The murals of the Lotsawa Lhakhang in Henasku and of a few related monuments. A glimpse into the politico-religious situation of Ladakh in the 14th and 15th centuries

*Les peintures murales du Lotsawa Lhakhang de Henasku et de quelques temples
apparentés. Un aperçu de la situation politico-religieuse du Ladakh aux XIV^e et
XV^e siècles*

Nils Martin

Electronic version

URL: <https://journals.openedition.org/emscat/4361>

DOI: 10.4000/emscat.4361

ISSN: 2101-0013

Publisher

Centre d'Etudes Mongoles & Sibériennes / École Pratique des Hautes Études

Electronic reference

Nils Martin, "The murals of the Lotsawa Lhakhang in Henasku and of a few related monuments. A glimpse into the politico-religious situation of Ladakh in the 14th and 15th centuries", *Études mongoles et sibériennes, centrasiatiques et tibétaines* [Online], 51 | 2020, Online since 09 December 2020, connection on 13 July 2021. URL: <http://journals.openedition.org/emscat/4361> ; DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4000/emscat.4361>

This text was automatically generated on 13 July 2021.

© Tous droits réservés

The murals of the Lotsawa Lhakhang in Henasku and of a few related monuments. A glimpse into the politico-religious situation of Ladakh in the 14th and 15th centuries

*Les peintures murales du Lotsawa Lhakhang de Henasku et de quelques temples
apparentés. Un aperçu de la situation politico-religieuse du Ladakh aux XIV^e et
XV^e siècles*

Nils Martin

Figure 1. Map of Ladakh showing Henasku, as well as the other sites discussed (in black) and landmark villages (in grey)

© Nils Martin, 2019

Introduction

Figure 2. Reproduction of the sketch of the defensive settlement and fort of Henasku

© Sir Henry D'Oyley Torrens in Torrens 1862 (opposite p. 268)

Figure 3. View of the defensive settlement and fort of Henasku from the south

© Nils Martin, 2013

- 1 When he sketched the view of the fortified complex of Henasku during a breakfast halt on his walk from Lamayuru to Bod Kharbu on the 26th of August 1861 (figs 1-3)¹, Sir Henry D'Oyley Torrens, a British army officer on leave for the summer, apparently omitted to depict the ancient temple locally known as Lotsawa Lhakhang (Tib. lo tsā ba lha khang), but added several tall buildings around. Overshadowed by the large ruins of a majestically situated fortress and by the palace of the Lonpo² (Tib. blon po), the temple, of humble dimensions, does not seem to have received attention from travellers or scholars during the next hundred years, even though Henasku was a major stopover on the main route from Kashmir to Leh, between Wakha-Mulbek and Lamayuru. The existence of the Lotsawa Lhakhang was pointed out to me by Quentin Devers in 2013, based on indications given to him by the British historic building architect John Harrison and the Swiss archaeologist Martin Vernier, both of whom have been documenting aspects of the cultural heritage of Ladakh for about two decades. Subsequently, I conducted four surveys of the temple during the summers of 2013, 2014, 2015, and 2017. The present study describes the remains of the murals that are still preserved inside it. The analysis of the iconography and style of these murals further allows their contextualization with relatable monuments, from which the overall historical and geographical settings in which the Lotsawa Lhakhang was built can be outlined, bringing much needed information about the otherwise little-known history of the region during the 14th and 15th centuries.

The temple

Figure 4. View of the Lotsawa Lhakhang (indicated by an arrow), behind the palace of the Lonpo, and the village on the rear of the valley, from the south-east

© Nils Martin, 2013

- 2 The Lotsawa Lhakhang of Henasku, in Purig, is located next to the now-deserted palace of the Lonpo, on the front slope of the crag that overlooks the stream behind which the modern village is hidden (fig. 4). It is a small temple of about 4 x 4,50 m, with two small protruding walls for a porch in the front³. It roughly faces east, and is built in stone masonry (figs 5, 6). The main crossbeam is supported by two wooden corbels: the one on the left wall carved with two volutes (fig. 7), and the one on the right in the shape of a lion (fig. 8). When I visited the temple for the first time in July 2013, it was abandoned and in serious decay (fig. 5). The front half of the roof was entirely missing, whereas decayed portions of the back roof protected to some extent the murals of the back wall as well as parts of the lateral walls⁴. According to Sonam Dondup Dunupa, an elderly villager of Henasku (aged 93 in 2015), “the temple was still in use till 1975. The walls were all covered with wall paintings, as well as the door” (Jigmet Namgyel & Vets 2016, p. 3). Probably due to a lack of maintenance, the temple progressively fell into decay in the following decades. Emergency measures were decided in 2016 by the villagers in collaboration with Achi Association, in order to prevent further deterioration. The murals were stabilized, parts of the walls were consolidated and rebuilt, and a new roof was added⁵ (fig. 9).

Figure 5. Outside view of the Lotsawa Lhakhang from the east

© Nils Martin, 2013

Figure 6. Architectural drawings of the Lotsawa Lhakhang by Hilde Vets for Achi Association, with AA and BB indicating two sections views

© Courtesy of Hilde Vets, first published in Jigmet Namgyel & Hilde Vets 2016, p. 4

Figure 7. The bracket of the left wall

© Nils Martin, 2013

Figure 8. The bracket of the right wall

© Nils Martin, 2013

Figure 9. Outside view of the Lotsawa Lhakhang from the east

© Nils Martin, 2017

Iconography of the murals

- 3 Murals of deities used to occupy most of the surface of the walls of the temple. They were framed by two upper friezes and a lower frieze, as one can still observe on the main wall. The topmost frieze showed a row of geese with their wings folded on their backs (fig. 10), migrating birds associated with renunciation and enlightenment in Buddhist literature. Below it, the second upper frieze was constituted by multicolour swag valances with peripheral falls of folds alternatively disgorged by leonine glorious faces (Skt. *kīrtimukha*) and crowned by round jewels, reminding of the celestial palaces of the Buddhist deities. The lower frieze (fig. 11) was made of a series of multicolour triangles making diamond-shaped conches. Between the upper and lower friezes, the deities were arranged geometrically on a dark-blue – celestial – background, enshrined within circular mandalas or enclosed in rectangular panels with yellow contour lines. In the following I describe the iconographic subjects that can still be observed on the intact parts of the walls, by order of importance in the iconographic program of the temple.

Figure 10. Upper friezes of geese and swag valances on the main wall

© Nils Martin, 2013

Figure 11. Tentative reconstitution of the lower frieze of conches on the main wall

© Nils Martin, 2013

Main wall

Figure 12. View of the main wall

© Nils Martin, 2017

Figure 13. Outline of the iconography of the main wall (after the condition of the murals in 2013)

- A 'bri gung bka' brgyud lineage probably comprising 33 masters
1 Vajradhara	2 Tilopa	3 Nāropa	4 Mar pa
5 Mi la ras pa	6 sGam po pa	7 Phag mo gru pa	8-33 'Jig rten gsum mgon, etc.?
- B Śākyamuni in the middle of his assembly, broadly conforming the description of the superior *pañā* in the *Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa Tantra*
- C Seven green Tārā
- D 1 Vairocana with Dhātviśvarī or Akṣobhya with Buddhacandā 2 Vairocana with Dhātviśvarī or Akṣobhya with Buddhacandā
3 Ratnasambhava in union with Māmaki 4 Amṛtābha in union with Pāṇḍaravāsini
as part of the mandala assembly of peaceful deities at the core of the *Māyāḍāla's Gyu 'phrul dra ba* cycle of Tantras
- E Ekadaśamukha Avalokiteśvara/bCu gcig zhal surrounded by an unidentified lineage comprising at least 18 masters
- F Rows of the five *jina*

© Nils Martin, 2017

- 4 Most of the remaining murals are on the back wall of the temple (figs 12, 13), which is also the most important in terms of iconography. Atop, a Drigung Kagyu (Tib. 'bri gung bka' brgyud) lineage comprising possibly up to 33 masters is represented in one

register. We will return to it below when discussing the affiliation of the temple. Underneath the lineage, the wall is divided into three vertical panels.

Figure 14. Buddha Śākyamuni at the centre of his assembly, main wall

© Nils Martin, 2017

- 5 The central panel depicts the Buddha Śākyamuni flanked by Maitreya and Mañjuśrī, and attended by an assembly made of the eight solitary Buddhas (Skt. *pratyekabuddha*), the eight hearers (Skt. *śrāvaka*), and the sixteen great bodhisattvas (fig. 14), broadly conforming with the description of the superior painted cloth (Skt. *paṭā*; Tib. *ras bris*) in the *Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa Tantra*⁶. This iconographic subject is designated as “beneficial to see” (Tib. *mtshong ba don ldan*) in this tantra, and was known under that designation in Tibet⁷. Below the throne of the Buddha, supported by lions and elephants, fragments of murals can be seen, depicting one of seven identical images of Green Tārā. The combination of these two iconographic subjects is characteristic of early Drigung painting, as already stated by Luczanits (2015, p. 252). The depiction of seven Tārā probably refers to a prayer composed by Jikten Sumgon (Tib. 'jig rten gsum mgon; 1143-1217) after he recovered from leprosy⁸ and whose recitation has remained a standard practice of the Drigung school until today⁹.

Figure 15. Right panel of the main wall

© Nils Martin, 2017

- 6 The two lateral panels of the main wall were probably divided vertically into at least two sections. Only the right panel is still visible (fig. 15). Across the upper sections of the two lateral panels and the upper left corner of the mandala of the right wall, a single iconographic subject was painted, comprising at least the five directional Buddhas (Skt. *jina*) in union with their consorts. Whereas the figures of Vairocana and Akṣobhya/Vajrasattva and their consorts are lost, the figures of Ratnasambhava, Amitābha (on the main wall), and Amoghasiddhi (on the right wall) in union with their consorts are still visible (figs 16-18). They probably stand for the central deities of the mandala assembly of peaceful deities at the core of the *Māyājāla* cycle of Tantras¹⁰, although they seem to have been depicted without attributes. The Drigung Kagyu school incorporated several such teachings associated with the Nyingma (Tib. rnying ma) school from the early-14th century onwards at the latest. Early depictions of the mandala assembly of peaceful deities of the *Māyājāla* cycle of Tantras are still observable on the left wall of the Senggegang Lhakhang (Tib. seng ge sgang lha khang) in Lamayuru and inside the lantern of the Tashi Sumtsek (Tib. bkra shis gsum brtsegs) in Wanla.

Figure 16. Ratnasambhava in union with Māmakī, main wall

© Nils Martin, 2017

Figure 17. Amitābha in union with Pāṇḍaravāsini, main wall

© Nils Martin, 2017

Figure 18. Amoghasiddhi in union with Tārā, right wall

© Nils Martin, 2017

- 7 Underneath the representation of Ratnasambhava and Amitābha with their consorts, the lower part of the right panel is occupied by a mural of Ekadaśamukha Avalokiteśvara, surrounded by an unidentified lineage of Tibetan masters (fig. 19), some wearing “meditation hats” (Tib. *sgom zhwa*) and others “pandit hats” (Tib. *pan zhwa*; Skt. *paṇḍita*) (fig. 20). These masters may compare in number but not in outfit with those of the lineage surrounding a similar mural of Ekadaśamukha Avalokiteśvara on the main wall of the Tsatsapuri Lhakhang (Tib. *tsatsapuri lha khang*) in Alchi.

Figure 19. Ekadaśamukha Avalokiteśvara, main wall

© Nils Martin, 2017

Figure 20. Tibetan master wearing a pandit hat, main wall, 2017

© Nils Martin, 2017

Other remnants of murals

Figure 21. View of the left wall

© Nils Martin, 2017

Figure 22. Outline of the iconography of the left wall (after the condition of the murals in 2013)

- A Undecipherable figure
- B White deity holding a bow in one of his/her right arms, possibly Uṣṇīṣavijayā/gTsug tor nam par rgyal ma
- C Row of buddhas

© Nils Martin, 2017

- 8 Remains of murals can be observed on the three other walls of the temple. On the left wall, only a white-skinned deity with multiple pairs of arms can be seen, raising one of its left hands over the shoulder and holding a bow in another one (figs 21, 22). The most probable – but not the only possible – identification would be the female deity of long life Uṣṇīṣavijayā.

Figure 23. View of the right wall

© Nils Martin, 2017

Figure 24. Outline of the iconography of the right wall (after the condition of the murals in 2013)

- A Mandala including a gallery comprising buddhas and an exterior circle comprising Indian gods, probably the mandala of Sarvavid Vairocana/Kun rig nam par snang mdzad according to the *Sarvadurgatipariśodhana Tantra*/Ngan song sbyong rgyud
- B (or D5) Amoghasiddhi in union with Tārā, as part of the mandala assembly of peaceful deities at the core of the *Māyājāla*/sGyu 'phul dra ba cycle of Tantras
- Rows of the five *jina*

© Nils Martin, 2017

Figure 25. Detail of the left panel of the right wall

© Nils Martin, 2017

- 9 On the right wall, except for the depiction of Amoghasiddhi in union with Tārā already discussed above (fig. 18), the only (fragmentary) iconographic subject still to be seen is a large mandala that includes a gallery comprising Buddha-like figures and an exterior circle comprising the four great kings (Skt. *mahārāja*) and the ten guardians of the directions (Skt. *dikpāla*), among which Virūḍhaka and Yāma are visible on the south side (figs 23, 24). This mural might be identified as the mandala of Sarvavid Vairocana according to the *Sarvadurgatipariśodhana Tantra*, that is also depicted on the right wall in the Tsuklakhang in Kanji and inside the gallery of the Tashi Sumtsek in Wanla.

Figure 26. View of the entrance wall

© Nils Martin, 2017

Figure 27. Outline of the iconography of the entrance wall (after the condition of the murals in 2013)

A Blue worldly protectress mounted on an animal, probably rDo rje chen mo or a member of her retinue

© Nils Martin, 2017

- 10 Finally, on the entrance wall, a blue-skinned deity mounted on an animal can be distinguished (figs 26, 27), whose mantle covering the right shoulder may identify as Dorje Chenmo (Tib. rdo rje chen mo), the protectress of Western Tibet (Tib. mnga' ris), or a member of her retinue. The latter are depicted at the right jamb of the entrance door of several ancient Ladakhi temples, including the Tsatsapuri Lhakhang in Alchi and the Guru Lhakhang (Tib. gu ru lha khang) in Phiyang.
- 11 As detailed above, the iconography of the Lotsawa Lhakhang in Henasku is quite close to that of the Tashi Sumtsek in Wanla and the Tsatsapuri Lhakhang in Alchi, among a few other monuments in Ladakh, all datable from the early-14th century to the mid-15th century.

Style of the murals

General characteristics

- 12 Because of the condition of the murals, the analysis of their style is restrained to parts of the main and right walls. In these, the murals reflect a local style that progressively departed from the so-called Eastern (Indian) painting tradition (Tib. *shar ris*) favoured in Tibet during the 12th and 13th centuries, to embrace elements of the Nepalese tradition (Tib. *bal ris*)¹¹, which “flourished as the sole painting style in Tibet” (Jackson 2010, p. 131) during the second half of the 14th century and the first half of the 15th century. The tiered lintel of the throne-back of the central Buddha (fig. 14), for instance, is rooted in the Indian tradition, whereas the arrangement of stacked-up elephants, lions, and ramping horned chimeras (Skt. *vyāla*) mounted by heroic figures on the outsides of the side-supports, and that of two sea monsters (Skt. *makara*) and a

mythical bird of prey (Skt. *garuḍa*) devouring two serpent-spirits (Skt. *nāga*) atop the tiered lintel, belong to the repertoire of motifs of the Nepalese tradition. The elaborate diadem worn by the bodhisattva Mañjuśrī, depicted frontally to the left of the central Buddha, also draws from the Nepalese tradition (fig. 28). It is made of golden drop-shaped finials (probably inserted with precious stones albeit difficult to see) connected together by golden hanging strands. The same figure also wears an elaborate multilayered and multicoloured lower garment, and a shawl that covers his shoulders and falls loosely along his torso. The latter garment, with its peripheral folds revealing its underside in a rather clumsy way, may derive from Yuan or Ming models circulated in Tibet along with the Nepalese repertoire. A rare use of a Nepalese motif in the murals of the Lotsawa Lhakhang can finally be noticed in the depiction of a capital or broken lintel on which stands a bird, right atop Mañjuśrī (fig. 14). It probably derives from the ornamental gate of the Nepalese tradition, made of two lotus-columns surmounted by an arrangement of creatures forming an arch. To the contrary of the throne-back, the gate can comprise the assistants of the main deity. However, both structures are usually not combined¹².

Figure 28. Detail of the bodhisattva Mañjuśrī, main wall

© Nils Martin, 2017

Formal analysis

- ¹³ In order to deepen the analysis and recognize the “hands” behind this local style, I use a formal approach relying mainly on a close comparison of the finishing outlines of the figures and their execution. Such an approach is rooted in the “experimental” method of the Italian connoisseur Giovanni Morelli (1816-1891), which was first used by him to attribute classical easel paintings and later applied to various fields of art history. The

comparison of the friezes is also emphasized here as, in most cases, master-painters appear to have been in charge of complete walls, from the upper friezes of geese and valances to the lower frieze of conches, although the type of friezes to paint was probably chosen in consultation with the religious figure supervising the painting and the main patron, as well as the other master-painters potentially involved. Hopefully, this analysis will be complemented in the future by research on the painting technique and pigments.

Figure 29. Outlines of three minor figures of buddhas of the main wall (a, c, d) and right wall (b)

© Nils Martin, 2017

Figure 30. A Buddha figure (Ratnasambhava) on the main wall

© Nils Martin, 2013

Figure 31. A Buddha figure (Akṣobhya) on the main wall

© Nils Martin, 2013

- 14 In the parts of the main and right walls under concern, the murals show a great consistency and ease in the outlines (figs 29a, c, d, 30), except for a few figures (figs 29b, 31). This suggests the work of a single master-painter, perhaps assisted by one or more apprentices, structured as a small workshop. Given the limited dimensions of the temple, this master-painter or his workshop may well have achieved the rest of the murals as well, but this is too far-fetched a conclusion. For convenience, I refer to this master-painter by the provisional name of Master of the Lotsawa Lhakhang of Henasku. Considering in particular the minor figures of Buddhas (figs 29a-c, 30, 31), their faces are rather large and heart-shaped, with extremely curved eyebrows, close-set eyes and – for a few figures only – eyelids; basic or three-lobed nose with the indication of the nostrils; poly-lobed ears with o- or „-shaped auricles as well as an extra lump of flesh atop the earlobes; and a round chin. When depicted in three-quarter profile (figs 17, 20, 29d), the figures show a long – usually upturned – nose with an extra curve indicating the brow ridge, sinuous duck-lips, and a distinctive prognathous lower jaw with an underlined chin and a round drooping cheek. Among the body features, the flesh of either armpit is indicated by a pair of horizontal strokes perpendicular to the lines of the arm and torso. A curve further underlines the chest, whereas, on rare occasions, three short strokes indicate either of the areolas. Like all minor figures, the small Buddhas are not seated on proper lotuses but on simple two-tiered seats.

Comparable murals in Ladakh

- 15 Whereas several murals of Ladakh that draw on Eastern Indian and Nepalese traditions have been grouped together in former studies because of their broadly similar style¹³, the inner chronology of these murals, which range from the late-13th to the late-15th century, remains uncertain. To remedy this state of affairs, it is necessary to carefully examine each mural with a constant view to the whole group, so as to establish all potential interconnections between the murals. In this way, subgroups of monuments and murals can be defined and their historical contexts may be illuminated by epigraphic or iconographic evidence found in one or another monument of each subgroup. I propose here to investigate the stylistic connections between the murals in Henasku and those in a few other temples and chortens in Ladakh, defining thereby a new stylistic subgroup of monuments.
- 16 Comparable examples of the local style of the murals of the Lotsawa Lhakhang can be observed in parts of the murals painted in the Tsatsapuri Lhakhang and in the Kubum Chorten in Alchi, in three of the most ancient caves in Saspol (caves 2, 7, and 8), and in the Guru Lhakhang in Phiyang¹⁴. They are datable to the first half of the 15th century, between earlier murals drawing mainly on the Indian tradition, such as the ones in the Tashi Sumtsek in Wanla and the Nyima Lhakhang in Mulbek¹⁵, and later murals showing a more pronounced shift towards the Nepalese tradition and incorporating new iconographic subjects associated with the arrival of the Geluk (Tib. dge lugs) school in Ladakh¹⁶, such as the ones in caves 3 and 4 in Saspol and in the repainted chorten in Nyarma¹⁷. They also show a number of common motifs, including distinctive facial and body features and the rare combination of a throne-back and a gate, visible in the murals of the Tsatsapuri Lhakhang in Alchi (fig. 32), cave 7 in Saspol, and in the Guru Lhakhang in Phiyang. These seven mural sites constitute altogether a stylistic subgroup, whose individual characteristics are examined in more detail below.

Figure 32. Buddha Śākyamuni at the centre of his assembly, main wall of the Tsatsapuri Lhakhang of Alchi

© Nils Martin 2010

In the Tsatsapuri Lhakhang and the Kubum Chorten in Alchi

- 17 Parts of the murals of the Tsatsapuri Lhakhang and the remaining murals of the Kubum Chorten, both in Alchi, are extremely close to the murals of the Lotsawa Lhakhang in Henasku in terms of style.
- 18 Inside the Tsatsapuri Lhakhang, a temple belonging to the religious compound locally known as (Tsatsapuri) Gompa in the neighbourhood of the same name, the mandala of Kālacakra painted on the rear of the left wall and the murals of the main wall comprise figures of an overall consistent personal style (figs 33, 34), which compare closely with those of the Lotsawa Lhakhang. They are drawn with ease and display most of the aforementioned facial and body features¹⁸. However, they show less care than the figures in Henasku, and are further characterized by an array of variations in the facial features and other details that are no longer appreciable in the damaged murals of the Lotsawa Lhakhang¹⁹. In both temples, the finely curled hair of the central Buddha is adorned with distinctive round golden finials (figs 14, 32). The friezes running along the main wall demonstrate too a close proximity with the Lotsawa Lhakhang²⁰ (figs 35, 36).

Figure 33. Minor Buddha figures, main wall of the Tsatsapuri Lhakhang of Alchi

© Nils Martin, 2015

Figure 34. Bodhisattva figures, main wall of the Tsatsapuri Lhakhang of Alchi

© Nils Martin, 2010

Figure 35. Upper friezes, main wall of the Tsatsapuri Lhakhang of Alchi

© Nils Martin, 2011

Figure 36. Lower frieze, main wall of the Tsatsapuri Lhakhang of Alchi

© Nils Martin, 2010

- 19 In the Kubum Chorten, a ruined chorten with multiple chambers corresponding to the Many Auspicious Door type (Tib. *bkra shis sgo mang mchod rten*), located in the neighbourhood of Shangrong, only two of the south-eastern chambers still preserve parts of their murals. Although their bad condition makes the analysis only tentative, it should be noticed that the few remaining figures, depicted in three-quarter profile, compare closely with the figures in Henasku (fig. 37). They are drawn with ease and display all the aforementioned facial and body features²¹. The analysis of the frieze, however, is less conclusive²².

Figure 37. Three-quarter profile figure, main wall of the central chamber of the Kubum Chorten of Shangrong (Alchi)

© Nils Martin, 2012

- 20 These comparisons suggest an attribution of part of the murals in the Tsatsapuri Lhakhang and in the Kubum Chorten in Alchi to (a) master-painter(s) closely related to the workshop of the Master of Lotsawa Lhakhang in Henasku, if not to this master-painter himself, perhaps at distinct – later – periods of his activity.

In caves 2, 7 and 8 in Saspol and in the Guru Lhakhang in Phiyang

- 21 At Saspol, on the opposite bank of the Indus River from Alchi, caves 2 and 7 also preserve murals of a similar local style as in Henasku. Unfortunately, they have been quite exposed to weathering, to the extent that, in cave 7, the outlines have completely faded away. In cave 2, the figures depicted frontally show only parts of the aforementioned facial and body features, but some of the three-quarter profile figures (fig. 38) compare more closely to the murals of the Lotsawa Lhakhang.

Figure 38. Three-quarter profile figure, left wall of the cave 2 of Saspol

© Nils Martin, 2012

- 22 The murals of cave 8 in Saspol and those of the Guru Lhakhang in Phiyang (on the right wall and parts of the main wall and the entrance wall) are closer to the murals in Henasku. The figures display parts of the aforementioned facial and body features, as well as numerous intentional variations of motifs also observable on the main wall of the Tsatsapuri Lhakhang²³ (figs 39-42). The style of the murals, however, is more conservative, drawing numerous motifs from the repertoire of the Indian tradition, and their execution is more careful. The friezes of both murals compare well with each other (figs 43, 44) and are more distant from those of the Lotsawa Lhakhang in Henasku and the Tsatsapuri Lhakhang in Alchi²⁴.

Figure 39. Buddha figure, main wall of the cave 8 of Saspol

© Nils Martin, 2012

Figure 40. Three-quarter profile figure, main wall of the cave 8 of Saspol

© Nils Martin, 2012

Figure 41. Minor Buddha figure, right wall of the Guru Lhakhang of Phiyang

© Nils Martin, 2015

Figure 42. Three-quarter profile figure, right wall of the Guru Lhakhang of Phiyang

© Nils Martin, 2015

Figure 43. Upper friezes, right wall of the Guru Lhakhang of Phiyang

© Nils Martin, 2015

Figure 44. Upper friezes, entrance wall of the cave 8 of Saspol

© Nils Martin, 2012

- 23 These comparisons suggest that the murals of the Saspol cave 8 and parts of the murals of the Guru Lhakhang were painted by (a) master-painter(s) more distantly related to the workshop of the Master of the Lotsawa Lhakhang in Henasku than the master-painter(s) of the Tsatsapuri Lhakhang and the Kubum Chorten in Alchi, albeit trained in a similar local style and using common distinctive motifs. They further strongly

support the attribution of the murals of cave 8 and parts of the murals of the Guru Lhakhang to a single master-painter. For convenience, I refer to this second master-painter by the provisional name of Master of cave 8 of Saspol, as he was the sole master-painter involved there, whereas a few others worked on the murals of the Guru Lhakhang in Phiyang.

Religious affiliation

A Drigung lineage

- 24 Despite the designation of the temple of Henasku as Lotsawa Lhakhang, which is based on the local claim that it is one of the 108 temples allegedly erected by the famous Lotsawa Rinchen Zangpo (958-1055) according to his medium-length hagiography (Tib. *rnam thar*)²⁵, its murals bear no relation with this historical figure. Rather, they show an obvious affiliation to the Drigung school, whose seat was founded in 1179 by Jikten Sumgon at Drigungthil (Tib. 'bri gung mthil) in Ü (Tib. dbus).
- 25 There is no clear evidence, however, to link the Lotsawa Lhakhang to a particular master of the Drigung school. Whereas lineages often provide useful indication in this regard as they theoretically end with the contemporaneous lineage-holder, the lineage depicted on the main wall of the Lotsawa Lhakhang is dubious and therefore of little help. Firstly, it is inverted, the lineage-holders alternating not from left to right as usual, but from right to left. This is made clear from the fact that the Tibetan translator Marpa (Tib. mar pa), depicted bare-chested but clearly recognizable by his long hair, sits in fourth position to the proper left of the central Vajradhara (fig. 45), whereas his disciple Milarepa, clad in a white cotton garment, sits in fifth position to the proper right of the latter Buddha (fig. 46)²⁶. The Tibetan master seated behind Marpa is probably Gampopa (Tib. sgam po pa), whereas the one depicted frontally wearing a red fan-like meditation hat behind Milarepa must be Phagmodrupa (Tib. phag mo gru pa)²⁷. Secondly, considering the figures following after them as the successive throne-holders of Drigung, starting with Jikten Sumgon, we are faced with too many figures for the period under consideration. Indeed, unless it would not have continued further on the left after Phagmodrupa, the lineage would potentially lead up to the 18th century tenure of Dondrup Chogyal (Tib. don grub chos rgyal; ten. 1718-1747)! Rather than representing the actual Drigung lineage, the mural may thus have responded to a compositional need, where characters were added to fill in the full width of the wall. At the same time, this would have emphasized the great length and continuity of the Drigung lineage.

Figure 45. Marpa (left) and Gampopa (right) in the right part of the lineage, main wall

© Nils Martin, 2017

Figure 46. Milarepa (right) and Phagmodrupa (left) in the left part of the lineage, main wall

© Nils Martin, 2017

- 26 This restriction to the interpretation of the lineage of the Lotsawa Lhakhang should not be taken as an insurmountable obstacle. The stylistic analysis of the murals of this temple has demonstrated a very close proximity with some of the murals of the Tsatsapuri Lhakhang in Alchi, suggesting that they were made by the same master painter or contemporaneous master painters. We can as such use the Tsatsapuri

Lhakhang to help us situate the Lotsawa Lhakhang more precisely in time. The lineage depicted atop the left section of the main wall of the Tsatsapuri Lhakhang (fig. 47) is the longest of this temple²⁸. It includes a total of 20 masters (plus one disciple) that could be regarded as the lineage of the Drigung throne-holders. Provided that it constitutes a faithful testimony of this lineage down to the time of the painting of the Tsatsapuri Lhakhang, the mural might date to the tenure of the 20th lineage-holder, i.e. Rinchen Pal Zangpo (Tib. rin chen dpal bzang po; ten. 1428/35-1467/69), the 13th throne-holder of Drigung²⁹.

Figure 47. Drigung Kagyu lineage, main wall of the Tsatsapuri Lhakhang

© Nils Martin, 2010

- 27 Incidentally, Rinchen Pal Zangpo might also have been depicted in another closely related temple. Lo Bue (2007, pp. 183-184) identified a series of portraits representing a Tibetan religious master performing rituals in the murals of the Guru Lhakhang in Phiyang (fig. 48) as those of this very Drigung throne-holder³⁰. This identification is further supported by the historical connection of Rinchen Pal Zangpo with Western Tibet, from his marriage to a princess from that region³¹. Still, one should keep in mind the otherwise limited presence of Drigung topics among the murals of the Guru Lhakhang. It is also far from certain that all the captions are contemporaneous with the figures they identify³².

Figure 48. Religious master Rinchen Zangpo, right wall of the Guru Lhakhang of Phiyang

© Nils Martin, 2015

- 28 In conclusion, despite the limits pertaining to the analysis of the paintings in the Tsatsapuri Lhakhang in Alchi and the Guru Lhakhang in Phiyang, their association with the beginning of Rinchen Pal Zangpo's tenure seems sound on both stylistic and iconographic grounds. The Lotsawa Lhakhang in Henasku could be seen as being from the same general context, even though a slightly earlier dating – to the few decades preceding the tenure of Rinchen Pal Zangpo – is also possible for this temple.

Of the Drigung influence over Ladakh

- 29 The affiliation of the Lotsawa Lhakhang in Henasku, the Tsatsapuri Lhakhang in Alchi and – to a lesser degree as we shall see – the Guru Lhakhang in Phiyang to the Drigung school is significant as there is otherwise only very scant historical information regarding the fate of this school in Ladakh between the early support by the king Lhachen Ngodrup (*lha chen dngos grub*) to the establishment of Drigung meditators in Western Tibet around 1215, and the renewal of this religiously-based alliance by Tashi Namgyal (Tib. *bkra shis rnam rgyal*; r. c. 1555-1595) in the mid-16th century.
- 30 In the absence of reliable literary sources, the murals and inscriptions enshrined in the temples and chortens of Ladakh preserve crucial evidence for the political and religious situation during this period. These are, however, incomplete and partial sources, insofar as they will reflect the views of their local patrons only. As a general rule, exemplified by the donation inscriptions inside the temples of Wanla, Kanji, and Mulbek³³, such temples were founded by the local aristocracy, and the merits from these acts were typically dedicated to deceased parents and living family members. Their murals expressed the devotion of their patrons to the religious masters with whom they were engaged in more or less tight alliances. There is no reason to believe

that the identity and the motivations of the patrons of the Lotsawa Lhakhang in Henasku were fundamentally different.

- 31 My doctoral research demonstrates on both art-historical and epigraphic grounds that the influence of the Drigung school over Ladakh did not cease even after the partial takeover of Western Tibet by the Sakyapas (Tib. *sa skya pa*) and their powerful Yuan allies, and the destruction of Drigungthil in the last decades of the 13th century³⁴. Monuments such as the Tashi Sumtsek in Wanla, the Senggegang Lhakhang in Lamayuru, the Tsuklakhang in Kanji, the Eastern temple in Lingshed, the Lhakhang Soma of the Choskor and the abandoned Lhakhang of Shangrong, both in Alchi, as well as the great gateway chorten in Nyoma, all dating around the first half of the 14th century and constituting a coherent stylistic subgroup, present clear Drigung affiliations. The slightly later murals of the Nyima Lhakhang in Mulbek and the Lhatho Lhakhang in Alchi also point to the same affiliation³⁵. The affiliations of the Lotsawa Lhakhang in Henasku and of the Tsatsapuri Lhakhang in Alchi to the Drigung school appears therefore to mark the continuation of the strong influence of the Drigung school over the western valleys of Ladakh right into the first decades of the 15th century.

Sakya and Drukpa(?) iconography in the Guru Lhakhang in Phiyang

- 32 In contrast to the Lotsawa Lhakhang in Henasku and the Tsatsapuri Lhakhang in Alchi, the Guru Lhakhang in Phiyang reveals a more nuanced position vis-à-vis the Drigung school. Its murals comprise only a few Drigung iconographic subjects besides other ones associated foremost with the Sakya school (Lo Bue 2007, p. 181). For example, the main protector of the temple, Pañjaranātha Mahākāla, represented right above the entrance door, is closely associated with the Sakya school³⁶. Murals portraying couples of hierarchs of the Sakya, Jonang (Tib. *jo nang*, often regarded as a branch of Sakya), and perhaps Drukpa Kagyu (Tib. *'brug pa bka' brgyud*) schools are, moreover, observable on the main and right walls. Lo Bue (2007, p. 181) identified one of these double portraits accompanied by captions (fig. 49), on the right wall, as Sakya Panchen Kunga Gyaltsan (Tib. *sa skya paṅ chen kun dga' rgyal mtshan*, ten. 1216-1243) facing Lama Dampa Sonam Gyaltsan (Tib. *bla ma dam pa bsod nams rgyal mtshan*, ten. 1344-1348), two famous abbots of Sakya³⁷.

Figure 49. Couple of Sakya masters, right wall of the Guru Lhakhang of Phiyang

© Nils Martin, 2015

- 33 It can be added here that the second double portrait of the right wall (fig. 50) represents on the left Sabzang Mati Panchen Jamyang Lodro (Tib. sa bzang ma ti paṇ chen 'jam dbyangs blo gros, 1294-1376), the famous abbot of Sabzang monastery (Tib. sa bzang; near Sakya) and disciple of Dolpopa Sherab Gyaltsan (Tib. dol po pa shes rab rgyal mtshan, 1292-1361). He faces an abbot of Zangdan monastery (Tib. bzang ldan), in Latö Jang (Tib. la stod byang), perhaps its founder Kunpang Chödrak Palsang (Tib. kun spangs chos grags dpal bzang, 1283-1363), another famous disciple of Dolpopa Sherab Gyaltsan, and also his biographer³⁸. As for the double portrait on the main wall (fig. 51), it may represent Drukpa masters, since the figure on the right is associated by caption with the hermitage of Namding (Tib. gnam sdings), which was founded by Yanggonpa Gyaltsan Pal (Tib. yang dgon pa rgyal mtshan dpal, 1213-1258), a disciple of the famous Drukpa hermit Götsangpa Gönpö Dorje (Tib. rgod tshang pa mgon po rdo rje, 1189-1258), at the southwest angle of the Shri mountain, also called Tsibri, in Latö Lho (Tib. la stod lho)³⁹. By the early-15th century, however, this hermitage may well have been occupied by masters of the Sakya or Bodong schools, casting doubt on the identification of this double portrait⁴⁰.

Figure 50. Couple of Jonang masters, right wall of the Guru Lhakhang of Phiyang

© Nils Martin, 2015

Figure 51. Couple of Drukpa(?) masters, right wall of the Guru Lhakhang of Phiyang

© Nils Martin, 2015

- 34 The murals of the Guru Lhakhang may not be the only ones of the subgroup of monuments considered here to show potential connections with the Sakya and Drukpa schools, both established in Tsang (Tib. gtsang). The potential existence of such connections in the murals of cave 8 in Saspol and – to a lesser degree – in the Tsatsapuri Lhakhang in Alchi might also be raised, although there are no captions there to help in this matter. More obvious is the comparison found in the fragmentary murals of the Chomopu Lhakhang in Diskit (Nubra), a very small temple dating to a few decades at most before our subgroup of monuments. There, as in the Guru Lhakhang in

Phiyang, the main protector is Pañjaranātha Mahākāla, represented right above the entrance door at the centre of a triad of protectors (fig. 52)⁴¹.

Figure 52. Pañjaranātha Mahākāla at the centre of a triad of protectors completed by Four-armed Mahākāla and Four-armed Śrī Devī, entrance wall of the Chomopu Lhakhang of Diskit

© Nils Martin, 2015

- 35 The rather mixed iconography of the Guru Lhakhang in Phiyang might be coincidental with the decline of the Drigung school in Western Tibet during the first half of the 15th century, which the *Gangs dkar ti se'i lo rgyus* (Chos kyi blo gros 1998, p. 169) attributes to internal and external reasons. According to this source, during a span of 70 years from the tenure of Dondrup Gyalpo (Tib. don grub rgyal po, ten. 1395/1401-1427) till the beginning of the tenure of Kunga Rinchen (ten. 1484?-1527), scholarship and practice were quite weak at Drigungthil itself, whereas there were only a few Drigung meditation dwellings around Mount Tise. Simultaneously, the takeover of Purang by the king of Mustang Agon Zangpo (Tib. a mgon bzang po), a supporter of the Sakya subschool of Ngor, in the mid-15th century, deprived the Drigung school of one of its principal sanctuaries in Western Tibet. Agon Zangpo offered to Ngorchon Kunga Zangpo (Tib. ngor chen kun dga' bzang po, 1382-1456) the monastery of Khorchak, which was held by the Drigung school until then. Several Drigung hermitages around Mount Tise were finally lent to Drukpa meditators, who never returned them⁴². In this restless time for the Drigung school, the Sakya and Drukpa schools may have gained new patrons in Ladakh too, which might explain the iconography of the Guru Lhakhang in Phiyang and the Chomopu Lhakhang in Diskit.
- 36 Leaving aside the elusive micro-historic factors that could explain the contrast between the prominently Drigung iconography of the Lotsawa Lhakhang in Henasku and the Tsatsapuri Lhakhang in Alchi, on the one hand, and the rather mixed iconography of the Guru Lhakhang in Phiyang and – to some degree – the Chomopu Lhakhang in Diskit, on the other, I would like to explore the hypothesis that distinct positions vis-à-vis the

Drigung school might have existed during the first half of the 15th century in the valleys of Western Ladakh and Eastern Ladakh. To substantiate this hypothesis, one should consider the political history of the region.

Political and religious contrast between Eastern and Western Ladakh?

Political fragmentation in Ladakh

- 37 As suggested by the existence of two distinct royal genealogies splitting a couple of generations after Palgyigon (Tib. dpal gyi mgon, r. mid-10th century), the first king of Maryul (a region intersecting with present-day Ladakh)⁴³, there existed before the rise of Tashi Namgyal more than one royal lineage in Central Ladakh⁴⁴, among which the political authority was occasionally disputed if not fragmented. The *mNga' ris rgyal rabs* (Anonymous 1996, p. 83, trans. p. 132) notably records that, in 1399, the royal monk of Leh and the nobles of Shey descending from Ö De (Tib. 'od lde, r. c. 1024-1037/1060) revolted against the king of Maryul, Ngadak Tri Tsan De (Tib. mnga' bdag khri btsan lde), who himself belonged to the lineage of Shey (Vitali 1996b, pp. 495-497). On that occasion, the king of Guge, Namgyal De (Tib. rnam rgyal lde, r. 1396-1424), dispatched troops to Ladakh, who waged war as far as Saspol to the west and eventually placed all the conquered lands under the political authority of Tri Tsan De, starting with Leh⁴⁵. The *Deb ther dmar po gsar ma* (bSod nams grags pa 1971, p. 39, trans. p. 169) further attests of the political fragmentation of the region around the second half of the 15th century, when no less than five royal houses supported the Gelukpas: those of Shey, Nubra, Leh⁴⁶, Ladakh (in this context, probably a subregion of present-day Ladakh intersecting with Sham)⁴⁷, and Zangskar⁴⁸.
- 38 Confirmation of the political fragmentation of Central Ladakh during the first half of the 15th century may also be found in the donor scene painted on the entrance wall of the Guru Lhakhang in Phiyang. It represents ten nobles seated in a row in front of seven ladies (fig. 53), among whom Lo Bue has proposed to identify the noble sitting at the fourth position with the king of Ladakh Lhachen Tri Tsuk De, on account of a caption naming him Lord Tri Tsuk De (Tib. jo khri rtsug lde). According to Lo Bue (2007, p. 183): "The epithets preceding his name and his presence among three members of the Ar clan suggest that the temple was decorated at a time in which he was still in power and that the Ar family, which sponsored the decoration of the Gu ru lha khang, was then a powerful one in Ladakh and possibly even related to the royal family".

Figure 53. Beginning of a row of ten noblemen, entrance wall of the Guru Lhakhang of Phiyang

© Nils Martin, 2015

- 39 On account of his tentative identification of the Drigung throne-holder Rinchen Pal Zangpo in the murals of the temple, Lo Bue further proposed to date the rule of Lhachen Tri Tsuk De to the first half of the 15th century, a few decades later than generally assumed⁴⁹. If Lord Tri Tsuk De should indeed be identified as the king of the *La dwags rgyal rabs* – leaving aside the issue of the accuracy of the captions – it would be remarkable that, although he was a king, Tri Tsuk De was not depicted at the head of the row, but only at the fourth position behind three members of the Ar clan. As pointed out by Lo Bue, this might indicate the crucial role of the Ar clan in the foundation of the Guru Lhakhang. Considering the importance of seating in indicating status and precedence in Tibet and in Ladakh as well, it might, moreover, indicate that the rule of Tri Tsuk De did not extend over Phiyang. Otherwise, he should have been portrayed seated before and above all other the figures in the row⁵⁰. This hypothesis may be confirmed by the short account of his reign in the *La dwags rgyal rabs* (Anonymous 1926, p. 36, trans. p. 99). According to this source, Tri Tsuk De had a row of 108 chorten built in Leh, and two more rows in Sabu. Just like for his father Lhachen Sherab before him, the rule of Tri Tsuk De thus seems to have been based in the area of Sabu and Leh, if it was not actually limited to these areas.
- 40 Altogether, these examples convey the impression that the political authority of the concurrent kings of Shey and Leh did not extend beyond Saspol during the first half of the 15th century. According to the *rGyal rabs gsal ba'i me long* (Bla ma dam pa bsod nams rgyal mtshan 1985, p. 550), however, Nubra was incorporated for some time within the dominions of the king of Shey Ngadak Rechen (Tib. mnga' bdag ras chen, r. third quarter of the 14th century), the uncle of Tri Tsan De⁵¹.

The situation in Eastern Ladakh

- 41 There is scant information about the political and religious alliances of the royal houses of Eastern Ladakh during this period. Besides the few hints provided by the murals of the Guru Lhakhang in Phiyang and the Chomopu Lhakhang in Diskit, the only information available to us concerns the royal house of Shey. The *gDung rabs kyi zam 'phreng* (Anonymous 1976, p. 340) first recounts that the recognized son of Rechen stayed, probably as a monk, at Sangsang Nering (Tib. zang zang ne rings, in Latö Jang), an hermitage founded in 1247 by the Drukpa master Delek Gyaltsan (Tib. bde legs rgyal mtshan, 1225-1281), a disciple of Götsangpa Gönpo Dorje⁵². Rechen himself may have become a cotton-clad ascetic, as his name suggests, while political power passed to his

brother's line⁵³. Incidentally, the *Gung thang rgyal rabs* (Kaḥ thog rig 'dzin Tshe dbang nor bu 2000, p. 116, trans. p. 117) attests that Rechen also had a daughter, who was married to the king of Gungthang, Chokdrub De (*mchog grub lde*, r. 1375-1389), but was eventually repudiated for bearing him no child. This is significant too insofar as the royal house of Gungthang retained religious and matrimonial relations with Sakya until the last decades of the 14th century. The *gDung rabs kyi zam 'phreng* (Anonymous 1976, p. 340) then recounts that the great-nephew of Rechen and son of Tri Tsan De, Ngadak Tsandar (Tib. mnga' bdag btsan dar, r. first half of the 15th century), received great gifts from Sakya in exchange for his protection or, rather, exaggeratedly, for his mercy⁵⁴.

- 42 From the little information available, the kings of Shey thus appear to have maintained political relations with the royal houses of Western Tibet. They may also have had religious connections with the Drukpa and the Sakya schools.

The situation in Western Ladakh

- 43 The political and religious situation of Western Ladakh during the first half of the 15th century is even more obscure⁵⁵. The passage of the *Deb ther dmar po gsar ma* discussed above makes no mention of Purig, where Henasku is situated, perhaps because its rulers had not extended their support to the Geluk school yet, or because this region was not always considered as a part of Maryul or Ladakh. We can, however, draw some bits of information about the situation of Henasku and Western Ladakh prior to the rise of the Namgyal dynasty from the donation inscriptions of the Tashi Sumtsek in Wanla and of the Nyima Lhakhang in Mulbek.
- 44 The donation inscription of the Tashi Sumtsek (Tropper 2007, v. 36-37) recounts that the villages of Kanji and Kharpoche (ancient name of the fortress of Bod Kharbu)⁵⁶ were seized by the ruler of Wanla and founder of the Tashi Sumtsek, Bhag Darskyabs (Tib. 'bhag dar skyabs), after he reached the age of 30. Henasku, located next to the junction of the side-valley of Kanji and the main valley of Bod Kharbu, would in all likelihood, because of its geographic situation, have been brought under the sway of Bhag Darskyabs, too⁵⁷. This conquest probably took place around the turn of the 14th century, before Bhag Darskyabs' power was recognised by Kashmir – whoever the ruler of that region was at the time –⁵⁸, and before he gained control over a large part of Ladakh. The Tashi Sumtsek was completed by his sons a few decades later at most, among whom the youngest received teachings from the throne-holder of Drigung (Tropper 2007, v. 119-120). The murals of the temple, which bear a clear Drigung affiliation, with several Nyingma subjects, can be dated to the first decades of the 14th century⁵⁹. Further art-historical and epigraphic evidence, which I will present elsewhere, suggest that Bhag Darskyabs, his dynasty, and his allies were instrumental in the foundation of the 14th century monuments bearing Drigung murals defined above as a subgroup, located in Kanji, Lamayuru, Lingshed, and Alchi in Western Ladakh, and Nyoma in Eastern Ladakh.
- 45 The donation inscription of the Nyima Lhakhang in Mulbek recounts another conquest that probably took place later in the 14th century. According to it (Martin forthcoming), a predecessor of the patron of this temple – probably his father Lord Sengge Gyalpo (Tib. seng ge rgyal po jo) – established his capital at Phokar with the support of the Sultan of Kashmir. He further seized Mulbek, Wakha, Staktse, and Kharpoche (Bod Kharbu) to the east – fortified villages that were previously under the rule of Bhag

Darskyabs. The inscription reveals thereby that, within less than a century, the power of Wanla had disintegrated and been partly replaced by that of Phokhar. It is unclear whether Henasku was left out of this new conquest or if it was not considered worth mentioning beside the great fortresses of Kharpoche and Staktse. Whether the eastern dominions of Wakha, Staktse and Kharpoche were inherited by the patron of the Nyima Lhakhang, who ruled over Phokar and Mulbek from c. 1332 or 1392 onwards, is also unknown. According to the donation inscription (Martin, in press), however, this patron “was not under the rule of any of the kings of Purang, Guge, Maryul, Zangskar, and Spiti”, indicating that Ladakh was fragmented in at least two kingdoms at that time. The Nyima Lhakhang itself was completed around the second half of the 14th century, and was probably affiliated to the Drigung school.

- 46 This review of the epigraphic and art-historical material shows that the successive dynasties who ruled over Western Ladakh during the 14th century shared two prominent characteristics: they were legitimized and supported by the rulers of Kashmir⁶⁰, and they were strong supporters of the Drigung school.
- 47 In the period of political fragmentation that might have lasted from the demise of Bhag Darskyabs’ dynasty until the mid-16th century, a few other noble houses might have enjoyed a significant independence in their own dominions, such as the Ar in Phiyang, and it is well conceivable that the patrons of the Lotsawa Lhakhang in Henasku might have also been semi-independent rulers. The location of Henasku at the very border of Purig, hidden behind majestic cliffs, is indeed favourable for the formation of such an autonomous principality, as is demonstrated by the later history of the village. Following the account of the *La dwags rgyal rabs*, it seems that Henasku was brought under the sway of the Namgyal dynasty a few times during the 16th and 17th centuries. But this also indicates that Henasku escaped the control of the kings of Ladakh at different times during this period, being either independent or in the hands of other – Balti or Purig – rulers. During the rule of Nyima Namgyal (Tib. *nyi ma rnam rgyal*, r. 1694-1729), Henasku was handed over to a brother of the king, whose rights over Henasku were confirmed in the treaty of Hanle in 1753 (Schwieger 2005). For a few decades, at least, it constituted a petty kingdom of Ladakh.
- 48 In any event, whether the chiefs of Henasku were under the rule of others or independent, the foundation of the Lotsawa Lhakhang certainly marked the epilogue of the historically strong support extended to the Drigung school by the rulers of Purig and Sham (Lower Ladakh) throughout the 14th century. It is yet to be established, however, whether the sectarian views manifested in the iconography of the Lotsawa Lhakhang in Henasku and the Tsatsapuri Lhakhang in Alchi, on the one hand, and the Guru Lhakhang in Phiyang, on the other, may be symptomatic of the enduring political and cultural contrast between the valleys of Western and Eastern Ladakh. In the foregoing, I have demonstrated that the rulers of Western Ladakh maintained alliances with Kashmir and the Drigung school during the 14th century. By contrast, the kings of Shey and perhaps the kings of Leh as well – to follow the identification of Tri Tsuk De proposed by Lo Bue – are known for their matrimonial alliances with the royal houses of Western Tibet and for their potential connections with the Drukpa and Sakya schools from the late-14th century to the mid-15th century. One may also note that the Sakya monastery of Matho was allegedly founded by the son of Tri Tsuk De, the king of Leh Drakbum De⁶¹, whereas the region between Khaltse and Bod Kharbu, already at the core of Bhag Darskyabs’ territory, still constitutes today a sanctuary for the Drigung school.

Still, there is an inescapable limitation to the conclusion that we may be tempted to draw from these apparent contrasts, insofar as the sources at our disposal to assess the political and religious situations of Western and Eastern Ladakh do not overlap exactly. Most of the material dating back to the 14th century is related to the rulers of Western Ladakh, whereas most information available for the period running from the late-14th to the mid-15th century is concerned with the kings of Shey. The political and religious alliances favoured by the kings of Eastern Ladakh during most of the 14th century are barely known, so is the situation of Western Ladakh during the 15th century. This material contrast may itself betray the dynamics of Ladakh throughout the 14th and 15th centuries, hypothetically marked by a shift of political power from the rulers of Sham and Purig to the kings of Stod (Upper Ladakh) at some point in the late-14th century, but it could also be due to the loss of relevant material, such as the ruination of Nyarma, the main religious centre of Eastern Ladakh, near Shey.

Conclusion

- 49 The Lotsawa Lhakhang in Henasku is a humble temple whose history will likely remain shrouded in uncertainty. Its murals, datable to the first decades of the 15th century, were severely damaged during the last decades and therefore their direct analysis is greatly limited. They show an overall primary Drigung affiliation, in a period of great turmoil for this school in Western Tibet. They were painted in a local style that departed from the reference to the Eastern Indian tradition and embraced the motifs of the Nepalese tradition. Their great homogeneity further enables their attribution to a single master-painter, provisionally named Master of the Lotsawa Lhakhang of Henasku. Comparable murals are found in the Tsatsapuri Lhakhang and the Kubum Chorten in Alchi, in caves 2, 7, and 8 in Saspol, and in the Guru Lhakhang in Phiyang. Among these, the ones in Alchi should be attributed to (a) master-painter(s) related to the workshop of the Master of the Lotsawa Lhakhang in Henasku, if not to this master-painter himself, whereas the ones in Saspol and Phiyang should be attributed to more distantly related master-painters. The murals in cave 8 in Saspol and in the Guru Lhakhang in Phiyang, in particular, should be attributed to a master-painter provisionally named Master of cave 8 of Saspol. Further research will hopefully detail these provisional attributions and revise them if necessary.
- 50 This formal and comparative approach of the murals should be pursued, especially in order to compensate for the extreme paucity of the literary and epigraphic sources available to us. At the scale of isolated monuments, it enables deeper understanding of the murals in regard of the specifics of the master-painters involved. At the scale of a group of monuments, it further enables the assessment of the contemporaneity of some of the murals, contributing to strengthening the inner chronology of the group. It can finally provide hints about a range of connected historical subjects, such as the training of painters in particular religious teachings and their depiction, the circulation of painters within the dominions of their patrons, helping thereby to reconstruct parts of the history of the region. In this case, the apparent contrast between the prominently Drigung iconography of the Lotsawa Lhakhang in Henasku and the Tsatsapuri Lhakhang in Alchi, on the one hand, and the rather mixed iconography of the Guru Lhakhang in Phiyang, on the other, raises the question of the religiously based alliances nourished by the rulers of Western and Eastern Ladakh in a period of serious political

fragmentation. In spite of the limited information at our disposal, it is sound to consider that the foundation of the Lotsawa Lhakhang in Henasku marked the prolongation of the historically strong support extended to the Drigung school by the rulers of Purig and Sham throughout the 14th century.

Acknowledgements

- 51 I wish to express special thanks to Quentin Devers, who accompanied me to Henasku twice in Summer 2014 and 2017, and has helped me to improve this paper significantly by his editorial inputs; Charles Ramble, who has looked at several inscriptions with me; and Hilde Vets, who has kindly agreed to let me use her architectural drawings of the Lotsawa Lhakhang. I also wish to thank Christian Luczanits, Matthew Kapstein, Pascale Dollfus, Marta Sernesi, Ven. Konchok Phandey, and Kunsang Lama-Namgyal for fruitful conversations during my research, as well as Marie Adamski and Ghislaine Beyel for proofreading, interest, and support during the writing process. It goes without saying that all remaining mistakes are mine only. This research would not have been possible without the financial support from the project Narrativity (PRES Sorbonne Paris Cité) for my fieldwork of Summer 2014, a grant from the East Asian Civilisations Research Center (UMR 8155) for my fieldwork of Summer 2015, and a dissertation fellowship from The Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation Program in Buddhist Studies administered by the American Council of Learned Societies.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Tibetan sources

Anonymous 1926 *La dwags rgyal rabs* [The royal chronicles of Ladakh], in A. H. Francke (ed., trans.), *Antiquities of Indian Tibet*, vol. 2, *The chronicles of Ladakh and minor chronicles* (Calcutta, Superintendent Govt. Printing, Archaeological Survey of India New Imperial Series 50), pp. 17-59, trans. pp. 61-148.

Anonymous 1996 *mNga' ris rgyal rabs* [The royal chronicles of mNga' ris], in R. Vitali (ed., trans.), *The kingdoms of Gu-ge Pu-hrang, according to Mnga' ris rgyal rabs by Gu.ge mkhan.chen Ngag.dbang grags.pa* (Dharamsala, Asian Edition), pp. 1-85, trans. pp. 107-134.

Anonymous 1976 *gDung rabs kyi zam 'phreng* [The rosary of the paternal lineage], in dGe rgan (ed.), *Bla dwags rgyal rabs 'chi med gter* [The chronicles of Ladakh, an eternal treasure] (New Delhi, Sterling), pp. 338-341.

bDe chos Ye shes stobs rgyal 2015 *Bod khul gyi 'brug pa bka' brgyud pa'i dgon sde khag gi lo rgyus mdor bsdu mes po dgyes pa'i mchod sprin* [A cloud of offerings that rejoices our forefathers, being a brief account of the various monasteries of the 'Brug pa bKa' brgyud order in the Tibetan region], vols 1-4 (Beijing, Mi rigs dpe skrun khang).

Bla ma dam pa bsod nams rgyal mtshan 1985 *rGyal rabs gsal ba'i me long* (The history of the royal Lha dynasty of Tibet by Bla ma dam pa bsod nams rgyal mtshan, with an account of the mna'-bdag-pa lineage and its descendants in Sikkim, reproduced from a damaged manuscript from gNam-rtse monastery in Sikkim) (Rewalsar, Zigar drukpa kargyud institute) [online at Tibetan Buddhist Resource Centre, URL: <https://www.tbrc.org>, text ref. W28247, accessed 11 October 2020].

bSod nams grags pa 1971 *Deb ther dmar po gsar ma* [The new red annals], in G. Tucci (ed., trans.), *Tibetan chronicles* (Rome, Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente).

bsTan 'dzin pad ma rgyal mtshan 2004 *'Bri gung gdan rabs gser phreng* [The golden rosary of the 'Bri gung throne-holders], in *'Bri gung bka' brgyud chos mdzod chen mo* (Lhasa), vol. 119, pp. 3-471 [online at Tibetan Buddhist Resource Centre, URL: <https://www.tbrc.org>, text ref. W00JW501203, accessed 11 October 2020].

Chos kyi blo gros 1998 *Gangs dkar ti se'i lo rgyus* [The history of Mount Tise], in *gNas yig phyogs bsgribs* [A collection of pilgrimage guidebooks] (Chengdu, Si khron mi rigs dpe skrun khang), pp. 115-197 [online at Tibetan Buddhist Resource Centre, URL: <https://www.tbrc.org>, text ref. W20828, accessed 11 October 2020].

dKon mchog rGya mtsho 2004 *'Bri gung chos 'byung* [The religious history of 'Bri gung] (Beijing, Mi rigs dpe skrun khang) [online at Tibetan Buddhist Resource Centre, URL: <https://www.tbrc.org>, text ref. W27020, accessed 11 October 2020].

Kaḥ thog rig 'dzin Tshe dbang nor bu 2000 *Gung thang rgyal rabs* [The royal chronicles of Gung thang], in K.-H. Everding (ed., trans.), *Das Königreich Mang yul Gung thang: Königtum und Herrschaftsgewalt im Tibet des 13.-17. Jahrhunderts*, vol. 1 (Bonn, VGH Wissenschaftsverlag).

Kun dga' rin chen 2014 *bKa' brgyud gser 'phreng gi rnam par thar pa* [The liberation stories of the golden rosary of the bKa' brgyud masters] in *'Bri gung bka' brgyud chos mdzod chen mo* [The great treasury of the teachings of the 'Bri gung bka' brgyud masters], vol. 53, pp. 2-220 (Lhasa) [online at Tibetan Buddhist Resource Centre, URL: <https://www.tbrc.org>, text ref. W00JW501203, accessed 11 October 2020].

sPen pa tshe ring 2013 *Ngam ring rdzong gi dgon sde'i lo rgyus dang da lta'i gnas babs* [The history and present condition of the monasteries in Ngam ring district] (Lhasa, Bod ljongs bod yig dpe rnying dpe skrun khang).

Tāranātha 2008 *Myang yul stod smad bar gsum gyi ngo mtshar gtam gyi legs bshad mkhas pa'i 'jug ngogs* [A gateway for the erudite, being an exposition of the marvellous accounts of the upper, lower, and intermediary parts of Myang yul], in *gSung 'bum* [Collected writings] (Beijing, Krung go'i bod rig pa dpe skrun khang), vol. 44, pp. 1-228 [online at Tibetan Buddhist Resource Centre, URL: <https://www.tbrc.org>, text ref. W1PD45495, accessed 11 October 2020].

Other sources

Alexander, A. 2016 Alchi Tsatsapuri. Notes on the history of an early monument, in R. Linrothe & H. Poell (eds), *Visible Heritage. Essays on the Art and Architecture of Greater Ladakh* (Delhi, Bibliainpex), pp. 1-22.

Béguin, G. & L. Fournier 1986 Un sanctuaire méconnu de la région d'Alchi, *Oriental Art* 32(4), pp. 373-387.

Bellini, C. 2010 *Dipinti svelati. Indagine storico-artistica su alcuni templi e stûpa poco studiati in Ladak (XIV-XVI secolo)*. PhD Thesis (Turin, University of Turin).

2014 The paintings of the caves of Sa spo la in Ladakh. Proof of the development of the religious

- order of the dGe-lugs in Indian Tibet during the 15th century, in Dramdul & F. Sferra (eds), *From Mediterranean to Himalaya. A Festschrift to Commemorate the 120th Birthday of the Italian Tibetologist Giuseppe Tucci* (Beijing, China Tibetology Publishing House), pp. 315-346.
- Bredi, D. 2011 History writing in Urdu. Hashmatu'l-Lah Khan, Kacho Sikandar Khan Sikandar, and the history of the Kargil district, *Annual of Urdu Studies* 26, pp. 5-20.
- Chan, V. 1994 *Tibet Handbook* (Chico, Moon Publications).
- Devers, Q. 2014 Les fortifications du Ladakh, de l'âge du bronze à la perte d'indépendance (1683-1684 d.n.è). PhD Thesis (Paris, École Pratique des Hautes Études).
- in press, The temples of Ladakh, ruined and intact, till the mid-15th century, in C. Luczanits & H. Poell (eds), *Proceedings of the IALS Conference in Kargil, 2015* (New Delhi, Bibliaimpex).
- Devers, Q., L. Bruneau & M. Vernier 2014 An archaeological account of ten ancient painted chortens in Ladakh and Zaskar, in E. Lo Bue & J. Bray (eds), *Art and Architecture in Ladakh. Cross-Cultural Transmissions in the Himalayas and Karakoram* (Leiden, Brill), pp. 100-140.
- 2015 An archaeological survey of the Nubra region (Ladakh, Jammu and Kashmir, India), *Études mongoles & sibériennes, centrasiatiques & tibétaines* 46, pp. 1-64, <https://doi.org/10.4000/emscat.2647>.
- Dollfus, P. 2006 The seven Rongtsan brothers in Ladakh. Myth, territory and possession, *Études mongoles & sibériennes, centrasiatiques & tibétaines* 36-37, pp. 373-406, <https://doi.org/10.4000/emscat.1036>.
- Ehrhard, F.-K. 2008 *A Rosary of Rubies. The Chronicle of the Gur rigs mdo chen Tradition from South-Western Tibet* (Munich, Indus Verlag).
- Everding, K.-H. 2002 The Mongol states and their struggle for predominance over Tibet in the 13th Century, in H. Blezer (ed.), *Tibet, Past and Present. Proceedings of the Ninth Seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies, Leiden 2000* (Leiden, Brill), pp. 109-128.
- Francke, A. H. 1926. *Antiquities of Indian Tibet*, vol. 2, *The Chronicles of Ladakh and Minor Chronicles* (Calcutta, Superintendent Govt. Printing, Archaeological Survey of India New Imperial Series 50).
- Gangnegi, H. P. 1998 A critical note on the biographies of Lo chen Rin chen bzang po, *The Tibet Journal* 23(1), pp. 38-48.
- Gyurme Dorje 1987 The Guhyagarbhatantra and its XIVth century commentary Phyogs-bcu munsel. PhD thesis (London, School of Oriental and African Studies).
- Ham, P. van 2014. The Khawaling Chörten. A unique sculpted and painted mandala at Nyoma, Ladakh, *Orientalia* 45(5), pp. 28-40.
- Howard, N. 1997 What happened between 1450 and 1550 AD? And other questions from the history of Ladakh, in H. Osmaston & N. Tsering (eds), *Recent Research on Ladakh 6. Proceedings of the Sixth International Colloquium on Ladakh, Leh 1993* (Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass), pp. 121-138.
- Howard, N. & K. Howard 2014 Historic ruins in the Gya valley, Eastern Ladakh, and a consideration of their relationship to the history of Ladakh and Maryul (with an appendix on the war of Tsede (rTse lde) of Guge in 1083 CE by Philip Denwood), in E. Lo Bue & J. Bray (eds), *Art and architecture in Ladakh. Cross-Cultural Transmissions in the Himalayas and Karakoram* (Leiden/Boston, Brill), pp. 68-99.
- INTACH (Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage) 2015 *Interim Report. Emergency Stabilization for Saspol Caves (Gon nila phuk), Ladakh, India* (Leh, INTACH Ladakh Chapter).

- Jackson, D. 1996 *A History of Tibetan painting. The Great Tibetan Painters and their Traditions* (Vienna, Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften).
- 2010 *The Nepalese Legacy in Tibetan Painting* (New York, Rubin Museum of Art).
- Jamspal, L. 1997 The five royal Patrons and three Maitreya images in Basgo, in H. Osmaston & N. Tsering (eds), *Recent Research on Ladakh 6. Proceedings of the Sixth International Colloquium on Ladakh, Leh 1993* (Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass), pp. 117-119.
- Jigmet Namgyel & H. Vets 2016 *The Lotsawa Lhakhang of Henisku. Report on the Restoration of the Architectural Structure* (Zürich, Achi Association).
- Jonarāja 2014 *Rājatarāṅgiṇī* [The river of kings], in W. Slaje (ed., trans.), *Kingship in Kāśmīr (AD 1148-1459). From the pen of Jonarāja, Court Paṇḍit to Sulṭān Zayn al-'Ābidīn* (Halle, University Press Halle Wittenberg).
- Khan, H. 1939 *Mukhtasar Tarikh-i Jammu Kashmir* [A concise history of Jammu-Kashmir] (Jammu, Jay Kay Book House).
- Konchog Gyaltsen 1986 *Prayer Flags. The Life and Spiritual Teachings of Jigten Sumgön* (Ithaca, Snow Lion Publications).
- Kozicz, G. 2009 The temples of Alchi Tsatsapuri. A brief introduction into the architecture and the iconographic program, *Indo-Asiatische Zeitschrift* 13, pp. 55-66.
- Lalou, M. 1930 *Iconographie des étoffes peintes (paṭa) dans le Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa* (Paris, Librairie orientaliste Paul Geuthner).
- Li, B. 2011 *A Critical Study of the Life of the 13th-Century Tibetan Monk U rgyan pa Rin chen dpal Based on his Biographies*. PhD Thesis (Oxford, University of Oxford).
- Linrothe, R. 2007 A winter in the field, *Orientalions* 38(4), pp. 40-53.
- Lo Bue, E. 2007 The Gu ru lha khang at Phyi dbang. A mid-15th century temple in Central Ladakh', in A. Heller & G. Orofino (eds), *Discoveries in Western Tibet and the Western Himalayas. Essays on History, Literature, Archaeology and Art. Proceedings of the Tenth Seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies, Oxford, 2003* (Leiden/Boston, Brill), pp. 175-196.
- Luczanits, C. 1998 On an unusual painting style in Ladakh, in D. Klimburg-Salter & E. Allinger (eds), *The Inner Asian International Style, 12th-14th Centuries. Papers Presented at a Panel of the 7th Seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies, Graz 1995* (Vienna, Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften), pp. 151-169.
- 2002 The Wanla Bkra shis gsum brtsegs, in D. Klimburg-Salter & E. Allinger (eds), *Buddhist art and Tibetan Patronage, Ninth to Fourteenth Centuries. Proceedings of the Ninth Seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies, Leiden 2000* (Leiden/Boston/Cologne, Brill), pp. 115-126.
- 2015 Beneficial to see. Early Drigung painting, in D. Jackson (ed.), *Painting Traditions of the Drigung Kagyu School* (New York, Rubin Museum of Art), pp. 214-259.
- Martin, N. 2012 *Les peintures murales du Tsatsapuri dgon pa à Alchi (Jammu-et-Cachemire, Inde)*. Master Degree Dissertation (Paris, École Pratique des Hautes Études).
- in press, For the sake of Lord Sengge Gyalpo. The Nyima Lhakhang of Mulbek, in C. Luczanits & H. Poell (eds), *Proceedings of the 17th Conference of the International Association of Ladakh Studies, Kargil 2015* (New Delhi, Bibliainpex).
- Namgyal Institute for Research on Ladakhi Art & Culture (NIRLAC) 2008 *Legacy of a Mountain People. Inventory of Cultural Resources of Ladakh*, vols 1-4 (New Delhi, Namgyal Institute for Research on Ladakhi Art and Culture).

- Namgyal-Lama, K. 2017 Les vestiges picturaux du fort de Gyantse, Tibet central (presentation for the Société Européenne pour l'Étude des Civilisations de l'Himalaya et de l'Asie centrale, Paris, 28th November 2017).
- Pal, P. 1984 *Tibetan Paintings. A Study of Tibetan Tankas, Eleventh to Nineteenth Centuries* (Basel, Ravi Kumar).
- Panglung, J. L. 1995 Die Überreste des Klosters Ñar ma in Ladakh, in E. Steinkellner & H. Tauscher (eds), *Proceedings of the Csoma de Körös symposium, held at Velm-Vienna, Austria, 13-19 September 1981* (Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass), pp. 281-287.
- Petech, L. 1977 *The Kingdom of Ladakh: c. 950-1842 A. D.* (Roma, Istituto italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente, Serie Orientale Roma 51).
- 1978 The 'Bri-gun-pa sect in Western Tibet and Ladakh, in L. Ligeti (ed.), *Proceedings of the Csoma de Koros Memorial Symposium* (Budapest, Akademia Kiado), pp. 313-325.
- Schuh, D. & A. H. Munshi 2014 *Travel into the History of Purig. Preliminary Report about a Journey to Purig in 2013* (Andiast, International Institute for Tibetan and Buddhist Studies).
- Schwieger, P. 2005 Documents on the early history of He-na-ku, a petty chiefdom in Ladakh, in J. Bray (ed.), *Ladakhi Histories. Local and Regional Perspectives* (Leiden/Boston, Brill), pp. 161-174.
- Skedzuhn, A., M. Oeter, C. Bläuer & C. Luczanits 2018 The secrets of 14th century wall painting in the Western Himalayas. Structural damage sheds light onto the painting technique in the Tsuglag-khang in Kanji in Ladakh, in H. Feigstorfer (ed.), *Earth Construction and Tradition*, vol. 2 (Vienna, IVA-ICRA Institute for Comparative Research in Architecture), pp. 205-222.
- Sikandar, K. S. K. 1987 *Qadim Ladakh* (Leh, Kacho Publishers).
- Snellgrove, D. & T. Skorupski 1980 *The Cultural Heritage of Ladakh*, vol. 2, *Zanskar and the Cave Temples of Ladakh* (Warminster, Aris & Phillips).
- Sørensen, P. & G. Hazod 2007 *Rulers on the Celestial Plain. Ecclesiastic and Secular Hegemony in Medieval Tibet a Study of Tshal Gung-thang* (Vienna, Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften).
- Sperling, E. 1987 Some notes on the early 'bri-gung-pa Sgom-pa, in C. Beckwith (ed.), *Silver on Lapis* (Bloomington, The Tibet Society), pp. 33-53.
- Tanaka, K. 2012 The Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa and the Origins of Thangka, in A. Heller (ed.), *The Arts of Tibetan Painting Recent Research on Manuscripts, Murals and Thangkas of Tibet, the Himalayas and Mongolia (11th-19th Century)* [online, URL: <https://www.asianart.com/articles/tanaka/index.html#2>, accessed 22 December 2017].
- Torrens, H. D. 1862 *Travels in Ladāk, Tartary, and Kashmir* (London, Saunders, Otley, and co) [online, URL: <https://ia800204.us.archive.org/1/items/travelsinladkt00torr/travelsinladkt00torr.pdf>, accessed 11 October 2020].
- Tropper, K. 2007 The historical inscription in the gsum brtsegs temple at Wanla, Ladakh, in D. Klimburg-Salter, K. Tropper, & C. Jahoda (eds), *Text, Image and Song in Transdisciplinary Dialogue. Proceedings of the Tenth Seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies, Oxford 2003* (Leiden/Boston, Brill), pp. 105-150.
- Tropper, K. 2015 The inscription in the Lo tsa ba lha khañ of Kanji, Ladakh, *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Südasiens* 55, pp. 145-180.
- Vitali, R. 1996a Ladakhi temples of the 13th-14th century. Kan-ji Lha-khang in Spu-rig and its analogies with Gu-ru lha-khang, *Kailash* 18(3-4), pp. 93-106.

1996b *The Kingdoms of Gu-ge Pu-hrang, according to Mgna'.ris rgyal.rabs by Gu.ge mkhan.chen Ngag.dbang grags.pa* (Dharamsala, Asian Edition).

2005 Some conjectures on change and instability during the one hundred years of darkness in the history of La dwags (1280s-1380s), in J. Bray (ed.), *Ladakhi Histories. Local and Regional Perspectives* (Leiden/Boston, Brill), pp. 97-124.

NOTES

1. See Torrens 1862, p. 228, and the sketch opposite page 268.
2. A Ladakhi official governing the village rather than a proper minister in this case. See Petech 1977, p. 105; Schwieger 2005, p. 163.
3. For a typology of 14th-15th-century temples' plans, see Devers, in press.
4. Between my first visit in July 2013 and the beginning of conservation work in 2016, at least a small part of murals, including the upper part of the figure of Milarepa (Tib. mi la ras pa), depicted behind Nāropa in the lineage of the main wall, further detached from the walls.
5. See Jigmet Namgyel and Vets 2016.
6. See Lalou 1930, pp. 17-41. Tanaka (2012) has first identified the depiction of the assembly of the superior *paṭā* of the *Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa Tantra* in Tibetan painting. Luczanits (2015, pp. 250-255) has identified numerous other depictions of this topic, notably in a Drigung context.
7. See Tanaka 2012. Other instances of the use of the designation (*ras bris*) *mthong ba don ldan* to refer to this particular assembly of the Buddha Śākyamuni can be found in Tibetan literature, notably in the *Myang chos 'byung* of Tāranātha (Tāranātha 2008, pp. 50 and 99; the first instance having been discussed by Namgyal-Lama 2017). As proposed by Luczanits (2015, pp. 255-256) in reference to an inscription found at the bottom of a drawing bearing the footprints of Jikten Sumgon, in the collection of the Rubin Museum of Art, similar designations may have further encompassed other painted subjects.
8. See Konchog Gyaltsen 1986, pp. 33-34, 66-67.
9. Personal communication of Ven. Konchok Phandey, July 2014.
10. Such an assembly is discussed in the sixth and seventh chapters of the *Guhyagarbha Tantra* (Gyurme Dorje 1987, see in particular pp. 626-631, 643-657) and more thoroughly described in its later Tibetan commentaries by Nyingma masters, such as the *Phyogs bcu mun sel* by Longchen Rabjampa (Tib. klong chen rab 'byams pa, 1308-1363).
11. The designations of the painting traditions are based on the extensive work on Tibetan textual sources carried out by Jackson (1996, pp. 34-36, 43-52). For a list of prominent features of the Eastern Indian and Nepalese painting traditions, see also Jackson 2010, pp. 85-97.
12. The only Newari painting on cloth (New. *paubhā*) featuring this combination known to me, kept in the Zimmerman family collection, was dated to c. 1400 by Pal (1984, pl. 25).
13. See for instance Béguin & Fournier 1986; Luczanits 1998, n. 10; Lo Bue 2007, p. 176; Luczanits 2015, pp. 243-247. Among the thirty or so mural sites that I personally include in this group, most notable here are (by village name): the Lhakhang Soma (Tib. lha khang so ma) of the Choskor (Tib. chos 'khor); the abandoned Lhakhang and the Kubum chorten (Tib. sku 'bum mchod rten) of Shangrong; the Lhatho Lhakhang (Tib. lha tho lha khang), the Tsatsapuri Lhakhang, and the Thukje Chenmo Lhakhang (Tib. thugs rje chen mo lha khang) of Gompa, all in Alchi; the Chomopu Lhakhang (Tib. co mo phu lha khang) in Diskit; the Tsuklakhang in Kanji; the Chuchikzhal Lhakhang (Tib. bcu gcig zhal lha khang) in Karsha; the Senggegang Lhakhang in Lamayuru; the Eastern temple in Lingshed; the Nyima Lhakhang (Tib. nyi ma lha khang) in Mulbek; the repainted chorten in Nyarma; the great gateway chorten in Nyoma; the Guru Lhakhang in Phiyang; the caves 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, and 8 in Saspol (I follow here the numeration of the INTACH 2015); and the Tashi Sumtsek in Wanla. Individual references will be provided in the following for each

mural site discussed. For the remaining mural sites, one may turn to the references given above or to the work of Devers (in press) on temples.

14. On the Tsatsapuri Lhakhang, see Kozicz 2009; Bellini 2010, pp. 76-77; Martin 2012, pp. 57-82, 113-137 (*passim*); Alexander 2016. On the caves 2 and 8 in Saspol, see Snellgrove & Skorupski 1980, pp. 79-81 (with the caves 1 and 4 corresponding to the caves 8 and 2 in the numeration of the INTACH 2015). On the Guru Lhakhang in Phiyang, see Vitali 1996a, pp. 97-103; Lo Bue 2007.

15. On the Tashi Sumtsek of Wanla, see Luczanits 2002, 2015, pp. 243-244. On the Nyima Lhakhang of Mulbek, see Martin forthcoming.

16. For a summary of most sources available on the arrival of the Geluk school in Ladakh, see Petech 1977, pp. 167-168; and for some of the new iconographic subjects associated with this school, see Bellini 2014.

17. On this chorten, see Panglung 1995; Bellini 2010, pp. 1-45.

18. Except for the curve underlining the chest, the three short strokes indicating either of the areolas, and – in most three-quarter profile figures – the curve indicating the brow ridge.

19. The alternation between the aforementioned drawing of two horizontal strokes perpendicular to the lines of the arm and the chest and the drawing of a simple inwards curve ending the line of the arm near the chest in order to mark the flesh of either armpit is especially noteworthy (figs 33, 34). In the Lotsawa Lhakhang, the latter drawing is only seen for the main deities, such as the central Buddha of the main wall and the deities of the mandala assembly of peaceful deities of the *Māyājāla* cycle of Tantras (fig. 16).

20. The geese on top (figs 10, 35) are depicted alternatively with spread wings covering their sides and with their wings folded on their back, most being further differentiated by minor details and variations, whereas in the Lotsawa Lhakhang, all extant geese have their wings folded on their back. An extreme simplification of the eyes and neck of the geese is observable in both murals though. The upper frieze of swag valances is comparable to that of the Lotsawa Lhakhang, except that the peripheral falls of folds disgorged by leonine glorious faces alternate with textiles as if winded around a pole crowned by a drop-shaped jewel. Finally, the lower frieze of conches shows a somewhat different and more finely drawn set of white lines and dots but the same double black strokes at the left corner of the triangles (figs 11, 36).

21. Including the curve indicating the brow ridge, the curve underlining the chest and the three short strokes indicating either of the areolas (fig. 37). They also show a few further variations that are not observable in the murals of the Lotsawa Lhakhang.

22. The geese on top are depicted with their wings folded on their backs and with numerous parallel strokes indicating their tail feathers. The frieze of swag valances is similar to that of the Lotsawa Lhakhang but carelessly drawn, whereas the lower frieze cannot be observed clearly.

23. Most notable are perhaps the prognathous lower jaw with an underlined chin and a round drooping cheek and the alternation between the aforementioned drawing of two horizontal strokes perpendicular to the lines of the arm and the chest and the drawing of a simple inwards curve ending the line of the arm near the chest in order to mark the flesh of either armpit.

24. The geese atop the right wall of the Guru Lhakhang in Phiyang are carefully drawn and alternate between the two types also observable on the main wall of the Tsatsapuri Lhakhang in Alchi: with wings folded on the back – more or less in the shape of a conch-shell – and with spread wings covering the sides. The geese of cave 8 in Saspol appear to be simplified versions of the latter type. Below the row of geese, both murals feature a similar frieze of tricolour pleat valances, which cannot be compared to the frieze of swag valances in the Lotsawa Lhakhang in Henasku. Finally, the lower friezes of conches differ slightly from each other, as well as from that of the Lotsawa Lhakhang in Henasku.

25. For a discussion of Rinchen Zangpo's hagiographies, see Gangnegi 1998; and for an English translation of the medium-length hagiography attributed to his disciple Pal Yeshe (Tib. dpal ye shes), see Snellgrove & Skorupski 1980, pp. 83-98, in particular pp. 94-95.

26. Unfortunately, the upper part of the latter figure is lost today. It was still visible in 2013 when I photographed it for the first time.

27. Similar depictions of Phagmodrupa are still to be seen in cave 4 in Saspol, as well as in the repainted chorten in Nyarma.

28. Three other lineages are depicted inside this temple, at least two of which appear to be either truncated or condensed versions of the Drigung lineage.

29. As already noticed by Sperling (1987, n. 20) and Sørensen & Hazod (2007, p. 718), the historical sources are occasionally at great variance regarding the succession and the dates of the throne-holders of Drigung. I rely here on the *bKa' brgyud gser 'phreng* (Kun dga' rin chen 2014) of the Drigung throne-holder Kunga Rinchen (Tib. kun dga' rin chen, ten. 1514?-1527), which appears to correspond better to the ancient representations of the Drigung lineage than the *'Bri gung gdan rabs* (bsTan 'dzin pad ma rgyal mtshan 2004) of the Drigung throne-holder Tenzin Pema Gyaltzan (Tib. bstan 'dzin pad ma rgyal mtshan, ten. 1788-1819). The *bKa' brgyud gser 'phreng* notably differs from the latter source insofar as it considers Jonup Dorje Yeshe (Tib. jo snubs rdo rje ye shes; ten. 1286-1293) not as a proper throne-holder but as a regent, thus counting one master less before Rinchen Pal Zangpo. On the lineage of the Tsatsapuri Lhakhang, see also Luczanits 2015, p. 247, who arrives to the same conclusion.

30. Each depiction is accompanied by a caption identifying the main figure as the religious master Rin(chen) Zang(po) (Tib. rin bzang), whereas another figure is once identified as the “steward” (Tib. nye gnas) Rinchen Tashi (Tib. rin chen bkra shis). Two depictions of the religious master Rin(chen) Zang(po), in particular, can be attributed to the Master of the cave 8 in Saspol (fig. 48). As noted by Lo Bue (2007, p. 181), this religious master “cannot be identified either with the famous Western Tibetan translator Rin chen bzang po or with the Bka' brgyud bla ma Rin chen bzang po (1243-1319): the presence of the two great scholars Sa skya Paṇḍita (1182-1251) and Chos rje Bla ma Dam pa Bsod nams rgyal mtshan (1312-1375) facing each other points to some later important master”.

31. See the *bKa' brgyud gser 'phreng* (Kun dga' rin chen 2014, pp. 174-175). dKon mchog rGya mtsho (2004, p. 402) adds that she was from Ladakh, although no reference is given for this information.

32. Some doubt about the circumstances of the composition of the captions is shed by the unexpected distance and sarcasm expressed in two captions of crude language towards the nobles that they identify, sitting at the fifth and sixth positions of a row of ten in the donor scene on the entrance wall (fig. 53). The caption of the sixth noble reads: *phe tse skyid sring mo rgyos*, with a meaning akin to “[the one who] has copulated with the sister/cousin [of] Tsheskyit [Tib. tshes skyid] [of] Phe” (a village located a few kilometres downstream of Phiyang), whereas the caption of the fifth noble probably reads: *ang lde m[a rg]yo[s]*, with a meaning akin to “[the one who] has copulated with Dema [Tib. lde ma] [of] Ang” (a village located a few kilometres to the east of Timosgang). In the latter, the verb *rgyos* (past tense form of *rgyo*, “to copulate”) was partly erased, perhaps for the sake of decency. It is doubted that such an outcome was in the mind of the designers of the murals. Rather, it might indicate a change of mind of the donors or their successors towards their past allies, if it does not just result from the venom of the scribe. See also Vitali (1996a, p. 101) and Lo Bue (2007, p. 182), whose readings greatly differ from mine, especially as they consider both inscriptions as combinations of clan names and personal names. I am indebted to Charles Ramble and Pascale Dollfus for discussing these inscriptions with me.

33. See Tropper 2007, 2015; and Martin, in press.

34. On these events, see Everding 2002. Following the interpretation of an important passage of the *Si tu bka' chems* concerned with the political situation in Western Tibet by Everding (2002, p. 115), there is no reason to believe that the Sakyapas and the Yuan ever extended their control over Ladakh during the Yuan period.

35. On the Tsuklakhang in Kanji, see Vitali 1996a; Skedzuhn *et al.* 2018. On the Eastern temple in Lingshed, see Linrothe 2007, pp. 50-53. On the Lhakhang Soma of the Choskor and the abandoned

Lhakhang of Shangrong in Alchi, see Béguin & Fournier 1986. On the great gateway chorten in Nyoma, see van Ham 2014; Devers *et al.* 2014, pp. 121-128. On the Lhatho Lhakhang in Alchi, see Kozicz 2009; Bellini 2010, pp. 75-76; Martin 2012, pp. 19-56 and 113-137 (*passim*); Alexander 2016.

36. In the subgroup of 14th century monuments defined above, including foremost the Tashi Sumtsek of Wanla, it is never represented as a separate iconographic subject.

37. The captions read: */ *sa skya' pan cen zhugs* // [(here) is Sakya Panchen]; and */ *mchos rje bla ma dam 'ba zhugs* // [(here) is the Lord of Dharma Lama Dampa].

38. The captions read: */ *sab bzang pan mchen zhugs* // [(here) is Sabzang Panchen]; and */ *bzang ldan khan po zhugs* // [(here) is the abbot of Zangdan].

39. On the foundation of this hermitage, see bDe chos Ye shes stobs rgyal 2015, vol. 1, pp. 114-117. On its location, see Chan 1994, p. 922. Another disciple of Götsangpa Gönpo Dorje, Madunpa (Tib. ma bdun pa, c. 1198-1265), is known to have practiced there from a source studied by Ehrhard (2008, p. 37, trans. p. 60).

40. The captions read: */ *mcho rje' 'jam yangs tshan can zhugs* // [(Here) is the Lord of Dharma whose name is Jamyang]; and */ *rtsib ri ba nam ldings pa bla ma cob trtan zhugs* // [(Here) is the one from Tsibri, from Namding, the religious master Chotan (Tib. *chos brtan?*)]. See also Vitali 1996a, p. 97, whose reading occasionally differs from mine. I am indebted to Marta Sernesi for providing me with information about the history of the hermitages of Tsibri.

41. The caption identifying Pañjaranātha Mahākāla reads *gur 'gon* (Pañjaranātha), whereas that identifying the small assistant on his proper right reads *mon chung pud tra* (Small Mon putra). The captions identifying Four-armed Mahākāla and Rematī read respectively *phyag bzhi ba* (Four-armed) and *re ma ti* (Rematī). On this temple, see NIRLAC 2008, vol. 4, p. 61; Devers *et al.* 2015, pp. 35-36; Devers, in press.

42. See also Petech 1978, pp. 319-320.

43. See Howard & Howard 2014, p. 89; Devers 2014, p. 194-196.

44. The *La dwags rgyal rabs* (Anonymous 1926; see Francke 1926), existing in several versions, allegedly exposes the genealogy of the kings of Ladakh, most of whom are designated by the title Lhachen (Tib. *lha chen*, “great god”), cognate with the title Lachen (Tib. *bla chen*, “great religious master”) of some retired kings of Western Tibet. There is, however, no clear historical and geographical continuity between the reigns it records until the time of Lhachen Sherab (Tib. *lha chen shes rab*) and his son Tri Tsuk De (Tib. *khri gtsug lde*), both based in the area of Sabu and Leh. The *gDung rabs kyi zam 'phreng* (Anonymous 1976, p. 338-341) and the *rGyal rabs gsal ba'i me long* (Bla ma dam pa bsod nams rgyal mtshan 1985, pp. 548-551) expose the genealogy of a second lineage, whose royal seat Vitali (1996b, pp. 495-497) has situated at Shey. It includes several non-Tibetan rulers, after which one finds rulers designated by the title Ngadak (Tib. *mnga' bdag*, “dominion-holder” or “ruler”). This title may relate them to the king of Purang Ngadak Ö De (Tib. *mnga' bdag 'od lde*, r. c. 1024-1037/1060), who also ruled over Maryul.

45. The help offered by Namgyal De to Tri Tsan De was probably part of a longer political alliance between the royal houses of Guge and Maryul (i.e. Shey), as suggested by the marriage of Namgyal De's son, Phuntsok De (Tib. *phun tshogs lde*, 1408-1480), with a princess of Maryul, Tricam Gyalmo (Tib. *khri lcam rgyal mo*), recorded in the *mNga' ris rgyal rabs* (Anonymous 1996, p. 84, trans. p. 133).

46. I follow here the interpretation proposed by Vitali (1996b, n. 840) for the term *glo ba*. The possibility that it could correspond to “someone from Lo” (Tib. *glo*, i.e. Mustang) cannot, however, be completely excluded, given that, as we shall see, one royal house of Ladakh at least had (unfruitful) matrimonial ties with that of Lo at the end of the 14th century.

47. See Howard & Howard 2014, p. 89; Devers 2014, pp. 194-196.

48. See also a passage of the hagiography of Thangtong Gyalpo (Tib. *thang stong rgyal po*, 1385?-1464?) attesting of the division of Maryul between two rulers in 1459, discussed by Vitali (1996b, pp. 514-515, n. 873).

49. Lo Bue (2007, p. 184) supports thereby the late chronology proposed by Jamspal (1997, pp. 140-144) for the rule of Tritsukde's alleged sons, Lhachen Drakbum De (Tib. lha chen grags 'bum lde) and Drakpa Bum (Tib. grags pa 'bum).

50. The hierarchical principle of seniority further prevents that the noble identified by caption as Lord Ar Bum De (Tib. jo ar 'bum lde) corresponds to the king of Ladakh Lhachen Drakbum De, the son of Lhachen Tri Tsuk De according to the *La dwags rgyal rabs*, as he sits *before* the latter at the third position of the row. See also Lo Bue 2007, p. 183, n. 19.

51. As demonstrated by Vitali (1996b, pp. 450-451; n. 775) on account of a passage of the *Yar lung jo bo'i chos 'byung*, Rechen was still alive in 1376, when the latter work was composed. By that time, he was associated to the rule of his nephew, probably Tri Tsan De.

52. According to sPen pa tshe ring (2013, p. 238), Sangsang Nering housed up to a thousand monks until it was partly burned to the ground by Sakya troops during the conflict between the myriarch of Phagmodru Janchub Gyaltsan (Tib. byang chub rgyal mtshan, 1302-1364) and Sakya (1346-1354) and its population temporarily decreased to about fifty monks only.

53. The passage reads:

“mnga' bdag ras chen gyi rgyal mo mi li lig khab tu bzhes / sras shig 'khrungs pa la gong du gshegs nas / sku skye ba gzhan du 'phos nas zang zang ne ring na bzhugs / yum dgongs rdzogs pas / phag tu gser gyi 'bum bzhengs / phag 'bum du grags so // de'i sras bde legs rgyal mtshan gyi gdan sa zang zang ne rings na zhugs / rgyal srid mnga' bdag bsod nams rgyal mtshan gyis bskyangs /”

[Ngadak Rechen married Gyalmo Mililik (Tib. rgyal mo mi li lig). At the birth of their son, [the latter?] died (*dgung du gshegs*) and his consciousness was transferred to another newborn, who resided at Sangsang Nering. [Rechen?] performed the memorial service [of his] wife (who had died in childbirth?) and commissioned in secret [a manuscript of] the *Ārya Śatasāhasrikā Prājñāpāramitā* [written] in gold(?) (Tib. gser gyi 'bum), which is known as the secret Bum. His son stayed at the seat of Delek Gyaltsan, Sangsang Nering, whereas Ngadak Sonam Gyaltsan protected the realm].

It is worth noting here that the first connections between the royal house of Shey and the Drukpa school might have dated back to the rule of the king of Maryul Lachenpo Dekhyim (Tib. bla chen po de kyim), included in the genealogy of the *gDung rabs kyi zam 'phreng* under the name Lhachen Zidikhyim (Tib. lha chen gzi di khyim, see Vitali 1996b, pp. 389-390). Urgyanpa Rinchen Pal (Tib. u rgyan pa rin chen dpal, 1223-1303), another disciple of Götsangpa Gönpö Dorje, became the chaplain of this king on his way back to Tibet from Urgyan in 1257-1258 (Li 2011, pp. 213-222, 257; Vitali 2005, pp. 99-102). The *gDung rabs kyi zam 'phreng* (Anonymous 1976, p. 339), however, erroneously attributes part of this episode to the rule of Ö De, betraying a gap of two centuries in its chronology (Vitali 1996b, n. 836).

54. The interpretation of Vitali (1996b, n. 831) according to which this episode would reflect “an effort by Sa.skya to strengthen links with a king of sTod whose line was historically close to the Sa.skyapa-s at a time when most kings of sTod were starting to side with the emissaries of Tsong.kha.pa” seems far-fetched. I would rather interpret this passage as an indication that Tsandar conducted inroads in Western Tibet as far as the border of Tsang, which is corroborated by the *rGyal rabs gsal ba'i me long* (Bla ma dam pa bsod nams rgyal mtshan 1985, p. 550). The passage of the *gDung rabs kyi zam 'phreng* (Anonymous 1976, p. 340) reads:

“rgyal po 'di'i dus su hor la dmag lan gnyis byas nas nor mang po thob / yar gyen yang jo bo btsan gyi bdag yod zer nas zhogs dgos byung bar gleng la / dpal ldan sa skya tshun nas sa skya chen mo'i dre'u dkar mo la dar yug dkar po'i thur mda' btags nas / rin po che mang po dang bcas pa phul nas / nga'i dgon pa ri tsaam 'di la mnga' bdag khyed kyis gnod pa mi gtong ba mkhyen zhes / zhu rten dang bcas nas byung / snyan pa dang grags pa ni sa steng khyab par byas /”

[During the time of this king, as war was waged twice against the Hor, abundant booty was gained. Lord Tsan[dar] declared that he was the master even upwards [the Indus], whence it was said that [this territory] should be abandoned [to him]. [At that time,] from Sakya, white mules

bridled with ribbons of silk were offered [to him] by the leader of Sakya, along with great riches. [The latter] said: "Please, may you the Ngadak not harm my monastery, which is like a mountain," and he made offerings in support for his request. The fame and renown [of Tsandar] covered the surface of the earth].

55. The works of Khan (1939) and Sikandar (1987) contain the genealogies of a few royal houses established in Purig, especially that of Kartse. There is, however, no information contained therein regarding the period before the 16th century that can be securely checked against other sources. On the genealogy of Kartse, see also Howard 1997, pp. 125-126; Bredi 2011.

56. For the identification of Kharpoche as Bod Kharbu, see Martin, in press.

57. Among other hypotheses, Tropper (2007, n. 240) has proposed that the toponym "en sa", designating one of the dominions seized by Bhag Darskyabs in the donation inscription of the Tashi Sumtsek in Wanla, might stand for Henasku.

58. Kashmir was invaded multiple times by the Qara'unas and Chagadaid Mongols during the 13th and 14th centuries, not even to mention the apparently successive takeovers of the valley by two Tibetan-speaking invaders named Rinchen between 1320 and 1339 (see the *Rājatarāṅgīnī* by Jonarāja 2014, v. 146-242). The hypothesis that Bhag Darskyabs could have been supported by the Chagadaids was proposed by Schuh & Munshi (2014, pp. 60-61), but the authors ultimately discarded this hypothesis for a late dating that cannot be reconciled with the art-historical evidence.

59. I follow here the late dating first proposed by Luczanits (2002, p. 124), which is corroborated by my own research.

60. This seems to mark quite a continuity with the westwards ties noticed in earlier periods in Purig, being with the Kushan and post-Kushan types of ceramics described by Broglia de Moura in this, or by the apparent Kashmiri or Central Asian influenced monasteries presented by Devers in this volume as well.

61. After Dollfus 2006, para. 10.

ABSTRACTS

The Lotsawa Lhakhang in Henasku, in the west of Ladakh, is a humble temple that has received little attention until now. Its murals, dated to the first decades of the 15th century, have suffered significant damage and therefore their analysis is greatly limited. The extant murals show an overall primary Drigung Kagyu affiliation, in a period of great turmoil for this school in Western Tibet. They were painted in a local style that departed from the reference to the Eastern Indian tradition and embraced the motifs of the Nepalese tradition. The indepth study of these murals further enables their attribution to a particular master-painter and their correlation with a limited ensemble of murals in Alchi, Saspol, and Phiyang, whence the political and religious situation of Ladakh during the 14th and 15th centuries is questioned.

Le Lotsawa Lhakhang de Henasku, dans la partie ouest du Ladakh, est un temple modeste qui a reçu peu d'attention jusqu'à présent. Ses peintures murales, qui datent des premières décennies du xv^e siècle, ont subi d'importants dégâts, ce qui limite dans une grande mesure leur étude. Les peintures murales qui ont été préservées montrent une affiliation principale à l'ordre Drigung Kagyu, au cours d'une période très mouvementée pour cet ordre au Tibet occidental. Elles ont été réalisées dans un style local se départissant de ses références à la tradition de l'Inde orientale

pour embrasser les motifs de la tradition népalaise. L'étude de la manière de ces peintures murales permet d'une part leur attribution à un maître précis, d'autre part leur mise en relation avec un ensemble restreint d'autres peintures murales situées à Alchi, Saspol et Phiyang. Enfin, la comparaison de ces peintures nourrit un questionnement sur la situation politique et religieuse du Ladakh au cours des XIV^e et XV^e siècles.

INDEX

Keywords: art history, temples, murals, donors, painters, Tibetan Buddhism, Western Tibet, Ladakh

Mots-clés: histoire de l'art, temples, peintures murales, donateurs, peintres, bouddhisme tibétain, Tibet occidental, Ladakh

AUTHOR

NILS MARTIN

Nils Martin is a PhD Candidate in Art History and Tibetology at the École Pratique des Hautes Études (Paris) and a former Teaching Assistant in Indian Art at the École du Louvre (Paris). He has been doing extensive fieldwork in and around Ladakh since 2010, documenting the images of temples, caves, and gateway-stupas alike, as well as epigraphic material with a view to reassessing the otherwise little-known history of that region. His PhD research, supervised by Charles Ramble, with the external supervision of Laurianne Bruneau and Christian Luczanits (SOAS, London), is a study of 14th-century murals in Ladakh focusing on the three-storey temple in Wanla.

nilsmartin@hotmail.fr