



southeast elevation



The most spectacular monument of the Alchi group is the Three-Storeyed Temple or Sumtseg (gSum-brtsegs) which, in contrast to the Dukhang, has hardly been altered since its construction in the early 13th century.

Only the roofs, which are today considerably thicker than they were originally and thus pose a major threat to this monument, have undergone major changes.

In addition, the wooden veranda originally in front of the door on the top floor has collapsed.

Strictly speaking the Sumtseg is not, as its name implies, a three-storeyed building, but a building with a second floor built in the form of a gallery and surmounted by a lantern.

On the level of the lower two floors are three niches dedicated to a triad of Bodhisattvas, the main images of the temple, and their secondary deities. The interior of the ground floor measures 5.4 x 5.8 metres and the niches are 2.1 to 2.7 metres wide and more than four metres high, the niche in the main wall being wider and higher than the niches in the side walls.

Bibliography
Abb. 1, 5, 6: David L. Snellgrove, *The Cultural Heritage of Ladakh*, Vol.1 - Central Ladakh, New Delhi, Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd., 1977; Abb. 2, 3, 4: Romi Khosle, *Buddhist Monasteries in the Western Himalaya*, Bibliotheca Himalayica, Series III, Vol. 13, Kathmandu, Ratna Pustak Bhandar, 1979;

Text: "Buddhist Sculpture in Clay" Christian Luczanits Chicago 2004, page 137
Fotos: Holger Neuwirth / Carmen Auer



The Sumtseg of Alchi

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