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THE EARLIEST PHASE OF THOLING MONASTERY
 Similarly, within the huge monastic complex at Tholing (mTho-gling) relatively little is preserved today that goes back to the original foundation from the end of the 10th century. The fascinating structure of the Yeshe-ö Temple or Gyatsa (brGyatsa) survives as a ruin with most of its sculptures and paintings destroyed.
 p. 30

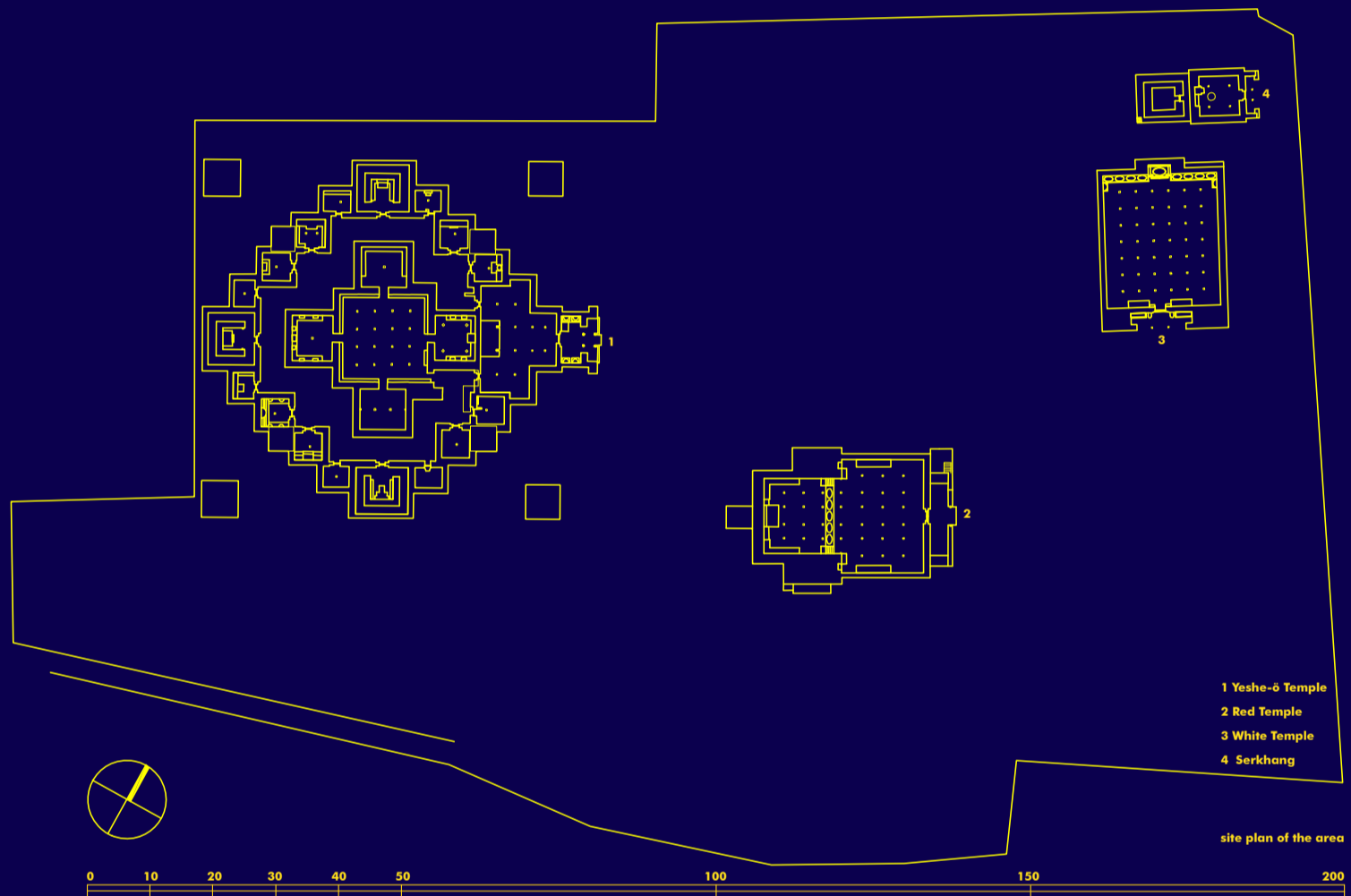
THOLING AND TSAPARANG
 The monuments of Tholing and nearby Tsaparang (rTsa-hrang), the newly established seat of the kings of the later Guge kingdom during the 15th and 16th centuries, demonstrate best the continuation of West Tibetan art and its political and religious background. Tholing monastery, the earliest phase of which has been summarised above, remained a thriving religious centre even in the 13th and 14th centuries, retaining its indigenous artistic tradition even under Central Tibetan influence.

At Tholing a considerable part of the Gyatsa (brGyatsa) or Yeshe-ö Temple (Yeshe-'od lha-khang) was restored and newly decorated in the course of the 13th century, much of this refurbishment being carried out under King Dragpa De (Grags-pa-ldo; possibly 1230-1277) in the third quarter of that century. It is mainly this phase of the temple and subsequent renovations undertaken up to the 15th or even 16th centuries that were documented in the small number of photographs taken by Ghersi inside the Gyatsa during the 1933 and 1935 Tucci expeditions to West Tibet.

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 The ruling elite of the later kingdom of Guge (c. 1400-1630) made Tholing a centre of the newly established Gelugpa (dGe-lugs-pa) school and had numerous monuments built at Tholing itself and on the slopes below their castle at Tsaparang.

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 Iconographically Yoga Tantra topics that are well known from the earliest monuments again become predominant in the major monuments (the White and Red Temples of Tholing and Tsaparang), while Anuttarayoga themes occupy temples that were probably not intended for wider public, such as the Tholing Serkhang.
 p. 283-85

Text:
 Christian Luczanits. *Buddhist Sculpture in Clay. Early Western Himalayan Art, late 10th to early 13th centuries.* Serindia Publications, Inc., Chicago, 2004.
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The Temples of Tholing

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