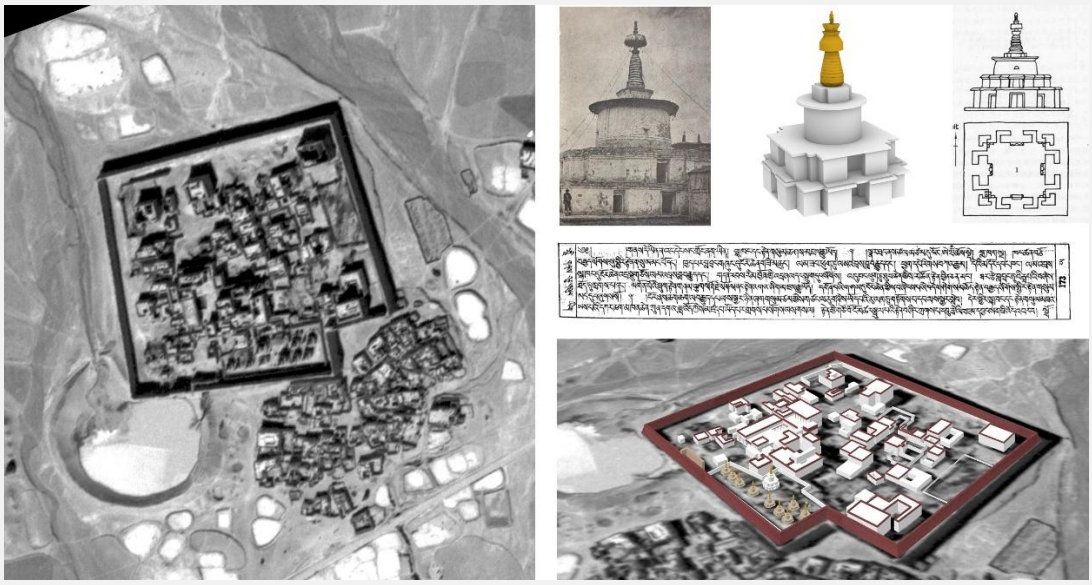
Conférence SFEMT

Current research projects of Studio Nyandak

Tenzin Nyandak (Studio Nyandak)

Jeudi 3 decembre 2026, 18h-19h30

Zoom : shorturl.at/OHyOZ



Narthang monastery in digital reconstruction © Studio Nyandak

Studio Nyandak is committed to the documentation and preservation of Buddhist architecture of Zanskar. Our ongoing research efforts seek to better understand this built heritage and the people who inhabit it. We work closely with the monks and nuns managing and residing in these monasteries and nunneries, along with the group of local Zanskaris. Recent developments such as road constructions, increased tourism, climate change, and demographic change are threatening this delicate heritage. We have conducted 4 field trips to Zanskar with our collaborators and have completed renovation of one painted gateway stupa. Next year, we are going to repair 15 painted gateway stupas and hopefully start the renovation of Karsha Monastery upper assembly hall.

The research on aerial U2 spy plane image relies on largely uninvestigated aerial photos taken by the CIA during the Cold War. The images capture Tibet's built landscape at an incredible resolution, offering crucial pictures of structures that had never been photographed and were destroyed shortly after. It locates, analyzes, and documents Buddhist and Bonpo monasteries and other architectural monuments that were damaged or destroyed during the occupation of Tibet and the Cultural Revolution. It offers unprecedented insight into the architectural landscape of Tibet during a pivotal era of the region's history.

The geolocation of Tibetan monuments is an ongoing research initiative where we use various sources to obtain precise geographic coordinates of Tibetan religious monuments. These findings draw from historical satellite images, various textual sources, archival photography, oral history, fieldwork, gazetteers, and datasets generously shared by our project collaborators. We have managed to collect more than 15,000 sites and verified the location of more than 3,800 sites. In addition to these three research areas, we are in the early stage of compiling a Tibetan dictionary of terms related to architecture and building construction.

Tenzin Nyandak is the founder of Studio Nyandak, a New York City-based multidisciplinary design practice. He is a registered architect and a licensed structural engineer. Prior to starting Studio Nyandak, he was an associate at Caples Jefferson Architects and in 2015, he was named the Robert Silman Fellow for Preservation Engineering. He cares deeply about safeguarding cultural heritage, developing contemporary architectural identity that is authentic, creativity in structural engineering, and supporting the younger generation of architects and engineers. In addition to New York City office, Studio Nyandak has a robust team of architects, engineers, and researchers based in Dharamsala, India. We work on research projects that support the wider field of Tibetan and Himalayan heritage preservation.