrow, the 10th of the month you must make many relics in my likeness'. Then the Lady Queen of the Lake kneaded the herbs and clay, made some thousand images, and spreading a fine cloth, placed them upon it. Then they covered them with a Banaras woven cloth and offered extensive worship. At sunrise on the 11th day the Master said: 'O Queen of the Lake, bring the relics'. But as she approached them, all the relics reverted to their true nature and they appeared bathed in splendour and blazing in a mass of light. The whole lordly entourage came together and looked. They were all amazed and prepared a vast circle of offerings. A ladle-full of wine² was produced and they offered a maṇḍala of gold and Queen of the Lake said: 'O Master, Mighty Knowledge-Holder, by your magical power you have been to Urygan and to India and furthermore you have brought scatterings of earth, of water and of herbs from all holy places, also the white and red essence of the secret treasure, bodily remains and bones of Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and of previous teachers, and all these special relics. As you are so gracious to us (5) will you arrange for a (single) object of worship by uniting these special images of you, our Master?' But as she had a

2. The term used for 'wine' is *rgun-grum-gyi chang*, literally 'grape-chang'. It is commonly referred to in texts concerning Padmasambhava and indicates the use of such 'wine' in the far north-western parts of the Indian sub-continent. It is still produced in some of the Dard non-Buddhist villages of western Ladakh. Concerning the maṇḍala of gold, see note 45.

mind to bring the images together, they all flew up into the sky and not one remained. Then the lordly entourage and the Lady Queen of the Lake all wept, but the Great Master said: 'Do not grieve, but amass offerings and sacrifices. Thinking of the good of living beings, make supplication from your hearts, O lordly entourage.' The whole entourage gave many offerings and items of atonement, offering maṇḍalas, that they became five hundred in number, and then the five hundred became fifty, and then twenty-five and there was a great blazing of light. Earth and sky shook and trembled and the Master said: 'JA HUM BAM HO, as he sprinkled them and consecrated them. This was absorbed into the images which were resplendent in a mass of light. Then Queen of the Lake and the lordly entourage making an obeisance asked: 'In which hidden places would it be good for these special secret treasures?' The Master replied: 'Please listen, you persons who are gathered here. Although there are many millions of images of me, the essence of them all, forsooth, of all the treasures this is the most essential, known as 'Good to see' and as the 'Striking Relics' and again as 'Mass of Light (bringing) Release on Sight', consisting of the image 'Good to see' (= Padmasambhava), Adamantine Sagging Belly and Queen of the Lake of Wisdom, (6) these three, and for all who see them they represent the Union of the Precious Ones. The yellow scroll in ḍākinī letters of the Holy Scripture *Heart-Drop of Transformation-Body*, bind it up as a treasure, hoard the treasury, insert it in a (container modelled as a) scorpion and conceal as a treasure at Tsha-ba Dro-drag Mountain. Then those images known as 'Good to see', conceal them at Tidro, Dradar, Koro, Drag-nga, and in the cleft of the Zang-zang

holy mount.³ Hide treasure at Senge Namdzong of Kham and at Dril-bu of Nili, at the Rotam Boulder, the Somo Boulder, at the Precious Pe-chen Mount and at the Gau'u Cave, at Kha-chog Mount, at the split mountain cliffs known as Nyen-dong, at the Shong Cave of Kyirong, at the Elixir Ravine and Mount Kyi-mang, at Urgyan Ling-phug of Tsang-zhi, at Lung-thang-drol of Nili, at the Snowy Cliff, the White Snows, the Lungmo Lake at Mi-yi-khang, at such places as these, my Queen of the Lake, fix seven seals on all these excellent places and hide the treasures there. SAMAYA SEAL SEAL SEAL ! Then the Lady Queen of the Lake said: 'Where will that man appear, the one who will gain connection with the Master's three effigies ? What is the lineage of the man who will deserve to bring them forth ? Whence comes this deserving man who will have control of them when he has extracted them ?' The Master replied: 'Ah well ! Queen of the Lake, listen carefully with devotion. The man who will extract these three special transformation-images is known as the Great Knowledge-Holder bDud-'dul rDo-rje who will come at the end of the line of the many rebirths of the present 'Brog-mi Translator Khye'u-chung.⁴

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3. The spellings of most of the following names are quite unsatisfactory. Since they are all places renowned as sources of 'hidden treasure' in the rNying-ma-pa tradition, it should be possible to trace them, if time and means were available, and neither is available just now. We have corrected *Tsha-ba sgro-brag* which appeared as *Tsha-ba dro-brag* on our MS, and also *Ti-sgro*, which was spelt as *Te-dro*. The translation gives phonetic spellings with occasionally translated terms in order to produce a tolerably readable text.
4. This prophecy could well be among those of bDud-'dul rdo-rje's *sPrul-sku snying-thig*, but they have all been deliberately omitted in the recently (Darjeeling 1976) reprinted work of Dudjom Rinpoche.

A yogin who practises in a secret manner, (7) practising unconventionally he practises his practice; patiently he protects living beings and by the mere act of opening these holy places he purifies the ten spheres of action and overcomes the Evil One, of this there is no doubt. He is the splendour of living beings in an evil age and when this great discoverer of hidden treasure bDud-'dul rDo-rje gives as prophesied into the hands of Urgyan dPal-bzang the three effigies together with half the Master's overmantle and one slipper brought from Khar-chung in Lho-brag, he makes this prayer: 'By the merit of transmitting to you these five treasures representing the Body, Speech, Mind, Qualities and Acts of Padmavajra, may the Buddhist doctrine in the form of the religious works of the Vajrayāna increase and so achieve the perfection of Visualization and Realization. May disease, plague and discord be annulled. May rain come in proper measure and may there be good harvests, and may you succeed in all you undertake!' "So saying he gave a blessing accompanied by auspicious signs.

Quoting from the 'Seven-Chapter Work':

"On a rock in a frontier land (Mon) to the south a bodily mark was placed.

The Five Precious Images were established for the good of Tibet. May the Buddhist doctrine flourish to the very end !"

Then Urgyan dPal-bzang asked: 'O foremost lama of mine, please agree upon the monasteries which shall be the fixed places for these five special effigies to reside'. His lama replied: 'A land known as Thag, a small stream to the right and on the left a great Mount Kailāśa, on the mountain behind is the Master's impressed image and to the front is Mount

Mu-li-gang⁵; the place where they shall reside is like an elephant lying down and on the summit where the great monastery is built (8) there is a large black boulder. It is thus that the auspicious connections depend.'

Then as prophesied, Urgyan dPal-bzang took the five holy items and made his way down. On the way he received many good offerings and the list of these exists in his biography. He went on down and when he reached the sPan Chu, he prepared some hot food. As he sat there making a sacrificial offering, a black crow sPu-srang⁶ came and carried off the dish. He was very surprised and said to himself. 'This sPu-srang of my Lama must be a manifestation of the Four-Armed Defender'. Then he went on down

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5. This is Dhaulagiri. The spelling used on our MS here is *rMu-gling Gangs-chen*. In our following text, which is largely a eulogy of this mountain, it is spelt as *Mu-li-gangs(-chen)*. I adopt a phonetic spelling throughout the translations, viz. Mu-li-gang. The description fits for one who is looking southwards. The great Mount Kailasa on the left (viz. to the west) is the impressive snow-covered flank of Annapūrna. The Master's impressed image on the mountain behind refers to a body-like impression on the rocks to the north of Dzongsam (Jomosom) on the left side of Kali Gandaki close to where a tributary, the sPan Chu as named just below, descends from Lobrag. Mu-li-gang (Dhaulagiri) or rather a massive snow-covered northern section of it appears as though blocking the Kali Gandaki valley as one looks south from Tukcha. See illustration no. 1.
6. We do not know the significance of this odd term *spu-srang*. It is used as though it were a synonym for crow, *kva-ta* or *pho-roq*.

and reached Sum Garab Dzong.⁷ All the villagers of Sum Garab Dzong came together and there was great rejoicing with suitable signs and auspices. He rested three days and then remembering the words of his foremost lama, he noticed that he was at a place where the hill was like an elephant lying down. Taking a lump of sugar in his hand, he went to look and he reflected that this Luminous Mountain ('*Od-zer-gangs*) was indeed like a great elephant. The foot-print of Guru Padma was there and he found the great boulder and the torma dish carried off by the crow. He looked at this black boulder where the monastery now is and he thought: 'This must be, is it not, the very stone mentioned by my lama'.

Then reciting three times the seven-verse prayer⁸ and

7. *dGa'-rab rdzong* ('Joyous Fort') remains as the extensive ruins (Illustration no. 3) on a summit just to the south of T'hin (Thinigaon in Nepali, Sombo or Sumbo in Tibetan, here abbreviated as Sum (*gSum*)). This is the old 'capital' of Thag, subsequently moved to T'hin, which in turn has been replaced as chief administrative head-quarters by Dzongsam, literally meaning 'New Fort', but corrupted to Jomosom by Nepali-speakers who are unaware of the Tibetan origin of the name.

8. The seven-verse prayer is:

hrī o rgyan yul gyi nub byang mtshams /
 padma ge sar sdong po la /
 ya mtshan mchog gi dngos 'grub bsnyes /
 padma 'byung gnas shes su grags /
 'khor du mkha' 'gro mang pos bskor /
 khyed kyi rjes su bdag bsgrub kyis /
 byin gyis bslab phyir gshegs su gsol /

Hrī - on the borders of the north-western land of Urgyan,
 (supported) on the stalk of a lotus-flower,
 he achieved the most wonderful state of perfection,
 famed as the Lotus-Born,
 surrounded by your entourage of *dākinīs*,
 so that I may succeed in your wake,
 I beg you to come to bestow your blessing !

praying to his lama, he prodded with his stick on the black boulder and it sank in four inches and would not come out. So saying to himself that this must be the place announced by his lama, (9) he founded the monastery. As symbols of the Buddha Body he had made images of the Dharmakāya, the Sambhogakāya and the Nirmanakāya as well as one of the Lord Maitreya. As symbols of the Buddha Word he brought the Perfection of Wisdom in 100,000 verses and the Great Compassionate One. As symbols of the Buddha Mind he had the five sacred items and he had the walls painted with the set of Tranquil & Fierce Divinities from the Heart-Drop cycle, also 'Self-Release from Evil Rebirths' through the Great Compassionate One' and the complete works of Blazing Padma. When the monastery was being consecrated, a rainbow remained in the sky for three days and religious music was heard. Dakinīs danced on the roof of the monastery and left their foot-prints there, and many other auspicious signs and wonders appeared.

Whoever gains the opportunity of making obeisances the whole way round this Luminous Temple, the Monastery of the true Body, Speech, Mind, Qualities and Acts of the Second Buddha, will embark upon the way of salvation in this very life. Just by meeting the Guru (in the form of these) internal links known as 'Good to see', one will certainly be reborn from this life into the state of a Knowledge-Holder. Just by gaining the grace (that flows from them) one will be established in the way of enlightenment. If one prays from the very bottom of one's heart, all that to which one directs thought will come about effortlessly. Whoever receives the effects of grace of these sacred items, receives the blessing of me Padmasambhava. Whoever sees these sacred items, sees me Padmasambhava without there being any difference. Into whichever land one brings them,

enemies will be thrown back and disease and plague will stop. Rain will come in proper measure and there will be good harvests. If one obtains the blessing of Adamantine Sagging Belly, (10) adverse circumstances, obstructions, sprites and demons will not intrude, and all harm and illness will be turned away. If one obtains the blessing of the Lady Queen of the Lake of Knowledge, all the defilements of time and circumstance will be annulled and in this life one will be born in the state of a Knowledge-Holder. It is just the same as though one saw the Dharmakāya Samantabhadra, the Sambhogakāya Vajravārahī, the Nirmanakāya Mandārava and the noble goddess Tārā.

Their compassion will equal that of all the Buddhas of the ten directions. The Mother Goddesses and the Dākinīs will gather round inseparably in clouds.

One will obtain the power of deathlessness and obstructions will not come about from devilish sorts with their perverted knowledge. If they bring dissention, the punishment will fall upon themselves.

Wherever these relics repose, there will be blessings and graces to the full. Disease of men, disease of cattle, all will come to an end. Harvests will be good and grain will increase, while sickness and discord will be annulled, and foreign foes will be turned back at once.

Such special five treasures are these, except for those who have accumulated merits for three incalculable kalpas, it is difficult to have sight of these five special holy items.

Whoever despises these five special holy items and all who provoke doubts concerning them, certainly belong to those devilish sorts with perverted knowledge and in this life they will suffer sickness and misery, while in the next life they will fall into hell and endure immeasurable suffering. There will be no meeting for them with me Padmasambhava. Anathema to those hapless ones ! SAMAYA (11) SEAL SEAL SEAL !

Again Queen of the Lake made many obeisances and asked: 'O Padmasambhava, Great Knowledge-Holder, whence will come that deserving man who will be responsible for these five special holy items ?'

The Great Guru replied: 'The man who will be responsible for these holy things which are the equal of myself is a re-incarnation of the Translator lCogs-ro.⁹ To the front side of that excellent place Kung-lung, where streams descend continually - with the complexion like that of an evil man with wide open mouth, possessed of true meaning so long as he remains unshaken in his connection with Visualization and Realization. Perfectible enlightenment is bestowed on him in due stages. Annulling the obstructions of King Pehar, he is patient for this reason with living beings. Then flowers and the ten kinds of grain mature.

As for this manifestation of Sagarbodhimati, on the western side of gYu-ri-kha-ba (Snows of the Turquoise Mount), where great rivers flow leisurely and all is green and flourishing,

9. The following prophecy is presumably to be found in the prophecy section of the *sPrul-sku snying-thig*. See note 4 above. It is certainly in the typical elusive style of bDud-'dul rdor-rje's pronouncements.

here at the centre (there appears) the one with the name of Ocean (= Sagar), who keeps to the manner of traditional practice. He appears as a Knowledge-Holder and it is bestowed upon him in due stages.

As for the Master's effigies known as 'Good to see', (a man appears) in the style of Avalokitesvara possessing the crown of a youthful Vajradhara. When he travels through wild regions, fleeing like a musk-deer, he does not fall into the power of the Evil One. If one gives the three effigies to that Bodhisattva when the auspices are right, the hosts of the Evil One will be overcome and the Buddhist doctrine will be protected. By the mere sight of them the entry to evil rebirths is closed. One or two will adopt the traditional lineage of me the Yogin, and as for the glorious incarnation of Padma dBang-chen, it is given to him who appears like Khye'u-dang. These relics consisting of such excellent images (12) descend many times like rain. They are the essential treasure of all hidden treasures. They are the foremost of all the best effigies. May they serve as protection for many worthy beings in the end times to come !

This proclamation of the Knowledge-Holder Lotus Heart-Jewel has been committed to writing by me the Dākinī Queen of the Lake.

O may I meet with that spiritual son of Padmasambhava, that worthy one known as 'Adamantine Skill in subduing the Evil One' (bDud-'dul rDo-rje rTsal). SAMAYA Seal Seal Seal ! Bestowed Seal ! Hidden seal ! Such a one as the Knowledge-Holder bDud-'dul rDo-rje drew it forth from the rearing cleft of Tsha-ba Dro-drag. May virtues increase !

A work entitled 'Faith at the sight of the east door with the desire of praising the site of the Excellent Luminous Mount.'
Hail to the Guru Padmasambhava !

Samantabhadra, protector of men from the very beginning,
Snowy Lake possessed of all the major and minor marks of perfection,

Protectors of the Three Families who assume suitable forms for their works of conversion,

Padmasambhava, Knowledge-Holder, all-comprehending,

Goddess Queen of the Lake of Knowledge,

Lord Pandit 'Brog-mi skilled in the use of two languages,

Treasure-Finder bDud-'dul rDo-rje and the inspired Urgyan

dPal-bzang,

I bow to the host of masters who belong to our basic tradition !

Best of religious retreats where Padma has placed his foot,

Luminous Mount blessed by former ones, to this equal of the

Copper-Coloured Mountain, I offer these verses of
praise ! (13)

This glorious mount as though with wings spread out is the sign
of its equalling the glorious Copper-Coloured Mountain.

This monastic temple is the sign of its equalling Lotus Blazing
Light himself.

This temple built as a single whole is the sign of its being
characterized by both old and new textual treasures.

The fact that the Dharmakāya, the Sambhogakāya and the
Nirmāṇakāya all reside here is a sign that these three
work for the good of living beings.

The presence of the Three Basic Ones (Lama, Yidam, Kandroma)
are all together as mural paintings is the sign of the
spreading of the Mantra teaching of the tantric tradition.

The Lord Maitreya seated on his throne is the sign of the spread
of Maitreya's teaching.

Samantabhadra set forth in Sambhogakāya form is the sign of the spread of the doctrine in its Mantra form.

Śākyamuni shown there with his ten disciples is the sign that we are not to be gripped by suffering.

The collection of books which is there is the sign of increasing the good of living beings through teaching and learning.

The temple above, built up as a white protrusion is the sign that marks this as an excellent place for religious practice.

The fact that it is built on this gloom-free summit is the sign that it is intended for the salvation of the phenomenal world.

Its being surrounded on its circumference by a wall is the sign that we shall not be mixed up with false teachings.

The (paintings of) ripe fruits and grains within are the sign that fruits will be ripened in final perfection.

The bringing together of meditation and application is the sign that we unite mighty rulers.

The reliquary chōten on the right is the sign of subduing the threefold world.

The sacred juniper tree that grows on the left is the sign for the assembling of Mother Goddesses and Dākinīs.

The foot-print of Padmasambhava which is there is the sign of the spread of the teachings of profound (hidden) treasures.

The offering of water from the lake below is the sign that all will be making offerings.

Its being built of the border of Tibet and the Southern Valleys (Mon) is a sign that its splendour is self-produced. (14)

The pleasant conditions which prevail in the south are the sign that the banner of religious practice is set up.

- Those joyful upland fields are the sign that the monastery's essentials are complete.
- Our being far from the town is the sign of our sharing the fundamental knowledge of the tantric class.
- The villages which are spread out before us are the sign that the doctrine and comprehension of the doctrine will spread far and wide.
- The wide plain spread out below is the sign that religion and with it all desirable things will increase.
- The pure streams that always flow in the valleys are the sign that our traditional performances will never cease.
- Our being surrounded by fields and forests is the sign that pleasant conditions of all kinds shall prevail.
- The flowering trees that blossom are the sign that the buds of our understanding will spread open.
- The sound of the wind that blows is the sign of the sound of self-produced mantras.
- The sun rising on the mountain peak is the sign that what we must practice will spread.
- The rivers and streams that descend from the mountain mass spread out to the east are a sign that all desirable things will accumulate.
- The track on the shoulder of the banner-like southern mountain leading up to the snowy summit is the sign of our attaining the peak of the Nine Ways.¹⁰

10. The Nine Ways according to rNying-ma-pa Tradition are: the three non-tantric 'Ways' (*yāna*), namely those of the 'Disciples' (*śrāvaka*), 'Lone Buddhas' (*pratyekabuddha*) and Bodhisattvas, followed by three 'external tantric ways' known as *kriyā*, *upa*, *yoga*, and by three 'internal tantric ways', namely *mahā*, *anu*, *ati*.

The snows and the pines spread across the western mountain combined like a Mudrā with the villages below are the sign of the unity of Method and Wisdom.

The high-rising meadows on the northern mountain, adorned with rare stones and with copper and iron-ore are the sign of accomplishing all kinds of works.

Furthermore this excellent place replete with these signs and good qualities

is the place which is blessed by our Guru,¹¹
is the place where our Yidam gives us success,
is the place where our Ḍakinī removes all obstructions,
is the place where we study our Guru's teachings, (15)
is the place where the whole community gathers,
is the place where religious brethren are pure in
their vows,
is the place they learn and reflect and meditate,
is the place where they are pure in the keeping of vows,
is the place where they learn the scriptures and study
religion,
is the place where they are zealous in knowing our
tradition,
is the place where they practise Visualization and
Realization,
is the place where pure knowledge arises,
is the place where sin is avoided and the ten virtues are
practised,
is the place where finally buddhahood is achieved,

11. Concerning Guru (or Lama), Yidam, Ḍakinī (= Kandroma), see note 18.

is the place where one gains the victorious stage
of the Dharmakāya;

moreover it is a place for making supplications,
a place for perfecting those who are not yet perfect,
a place for achieving the salvation of those who are
perfect,

a place the mere sight of which suggests salvation,
a place where the faithful accumulate merits,
a place where the deserving attain release.

The good qualities of this place transcend all thought.

In this place associations and destinies are propitious.

In this place the faithful are replete with merits.

Some remain in a state of profound meditation.

Some are absorbed in the state of Pure Light, as close as
mother and son,

Some are practising Visualization and Realization as a unitary
process,

Some are perfecting their skills of learning,

Some are praying and performing ceremonies,

Some give their attention to the Great Symbol and the Great
Perfection,¹²

Some cleanse accumulations (of evil) by making prostrations
and circumambulations.

Some just avoid evil and practise virtue.

Whatever is done is all part of religion. However it is done,
it is a way of salvation.

12. This line is very compressed in Tibetan. *Phyag* stands for *phyag-rgya chen-po* = the Great Symbol (Mahāmudrā), and *rDzogs* stands for *rDzogs-pa chen-po* = the Great Perfection.

May all beings¹³ who gain contact with this place attain soon the Buddha state ! Blessed be our final state ! Blessed be this life and the next ! May such blessedness be blessed ! May all be finally blessed in buddhahood !

These praises of the Mahayana Luminous (16) Mount were recited by me at the Gang-rmu Lake, for when I was in my native land I used to recall the place remembering the power of its relics. May virtues increase !

An account of how a fiendish obstruction arose with regard to the Image 'Good to see'.

A religious of Byang-lhar-brtse heard that this image of ours from Lho-brag known as 'Good to see' had been carried off by a lama from the frontier regions to the south. That religious became angry about it and he said to himself that he would steal this great treasure of ours and carry it off. Having come down begging his way, he arrived at the Luminous Temple, but seeing there a large number of monks performing a ceremony of offerings, he could not steal it, so he remained for a few days going up and down begging. Then one night just at midnight he went to steal the image when not a single monk was there. He entered by the fan-light and looking for the treasure case, he found it but having opened it, he could not raise the image in his hand.

13. The term *ma-rgan* = 'old (at being) mothers' refers to the Buddhist notion of endless samsaric existence in which all beings have known so many rebirths that at one or another they have been mothers of all other beings.

He shook and trembled with fear. Heavy drops of sweat oozed forth and all the clothes he was wearing were drenched with this sweat. Struggling to raise this image 'Good to see', he got it into his pocket, and shaking and trembling, he could hardly place one foot forward. The image seemed extremely heavy, and shaking and trembling he reached by dawn the place where the Guru's impressed image is.¹⁴ Then his pocket became very light and his shaking and trembling stopped. He looked to see if the image was still in his pocket and indeed it was still there. (17) He wondered what could it be, this heaviness on the way from the temple and its becoming light now, and so he was very surprised. Then he continued up and reached the monastery at Kagbeni, lying down to sleep by its doorway. He placed the image by his head as he lay with its face turned to the north. Awaking early he looked at the image and saw that it was now facing south. Carrying on as before, he reached Lo sMon-thang. He placed it by the head of his bed and he saw that things happened just the same way. Continuing on his way, he reached Lhar-brtse, where he halted at a gYung-drung Bon temple. The Bon Lama was there and he told him in detail the story of his stealing the image and so retrieving it. Then the Lama said: 'Well today we should worship this image, so make obeisances'. Then he placed the image facing in the direction of Lho-brag. They worshipped it, made obeisances and recited prayers, and then went to sleep. When they arose in the morning both the lama and the thief went to look, and they saw that the image was facing to the south. The lama said: 'The direction in which the image wants to go seems to be the south. There will be no great blessing if you leave it here and obstructions would manifest themselves. Go and return it to its own monastery'.

14. See note 5 above.

That religious who had stolen the image thought to himself: 'Evil and difficulties will befall me as a result of stealing this image' and being full of regrets, he carried it back and so reached the Luminous Temple. When he looked at the image, he saw that it reposed in a mass of light which was wonderful to see. (18) He offered a gift-ceremony, a hundred lamps and a hundred Nepalese silver coins and so he made his confession. That is the reason why there are two such images here nowadays.¹⁵ There is the self-produced 'Good to see' and the returning 'Effective to see'. This is a sure word concerning the secret names. If I had not told this story in brief, there could be the error of doubt in the matter. I have written it quickly just as it was told me.

Furthermore there are four monasteries under Sum Garab Dzong: dPal-ldan dGon-pa, Khyad-mdó dGon-pa, Bon-po'i dGon-pa and the Luminous Temple ('Od-zer lha-khang).¹⁶ In the Iron Rat Year in the time of the Elder Bla-sku these four monasteries were unified and the special effects of the lamas of the monasteries are now at the Luminous Temple. The special images of dPal-ldan dGon-pa are a self-produced image in black stone of the mighty

15. Ngawang explains that the stolen image was replaced by a substitute, presumably miraculously, and thus when the stolen one was returned, there were two.

16. The only two remaining are Ku-tsab-ter-nga (Luminous Mount) and the Bon-po'i dGon-pa in T'hin (Thinigaon), described in my *Himalayan Pilgrimage*, p. 186. Of the other two, one remains as an unidentified ruin just above the rocky stream which separates the village of T'hin from the ruined fort of dGa'-rab rDzong. The collection of relics which we were shown at Ku-tsab-ter-nga in 1956 were later taken for safe keeping to T'hin, where they now are.

divinity Samvara and a self-produced set of the Five Buddhas in coloured stones. From Khyad-mdo dGon-pa there is a self-produced image of the Canopy-Guardian. From the Bon-po'i dGon-pa there is the lama's skull with the letter \bar{A} self-produced upon it.

Also at the Luminous Temple are some genuine relics of the Buddha Bhaishajyaguru which fell down from the sky when a ceremony to Bhaishajyaguru was being performed on the occasion of the spreading of some disease. Then there is a real thunderbolt Dorje¹⁷ which came down like lightening from the sky when a ceremony to Phur-pa'i Lha was being performed because spirits were making trouble in the town. (19) Then there are the foot-prints left by the \bar{D} akinīs who danced on the roof when the temple was being consecrated. Furthermore there are the relics and clothes of our (previous) lamas.

If devout benefactors offer worship with flowers, they will be born in the next life handsome and resplendent.

If they make an offering of incense, they will be born in a perfect state of morality.

If they make offerings of lamps, they will comprehend the meaning of the Five Wisdoms which remove the darkness of ignorance.

If they make offerings of sacrificial cakes, they will be born in great splendour with food and drink, enjoyable things and of fine appearance.

17. 'Thunderbolt Dorje' may seem an odd combination to those familiar with 'thunderbolt' as a translation of *rdo-rje* (Dorje). The Tibetan here is *gnam-leags-kyi rdo-rje*, and *gnam-leags* ('sky-metal') is the Tibetan for thunderbolt in the ordinary sense of the term. The item in question is a elongated piece of thunderbolt suggestive of the shape of the ritual Dorje.

If they offer worship with all kinds of accompaniment, they will be born famous and with good reputation.

If they offer hangings, umbrellas, banners, canopies, curtains and so on, they will be born where there are jewelry and fine clothes.

If they offer general ceremonies rendering service with various religious necessities, they will be born in the condition of a Bodhisattva and achieve quickly the stage of all knowledge.

(I) a lama of this Luminous Temple with the name Urgyan bsTan-'dzin Phrin-las Klong-yangs dPal-bzang on an auspicious day, a Monday in the 3rd month of the Fire Horse Year

(make) this aspiration in honour of these images.

May the bounds of the doctrine be ever extended !

If there are errors and faults, may the Five Representative Treasures be patient with me !

Through association with this place may all beings gain buddhahood !

A DESCRIPTION OF MUKTINATH, THE PLACE OF PROMENADE,
KU-TSAB-TER-NGA, MOUNT MU-LI, THE GURU'S
HIDDEN CAVE AND THE SNA-RI LORD

A record of the holy place known as Muktināth

Salutation to the Guru, to the God, to the Dākīnī !¹⁸

This excellent place of a 'Hundred Springs' is known in Indian language as Muktināth and in Tibetan as *Chu-mig-brgya-rtsa* (= a hundred-odd springs).¹⁹ As for recounting the origin of this famous resort of the Thirty-three Gods of the Joyous Heaven, (let it be known that) it was consecrated in the first world-age by Padma of Uryyan and that in the intermediate world-age it was consecrated by the Eighty-Four Great Magicians.²⁰ With the idea of benefitting living beings they carried a jagged stone from India on the tips of their fingers and brought it to Tibet where they placed it so as to block the mouth of a

18. These are Padmasambhava and his two primary emanations, the God *sTag-lha* (Tiger-God) and the Dākīnī *Senge gdong-ma* (Lion-Headed). They are also referred as Lama, Yidam, Kandroma (*mKha'-'gro-ma* = Dākīnī).

19. We have amended the 'Indian name' to Muktināth. It is illegible on our MS, and appears as *dMu-ghu bhadra* in MS A, and as *dMu-gu byi-ltar* in B.

20. Our MS as well as the others refer continually to the 'hundred and ten Great Magicians' or to the 'hundred odd Great Magicians'. It is well known that there are a conventional number of 84 Great Magicians (*mahā-siddha*) and our story-teller has the problem of associating this number with the 108 water-spouts at Muktināth. We have amended to 84 throughout. MS A reads *rgyad-cu* (eighty) at least once.

seething poisonous pool. This is rGyal-gyi-shā-ri in La-stod. Then those Great Magicians visited the King of Snow-Mountains, the White Lion-Faced One, known as Ti-se (= Mount Meru) and they made a circumambulation of Ti-se, and going to Lake Manasarowar they bathed there. Then taking eighty-four ladle-fulls of water, they went to Muktināth. Seated on the crag which is like a tiger's tooth,²¹ they surveyed the scene.

The central main mountain, which resembles a great lion, looks out on the maṇḍala of the sixty-four divinities.

This mountain which is coloured like lapis lazuli is placed as though it were Cakrasamvara's maṇḍala.²²

Great Mother Vajrayoginī ! Manifestation is Male. Emptiness is Female. Manifestation and Emptiness are here united indistinguishably.

(22) This eastern mountain of golden hue seems to be the resort of the Lord Maitreya. The white and yellow and red and green of its middle parts appear as the resort of the twenty-one manifestations of Tārā.

The yellowish mountain to the south is the seeming resort of the Lord Śākyamuni. In the excellent place which is like a mine of precious stones a small stream like a horse's tail arises.

In this place on the 10th (of every month) Padmasambhava's worship was offered.

21. MS A reads 'seated on the top of a Vajra-Palace'. B is corrupt but appears to have had a similar reading. Our MS is preferable here.

22. This sentence, representing lines 18 and 19 of our MS p. 21, is missing in MSS A & B. They also refer to 74, not 64 divinities.

Excellent place that it is, famed as the resort of *dākinīs*,
 Afterwards the Eighty-Four Great Magicians came here and
 increased even more their deep comprehension.

Thousands of foot-prints arose from their dancing.

Now in this evil age the Yogin Don-yod dPal-'bar out of twenty-
 two precious configurations concealed twenty foot-prints
 as hidden treasure and placed two there for the benefit
 of living beings.²³

A place frequented by those worthy ! May the unworthy act
 just as they please !

(23) This water-like music of the gods is the holy offering
 of *dGa'-bo 'Jogs-pa*.²⁴ If worthy ones are present, let
 them walk around it.

At eighteen fathoms distance the precious fire that burns from
 water has the way of burning changeless and unceasing²⁵
 from the hidden parts of Samvara Male and Female.

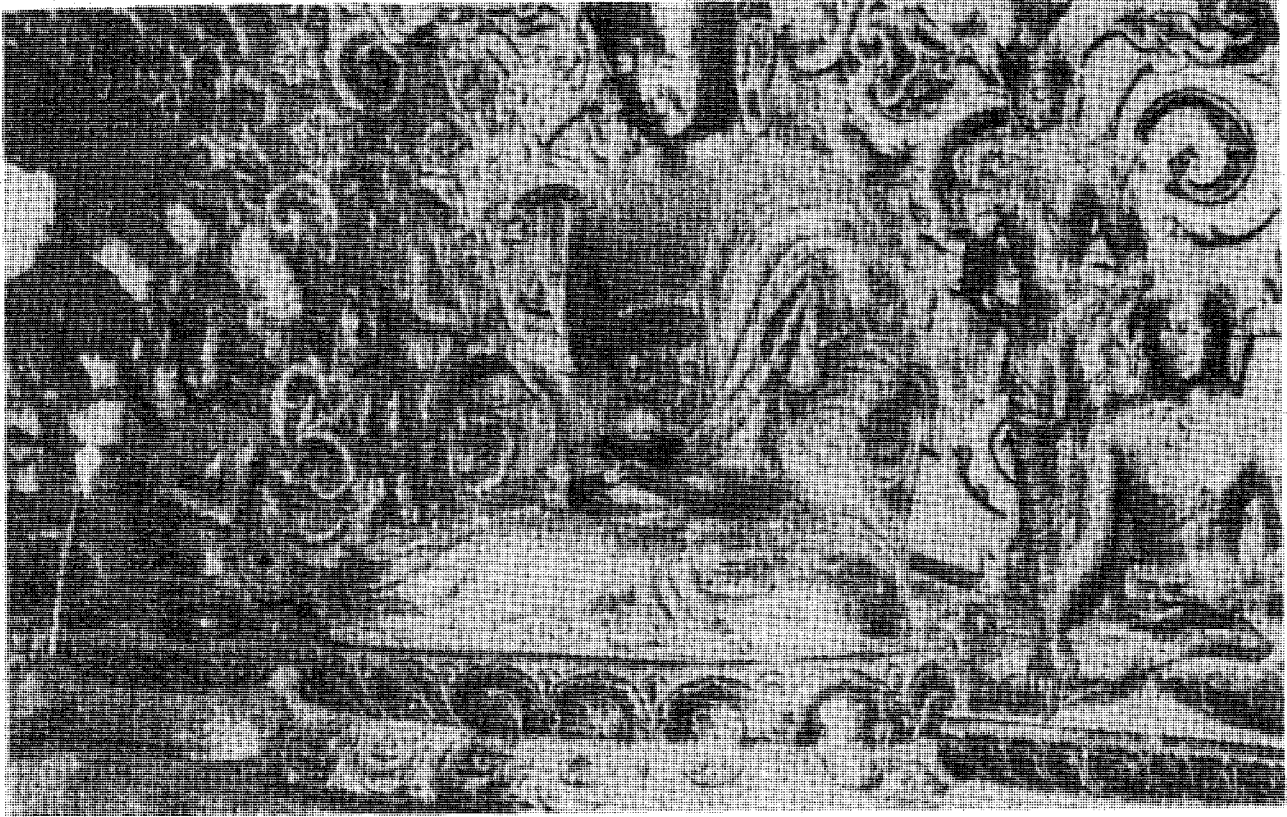
This precious fire that burns from stone serves as symbol of
 the light-giving butter-lamp. If worthy ones are pre-
 sent, may they request their own perfecting !

These streams of water, one hundred and eight,

23. The reference of Don-yod dPal-'bar and his 'configurations'
 (*spyod-yig*) is missing in MSS A & B with the result that
 they are more readily translatable, viz. 'Thousands of
 foot-prints arose from their dancing. So they concealed
 twenty-two of these as hidden treasure and left two there
 for the benefit of living beings'.

24. *dGa'-bo 'Jogs-pa* is the local *nāga* (serpent) divinity, whose
 little tiered roof temple stands by the 108 springs. He
 is identified by Hindu pilgrims as the God Vishnu.

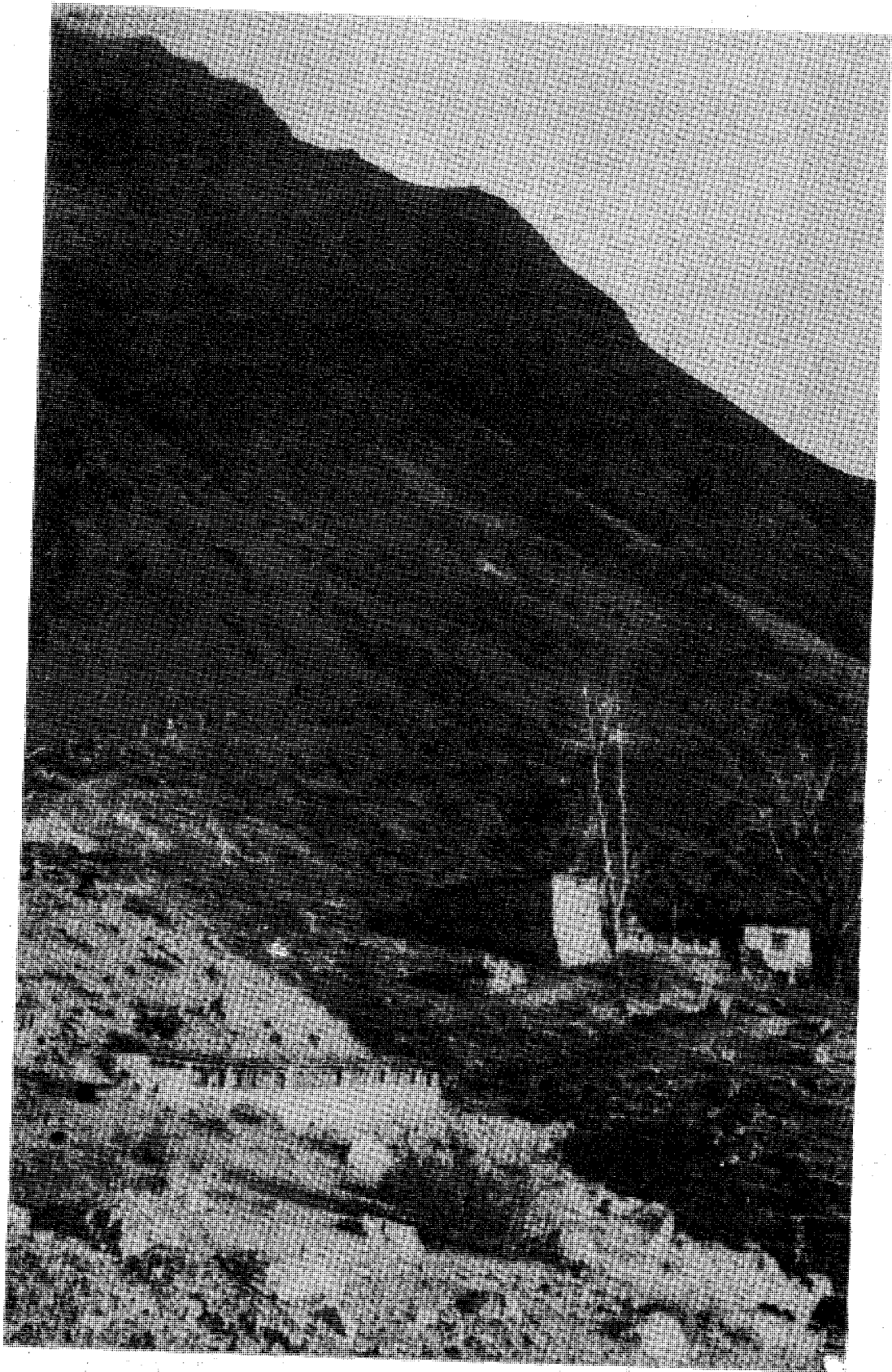
25. I translate as though the Tibetan read *rje chag med pa'i 'bar*
tshul. All MSS support however the given Tibetan reading,
 which is awkwardly translatable as " 'the precious fire
 that burns from water is the sign (*rjes*) that arises from
 the hidden parts of Samvara Male and Female in the manner
 of burning fire'.



9. The main image of Sakyamuni at Ku-tsab-ter-nga



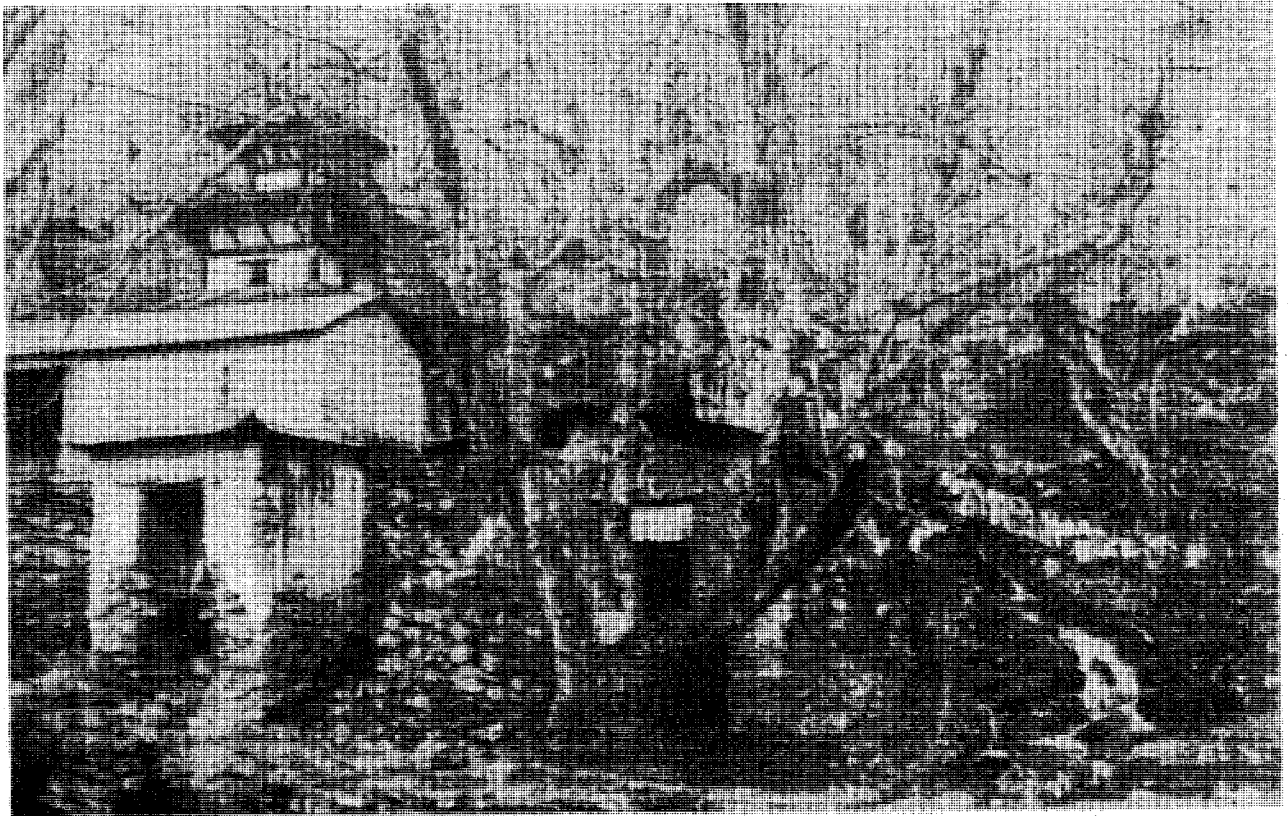
10. Mural of three of the Sixteen Arhats



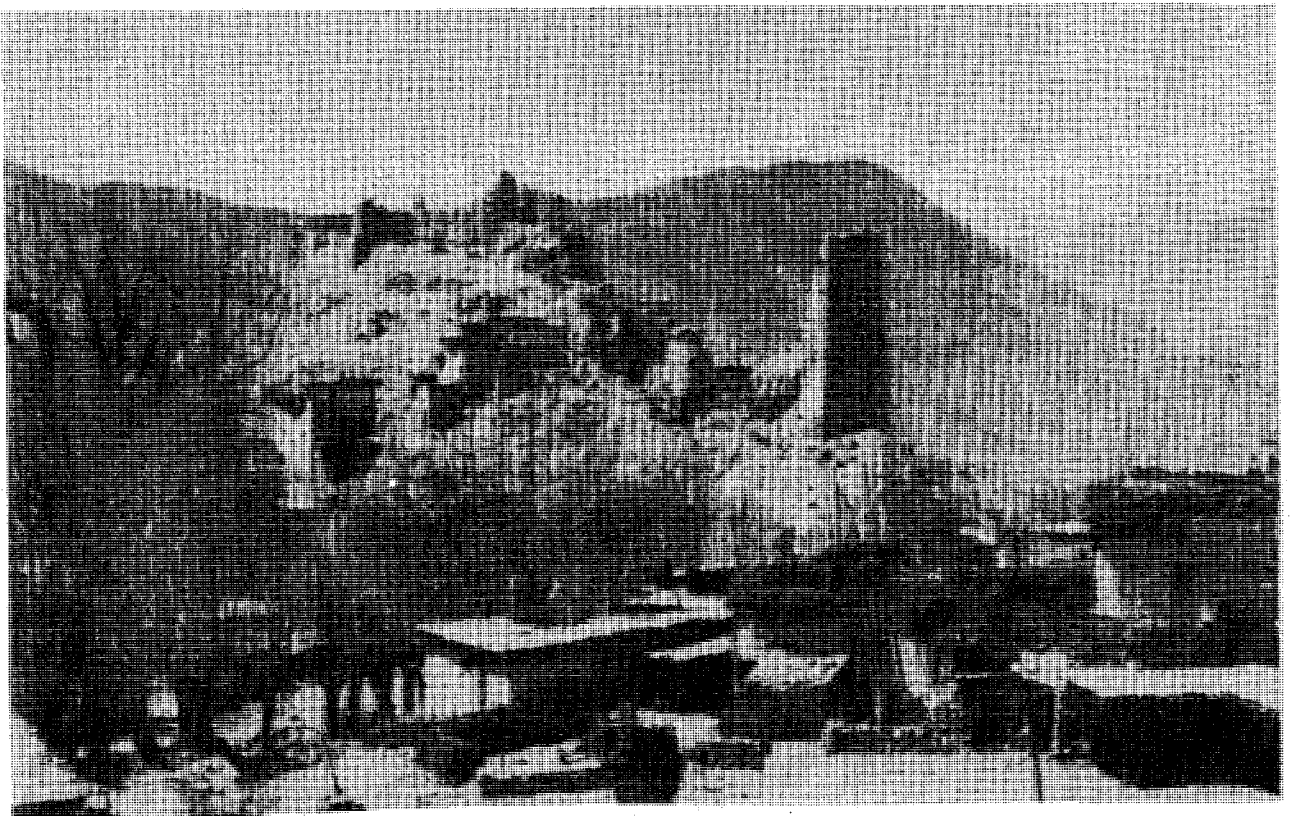
11. View of Muktinath with the temple where fire burns from water, earth and rock, with the summit above which is sacred to Samvara and his spouse



12. The little shrine where the sound of the Serpent Divinity (dGa'-bo 'Jogs-pa) 'playing music' can be heard



13. The little tiered-roof shrine near by the water-spouts enshrining according to Tibetan Buddhists dGa'-bo 'Jogs-pa and according to Hindus Vishnu



14. The ruined citadel of Rab-rgyal-rtse, once the main stronghold of Dzar-Dzong (the high valley descending from Muktinath to Kagbeni)

are a place which the Eighty(-four) Great Magicians protect, each one of them.

They each poured water here in ladles from the Manasarowar Lake.

The hundred and eight trees that grow here are each the resort of some Great Magician.

To this especially holy place (24) those who make obeisance and offer worship will be freed of all evil committed in this life and afterwards gain buddhahood, so the saying goes.

To the north-west of this holy place there is a sacred foot-print, and to the south-west there is a sacred foot-print of the Master Padmasambhava.

To the north-east of the holy place at the upper end of the valley known as sTad²⁶ there is an inexhaustable mine of salt.

There is too the four-pillared meditation hut of Padmasambhava of Urgyan. Miraculously produced marks of his head and of his lotus-hat are there.

Thus it is famed as grace-bestowing.²⁷

26. This place is spelt as *bTad* in MS A and as *sTod* in B. See also note 54.

27. This passage beginning: 'There is too the four-pillared meditation hut' reads differently in MSS A and B, which here as elsewhere run very close together. Thus for our MS lines 12-15 on p. 24, one reads:

*slob-dpon padma 'byung-gnas kyi / sgrub-khang dbu-rjes zhabs-rje
pad-zhwa rang-byon dang bcas-pa / mkha'-'gro'i tshogs-khang shel
gyi ka-ba dang / gser gyi ka-ba la sogs mang yod / =*

There is the Teacher Padma's meditation hut together with head-mark and foot-print and (a mark of) his hat (all) self-produced, and there is the Dākinī temple of offerings with pillars of crystal and pillars of gold and much else also.'

So if at this holy place of Muktināth one makes but seven paces in devotion,²⁸ one is freed from all the grievances of bad rebirth.

By the merit of setting up a silken banner one is born as a universal monarch.

If one offers tinkling bells (25) one is born as a high-grade scholar.

By drinking the purifying water the evil of the five immeasurable sins is washed away.

If one repairs and paints (the shrines),²⁹ one is safe from tigers, leopards, bears, hyenas, poisonous snakes and all dangerous creatures, so it is said.

Again there is a prophecy by the Lady Tārā:

A place where water-sprites, daemonic powers and dākinīs congregate, a place where Samvara Male and Female have their abode,

If you reside here but one day, you gain that firm stage (of bodhisattvahood) whence there is no falling back, so it is said.

Although there are many stories of its origin, I have written just a brief account on this occasion.

Thus this holy place of Muktināth has been told of by the Holy Indian, mentioned in the Great Treatise of the Single-Flavoured Practice (*Ro-snyoms spyod-khrīd chen-mo*) and announced by the Master Padmasambhava.

28. Here again MSS A & B differ from us. A reads: *mos-pas bsgom-bzlas 'bad nus-na* = 'If one strives with devotion at prayer and meditation'. B probably intended the same, but is now corrupted to: 'If one abandons with devotion prayer and meditation' !

29. Again MSS A & B have a slightly different phrase, but the sense remains the same.

It is a place where tantric gods and *dākinīs* come together, for it has been blessed by the Great Magicians of India.

It is a place where worthy ones gain merit, and worthless ones are ineffectual.³⁰

A meeting place for the faithful and devout ! (26) The unbelieving have their wrong ideas. Do not have wrong ideas, O you deserving ones, and make your prayer ungrudgingly.

Afterwards you gain buddhahood. Ask for grace and may blessings be upon you.

The record of Muktināth is finished. May all be well !

If one goes a day's journey northwards from Muktināth one comes to the Self-Produced Place of Promenade (*gCong-gzhi rang-byung*) where the Guru Padma's feet have trod.

Blessed by the Eighty-Four Great Magicians, this is the Place of Promenade with its raised figures as seen by the Ka-gyü³¹ Lama Mi-pham yongs-'dus and the Great Sage sTag-rtse. Samvara the Innate and his partner are seen here, and furthermore the self-produced images and these great ones are present: a self-produced Kharsapani made of precious alabaster in five manifestations,³² a self-produced Lady Tārā, the Trio of Urgyan³³

30. The last lines of the 'Muktināth Record' from here on are missing in MSS A & B.

31. MSS A & B read *skabs-brgyad* for *bKa'-brgyud* (Ka-gyü).

32. For our *sku-rjes lnga* A reads *sku-mched lnga* and B *sku-chen lnga*.

33. See note 18 above.

(= Lama, Yidam, Kandroma), prints of bodies, prints of feet, (27) prints of hands. many such, a thought-maṇḍala and a self-produced vase of life, the Guru's foot-print to the right of Samvara and a self-produced lotus stalk to his left. In the Dākinī shrine there is a Six-Armed Guardian in raised stone, and to its front there is a serpent divinity lying down. At the door of the cave there is the doorway of evil rebirths³⁴ and by this doorway there is a self-produced Hayagrīva, above which is a self-produced garuḍa, and many other self-produced images. There is no difference between this place and Sukhavati and the Glorious Copper-Coloured Mountain and such divine resorts.

A day's journey south from Muktināth on the Luminous Mount³⁵ are the imprints of the Guru's knee and his hand and

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34. Ngawang explains the 'doorway of evil rebirths' as a hole near the entrance of the cave, into which pilgrims try to fit themselves. If they fit, it is a sign that they are heading for an evil rebirth. This test would seem to be to the disadvantage of slim persons, unless of course the hole is supposed to fit itself miraculously to some and not to others.
- 35 MSS A & B read: *sngon gyi dus 'od-gsal gangs zhes su grags / da-lta grum pa lha-khang yang zer* / = 'previously known as the Luminous Mount, now known as the Grum-pa Temple'. Grum-pa (pronounced Drumpa) is a small village just below the Monastery of Ku-tsab-ter-nga (*sku-tshab gter-nga*) on the south slope of the elephant-like height on which the Monastery is built. Only one who is unfamiliar with the traditions concerning this site, could refer to it just as the Drumpa Temple. One may note that it receives very scanty treatment in the present work.

especially the five great sacred items, the equal of the Guru himself, blazing with rays of grace. Those who see these things, who learn about them, who think on them, who touch them, are established and abide in the enlightenment of salvation, so very great is the outflow of grace. Although this is an unimaginably unutterably wonderful sanctuary of the Great Teacher Padmasambhava, of all these places the Four Snow Mountains³⁶ remain the best. (28) Whoever worships at the precious Mu-li-gang and at the Hidden Cave gains hundreds of merits, such is the place, and by making offerings, one closes the doors of evil rebirths. If one meditates at this holy place which is trodden by the Guru's own feet, failure is impossible, and if one dies there, one quickly gains buddhahood, it is said.

The evening of the 10th day of the 5th month of the Iron Male Monkey Year I who am known as Yogi and named Spell-Holder Long-Life (*sNgags-'chang Tshe-ring*),³⁷ prayed single-mindedly at the Guru's Hidden Cave and then in a brilliant dream where body, speech and mind were composed, I saw in the light of the dawn mingled with the brilliance (of the vision) a Buddha-manifestation in the bodily form of a *ḍākinī* in the midst of a rainbow haze surrounded by a canopy of rainbow colours manifest in the sky before me. This delightful Lady, the equal of the Lord, spoke such a prophecy as this in description of the place:

36. Mu-li-gang (also written sometimes Bu-li-gang) is seen as a mountain mass with four summits.

37. Our MS reads *yo-ga'i mtshan-can*, not *yo-gi'i mtshan-can*, and one may note that Yogi is usually written *dzo-gi* in Tibetan. A & B both read *yon-bdag mtshan-can* = 'known as the benefactor', and this may be the correct reading. Our MS was also very corrupt in its reading of *sngags-'chang*, but we have amended it.

E-MA-HO ! The great snow-mountain, the precious Mu-li-gang (Dhaulagiri), this wondrous place is the resort of numerous *ḍākinīs*. Furthermore this precious Mu-li-gang resembles a crystal *stūpa*, and these white snows which are like a crystal *stūpa* have been blessed by the thousand and more Buddhas of the Good Age. It is said to be a treasury of 108 (smaller) *stūpas*. This mountain to the right and to the left resembles jewels set together, removing the poverty of the world, and this is a sign that we are concerned with the treasury of all desirable things.

On the Mu-li-gang Peak is the resort of the Blessed Ones, consecrated by former Buddhas and this is a sign of the winning of perfection in this world. The summit is like a white conch-shell with its twists to the right, and (29) this is a sign of the fruition of the Three Buddha-Bodies in complete purity. On the four sides and the four intermediate points, eight in all, there are eight major sites to be visited, and if one counts the smaller ones, there are thirty-seven. This is a sign of the good things of this world and of the perfection one gains. The flanks are arranged like crossed-*vajras* and this is a sign of the defeat of all obstructive forces.

Outside there are white snows, and inside there is a golden yoke, and inside this, it's said, there is a treasury with seven golden pillars, and this is for the happiness and prosperity of the world.

Outside the white snows are like a crystal *stūpa* and inside there is this place of alabaster and wish-granting gems. It has been blessed by all who have gained perfect buddhahood.

It is the excellent Mountain Mu-li-gang. It is said to be made of wish-granting gems and of alabaster and the snows are encircled with five hundred jewels, which eliminate poverty in the world. At the four sides are four stūpas which remain there is a changeless state.

This is the place where living beings accumulate merits, for it is said to be encircled with the foot-prints of the Teacher³⁸ and all the footprints of the five hundred Arhats. It is renowned as being effective for eliminating the evils of the six spheres of existence.

The realms of all the Buddhas of the ten directions are complete here on this most lofty Mu-li-gang, for it is a place which has been consecrated by the Buddhas of the Five Families, and it has been blessed by the Buddhas Vipāśyin, Śikhin, Viśvabhū, Krakucchanda, Kanakamuni, Kāśyapa and Śākyamuni.³⁹ (30) On the eastern side are the auspicious signs quite clear of conch-shell and wheel. On the southern side are the patterns of the vase and the golden fishes. On the western side are the parasol and the banner of victory quite clear, and on the north there are the lotus-flower and the diagram of good fortune. Thus from Mu-li-gang which is replete with the eight signs of blessing, elixir flows in waves of compassion and embraces all living beings. It is from here that happiness springs for the world, it is said.

38. Here the term 'Teacher' (*sTon-pa*) refers to the Buddha Śākyamuni. Five hundred perfected or literally 'worthy' (*arhat*) disciples of his are said to have assembled immediately after his decease in order to fix the contents of the Buddhist Canon.

39. This is an early list of seven Buddhas, six of whom are said to have appeared in the world before Śākyamuni.

On the eastern side are the abodes of the Three Protectors and of Jambhala both yellow and black.

On the southern side are the abodes of Bhaishajyaguru and of Tārā.

On the western side are the abodes of Vajravarāhi, of tantric gods and dākinīs.

On the northern side are the abodes of Śrī Cakrasamvara and of the seventy-two glorious protectors.

There are said to be one hundred and eight caves blessed by all the Great Magicians.

Half way up there are offerings arranged in circles by the tantric gods and the dākinīs, and at the foot there are offerings arranged by all the protecting divinities.

On the (lower) borders of the alpine meadows there are blue lakes replete with the five kinds of gems.

On the (upper) borders of the snow peaks there are mounds that look like foxes drinking.

The relics of the Buddhas are mixed inside the frozen water-drops, they say.

To the left there is holy water, a pool sanctified by Buddhas.

In the heart of the snow mountain there are white lakes and dark lakes.

The white lakes are like sheep lying low.

The dark lakes are like black yaks lying down.

Blue water-fowl live there, it is said.

At the head of the gorge is the holy water of the Great Indian Magicians.

On the southern side there is a golden treasury of gems.

On the western side there is a treasury of copper. (31)

On the northern side is the secret hidden valley where the Guru Padma did his practice.

Mu-li-qang, mountain most pure, triple abode of Buddha-Body, Speech and Mind,

Resort of Guardian Sages, protectors of (all) future beings,
A place revealed to us by holy men, incarnate lamas.

To the east between what seems like gems set together,
grains of different kinds of trees all sorts of
flowers appear.

High snow mountain, Mu-li-gang of seven jewels, above all with
the Hidden Cave of the eminent Guru,

In that holy place, the mountain-cave with its intertwining
gem-like mountain-crags, the Guru of Urgyan would often
meditate in former times.

These crags and snows and lakes, all places here are blessed.
Like a wish-granting gem is the Self-Produced Place of
Promenade.⁴⁰

Inside the Guru's Hidden Cave, that especially holy place
blessed by those who went before, there is fixed a
great pillar, they say, made of alabaster and wish-
granting gems.

Inside too are the maṇḍalas of the eight manifestations of the
Guru of Urgyan self-produced on the rock-face and quite
unspoiled, while the door is stamped around with crossed
vajras, it is said.

Whoever worships here and makes the round of the mandalas, just
by that they purify the evil of ten thousand kalpas, so
they say, and having purified these evils, sins and
imperfections, they reach the thirteenth stage of the
Vajra-Holder. (32)

40. The mentioning of this place (*gCong-gzhi rang-byon*), which
has already been described above is incongruous, espe-
cially as it is far up the Kali Gandaki gorge a long way
north of Mu-li-gang (Dhaulagiri). All three MSS have
the same reading.

On the tenth day in the earlier part of the month and on the twenty-fifth day in the latter part Padmasambhava, that wondrous incarnate being, comes in person.

It is like a canopy of rainbow lights, this place where Padmasambhava himself resides.

Up above there are blue dragons in the sky. Lightning flashes and the roar of thunder resounds.

On the left side there are black garuḍas, self-produced, soaring above as though overpowering local gods, serpent-gods and malignant sprites.

On the right is Tārā's abode, and if you can pray with all your heart, all your intentions will be fulfilled.

Inside there are various blissful maṇḍalas, all self-produced. In the middle is the abode of the Great Compassionate Lord. Up above is the abode of the Buddha Bhaishajyaguru. Below is the abode of the sets of Tranquil and Fierce Divinities.

This is the place blessed by the Buddhas of the Three Times, and here there is that holy water, blessed by the Guru Padma.

Blessed by former Buddhas in their compassion, the elixir of this purifying stream flows down amidst darting rainbow lights.

Just by tasting this water, the evil accumulated throughout the series of one's lives is washed away.

Outside the door of this holy place, this Hidden Cave, the Four Great Kings protect the entrance, listening attentively.

On the right side of the door the purifying stream of the Fierce God Bhṛkuṭa flows down and washes away foul imperfections and torments (*kleśa*).

On the left side of the door the purifying stream of Amṛtakundalin flows down and washes away defilements and faults.

The defenders of religion, masters of the offerings, are there in fearful form. The defenders of the ten directions, the yakshas, those (warrior gods) in copper armour,⁴¹ the Brother and Sister pair (*lCam-sring*), all are there. Inside there a conch-shell twisting to the right, and this is said to be the conch for worshipping the Buddhas of Past, Present and Future. Outside one hears unceasingly (33) the HUM-like sound of a spring of water, and by the mere hearing of this watery sound of HUM one gains enlightenment, it's said. This place has been hallowed by all the Buddhas of the ten directions, for this holy mountain with the cave where Padma of Urgyan has performed his religious practice, receives the continuous consecration of the Buddhas of the Five Families.

Precious pieces of alabaster are set together and inside there flows ceaselessly water which has been blessed by one born seven times as a Brahman.⁴² Even by drinking just a sip of this water, one gains buddhahood in one life in one body, it's said.

To the right there is a mountain like a *ḍākinī*'s breast, and within it a spring flows ceaselessly which is the elixir of enlightenment. By drinking just one sip of such elixir, one gives birth to the supreme thought of compassion and enlightenment.

41. MS B agrees with our reading of *zangs-khrab* (copper armour). MS A reads instead *khro-bo* (fierce).

42. In popular Indian belief, Buddhist as much as Hindu, one's present state of rebirth is primarily conditioned by the manner of one's previous way of life. Thus to be born seven times in succession as a Brahman represents an ideal state of human perfection. The concept of such a 'seven-birth Brahman' entered Buddhism very late. For another reference to such a one, see my edition of the *Hevajra Tantra*, vol. I, p. 71.

Above there is a boulder resembling a lion, where there flows ceaselessly the holy water of the Buddha Bhaishajyaguru. It removes all diseases of the blood and the wind, of bile and of phlegm and the rest.

To the left there is (a stone) resembling the life-vase of the Buddha Amitāyus. From this life-vase the water of life flows continuously, and by drinking just one drop of this elixir-water one gains a hold on the knowledge of deathlessness.

Above there are three boulders, white and red and black, and there the holy water of the Three Protectors⁴³ flows continuously. By drinking just one sip of this elixir one becomes mighty in wisdom and compassion.

On the left side there is a (stone resembling a) garuḍa, it's said. The elixir-like holy water of the Twenty-One Tārās flows there continuously. By just drinking three sips of this holy water all bad and adverse circumstances and all obstructions are overcome, and (34) all one's mind is set on comes about spontaneously, it's said. They say there are five maṇḍalas made of wish-granting gems and alabaster, and also in these four mountains there are relics of the Buddhas Vipāśyin, Śikhin and Krakucchanda as grace-bestowing icicles not less than an ounce in weight, it's said.

There are five secret caves and if one goes the distance of an arrow's flight from one of them, there is a large secret cave, they say, supported by eight alabaster pillars. (In it)

43. These are the Protectors of the Three (Buddha-) Families (*rīgs-gsum mgon-po*), viz. Avalokiteśvara, Mañjuśrī and Vajrapāṇi, to whom shrines are erected throughout Tibetan-speaking lands.

there are a thousand and more Buddha emanations and these are grace-bestowing images not made (with hands) but spontaneously produced, it's said. The goddesses of the offerings worship there continuously, they say, and on feast-days and on auspicious dates and days one hears the uninterrupted sound of conch-shells and cymbals.

This is the place blessed by Vajravārahī, Mother of all Buddhas of the three time-periods, and here there flows from her secret womb (35) the elixir of her water of life. It is a place blessed by all past Buddhas and by all our predecessors, so we inhabitants of the samsaric world who have all at one time or another been the mother of the others, pray especially from the heart in faith and devotion at the Guru's Hidden Cave. Purificatory water gushes there, enveloped in light-rays of five colours. Whoever washes there again and again, is cleansed of the evils and imperfections accumulated throughout his life-series. To the left there is in truth purificatory water of the tantric gods and ḍākinīs, and whoever washes his body with the holy water of these ḍākinīs is cleansed from the effects of imperfections and faults. Outside there is a pillar made, it seems, of turquoise, and inside there flows continuously from a crystal vase the purifactory water of Vajravijaya. Whoever washes in this elixir-like water, is cleansed from all impurity, imperfections and torments (*klesā*).

The Guru's Hidden Cave with such wonderful purificatory waters inside and out, where fire-like rainbow colours flash at sun-rise like a tent erected of light-rays of five hues, the place where Padmasambhava really stayed,

where tutelary divinities and hosts of gods are really present, such is this resort where those of faith worship with devotion for the sake of eliminating the evil karma, the sins and imperfections of living beings.

At this lonely place, this noble place of the Guru's Hidden Cave, whoever does religious practice will increase his inner understanding,

and by this inner understanding derived from meditation he will behold the clarity of his own mind.

By such beholding the clear light of compassion is born. (36) He beholds the self-produced knowledge of the voidness of thought and the clear light of meditation continues unbroken, it's said.

Whoever worships these two, the Mountain and the Hidden Cave, will possess unthought of virtues, so they say.

Whoever visits the Guru's Hidden Cave comes to omniscient enlightenment.

Whoever bows down and worships at this place, purifies the evil and imperfection accumulated through a whole series of lives.⁴⁴

44. MS A reads differently: 'Whoever worships and honours this Mountain and Hidden Cave, his benefits are unthinkable, beyond naming and quite unnumbered. Whoever visit and worship at the Gurù's Hidden Cave, they all are cleansed of evils and imperfections accumulated throughout their life-series and gain enlightenment, it's said.' MS B correspond with our MS, but folios are missing, the last words being *mehod-pa sus* (= beginning of line 6 of the page 36 of our MS).

Whoever offers here a maṇḍala,⁴⁵ quickly gains thereafter the fruit of buddhahood.

Whoever presents here a full set of offerings, closes the door to rebirth in the three evil directions.

Whoever makes entreaties and prayers from the heart, meets me the Guru free of all distinctions, so says (the Guru Padmasambhava).

Place blessed by the Guru of Urgyan, if any faithful follower prays here with devotion, he will be quickly cleansed of all evil karma and undoubtedly born in the paradise of the Glorious Copper-Coloured Mountain.

Sacred place of the Hidden Cave where snows and gems are intertwined, blessed by former Buddhas in their compassion.

Here the sun rises early and the place is clean.

Flowers blossom on the different kinds of trees collected here

The pleasing calls of different kinds of birds are heard.

To right and left are turquoise-coloured meadows where various herbs are found.

In front the Serpent-King gTzug-na-rin-chen lives in a lake which is like a turquoise maṇḍala, a place surrounded by a hundred thousand lesser serpents who form his entourage.

There are animals and fishes and so forth. It is a lake where water-horses, water-oxen and water-yaks all come together.

45. The Tibetan term used here is the Sanskrit word *maṇḍal* (so spelt), thus distinguishing it from *maṇḍala* (Tibetan: *dkyil-'khor*) with the regular meaning of 'circle of divinities'. A *maṇḍal* (so spelt in Tibetan) is a symbolic offering of the whole universe, represented by a set of rings of ornate metal, usually silver, between which rice is heaped up, so as to suggest the configuration of the universe as envisaged by Hindus and Buddhists with its concentric rings of oceans and mountains.

The forest is encircled with a fence which serves as the boundary.

The Serpent Palace is in the Lake 'Glacial Oblation' (*bShos-gangs*), (37) for ceaselessly this pure lake offers day and night spontaneous worship with a gift of water to the Mountain and the Guru's Hidden Cave.

One night in a dream when sleeping at the Guru's Hidden Cave, I saw a man riding a white horse and wearing a pure white garment. He wore an ornamented turban of white silk, and in his right hand he held a spear with a silken pennant. He was surrounded by a numerous entourage. He saluted me respectfully and said: 'Please always offer me a sacrificial cake, and I will certainly be quickly at your service'. So saying, this apparition of light rays disappeared.⁴⁶ I wondered who it might be. Then afterwards I realized it was the powerful local god of the Mountain and of the Hidden Cave. As a result of this auspicious connection for as long as I have lived here (in Thag),⁴⁷ I have been free from illness and circumstances have been propitious.

46. This phrase, literally: 'the light rays disappeared' is not very satisfactory. MS A reads: 'that man disappeared like a rainbow from the sky'.

47. Ngawang interpreted the words 'in this place' as meaning in Thag. This is confirmed by MS A which actually reads 'as long as I have lived in Thag'. English-speakers may be advised that Thag is pronounced as 'Tark'. It occurs on maps of Nepal as Thākkhola = the Thag Valley.

There is the so-called 'Lord of sNa-ri,⁴⁸ which was brought from the Mountain and the Guru's Hidden Cave, conceived in alabaster, that wish-granting stone. It was not made of stone, but was spontaneously produced. Avalokiteśvara, really self-produced, who looks in compassion towards all six spheres of samsaric existence, this is an image which eliminates sacramentally⁴⁹ all the evils and imperfections of all future living beings. Whoever worships it or even by the mere worshipful sight⁵⁰ of it, for him the doors to evil rebirths are blocked. There is no doubt of this, and I give oath upon the matter. Such words are a pronouncement of the *dākinīs*. In these three, the Mountain, the Hidden Cave and the (sNa-ri) Lord, all places of pilgrimage in the world are comprehended. Such three places, bestowing the grace of compassion, wonderful

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48. sNa-ri is the village named by me as Narshang in *Himalayan Pilgrimage* p. 181, where this particular precious image is also mentioned. The temple and village are on the mountain side above Gophang (Nepali Lārjung) at the river junction below Tukcha, whence one travels up the side-valley westwards to the Guru's Hidden Cave.
49. The translation draws attention to the difficulty of translating the Tibetan term *rten*, literally 'support', into another language. Literally the translation would be: 'this is a support eliminating all the evils and imperfections'. The term comes to mean an effective grace-bestowing representation of Buddhist religion. Thus there are 'Body-supports' (meaning images as here), Speech-supports (meaning religious books) and Mind supports (meaning reliquaries, especially *chötens*). No single English translation is possible if any kind of English style is to be preserved.
50. Here we have another expression difficult to render into English. It means literally 'to visit' but in a highly honorific sense. Christians on pilgrimage 'venerate' relics and other holy things, and this provides a closely analogous idea. The Indian term *darśana* conveys a similar meaning, even closer to the Tibetan.

and noble places, where trees of various kinds are growing and various kinds of fruits are ripening, here plague is absent, (38) good things are in abundance and the delights of elixir like *chang* never cease. So it is said. There is a stone on 'Bum-gter Mount on which the Guru's foot-print has been made. This is an efficacious sign for the elimination of the evils and imperfections of living beings. It is said to be a wish-granting stone which has come from the depths of the ocean in the Serpent Realm. By praying there or by just visiting it, one is saved from the harms caused by the eight classes of evil spirits, they say.

Now is told in brief the account of the holy place of the four spirits:

On the western side of the Mountain and on the eastern side of the precious palace of the Religious King of Jumla there are two whitish red sandal trees, known locally as *tso-pa-ti* trees. Now Indra, Lord of the Gods, and the Great Brahmā, these two up in the Joyous Heaven, having in mind the benefit of living beings in this human world, set down gods (of the class) of the Four Spirits from the heaven known as Luminous in the celestial expanse, and so they descended, these 'gods of knowledge' and disappeared into the two sandal-wood or *tso-pa-ti* trees. The Precious King owned a jewel of a cow which gave a lot of milk, and since now the milk did not come as previously, they wondered why it might be. 'Has someone stolen it?', they said. 'Let a man go on the track of the

cow', the King commanded. He went to look and he saw the cow make the round of the two sandal-wood trees two or three times. He reported that the milk did not appear to have been stolen, but might it not be something to do with the two trees⁵¹ and of the many gods that were there, some went up to the Luminous Heaven, but many of those 'gods of knowledge' disappeared into the sandal-wood trees. If men of the west and of the north really meet those powerful gods of the Four Spirit class, all the excellence of gods and men will depart, it's said.⁵² But those men who worship and pray to them, will realize spontaneously all they have in mind.

Prophecy was given in a dream to a sacristan who offered worship: 'In the east is the land of Thag, where are some who

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51. Our MS might be translated as 'they cut down the two trees', but the context makes this unlikely. They presumably made a cut in the trees to see if milk flowed out. MS A has a locative ending on the word 'two' (*gnyis-kar*), thus meaning literally: 'they cut at the two trees'. But may be the trees were cut down, and some of the gods re-entered the felled trees, and then were all later invited to Thag, as the sacristan intends. The story is not very clear.
52. Our MS, which differs from MS A here, seems to support the interpretation that the gods were displeased with the men of the west and the north, which could well refer to Jumla from the point of view of the people of Thag. We are curiously prevented from the easier translation of 'men of the north-west' by our reading *nub-byang gnyis mi*, but this could easily be an error for *nub-byang-gi mi*.

MS A has a very different meaning: 'If one really meets those gods (of the class) of the Four Spirits in a dream of one's evening sleep, those men who pray to them, will realize spontaneously all they have in mind'. Such a meaning is seemingly produced by a corrupting of our reading, which is certainly preferable.

should be converted to me'. Having received this announcement in his dream, he considered the matter and made a decision. 'If I go to the land of Thag in the east', he thought', then I must invite these gods of the class of the Four Spirits. So he came seeking the way and finally reached the land of Thag in the east.

The shape of the land of Thag resembles jewels set together. There are innumerable forests there of different kinds of trees, and in these forests there are creatures like monstrous bears,⁵³ as well as other wild animals, bears and snakes and so on.

Although there are many stories about the Mountain, the Hidden Cave and the Lord (of sNa-ri), I have condensed the matter here and written briefly and I beg that this may do. If you visit other places and do not visit these three, the Mountain, the Hidden Cave and the Lord,

it is as though you had a horse beneath you with a broken leg,

as though you had a coat which lacked its sleeves,

as though you went around India with a club-foot, and so no effects of grace will come about, it's said. Thus there is no help for it but to visit these three places.

The itinerary of the Mountain together with the Hidden Cave is now finished.⁵⁴

53. The term translated as 'monstrous bears' is *mi-dred* (= 'man-bear'), the Tibetan equivalent of the Sherpas' 'yeti' (*g.ya'-dred*) which some westerners have tried to find.

54. A list of places given at the end of the text refers to *gCong-gzhi*, *Tsha-bo-rong* (which according to Ngawang is the 'salt valley' mentioned above on p.109), *sku-tshab-gter-lnga*, *Mu-li-gangs-chen* and *Gu-ru'i gSang-phug* as belonging to the circuit of Muktināth (*Chu-mig-brgya-rtsa*).



ॐ । मा । म । र । र । गे । ये । ने । स । म । र्के । कु । थ । मा । ॥

DĀKINĪ QUEEN OF THE LAKE OF WISDOM

