

The irrigation canals of Li are of some interest. In one case the water is conducted through a rock or mountain by a tunnel of considerable length. People here firmly believe that this tunnel was made by fairies (*mkha-'agro*) or gods (*lha*). In the West people would be proud of their clever ancestors.

In one of the *mchod-rten* at Li, on the road to Nako, I found a clay tablet representing Avalōkitēśvara with eleven heads and eight arms, an interesting stage in this divinity's development into a figure with a thousand arms.

On Friday the 23rd July, we marched to Nako. We had hardly left the village of Li, when our caravan had to cross the swollen Spiti river by a rope bridge. (Plate XII, a). I sincerely sympathised with Pindi Lal when he said "I am tired of these bridges." But we had a right to be tired of them, for it was, after all, the last one we had to cross in the course of our journey. After we had spent about three hours in transporting our luggage and ourselves across the foaming waves, we had to climb up a very steep and high mountain side with no shade and a scorching sun above us. When it seemed as if I had reached the ends of the earth with nothing beyond, the large emerald plateau of the village of Nako suddenly appeared before me. There were waving fields in which girls were working and singing merrily, and a picturesque town reflected in the mirror of a clear little lake.

We noticed at once the site of a great 'aBrugpa monastery, called Lo-tsa-bai Lha-khang (Plate XII, b). Four large temple halls are still standing and form a kind of court. South-east of them, there are many ruins of other buildings, probably the cells of monks. There are also plenty of more or less ruined *mchod-rten*. This great monastery is believed to have been founded by Lo-tsa-ba Rin-chen-bzang-po, in the days of king Ye-shes-'od of Guge, c. 1025 A.D., and I am convinced that this assertion is right. Here we are certainly on ancient ground. Let me now proceed to describe the different temples.

The western hall is called *Lha-khang-ched-po*. The principal figure in this hall is that of rNam-par-s nang-mdzad (Vairōchana), the chief of the Dhyāni-buddhas of the five regions (Plate XIII, a). On his right we find Don-yod-grub-pa (Amōgha-siddha) and Rin-chen-byung-ldan (Ratna-sambhava); on his left sNang-ba-mtha-yas (Amitābha) and rDo-rje-sems-dpa (Vajra-sattva). Rin-chen-byung-ldan is represented once more on the same wall with a dragon frame, similar to that of the principal figure.¹ As regards the frescoes on the walls, they were arranged in circles, just as we find them at the Alchi monastery. However, their quantity being enormous and their state of preservation poor, I gave up the attempt either to copy or describe any of them. I must leave that to future students who can afford to spend at least a month in that interesting place. Elsewhere² I have given expression to my opinion that stucco images are

¹ In this "dragon frame" as well as in that of the stucco sGrol-gser in the northern temple we notice a curious development of a well-known decorative motive of Indian art. It is very common in the architecture of Java, where archæologists are in the habit of describing it as the *Kāla-makara* ornament. Some, however, prefer the designation *Garuḍa-nāga* ornament. In the present instances the central figure at the top is undoubtedly a Garuḍa, but the two dragons at the sides still bear the character of *makaras* (Ed.).

² *History of Western Tibet*, p. 51.