

dGe'adun-grub (1389-1473). What points in particular to their ancient origin is the fact, that in these inscriptions the *e*, *o* and *u* vowel signs are all directly joined to their consonant bases. These stones were, in all probability, put up on the roadside during the Lamaist reformation, and later on placed on or near *mani* walls. They testify to the enthusiasm with which Tsongkhapa's reformation was welcomed in these tracts.

A still more interesting inscription I found on a *mani* wall at the desert camping place of Horling. This *mani* wall was erected by a man of the Tibetan village of rGyüm-khar, the *Shugar* of the map, during the reign of a king who resided at Tsaparang (spelt *rTsabarang*, on the stones). When I read this, I could not help thinking at once of the Jesuit priest, d'Andrada, who states that he had found a Tibetan king at Tsaparang favourably inclined towards Christianity. This statement of the Jesuit has been subjected to serious doubts by modern writers on Tibet. They could not believe that a 'king' should ever have resided at the now unimportant village of Tsaparang. But d'Andrada is vindicated as we know now that Tsaparang was the capital of a sovereign whose power was acknowledged even as far as Spiti. At the same time when the tablet was carved, Tsaparang was the capital of the kingdom of Guge, the largest vassal state of the Western Tibetan empire. As far as my knowledge goes, the kingdom of Guge has had three capitals : the first was mTho-lding (Tholing), the second, Tsaparang, the third Garthog. The genealogical tree of the kings of Guge has been preserved in Tibetan historical works. The original line of these kings came from Zangskar, as stated above. Their dynastical name was *Lde*. The *Lde* dynasty came to an end in the principal line, and was superseded by a *rMal* dynasty. When the *rMal* dynasty became extinct, a member of a side branch of the original *Lde* dynasty was invited from Purang and became king of Guge. Then the historical information ceases. The name of the king who is mentioned on the votive tablet, is Khri-bkra-shis-grags-pa-lde. This name is not found in the genealogical tree, and therefore he must be one of the later members of the second *Lde* dynasty from Purang. He cannot well have reigned before 1600 A.D., for *mani* walls were hardly ever constructed before that time ; nor can he have reigned much later than 1630 A.D., for about that time Indra Bodhirnam-rgyal, a younger brother of the king of Leh, was made vassal king of Guge, and in 1650 A.D., Guge was annexed by Lhasa and received a Tibetan governor. It is, therefore, very probable that Khri-bkra-shis-grags-pa-lde is the very king whose acquaintance was made by d'Andrada in 1623 A.D.

This supposition is strengthened by the discovery of a similar votive tablet which I made three days after at Tabo in Spiti. This contained the name of the same king and gave Tsaparang as his residence. But what is still more surprising, is the occurrence of the following short passage on the same tablet : " He who clears away all the apostacy and darkness at the great palace of *Tsabarang rtse*." The man who carved this inscription was evidently displeased with the Tsaparang king's inclination towards Christianity. So was the king of Leh ; for it was probably on this account that he placed his younger brother on the throne of Guge. I think, we shall have to accept d'Andrada's account of his mission to Tsaparang without any severe criticism.