Dedicated To

My Late Father

Shri Thupten Tsewang Lama

DECLARATION

I do hereby declare that the thesis titled "Tawang Monastery as a site of Memory: the role of Tawang Monastery in preserving Cultural Methods and Practices" submitted by me to Tezpur University in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Cultural Studies under the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, is a result of my own study and research on the subject and that it has not been submitted to any other institution, including this University in any other form or published at any time before.

I hereby also certify that all images included in the thesis have been used with valid permission from individuals, museum and archives of Tawang Monastery. Many of the photographs were taken directly from the field and are properly acknowledged in the thesis.

Date: 25/03/2025
Place: Tezhur University

Yeegha)

Registration No. TZ189828 of 2018



तेजपुर विश्वविद्यालय / TEZPUR UNIVERSITY

(संसद के अधिनियम द्वारा स्थापित केंद्रीय विश्वविदयालय)

(A Central University established by an Act of Parliament)

(सर्वोत्तम विश्वविदयालय के लिए कुलाध्यक्ष पुरस्कार,2016) औरभारत के 100श्रेष्ठ उच्च शिक्षण संस्थानों में पंचम स्थान प्राप्त विश्वविदयालय) (Awardee of Visitor's Best University Award, 2016 and 5th among India's Top 100 Universities, MHRD-NIRF Ranking, 2016)

Dr. Juri Gogoi Konwar **Associate Professor** Department of Cultural Studies Mobile: +91 94353 80139 Phone: +91 3712 5156 Email: jgkon@tezu.ernet.in

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis titled "Tawang Monastery as a site of Memory: the role of Tawang Monastery in preserving Cultural Methods and Practices" submitted to the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Tezpur University in part fulfilment for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Cultural Studies is a record of research work carried out by Ms. Tenzin Yeegha under my supervision and guidance.

All help received by her from various sources have been duly acknowledged.

No part of this thesis has been submitted elsewhere for award of any other degree.

Date: 25.3.25
Place: Tegpur University

(Dr. Juri Gogoi Konwar)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It gives me immense pleasure to see that after years of hard work and continuous effort my PhD thesis is finally being submitted. This journey of almost five to six years would not have been possible without mentioning the names of many people who have in one way or the other helped me in this long path of completing and compiling my thesis.

This study would never have completed without the help and support from several individuals towards me during my tenure as a doctoral researcher. First and foremost, I want to thank my Supervisor, Dr. Juri Gogoi Konwar, Associate Professor, Department of Cultural Studies, for her consistent encouragement and support during my research tenure. Being a part time scholar, it was very challenging for me to keep myself on the right track with the study. Thank you, madam, for your exemplary mentorship and for infusing me with a desire for research and for allowing me to grow as a researcher in this field of study. The faculty members of the Department of Cultural Studies, Tezpur University namely Dr. Parasmoni Dutta, Dr. Madhurima Goswami, Dr. Jayanta Vishnu Das, Dr. Hashik N. K, Dr. Mandakini Barua, Dr. Moushumi Kandali for their wise counsel and valuable inputs while developing this research idea. I am also grateful to Prof. Debarshi Prasad Nath, Head of the Department and my teacher, for his constant encouragement and support. I am grateful to Prof Shambhu Nath Singh, the Vice-Chancellor of Tezpur University, and Prof Mihir Kanti Choudhury, Former Vice-Chancellor of Tezpur University, for allowing me to do research in this institution. I would also want to express my heartfelt appreciation to all of the other members of the Tezpur University administration for their unwavering support throughout the years. Special thanks to Ashish Dutta and Deepak da, Luit da, for their invaluable help during this period, and for taking care of all my official requirements. I would like to express my special thanks to Dr. Subhra Devi for her constant help and encouragement. I want to express my gratitude to Tezpur University, the Pobitora Madame Curie Hostel administration, and all the menials (mahis) for providing me with a home away from home during the course work and meeting all of my requirements over the years, both physically and emotionally. I would like to thank my young friends Siwani, Bornil, Priyanka, Moyuree, Shymoshree, Parikshit, Premjit, for their constant help and suggestions. I would like to express my heartiest gratitude to all my informants Shri Pema Dorjee, Lama Ngawang Norbu, Lama Tashi Phuntso, Lama Tenzin Kherap, Late Lama

Sange Dakpa, Gyeshi Thutan Gendun, Achi Lhendup Chosani, Ama Sichu, Lham Chotten, Gyen Thutan Tsering, Achi Jambey Wangdi, Yontan Zopa, Achi Thuptan Kalden without whom my research would not have been possible. I would like to thank the Librarian of Tawang Monastery and the in charge of Museum of Tawang Monastery for providing me the help to access all the religious texts and materials required for my research. I fall short of words to express my gratitude to Professor K.C. Mishra, V. K. Pandey (Retired Associate Professor) and Professor M.K. Behera who always encouraged me for research works and has always been like a ray of light in my life. Ama, Obu, Pinki and my 13 years old daughter Sonam, there are no words to express my love and gratitude for your endless sacrifices, unflinching faith, unfaltering love, and for being the backbone of my life. This work is dedicated to all of you. Your unspoken support has seen me through all my dark and desperate times and kept my hopes alive. Last but not the least my Late Father (Apa) who always dreamt of me holding a PhD degree and I know he would have been the happiest person today knowing me submitting my PhD thesis. And would also like to thank each and every individual who has in one way or the other helped me in these long years. Lastly, I thank Palden Lhamo (Guardian Deity) for keeping me in good health.

Date:	
Place:	

Tenzin Yeegha

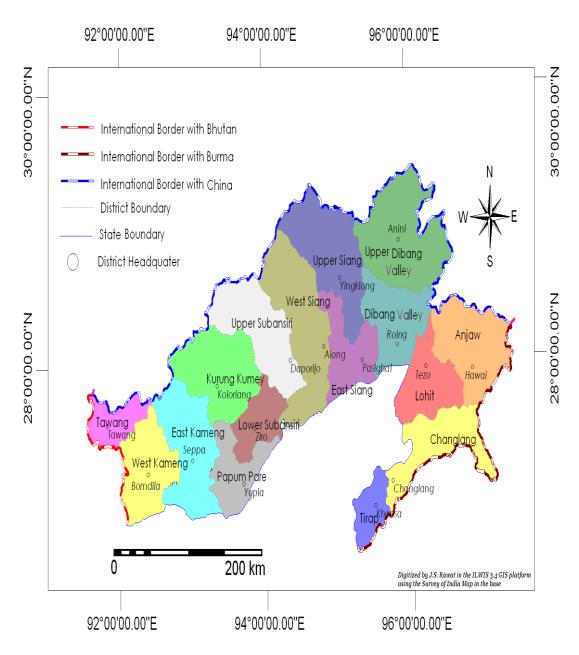
LIST OF TABLES

Table No.	Table Title
Table 1	Dimension of Cultural Memory by Aleida Assmann
Table 2	Levels of Memory by Thomas Luckmann
Table 3	Names of different Abbots of the Monastery Source:
	Souvenir
Table 4	Table of dates, time and name of rituals performed
Table 5	Names of week in local term with the auspicious element.
Table 6	Names of dates and zodiac signs in a lunar calendar in local
	term along with auspicious dates and day. Source: Field
	work
Table 7	Table showing the distribution of villages for collection of
	Taxation. Source: Field work
Table 8	Showing the list of villages and the number of monks
	attending the meeting for construction of Tawang
	Monastery. Source: Field work

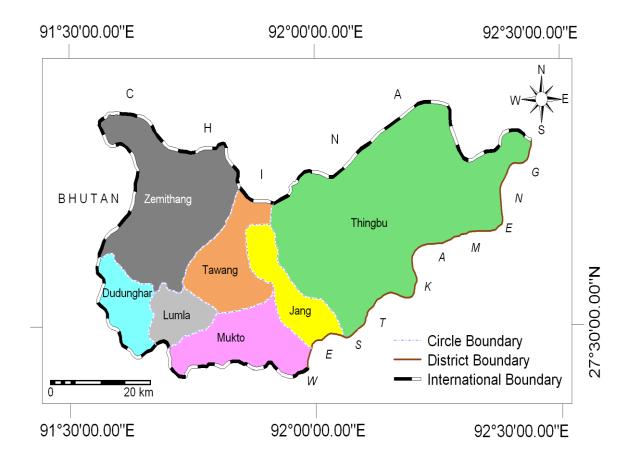
LIST OF FIGURES

Figure No.	Figure Title
Fig 1&2	Dough prepared by the monks of Tawang Monastery for a
	puja ritual performed during Lossar
Fig 3 &4	Pictures of traditional games and sports played during
	Lossar.
Fig 5	Picture of Yak and Palden Lhamo during the performance
	of Yak pantomime
Fig 6	Actors ready to perform Aji Lhamo dance
Fig 7	Picture of Sange Cham (Lion Dance)
Fig 8	Picture of Keng Cham
Fig 9,10&11	Pictures of few traditional arts and crafts
Fig 12	Marriage picture of a Monpa couple
Fig 13	Entry gate of the Monastery
Fig 14 & 15	Peoples participation during Torgya festival
Fig	Few pictures of monks performing monastic dances
16,17,18&19	
Fig	Pictures of monks fully dressed for Gyep Gyem Cham
20,21,22&23	
Fig	Pictures of monks fully dressed for Gyep Gyem Cham
20,21,22&23	
Fig 24,25	Murals and statue inside the monastery
Fig 26	Picture of Sepei Kharloh (Wheel of Life)
Fig 27	Official document send to one of the villages for tax
	collection
Fig 28	Picture of taxation book (in Bhoti script) used by the
	monks at the time of collecting taxes from villages
Fig 29	Picture of the stone believed to be given by Merak Lama
	to be used as a weighing tool at the time of collection of
	taxes.
Fig 30	Picture of Zambala, kept with the stone at the time of
	collection of taxes, it is believed to be a symbol of Wealth.

Fig 31	Small box where Zambala is kept along with the stone.
Fig.32 & 33	Picture of Lama Chukang
Fig 34	Picture of old building of Parkang
Fig 35	Picture of newly constructed Parkang.
Fig 36	Picture of guardian deity Palden Lhamo displayed during
	the Torgya for the common masses
Fig 37	Picture of monks performing their morning prayers in the
	main prayer hall (Dukhang)
Fig 38 & 39	Pictures of statue of Lord Buddha inside the Dukhang
Fig 40	Picture of prayer flag installed in front of the main
	building of the monastery.



MAP OF ARUNACHAL PRADESH



GEOGRAPHICAL MAP OF TAWANG