PART TWO: LITERATURE
Unexpected chance discoveries rather than planned investigation have often provided crucial evidence resulting in considerable progress in historical research. In the context of the study of Western Tibetan temples and the significance of documentary material to be found in the libraries of the area—an important territory for the study of the Tibetan canon, not to mention art and architecture—a noteworthy find was made in 2000 thanks to the restoration of the temples of the Khor chags monastery in the Pu hrang county, on the border between the present-day Tibet Autonomous Region and India and Nepal. Here I will give an account of this discovery and also examine one text in detail to illustrate the kind of evidence it provides both for establishing the period to which the books belong to and also the contribution of this library to the history of the formation of the Buddhist Tibetan canon. My particular interest lies in the study of some of the translation techniques adopted over various periods which yield tantalising hints of the diachronic development through which Tibetans absorbed and assimilated Buddhist philosophy and religion adopting a newly coined specific language.

The Discovery

The restoration of the Khor chags monastery and the building of the river embankment were undertaken in the year 2000.¹ The monastery stands on the banks of a river (see Plate 1) and even in 1935 Giuseppe

¹ These renovations were undertaken, under the direction of Enrico dell’Angelo, by the Italian Non-Governmental Organisation A.S.I.A. (Associazione di Solidarietà Internazionale in Asia) thanks to financial aid from the TRACE Foundation and Mnga’ris Prefecture.