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THE EDITORIAL NOTE

This issue of Kailash is a continuation in sequence, though not in chronology, following Volume XVIII Nos 3 & 4 (1996). It is dated 2000 to mark the arrival of the New Millennium at the editorial desk of the journal. As everyone else, we are trying to catch up with time. However, once in a while our efforts are in vain due to a scanty flow of acceptable and publishable material in Himalayan Studies reaching us.

We had to take a fast decision to do justice both to our contributors as well as readers. In the past 26-year long history of Kailash such drastic decisions had not been unprecedented. Between 1979 and 1981, there were two 1980 issues missing; between 1985 and 1987, the 1986 issues were missing; and finally, in 1990 to 1995, eight issues spanning four years were missing. However, the journal has continued to maintain its sequence in terms of Volume and Number with no discontinuity in between.

The current Editors have been trying to maintain a defensible balance between quality of the publication and its regularity. Once in a while, its chronology tends to be an unintentional casualty!

The Editors

**PRE-BUDDHIST ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES IN
NORTHERN TIBET: AN INTRODUCTORY REPORT ON
THE TYPES OF MONUMENTS AND RELATED LITERARY
AND ORAL HISTORICAL SOURCES*(Findings of the Changthang Circuit Expedition, 1999)**

JOHN VINCENT BELLEZZA

Introduction

The archaeological and cultural data presented in this paper are derived from my Changthang Circuit Expedition. On this expedition I explored the Byang-thang and sTod regions of northern and western Tibet¹ with the objective of documenting as much as possible of the vanishing cultural heritage of these remote parts of Tibet. The Changthang Circuit Expedition, which lasted from May to November of 1999, had three main research components: archaeological,

* The Changthang Circuit Expedition was, in part, funded by the Spalding Trust, England. I am very thankful for their assistance. I also express my gratitude to the Shang Shung Institute, U.S.A. and Italy, for supporting my research.

¹ The Byang-thang is the vast region in Tibet north of the Trans-Himalayan ranges which stretches as far as the Kunlun Mountains and the gDang La range. It encompasses an area of some 700, 000 square kilometres. The region of Tibet known as sTod extends west from the west-central province of gTsang to the Indian Himalaya, a portion of it being south of the Trans-Himalayan ranges. In some parts of far western Tibet, such as Ru-thog, sTod and the Byang-thang refer to the same territory.

ethnographic and textual. In this paper I will present a resume of my archaeological finds, as well as Tibetan literary and oral sources of information which help to shed light on the identification of these ancient remains.

Archaeological research on the Tibetan plateau, especially in the quite inaccessible northern and western regions, is still very much in its infancy.² A pioneer in the study of Tibetan archaeology was George Roerich who, in the late 1920s, traversed the Nag-chu and Nag-tshang districts of the Byang-thang in conjunction with his Central Asiatic Expedition (Roerich 1967). During his caravan trip in northern Tibet, Roerich came across megaliths and ancient grave sites which he believed belonged to the Metal Age.³ Another European pioneer in the field of Tibetan archaeology was A.H. Francke who, at the turn of the century, surveyed ruins and graves in Ladakh (extreme western edge of the Tibetan plateau under Indian jurisdiction).⁴ Guiseppe Tucci, one of the century's leading Tibetologists, also managed a preliminary study of the subject and identified several sites in western Tibet, including those of pre-Buddhist forts and stelae. He also brought to the attention of the world the *thog-lcags*, a heterogeneous group of Tibetan metallic amulets produced between the early Metal Age and the medieval period.⁵

Although international study in Tibet has been restricted during the half century of Communist rule in Tibet, Chinese and Tibetan researchers have continued to piece together Tibet's archaeological heritage.⁶ Numerous sites believed to range from the Middle Paleolithic to Tibet's imperial period (early 7th to mid-9th century) have been discovered, but very little excavation has taken place and the body of archaeometric data is small. The state of research in the parts of the Tibetan plateau which have been incorporated into Chinese

² For a review of Tibetan archaeological discoveries made by Western explorers in the first half of the 20th century, and by Tibetan and Chinese researchers in the second half of the century, see Chayet 1994.

³ For an account of the exploration of a megalithic site discovered by Roerich and to which he gave the name "Doring" in the late 1920s, see Bellezza 1995.

⁴ Circa 1900, Francke (1989) found both graves and forts which the Ladakhis (Ladwags) attributed to the Mon.

⁵ Tucci detailed his archaeological discoveries of both ruins and *thog-lcags* in his volume *Transhimalaya* (Tucci 1973).

⁶ A review of Chinese archaeological discoveries in Tibet is supplied in Hu Xu Tru (1993).

provinces is at a more advanced stage than in the Tibet Autonomous Region.⁷ In a sign that the times are changing, the Chinese government has recently permitted international collaboration on an archaeological project in the Sulej valley with Thomas Pritzker and Mark Aldenderfer of the United States.

Methodology used on the Changthang Circuit Expedition

On the Changthang Circuit Expedition I covered approximately 13,000 kilometres by vehicle, while the inaccessible location of some of the sites necessitated another 1000 kilometres on foot. During the expedition I was able to conduct field work in 13 of the 16 counties which comprise the sTod and Byang-thang regions. The main thrust of my research was to make contact with the elders of the areas I visited and enquire about the locations, history and lore of pre-Buddhist sites. Whenever possible I would visit the sites to photograph and in some cases, map visible remains. I also took general measurements of the visible remains and collected some samples of the parent rocks used in construction for subsequent geological identification. My survey was confined to taking photographs, conducting interviews and making maps. At no time did I disturb the ground or in any other way affect the integrity of the sites.

The identification of pre-Buddhist sites

A word on what constitutes the pre-Buddhist period is in order: I use the word pre-Buddhist to denote cultural phenomena and physical evidence which have their origin in the period before Buddhism came to dominate Tibet, and which in content display distinctively non-Buddhist characteristics.⁸ The first diffusion of Buddhism began in the early 7th century, in the reign of King Srong-btsan sGam-po. Buddhism, however, did not come to dominate the religious sentiments of Tibetans until the ninth or tenth centuries. It is very likely therefore, that pre-Buddhist edifices and art could have been produced as late as 1000. In certain situations, as in very remote areas where pre-Buddhist cults continued to exist, the pre-Buddhist cultural context can be extended as late as

⁷ The Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) denotes the part of Tibet which became an autonomous province of China in 1965. All of the Byang-thang and sTod now falls in the TAR (from 1952 to 1972 mNga'-ris province was part of Xinjiang).

⁸ For an assessment of pre-Buddhist chronology see Bellezza 1997a; Bellezza in press c.

1250. At the other end of the chronological spectrum are pre-Buddhist sites of deep antiquity dating to the early Metal Age⁹ and earlier.

At this stage in the investigation, I can only offer a pre-Buddhist chronology derived through inductive means: one based on non-direct evidence. This will remain the state of affairs until archaeometric data are obtained through the scientific excavation of selected sites. As I am well aware such a chronology is unverifiable and inconclusive. We can only hope that the those involved in the physical sciences take up the investigation and provide us with the means directly to date the sites I have documented.

I attribute archaeological sites to the pre-Buddhist period on the basis of the following criteria:

- 1) Sites mentioned in Bon literature as belonging to the Zhang Zhung period (Zhang Zhung was a pre-Buddhist kingdom centered in north and west Tibet)
- 2) Ruins ascribed by elders to the ancient Bon-po,¹⁰ Mon-pa,¹¹ Zhang Zhung kingdom,¹² or in certain instances, to the Tibet epic of Gling Ge-sar

⁹ Unfortunately, due to the paucity of archaeological data, the delineation between the Bronze Age and Iron Age is ambiguous; hence the inclusive term Metal Age.

¹⁰ Bon is the indigenous religion of Tibet, and Bon-po are the practitioners of this ancient religion which, since the 11th century, has been closely assimilated to Buddhism. For a description and analysis of Bon see especially works such as Kvaerne 1995; Karmay 1975; Karmay 1972; Karmay 1998 (collected works).

¹¹ The Mon-pa or Mon were a non-Tibetan people who are believed by Tibetans to have inhabited much of the Tibetan plateau in early times. The name is applied to a tribe of Tibetans living in eastern Bhutan, western Arunachal Pradesh and in adjoining areas of Tibet; a tribe traditionally engaged in artisanal work in Baltistan is also called Mon; and many other peoples of the Tibetan rim land, such as the pronominalised language groups of Lahoul, are sometimes referred to as Mon. Bu-ston's *Chos-byung*, written in 1323, locates the Mon in sKyid-rong (Murty 1969: 292), on the edge of sTod, while the 19th century *La-dwags rGyal-rabs* places them in Lo Mun-thang (Murty 1969: 292). Lo Mun-thang is adjacent to the Tibetan region traditionally known as 'Brong-pa tsho-pa-dgu, an area rich in sites connected to the Mon. It is accepted that the identification of ancient buildings with the Mon is a generic usage of the term which embraces all prehistoric inhabitants (ibid: 292). Tucci also notes that Mon is a generic term for ancient non-Tibetan people of various races and languages (Tucci 1949: 6). The findings of the Changthang Circuit Expedition clearly corroborate that Mon is a general term for all prehistoric inhabitants of the Byang-thang and sTod. In the villages of sNu, Byang-thang and Log, in the Sulej valley of Tibet, Tucci discovered

- 3) Ruins exhibiting distinctly non-Buddhist morphological features
- 4) Art and artifacts which display archaic non-Buddhist characteristics
- 5) The location of monuments in non-Buddhist geographical areas
- 6) Cross-cultural comparisons with archaeological sites in adjoining countries

1) The literature of the Bon religion (the indigenous religion of Tibet enriched in early times by traditions borrowed from adjacent countries) is replete with references to the pre-Buddhist Zhang Zhung kingdom (located in sTod and Byang-thang) which according to the *Old Tibetan Chronicle*, collapsed in the 7th century after its defeat by the southern Tibetan sPu-rgyal kingdom.¹³ Relevant Bon literary references, as a rule, were compiled between the 10th and 14th centuries and therefore, postdate the Zhang Zhung kingdom by many centuries. As these are not contemporaneous accounts, nor records belonging to the earliest tier of Tibetan literature, they must be viewed in a legendary rather than historical context. Although the historicity and chronology of events described in Bon sources are open to question they still form a highly valuable resource for placing pre-Buddhist archaeological sites in a cultural setting. The value of these texts is underscored by the fact that at virtually every site cited as important to Zhang Zhung religious adepts that I have surveyed, I have found physical evidence of the pre-Buddhist period (Bellezza 1996; Bellezza 1997a; Bellezza 1997b; Bellezza 1999c; Bellezza 2000b; Bellezza 2000c).

2) The predominant culture in sTod and the Byang-thang is that of the *'brog-pa*, the Tibetan pastoralists. The *'brog-pa* have inhabited the region from time immemorial first, as hunters and then as shepherds. Through the course of time, there have been significant movements of people in and out of the region and in the last 1200 years, emigrants from southern and eastern Tibet as well as Mongolians have regularly moved into sTod and the Byang-thang in search of open pastures. Still, the pre-Buddhist cultural legacy lives on in archaic customs and traditions (like the cult of mountain deities), clan names (such as Zhang

ancient tombs and forts, which local people identified as belonging to the Mon (Tucci 1996: 102-107, 112, 121). For a summary of the historical and anthropological context of the Mon see Murty 1969.

¹² Zhang Zhung is believed to be the name of a kingdom centred in western and northern Tibet in which the pre-Buddhist form of Bon was practised. Many Bon works allude to the greatness of this kingdom in terms of its size and achievements. See Norbu 1995; Karmay 1972; Bellezza 1997 for numerous references to Zhang zhung.

¹³ See Uray 1972; Beckwith 1987; Norbu 1995: pp.32, 33, 234.

Zhung-pa, Gyer-pa, Mon-pa and Gu-rub), and in an archaic substrate of the language (especially in toponyms and mythological terminology). Due to the survival of a portion of the ancient culture and the aboriginal element in the population, some *'brog-pa* elders have a profound sense of history. This is typified by the ability of the *'brog-pa* to add convincingly to lore recorded in ancient texts.

As archaeologists have come to know, the accuracy of information concerning ancient sites obtained from oral sources fluctuates greatly, and is therefore no more than a supplement to identification. This is also certainly the case in sTod and the Byang-thang. As a rule, *'brog-pa* oral histories are not well historicised and even seminal historical events of the last few centuries can be grossly distorted. However, the value of oral sources is enhanced by corroborating them with literary sources whenever possible and by a critical analysis of what is presented. From my research, I know that the *'brog-pa* have certain cultural cues for identifying and expressing their pre-Buddhist heritage. Encoded in the language of past kingdoms real and legendary (such as Zhang Zhung, Mon and those surrounding Gling), the *'brog-pa* oral accounts rely on the vocabulary and metaphors of the Bon religious tradition to orient one to their pre-Buddhist archaeology.

3) Many examples of the morphology of pre-Buddhist archaeological sites are unmistakable. Graves of various types fall in this category. Tibetan literary sources contain references to pre-Buddhist burial and funerary customs, among the earliest of which is a circa 8th century Bon text detailing the customs surrounding the burial of high status individuals (Lalou 1953; Chu Junjie 1991). While burial is still conducted, especially in eastern Tibet,¹⁴ graves consisting of elaborate superstructures and burial chambers belong to the pre-Buddhist period.¹⁵ Another archaeological form which has no Buddhist successor are the quadrangular arrays of monoliths sometimes numbering many hundreds. These rows of menhirs are frequently associated with other types of structures. There are also other types of stelae and pillars without Buddhist era counterparts.

¹⁴ For information on various types of burials carried out in eastern Tibet see Rinchen Losel 1996.

¹⁵ Descriptions of the tombs of the Tibetan kings derived primarily from literary sources can be found in Tucci 1950; Haahr 1969.

A characteristic architectural form associated with pre-Buddhist sites is the all-stone structure. Where still intact, these structures have stone roofs plates, and stone roof braces and beams.¹⁶ The rooms inside these structures are small (two square metres to nine square metres), sometimes oval-shaped and built in clusters of several rooms sharing a common entrance. There appears to be no Buddhist counterpart to this type of monument.

4) Pictographs and petroglyphs which display non-Buddhist compositions are found throughout sTod and Byang-thang (Bellezza in press b; in press c; Bellezza 1997a, Bellezza 1997b; bSod-nams dBang-'dus; Tang Huisheng 1993; Tang Huishang 1989). These compositions come in many forms and include animals rendered in the Bronze Age and Iron Age style of Inner Asia (Mongolia, Central Asia, Altai and southern Siberia), animals in ritual poses, anthropomorphs with feathers and horned-headresses, and hunting scenes. *Thog-lcags*, archaic metallic amulets, also exhibit pre-Buddhist motifs (Tucci 1973; Bellezza 1994; Bellezza 1998a; Bellezza 1999e). Pre-Buddhist art is very valuable in unraveling the character of early Tibetan culture, and should prove to be all the more so once archaeologists begin to develop a datable chronology for the pre-Buddhist period.

5) The location of archaeological sites also provides clues for their identification. Some geographic locations, such as the islands and headlands of the Great Lakes are closely associated with the pre-Buddhist cultural milieu. While these islands and headlands have seen some inhabitation in the Buddhist period, with few exceptions, the ruins found on them are attributed in oral and literary sources to the pre-Buddhist period. These islands and headlands are in the midst of lakes which are intimately connected with pre-Buddhist goddesses who have become marginalised in the Buddhist period. With the shifting of religious emphasis in Buddhism to psychological phenomena these environment-bound deities and the sites associated with them have fallen into obscurity.¹⁷

¹⁶ I documented buildings constructed entirely of stone at bKra-ri gNam-tsho, a large lake in mTsho-chen county. These structures were found on the headlands (erstwhile islands) of Do-nag-po and Mu-ro, and in the escarpment at Do-dmar Khang-ro. In total, I found about 40 of these structures, suggesting a significant pre-Buddhist presence in the region. See Bellezza in press d.

¹⁷ For a description and analysis of indigenous Tibetan deities see Nebesky-Wojkowitz 1956; Karmay 1996; Bellezza 1997a; as well as various articles in Blondeau and Steinkellner 1996.

6) I have noted some similarities between what appear to be graves in the Byang-thang and those known from Bronze Age and Iron Age Central Asian cultures (Bellezza 1997a: 261, 434, 435), and while this is a tentative effort, cross-cultural analysis of archaeological sites is a methodology which may prove very useful. Parallels between sTod and the Byang-thang archaeological sites and those of other regions of Inner Asia potentially fall into three categories: ecological, typological and chronological.

Environmental history in Tibet and its relation to pre-Buddhist archaeology

Pre-Buddhist archaeological sites are found across the northern and western parts of Tibet in various environmental contexts. Sites are located in open plains and narrow valleys, and on slopes, cliffs and mountain tops. The largest concentration of sites in the Byang-thang occurs in the Great Lakes belt which stretches the breadth of Tibet's northern plains, at 4400 metres to 4800 metres elevation. This is the most congenial environment the austere region offers: to the south are the frigid valleys of the Trans-Himalayan ranges while to the north the plains are generally more arid. As in any place in the world settlement was predicated on the availability of potable water, a scarce resource in some places, plentiful in others. As compared to modern settlement in the region, the location of archaeological sites indicates that the pre-Buddhist population routinely lived at relatively higher elevations and had more hydrological resources on which to rely.

The desiccation of the Tibetan plateau has been the predominant trend since the Middle Holocene climatic optimum (Bellezza 1997a: 438, 439) and is a factor which must be reckoned with in any attempt to outline the origins and development of Tibetan civilization. Environmental history in Tibet, as important as it is, is a subject that has received scarcely any attention. As new paleo-climatological, paleo-glaciological, palynological and related studies emerge for Tibet, the situation should begin to change. My findings at the 80 kilometre-long Dang-ra g.yu mtsho, Nyi-ma county, clearly indicate that water available for irrigation and agriculture has been dwindling for many centuries (Bellezza 1997a: ch. 9). The Byang-thang and sTod (as well as gTsang province) are full of examples of such settlements vacated in both the pre-Buddhist and Buddhist periods.

On the Changthang Circuit Expedition, I returned on two different occasions to Dang-ra g.Yu-mtsho and found more evidence to support local claims that during the time of the Zhang Zhung kingdom, the shores of the lake supported a much larger population and infrastructure. There are 16 valleys which open on to the lake and which exhibit signs of past agriculture and sedentary settlement. These settlements have been either completely abandoned or are a small fraction of their earlier size. In several villages agriculture is still practised, albeit often to a much smaller extent than in the past. Valleys where agriculture is defunct are now exploited by a few seasonal herders and fuel-collectors.

I will now enumerate a list of valleys at Dang-ra g.yu mtsho where remnants of past cultivation in the form of terraces, irrigation systems and fields are found. According to the oral history of the region, most of these agricultural areas were abandoned with the collapse of the Zhang Zhung kingdom. East Shore (from south to north): 1) gNyan-dmar, 2) Phyug-'tsho grog-po, 3) Lha-sa, 4) Lha-lung, 5) Jag-lung, 6) rTsa-lung, 6) Gyam-pa'i rDzong, 7) Sog-po, 7) Khyung rDzong, 8) Ba'am, 9) Dar-chen, 10) Dar-chung, 11) Gangs-lung, 12) dMar-lcam, 13) sGob-bdag, 14) 'Om-mo; west shore: 15) Zhing-lung; south shore: 16) Gangs-lung lha-rtse.

Likewise, at bKra-ri gNam-mtsho, on what were islands and which are now headlands connected to the mainland by gravel spits, are the remains of habitations abandoned many centuries ago (Bellezza in press d). bKra-ri gNam mtsho is an alkaline body of water and the erstwhile islands have no permanent source of potable water. This suggests that the communities here were founded when the lake provided a source of fresh water, and were abandoned by the time the water had become too salty to drink. Extensive remains of settlements which are believed to have met their demise with the collapse of Zhang Zhung are also found at Da-roq mTsho and gNam mTsho (Bellezza 1999c; Bellezza 1997a).

Pre-Buddhist archaeological types documented on the Changthang Circuit Expedition

During the expedition I was able to document around 100 pre-Buddhist sites (in addition to 50 other pre-Buddhist sites surveyed on previous expeditions; consult author's bibliography). These archaeological sites lie between 4400 metres and 5000 metres elevation, making them among the

highest in the world. Although there is still much to discover, I now believe I have sufficient data from a representative sample of archaeological monuments to form a typological outline. My survey also permits an analysis of preferred location patterns and is an initial step towards developing an archaeological processualist perspective on pre-Buddhist settlement in the region.

The typology provided below should be seen as nothing more than a guide, since some ambiguity remains. For example, from a visual survey alone it is sometimes impossible to gauge whether a pillar had an enclosure built around it, or whether dissipated remains constitute religious edifices or a village. Moreover, a single site can contain structures of various typologies, as I was able to ascertain at certain places.

The types of pre-Buddhist archaeological sites found on the Byang-thang can be broadly classed as follows:

- 1) Petroglyphs and Pictographs
- 2) Hilltop forts, palaces and other structures built on summits
- 3) Structures, mostly religious, integrating caves and escarpments in their construction
- 4) Free-standing religious edifices
- 5) The remains of sedentary villages
- 6) Cist-type graves, both square and round in form
- 7) Graves with superstructures built on summits
- 8) Isolated pillars
- 9) Stelae built within a quadrangular perimeter
- 10) Monolithic / Megalithic arrays, usually with accompanying structures
- 11) Other remains such as mountain-top walls, irrigation systems, unidentified tumuli and earth-works

1) On the Changthang Circuit Expedition I continued to survey the rock paintings of Lake gNam mTsho, and found examples which have not yet been published. These pictographs range in age from the Aeneolithic or early Metal Age to relatively recent times.¹⁸ The majority of them are painted in red ochre. As for petroglyphs, a heretofore undocumented site in Ra-spang township, Ruthog county, presented diverse compositions dating from prehistoric times

¹⁸ References to rock art in Tibet include: bSod-nams dBang-'dus 1994; Heffner 1990; Tang Hui-sheng 1989; Tang Huisheng 1993; Zhang Jian-ling 1987; Bellezza 1997a; Bellezza 1997b; Bellezza in press b; Bellezza in press c.

through the Buddhist period.¹⁹ They were produced using various techniques such as carving with metal implements and pecking at the parent rock with stone or metal tools. I will examine this rock art in my forthcoming book: *Antiquities of Northern Tibet: Pre-Buddhist Archaeological Discoveries on the High Plateau*.

2) On the expedition I surveyed hilltop ruins which were frequently attributed to the Mon (also referred to as Mon-pa), a legendary non-Tibetan people who are believed to have inhabited much of the plateau in pre-Buddhist times. Legendary figures from the Tibetan epic are also associated with the hilltop ruins. The 'brog-pa believe that many of these hilltop structures functioned as forts and palaces. This is very plausible in that Tibetans often built such structures on summits in the Buddhist period. Among the most famous examples are the Po-ta-la palace in Lhasa and the fort of the g'Tsang kings at Shigatse. There are two major architectural types of hilltop ruins associated in 'brog-pa oral history with the Mon-pa; those which had all-stone roofs and those which at one time supported roofs which incorporated wooden beams in their construction. The individual structures of the former category tend to be smaller than those of the latter.

The characteristically smaller all-stone structures do indeed appear to be pre-Buddhist while attribution of structures with wooden roofs to this period is much less certain. In addition to formidably built structures up to 55 metres in length, at some sites there are ramparts running along ridge tops for upwards of several hundred metres, as well as small bunker-like structures in the heights. Also on hilltops are the remains of pre-Buddhist religious edifices which in one instance still retains a portion of its all-stone roof (see L-1, in the section below).

3) At several places I found the remnants of structures built into escarpments and caves which are thought by local people to have been Zhang Zhung religious hermitages. These sites include the remains of half a dozen to more than 20 structures. In some cases these were multi-level affairs built around the mouths of caves. At several places, I found pictographs, the most common being the counterclockwise *gyung-drung* (swastika) painted in red ochre. There are also examples of stone entablatures, altars and other lithic furniture in the caves. As is well known, cave hermitages were also an important feature of the religious landscape of the Buddhist period.

¹⁹ For a chronology of rock art based on non-direct means see bSod-nams dBang-'dus 1994; Bellezza in press b; in press c.

4) Primarily in Nyi-ma county, I have found a series of ruins which are identified by the local people as being the remains of Zhang Zhung era religious edifices. These are all stone structures which quite frequently had oval-shaped rooms. They are often situated in high valleys which are no longer permanently inhabited. Complexes of up to a half dozen buildings are the norm.

5) Groups of ruins usually leveled to the ground and occupying plains and sloping terrain appear to be the vestiges of villages. What seem to be the foundations of domiciles and other structures can form extensive complexes. Perhaps most notably until very recently the only habitation was represented by the pastoralists' tents. Clearly, at some point in the distant past, fixed structures were the norm in certain places.

6) Structures which are identified by the *'brog-pa* as grave sites are scattered throughout sTod and the Byang-thang, as they are in other places in Tibet and Eurasia. There appear to be several types of subterranean graves. They include those that now appear on the surface as oval-shaped rings of stones, two to five metres across, which often come in clusters of up to 20 graves. Inside some of these rings are what appear to be the remains of other elements of the superstructure. Another type of grave is square in shape, two or three metres across. The ground surface is capped with a carefully constructed masonry shell which can contain contrasting coloured stones. In one location, I found an open tomb of this type, the cist being a well-built stone-lined chamber. There are also sites identified as burial grounds that are terraced or raised above the surrounding ground level, and which have the appearance of low-lying quadrangular platforms.

7) In several rocky places, perched on the edge of the summits of mountains, are the remains of cubic masonry constructions which are also believed to be graves. These structures average less than three square metres and extend as much as 1.5 metres above the ground. When preservation is adequate one can see a chamber in the centre of the structure which averages about one metre in length and perhaps one metre in depth. Adults could only have been interred here if the corpses were dismembered. Most likely, the central burial chambers were at one time sealed. The structures do not appear to extend below the ground surface.

8) At several sites I found isolated pillars protruding from the ground. These erect stones were usually hewn into a rectangular shape and are between 1.2 and

two metres in height. Occasionally they come in pairs. The original function of these stelae is unknown to the 'brog-pa. While they cannot with any certainty be attributed to the pre-Buddhist period they are sometimes referred to as primordial stones which appeared with the creation of the universe (*srid-pa chag-pa'i rdo-ring*). This mythology, as well as the heavy weathering and inclination of the stones, are some indication of their antiquity.

9) More common than the isolated pillars are single or multiple menhirs planted on the west side of square or rectangular enclosures. To my knowledge there is no record of this type of monument being built in the Buddhist period. The menhirs are between 60 centimetres and 1.8 metres in height and can form groups of as many as one dozen specimens. It is not uncommon to find stones that are either broken or no longer rooted in the ground. The stone enclosures consist of double-coursed masonry walls which do not extend above ground level. These perimeters range in length from four to 20 metres. The enclosures and menhirs are usually closely aligned with the cardinal directions. Like the isolated pillars, this type of monument is often believed by the 'brog-pa to have appeared at the dawn of creation. Alternatively, they are said to be posts where the epic hero Gling Ge-sar hitched his divine horse.

While it is still far from certain what the function of these megalithic monuments was we can speculate, based on our knowledge of standing stones gleaned from literary sources, that they functioned as tribal cultic sites which were perhaps involved with ancestor worship. This is supported by the stones sometimes being referred to as the graves of the Mon (*Mon-dur*). Their orientation to the cardinal directions suggests that there was an astronomical or astrological component in their use and design. The 'brog-pa still use mountains which they call sky pillars (*gnam gyi ka-ba*) to mark the movement of the stars and the procession of the seasons. As is perfectly plausible, sLob-dpon bsTan-'dzin rNam-dag, the distinguished senior scholar of the Bon religion, believes that these standing stones were erected as symbols of temporal power and prestige and were closely related to the indigenous deities of the locale.²⁰

²⁰ This information was obtained in personal communication with bsTan-'dzin rNam-dag on December 10, 1999, at his monastery in Kathmandu. Pillars in Tibetan culture function to bridge the two or three vertical divisions of existence, a corollary of their symbolism as power devices (cf Tucci 1950: 7).

10) One of the most visually captivating monuments found in sTod and the Byang-thang are the monolithic / megalithic arrays. These consist of standing stones 25 centimetres to 1.6 metres in height which are laid out in rows to form quadrangular arrays. One quadrangle can contain upwards of 800 stones (Bellezza 1997a: 366) and there can be as many as six quadrangles at a single site. The rows of standing stones are carefully oriented in an east-west direction. In this orientation we may read astrological-astronomical relationships, for we know, on account of the importance of celestial deities, that the early Tibetans were keen sky watchers. These concourses of menhirs are often associated with other types of structures ranging in size from just a few metres across to over 50 metres in length. When these associated structures are relatively well preserved they exhibit massive walls that can be more than two metres thick. The thickness of the walls in relation to the width of the structures indicates that at ground level they had relatively small interior dimensions. In a few instances, this type of monument was identified by the 'brog-pa as being the graves of the Mon.

11) There are various other types of monuments which seem to occur less often; however, my survey of sTod and the Byang-thang is not yet complete enough to determine accurately the frequency with which each type of archaeological monument occurs. Among these seemingly less common types are isolated walls on the slopes and summits of mountains. These are not found in association with other types of remains and they do not appear to have been part of buildings. They could well be the precursors of the modern Bon and Buddhist *ma-ni* walls. There is little oral tradition surrounding these structures.

At several places near Dang-ra g.Yu-mtsho I discovered the remnants of irrigation channels which at one time watered now defunct agricultural parcels. Only small sections remain but even these attest to an irrigation system more elaborate than the ones still in use in the region. In places, when necessitated by the steep topography, walls up to four metres in height were constructed to contain the water. While I can offer no data on the age of these structures they did feed areas which are said to have been farmed in the pre-Buddhist period.

In 1997, and on the Changthang Circuit Expedition, I have surveyed earth works and tumuli in the 'Dam-gzhung and sNying-drung regions north of Tibet's capital, Lhasa (1999a). These earthworks consist of eroded rectangular platforms of earth elevated two to three metres above the adjacent plain and measuring upwards of 250 metres in length. Some of the platforms contain mounds, stone

terraces and other types of walls. In close proximity to one of the sites there are a number of tumuli up to five metres across. In local mythology, these earthworks are said to be where Lha-mo 'Brug-mo, the wife of the epic hero, erected her giant tent.

Pre-Buddhist archaeological sites documented on the Changthang Circuit Expedition

I shall now enumerate the archaeological sites surveyed on the Changthang Circuit Expedition and furnish a brief description of each of them. The L-number preceding each entry corresponds with the location of the site on the accompanying map and the P-number refers to the corresponding photograph. Whenever the information is available, a summary of the oral and literary sources relating to the site will be provided, and will end with an assessment of the pre-Buddhist status of the site.

Most of the current names of the archaeological sites refer to the location and therefore, are toponymic. Other names refer to the monuments themselves but these are often descriptive and of indeterminable origins. For example, at Dang-ra g.Yu-mtsho there are a number of ruins associated with the pre-Buddhist period that have names describing their location. This idiomatic tendency is compounded by the fact that ancient names found in the Bon texts are in many cases no longer commonly used or have been forgotten altogether. For example, what was probably an imperial era hermitage at Dang-ra g.Yu-mtsho known as sPyan-dgon is mentioned in the circa 14th century work *rDzogs pa chen po zhang zhung snyan rgyud* (p. 66); however, it can no longer be identified despite there being a number of ancient religious centres in the area.

The dimensions of archaeological sites presented below should be seen as approximations only. In many cases structures are partially obscured by soil and rubble, or have missing sections; these conditions make measurement very difficult. Note that mTsho in the Tibetan language means lake, gTsang-po = river, Ri = mountain, Phug = cave, and Chu = stream or river.

Type-2: Hilltop forts, palaces and other structures built on summits

(L-1; P-1) Name: rDzong Ser (Yellow Fort). Location: Bal-ros gTsang-po, approximately 10 kilometres from sKya-ring mTsho, Zha-ngo township, Shen-rtsa county. The primary site at rDzong-ser is located on top of a hill of the same name and is called sKyid-phug dGon-pa (Happiness Cave Monastery). This is an oval-shaped all-stone structure which measures nine metres in length including its walled courtyard. The structure was in use until 1959 as a religious retreat. sKyid-phug is unique in that it is an ancient structure which has withstood the ravages of time. Stone braces which extend from all sides of the wall plates support the stone rafters on which the roof slabs rest. The building contains four small rooms. The ceiling is covered in heavy layers of black and white coloured organic deposits attesting to its great age. The stone roof in the front (south) part of the structure was destroyed during the Chinese Cultural Revolution and has since been rebuilt of wood. On the east side of rDzong Ser, on a level area half way between the summit and base of the hill, are three sets of foundations measuring up to seven square metres. On a shoulder north of the summit is a tumulus measuring five metres in diameter. The local 'brog-pa say that rDzong Ser is an ancient site. The all-stone construction of sKyid-phug supports this assertion. In the absence of an oral history linking rDzong Ser with the ancient Bon-po, the pre-Buddhist status of rDzong Ser is provisional.

(L-2; P-2) Name rDzong Nag (Black Fort). Location: seven kilometres from sKya-ring mTsho, near the 'Dam Chu, Zha-ngo township, Shen-rtsa county. The site consists of the remains of three large structures built on the summit and shoulder of a hill of the same name. On the shoulder of rDzong Nag, just north of the summit, are the remains of two multi-roomed buildings. The walls of these structures are between 75 centimetres and one metre thick and are built of dark-coloured dressed blocks some of which exceed 50 centimetres in length. The walls have been reduced to one metre or less in height. The east building measures seven metres (east to west) by 27 metres (north to south). The west building is L-shaped and is 50 metres long and six metres wide. The structure on the summit measures 55 metres in length (north to south) and a maximum of 16 metres in width (east to west). Much of the summit is blanketed in building rubble but the remains of partition walls, terraces and a bulwark around the summit are visible. According to local 'brog-pa, rDzong Nag represents the remains of an ancient fort. rDzong Nag may not have a pre-Buddhist status.

(L-3; P-3) Name: Sha-ba Brag (Deer Rock). Location: on the summit of the escarpment above Sha-ba Brag monastery, Shen-rta county. The structure, measuring six metres (east to west) and seven metres (north to south), was built in three tiers. There are four vertical metres between the base of the ruin and its uppermost extent. The walls of the structure are built of doubly-coursed, crudely-hewn limestone blocks and are upwards of one metre thick. Most walls have been leveled to the foundations. According to the monks of the Buddhist Sha-ba Brag monastery, the ruins belonged to the ancient Bon-po. This is corroborated by the Bon text *'Bel-gtam lung gi snying po*, written by sLop-dpon bsTan 'dzin rNam-dag, which tells us that the Zhang Zhung adept sNang-bzher sLod-po practised here. Indications are that Sha-ba Brag is a pre-Buddhist site.

(L-4; P-4) Name: 'Om-bu rDzong ('Om-bu Fort); Location: In the 'Om-bu valley upstream of 'Om-bu village, Dang-ra g.Yu-mtsho, 'Om-bu township, Nyi-ma county. A steep climb from 'Om-bu village brings one to a saddle connected to a dark-coloured crag overlooking the Dang-ra g.Yu-mtsho lake basin on which the remains of what is reported to have been a fort is situated. On the west side of the saddle are the remnants of a wall 13 metres in length which in places exceeds one metre in height, and which is built of stones up to 80 centimetres in length. This is one of several wall fragments found in the vicinity of the saddle. At the base of the dark-coloured crag are the remains of a rampart a maximum of three metres tall, three metres thick and 4.5 metres in length. On the northeast side of the summit of the crag is a ruins whose exterior dimensions measure 14 metres by 4.5 metres with walls still more than two metres high in places. According to Bon elders at Dang-ra g.Yu-mtsho, 'Om-bu rDzong was a Zhang Zhung stronghold. Indications are that 'Om-bu rDzong is a pre-Buddhist site.

(L-5; P-5) Name: Khyung rDzong (Eagle Fort). Location: Khyung La, Dang-ra g.Yu mtsho, 'Om-bu township, Nyi-ma county. The Zhang Zhung era fort known as Dang-ra Khyung rDzong is one of the most famous in Bon religious tradition. According to Bon works such as *Bon ma nub pa'i gtan tshigs* and *Bel gtam lung gi snying po*, the last king of Zhang Zhung, Lig-mig-rgya, was ambushed and killed by an army of the Tibetan king not far from his capital at Khyung rDzong. Visible ruins are limited to Khyung La and consist of foundations and the remains of a rampart or other type of wall. The largest foundation measures 55 metres (north to south) by 10 to 14 metres (east to west). I could not conclusively identify this foundation as having supported a structure because of the high level of disintegration and the fact that foundations which would have supported partition walls are not discernible. There are

several other foundations visible but they are in a very poor state of preservation. West of the main foundation a wall, now mostly leveled, meanders along the summit of Khyung La for at least 50 metres. Indications are that Khyung rDzong is a pre-Buddhist site.

(L-6; P-6) Name: Gyam-pa'i rDzong (Fort in the Rock Overhang); Location: near g.Yu-bun monastery, Dang-ra g.Yu-mtsho, rGya-sgog township, Nyi-ma county. Although wall segments up to two metres in height are intact much of Gyam-pa'i rDzong is leveled. This once large citadel now forms a dense aggregation of ruins covering the summit of the hill of the same name and spilling down the precipitous south slope for distance of 45 metres in a swath some 20 metres wide. On a shoulder below the southwest side of the summit ruined buildings cover an area of 2000 square metres. According to Charles Ramble who had visited the site, there is also clear evidence of an irrigation system on the north side of the hill on which the fort stands. Below this group of ruins is the large cave temple called Gyam-pa'i Lha-khang which, like Gyam-pa'i rDzong, is said to date from Zhang Zhung times.²¹ Indications are that Gyam-pa'i rDzong and Gyam-pa'i Lha-khang are pre-Buddhist sites.

(L-7; P-7) Name: Ar-po rDzong (Bandit's Fort) / Ar-pa'i rDzong. Location: sKyid-gsum, Dang-ra g.Yu-mtsho, rGya-sgog township, Nyi-ma county. Ar-po rDzong is said by elders of the region to be the ruins of a Zhang Zhung era fort. The remains occupy the summit and southern flanks of a rocky mount. The multi-roomed complex on the summit measures 17.5 metres by five metres. The walls stand up to 1.8 metres tall and are around 80 centimetres thick. On the south side of the formation there are fragments of ramparts and walls. Scattered around the site are what appear to be roof braces up to one metre in length. Indications are that Ar-po rDzong is a pre-Buddhist site.

(L-8; P-8) Name: Brag-chung dBu-rtse rDzong (The Summit Fort of the Little Formation). Location: sKyid-gsum, Dang-ra g.Yu-mtsho, rGya-sgog township, Nyi-ma county. The ruins of Brag-chung dBu-rtse rDzong are attributed to a Zhang Zhung period fort. Little seems to remain of the site. There are obscure ruins perched on the top and east side of the formation of the same name. With so little evidence available the pre-Buddhist status of Brag-chung dBu-rtse rDzong is provisional.

²¹ Gyam-pa'i rDzong and rGyam-pa'i Lha-khang were first visited by the author in 1995; see Bellezza 1997a: 383, 384.

(L-9; P-9) Name: rGyang-pa'i-gtsug rDzong (The Walls of the Fort on the Peak). Location: sKyid-gsum, Dang-ra g.Yu-mtsho, rGya-sgog township, Nyi-ma county. Bon elders of the region believe that the ruins of rGyang-pa'i-gtsug rDzong are those of a Zhang Zhung era fort. Extensive ruins are found on the summit, east and south sides of a hill of the same name. The ruins on the south side cover an area of roughly 1400 square metres while those on the summit extend over an area of around 220 square metres. The summit appears to have been walled with a number of rooms contained within. While most of the structures are leveled or partially buried, a few stone roof braces are in situ on the west side of the summit, while many others lie scattered about the site. On the north side of rGyan-pa'i-gtsug rDzong, at the base of the hill, are several other foundations; among them are structures resembling graves. Indications are that rGyang-pa'i rDzong is a pre-Buddhist site.

(L-10; P-10, P-11) Name: Phyug-'tsho Grog-po rDzong (Rich Locale Ravine Fort). Location: Phyug-'tsho Grog-po, Dang-ra g.Yu-mtsho, rTa-sgo township, Nyi-ma county. Bon elders of the region allege that Phyug-'tsho Grog-po rDzong, like other forts at Dang-ra g.Yu-mtsho, was founded in the Zhang Zhung period.²² The rocky ridge on which the site is located is 215 metres in length and a maximum of 70 metres wide, and it is densely blanketed with the ruins of buildings. The most intact room at the site is located on the summit and has much of its stone roof intact. Its interior dimensions are two metres by 1.75 metres and moldy plaster still clings to the walls. Existing walls of the structures are as much as three or four metres tall in places. It is common to find rubble infilling ground level buildings almost to the lintels of the doors. Some structures were at least two stories tall and in certain instances, they have stone braces extending from the walls at the juncture between the two floors. A few buildings had adobe walls and there is evidence that several structures were built of adobe and stone sandwiched together. South of the fort are various other ruins including a tumulus measuring 17 metres by 4.5 metres. Just west of Phyug-'tsho Grog-po rDzong is the remains of a large *mchod-rten* complex. Indications are that Phyug-'tsho Grog-po rDzong is a pre-Buddhist site.

(L-11; P-12) Name: Tsan-rag. Location: rDzong, Dang-ra g.Yu-mtsho, rGya-sgog township, Nyi-ma county. On the flat summit of a hill called rDzong (Fort), located on the east side of the Tsan-rag Chu, are the ruins of what some

²² Phyug-'tsho Grog-po was first visited by the author in 1995; see Bellezza 1997a: 373-75.

local people believe was either an ancient fort or religious edifice. The ruins occupy the entire hilltop and measure nine metres (east to west) by 31 metres (north to south). Much of the site has been obliterated and few coherent wall segments exist. Rubble is heaped up all along the rim of the summit. The pre-Buddhist status of Tsan-rag is provisional.

(L-12; P-13) Name: Ser mDzod rDzong (Yellow Treasury Fort). Location: Ser mDzod rDzong, Las-stod township, Nyi-ma county. Ser mDzod rDzong is situated on the east side of a defile of the same name which forms around the Phu-'bri gTsang-po, several kilometres west of Dang-ra g.Yu mtsho. The crumbling remains of buildings and ramparts form a line down the eastern spine of the formation. The most intact of these structures is a battlement built into the cliff. The three remaining walls of this structure are a maximum of 1.5 meters tall and create an interior space measuring three meters by three metres. There are highly disintegrated ruins cloaking the summit of the formation, which only measures three meters by 10 meters. Local 'brog-pa believe that the ruins of Ser mDzod rDzong are ancient but offer no other information. The pre-Buddhist status of Ser mDzod rDzong is provisional.

(L-13; P-14) Name: Zhing-chen Mon-mkhar (Great Farm Mon Citadel). Location: Zhing-chen valley, about 20 kilometres west of Tshwa-kha township headquarters, dGe-rgyas county. The site is located on the top of a rocky mount just up stream from the mouth of the Zhing chen valley. The ruins, now reduced to obscured foundations, cover the small summit of the formation. A wall 20 metres in length, one metre thick and up to 1.6 metres in height encircles part of the summit. According to local legend preserved by 'brog-pa elders, these ruins represent the remains of a Mon stronghold. Indications are that Zhing-chen Mon mKhar is a pre-Buddhist site.

(L-14; P-15) Name: Shangs Klu Pho-brang Mon mKhar (Mon Citadel of Shangs Water Spirits Palace). Location: Shangs Klu-khang, gZhung-pa township, dGe-rgyas county. The site is located about two kilometers north of Shangs Klu-khang monastery on a limestone formation called Klu Pho-brang. Above the shrine to the water spirits (*klu khang*), at the base of the formation, are the foundations of eight small structures, six of which support wall fragments. The maximum length of the walls is four metres and the maximum height is 1.5 metres. Nearby, on a cliff face, are the vestiges of four walls which do not appear to have been part of buildings, the longest of which is six metres. North of the shrine to the water spirits are traces of other foundations. The foundations and

walls at the lower site appear to be related to those found on the summit of Klu Pho-brang, in that they are in an advanced stage of disintegration. The ruins on the summit extend for about 35 metres along a narrow ridge top. This jagged summit allowed for the construction of no more than five small buildings. The tallest surviving wall is 1.5 metres and along the central summit, the base of one wall attains a thickness of three metres. The exterior dimensions of the summit structures do not exceed four metres in width. Below the summit, staggered at successive elevations along a precipitous ridge line, are the remains of what appear to be three small battlements. According to regional *'brog-pa* elders, the ruins on the summit are those of a Mon. citadel. Indications are that Shangs Klu Pho-brang is a pre-Buddhist site.

(L-15; P-16) Name: Nya Chu rDzong-dkar (White Fort of Fish River). Location: Nya Chu rDzong-dkar valley, approximately 20 kilometres west of lCags-sgang township headquarters, Ru-thog county. The ruins of various structures are found on the summit and flanks of a white limestone formation. On a shelf, on the south side of the formation, are the remnants of various foundations. Higher up is a structure measuring nine metres by 4.2 metres, with walls up to two metres in height. This structure certainly supported a wooden roof and does not appear to be of great age. The walls are relatively well preserved and there is still some mud plaster on the exterior. On the summit of the formation are what appear to be older remains, including a structure which measures 16 metres by a maximum of 4 metres. On the east side of the limestone outcrop is another complex; the largest structure here measures 15 metres by six metres. According to the few people I spoke with Nya Chu rDzong-dkar is a Mon site. The pre-Buddhist status of Nya Chu rDzong-dkar is provisional.

(L-16; P-17) Name: Khu-rag mKhar-gog (Citadel Ruins of Khu-rag). Location: Khu-rag village, Ru-thog township, Ru-thog county. Perched on a summit, the ruins form a compact mass measuring 30 metres (north to south) by five metres (east to west). Exterior walls rise to three metres and are 1.2 metres thick at the base. One small niche has survived in an inner wall. There are also significant ruins on the east side of the hill but these are heavily degraded. Little oral history for Khu-rag mKhar-gog seems to have survived. Some local people are under the impression that it was connected with the Tibetan imperial era kings. Khu-rag mKhar-gog may not have a pre-Buddhist status.

(L-17; P-18) Name: Ru-thog bShan-pa'i mKhar; (Butcher's Citadel of Ru-thog). Location: rDzong Ri, Ru-thog county. On the hill of rDzong Ri there are

extensive ruins representing six Buddhist monasteries (Shar-ba, sGo-nub, bLa-brang, Lhun-grub Chos-lding and Kha-dkar), monastic residences, and those of at least one fort. This fort occupies the east end of the summit of rDzong Ri . According to popular legend, it was founded by bShan-pa (Butcher), one of 30 minister-warriors of King Ge-sar in the Tibetan epic. According to oral and literary sources (bsTan-'dzin dBang-grags: 35), a Zhang Zhung era fort named Ru-thog Senge rDzong was located at Ru-thog. Senior figures of the area believe that it was situated on rDzong Ri but its precise relationship with bShan-pa'i mKhar is unclear. On an outcrop, on the south side of rDzong Ri, there are a few highly worn petroglyphs including an anthropomorph standing above an animal, several other animals, a bell-shaped *mchod-rten*, the six syllable *ma-ni* mantra and some other lettering. All these carvings appear to be of the same general period, as they were engraved using the same technique and exhibit similar wear and patination characteristics. On the basis of the style of inscriptions and *mchod-rten*, they can provisionally be dated to the imperial period (7th to mid-9th century). Indications are that rDzong-ri is a pre-Buddhist site but it cannot be established with any certainty if Ru-thog Senge rDzong and Ru-thog bShan-pa'i mKhar shared the same location.

(L-18; P-19) Name: Brag-gdong (Rock Face). Location: near dBu-byang township headquarters, Ru-thog county. At the base of a craggy mountain called Brag-gdong there are the remains of at least twelve structures now reduced to incoherent foundations and depressions in the ground. Above these structures an interconnected series of about 10 ruins cling to each of two limestone ribs. These have been mostly leveled. Above the ribs there is an amphitheatre which also hosts faint groups of ruins. The highest ruin at Brag-gdong (no less than 300 vertical metres above the valley floor) is also the best preserved. It measures roughly six metres by six metres and a wall fragment standing four metres has survived. I could collect no oral history on Brag gdong but the location and the presence of multiple small structures exhibiting significant wear and dissolution suggests that the site is of considerable antiquity. Even the function of the site escapes local attention but the defensible position of the ruins does indicate that it was a stronghold of some kind. The pre-Buddhist status of Brag-gdong is provisional.

(L-19; P-20, P-21) Name: Glog-phug mKhar (Lightning Cave Citadel); Location: approximately six kilometres east of Ra-spang township headquarters, Ru-thog county. Glog-phug mKhar consists of the remains of what is locally believed to have been a Mon citadel. These ruins are distributed all over the

mountain of the same name. On the top of a buttress overlooking gLog-phug mtsho is a foundation measuring nine metres by five metres and in the vicinity a number of others cling to the rocky slopes. A little higher up there is a structure measuring 13 metres by 13 metres with wall fragments up to 2.5 metres in height. In one room a single roof brace is still in situ. From this structure a wall ascends the ridge line for at least 300 metres. This wall, which was ostensibly a defensive feature, is a maximum of 1.5 metres tall and 1.7 metres thick. Other structures dot the mountain side all the way to the summit of Glog-phug mKhar, several hundred metres above Rwa 'brog mTsho. Among the best preserved is a structure measuring three metres by three metres and with walls up to 1.5 metres in height. The interior is about two square metres. This was an all stone construction (as all structures at Glog-phug seem to be) and several roof braces and the stone slabs covering them are still in place. The ruins on the summit, like so many of them at this site, are nearly level making analysis difficult. Indications are that Glog-phug mKhar is a pre-Buddhist site.

(L-20; P-22) Name: Hang-dal rDzong (Hang-dal Fort). Location: on the outskirts of Hang-dal village, Dang-ra g.Yu-mtsho, Las-stod township, Nyi-ma county. Surmounting a rocky spur are the remains of what is locally reported to have been an ancient fort. The complex covers an area measuring 42 metres (north to south) by 12 metres (east to west). The highest and most prominent structure measures 10 metres by 10 metres with existing walls up to two metres tall. There also appear to have been three lower buildings. Hang-dal rDzong may not have a pre-Buddhist status.

(L-21; P-23) Name: Gra-rong Mon-rDzong (Mon Fort of Gra (= a woody shrub) Valley. Location: Lo-bo township, mTsho-chen county. The ruins of what local 'brog-pa believe was a Mon fortress are situated on the top of a limestone outcrop in the Gra-rong valley. The site is composed of three complexes, which I designate East, Central and North, all of which are built of light bluish limestone. The East Complex has been leveled to its foundations and measures 13 metres by 6 metres. The Central Complex is composed of upper and lower multi-roomed structures and covers an area measuring 18 metres by 24 metres. The walls are 70 centimetres to 90 centimetres thick and stand upwards of 1.5 metres tall. Like the West Complex, the wall partitions of the Central Complex indicate that the structure was spanned by wooden rafters - the rooms are too large and not built in the proper style (without the requisite inner wall buttresses) to have supported a stone roof. The West Complex is the most extensive of the three: the dimensions of the largest single building are 22 metres

(north to south) by 16 metres (east to west). This structure is precisely aligned with the cardinal directions and contained at least eight rooms built on three different elevations. Many walls with a maximum height of two meters have endured. Adjacent to this building are the far less well preserved foundations of at least four others extending over a 50 metre transect. There are also the remains of a broad stone stairway built on a cliff face connecting the West Complex with a higher summit. The pre-Buddhist status of Gra-rong Mon rDzong is provisional.

(L-22; P-24) Name: Zhing-mkhar mKhar-gog (Citadel Ruins of Farm Citadel). Location: on hillside above Zhing-mkhar village, gNam-ru township, sGar county. The remnants of stone structures and on the upper end of the complex, adobe buildings, extend over an area of 60 metres (east to west) by 68 metres (north to south). The structures are concentrated along the edges of the walled complex. The most intact structures are those built with adobe upper sections and attain four metres in height. Elders of Zhing-mkhar allege that the fort belonged to the Mon. I however, question this identification on three grounds: 1) the buildings all had roofs supported by wooden rafters; 2) the symmetrical layout of the complex is on a broad slope, not staggered in the crags which is the norm in the Mon fortress typology; and 3) the area was prominent in the historical period. Zhing-mkhar mKhar-gog may not have a pre-Buddhist status.

(L-23; P-25) Name: A-pha 'Dre-dkar sPungs-pa Mon-mkhar (Mon Citadel of the Heap of the White Father Spirit). Location: A-pha 'Dre-dkar sPungs-pa, gNam-ru township, sGar county. The remains of this small citadel are perched on a rocky rib overlooking the sGar valley. It was built of a dark-coloured stones which contrast with the white colour of the mountain. According to the elders of the area, the ruins here represent the vestiges of a Mon fortress. The morphological characteristics of the site support such an identification. The heavily deteriorated structures are all located in craggy terrain and extend for about 50 metres in many tiers. They appear to have been small enough to have been built with all-stone roofs and indeed, there is evidence of at least one stone on the site of a quality which could have been used as a roof beam. Indications are that A-pha 'Dre-dkar sPungs-pa is a pre-Buddhist site.

(L-24; P-26) Name: Mu-ti. Location: Mu-ti peak, Brag gTsang-po valley, Hor-chu township, sPu-Hreng county. On a peak known as Mu-ti are ruins which are locally reputed to be of great age and, unlike many other sites in the

area, do not seem to have a Buddhist tradition attached to them. The Bon text *rDzogs pa chen po zhang zhung snyan rgyud* (pp. 57, 73, 96) records that pre-12th century Bon-po adepts such as rGya-ston Ye-shes Rin-chen, gCig-chod Dad-pa Shes-rab and Kun-dga' Ring-mo were active in the area. The site consists of a foundation aligned to the cardinal directions measuring 10 metres (north to south) by eight metres (east to west). On the north side of the summit are the vestiges of a wall which descends along a natural rock rib. Looking from the top, this wall is precisely in line with Mount Kailas (Gangs Ti-se). Below the upper extent of the wall there is a highly obscured foundation measuring 14 metres (north to south) by five metres (east to west). The pre-Buddhist status of Mu-ti is provisional.

Type-3: Structures, mostly religious integrating caves and escarpments in their construction

(L-25; P-27) Name: Gyer-ru mTsho-do (Headland of the Lake of the Bon-po). Location: on the three kilometre long headland that juts into the north side of Gyer-ru mtsho. The site consists of seven sets of ruins built in and around the mouths of caves. Walls enclosing the caves, foundations, and man-made terraces are found here. The multi-tiered foundations in front of the caves are between 11 and 22 metres in length. There are also two highly exfoliated red ochre *gyung-drung* (swastika) on the cliff wall at the ruins I designate West Complex II. Also at Gyer-ru mtsho there is a hermitage called Elephant Cave (Glang-chen Phug) which was in regular use by Bon religious practitioners until 1959. Elders in the region believe that ruins at Gyer-ru mTsho date to the time of the Zhang Zhung kingdom, and while their belief is corroborated by Bon tradition, the site was regularly occupied in the Buddhist period. It is therefore not possible to establish the period in which visible remains were constructed. The pre-Buddhist status of Gyer-ru mTsho is provisional.

(L-26; P-28) Name: Brag mThu-bo-che (The Great Powerful Outcrop). Location: ten kilometres north of Dang-chung village, 'Om-bu township, Nyi-ma county. There are two complexes built into the escarpment at this site. The Lower Complex consists of two caves with walls and terraces built around them. In the rear of the lower cave is a rectangular structure (resembling those used for *gtor-ma* offerings) built of stone and clay which had been painted red and orange. However, not enough of the paint has survived to discern its design characteristics. The Upper Complex at Brag mThu-bo-che is located along a

steeply inclined natural stone ramp which runs up the escarpment. Along the ramp are faint traces of structures and at the head of the ramp there is a four metre deep cave. In the rear of the cave are the remnants of a stone and adobe entablature which was painted yellow. According to senior monks at Dang-chung monastery, the ruins at Brag mThu-bo-che are of great antiquity. The fact that the site does not appear to possess a Buddhist historical tradition combined with the unusual aspect of the Upper Complex suggests a pre-Buddhist identification. The pre-Buddhist status of Brag mThu-bo-che is provisional.

(L-27; P-29, P-30) Buddhist Name: gNas Kun-bzang (All Good Site), Bon Name: sMon Brag-sa (Blessed Escarpment Place). Location: three kilometres east of Dang-chung Monastery. This site, spread over a couple of kilometres, consists of many structures in and around caves which tower above Dang-chung mTsho. The site can be divided into two sectors: the West Red Limestone Escarpment and the East White Limestone Escarpment. West Red Limestone Escarpment contains no less than eight sites comprised of walled caves, foundations and terraces. Facades built around the caves attain 10 metres in length and the man-made terraces 30 metres. East White Limestone Escarpment contains no less than 14 cave shelters built at a higher elevation than those of the Red Limestone Escarpment. Like their counterparts, they are badly deteriorated with many of the structures being leveled to their foundations. Even many of the foundation walls are obliterated. In the cave I call Lower East VIII there are the remains of an entablature built against the rear east wall and in the innermost recess of Upper East II, a shelf and niches were hewn into the cave wall. According to regional Buddhists, gNas Kun-bzang was occupied by the 8th century translator and monk Vairocana. In Bon tradition, sMon Brag-sa is associated with the Zhang Zhung adept gYung-drung Rin-chen. Indications are that sMon-Brag-sa is a pre-Buddhist site.

(L-28; P-31) Am-nag (Black Outcrop). Location: Am-nag, Dang-ra g.Yu mtsho, 'Om-bu township, Nyi-ma county. Perched on a dark-coloured escarpment overlooking Dang-ra g.Yu-mtsho are the remains of what Bon elders believe was an ancient religious hermitage. The total length of this complex is 18 meters and it consists of two caves with several anterooms built around them. The northwest anteroom of the south cave appears to have been a two-storied structure. The pre-Buddhist status of Am-nag is provisional.

(L-29; P-32) Name sGo-bdag (Master of the Portal). Location: sGo-bdag, Dang-ra g.Yu-mtsho, 'Om-bu township, Nyi-ma county. There are three

archaeological sites at sGo-bdag; I designate them Lower, Middle and Upper. The Upper Site consists of ruins identified by Bon elders of the region as those of a Zhang Zhung period religious hermitage under the authority of the sGo-bdag Throne Holder (sGo-bdag Khri-pa). Arrayed around a bright orange cliff are over two dozen cave structures and free-standing rooms. Fragmentary walls and foundations have survived and the presence of well hewn stone braces scattered about the site and, in one case, in situ, indicates that many if not all of these structures had stone roofs. The structures at the Upper Site are vertically layered and seem to have contained small rooms - for example, three rooms seemed to have run the length of one eight metre long ruin. In the rear of caves found on the site niches, an entablature, a closet-like structure and a fire place have survived partially intact. There are also pigment applications in the caves including a *g.yung-drung* and a Tibetan letter A. The Middle Site at sGo-bdag is comprised of a ruined building measuring 14 metres (north-south) by five metres (east-west). The structure appears to have originally been larger but much of it was converted into a corral. No oral history remains for this structure. The Lower Site at sGo-bdag is that of a defunct agricultural area located on a bench below the ruins. The remnants of terraces and what may have been their irrigation system are discernible. Indications are that the Upper Site of sGo-bdag belongs to the pre-Buddhist period.

(L-30; P-33) Name: Sad-ne Ga'u sGrub Phug (Meditation Cave of Sad-ne Ga'u). Location: Lha-lung, Dang-ra g.Yu-mtsho, rGya-sgog township, Nyi-ma county. A cave of two chambers with a masonry facade built around it is said by local villagers to have been used by the Zhang Zhung adept Sad-ne Ga'u. The heavy soot and thick white mould covering much of the interior of the cave indicates that it was occupied for a significant amount of time. The link between Sad-ne Ga'u and Dang-ra g.Yu-mtsho is clearly established in the Bon tradition in works such as the *sPyi spung khro bo dbang chen* and in two registers of sacred places found in the region (*Dang ra'i dkar chag*). In the *rDzogs pa chen po yang rtse klong chen* it records that the circa 14 th century (?) Bon saint bShag-sgom Tshul-khrims meditated at a secret place in Lha-lung. An elder I spoke with at Lha-lung mistakenly identified him with the Zhang Zhung period, an example of how historically unreliable oral accounts can be. The Sad-ne sGrub phug was in regular use until 1959 and, although local people are under the impression that the walls are original, it is likely that they were rebuilt on various occasions (in the aftermath of an earthquake for instance). The pre-Buddhist status of Sad-ne Ga'u sGrub Phug is provisional.

(L-31; P-34) Name: rDzong dKar-po (White Fort). Location: rDzong dKar-po, Dang-ra g.Yu-mtsho, 'Om-bu township, Nyi-ma county. In the Zhing-lung valley, around four kilometres from Dang.ra g.Yu-mtsho is the unmistakable white limestone outcrop known as rDzong dKar-po. High up on the west side of the formation, a wall 24 metres in length spans the mouth of a cave. This wall, which is now fragmentary, was built in at least two tiers and has now been reduced to 1.5 metres in height or less. The cave it enclosed is about 10 metres deep. According to regional Bon elders, rDzong dKar-po dates from remote antiquity. Indications are that rDzong dKar-po is a pre-Buddhist site.

(L-32; P-35) Name: Ma-mig Brag-dkar (White Cliff of Ma-mig). Location: Ma-mig monastery, Ma-mig township, sGer-rtse county. The circa early 12th century Bon text *rDzogs pa chen po zhang zhung snyan rgyud* (p. 28) records that the 8th century Zhang-zhung adept sNang-bzher Lod-po practiced at Ma-mig Brag-dkar. According to the Buddhist monks who occupy the site, the ancient Bon-po Ma-mig Brag-dkar is one and the same as the contemporary God-tshang Brag (they have copied a history derived from *sTod mnga' ris skor gsum gyi lo rgyus*, p.364, claiming as much, which is displayed on cloth in the vestibule of the monastic assembly hall). Indications are that while the site itself is pre-Buddhist, none of the structures which might have existed in this period are extant.

(L-33; P-36) Name: Chu-phug (Water Cave). Location: Chu-phug, Brag gTsang-po valley, Hor-chu township, sPu-Hreng county. According to local oral history, the caves at Chu-phug were occupied by the ancient Bon-po. The site has been transformed into a modern 'brog-pa settlement and thus has undergone tremendous change. Evidence of past habitation is seen in the blackened ceilings of the caves. There is only one cave left which has the remains of an old facade built around it. Despite the associations of the site with the ancient Bon-po, Buddhists were very active in the region for many centuries and could well have occupied Chu-phug as a retreat centre. The pre-Buddhist status of Chu-phug is provisional.

(L-34; P-37) Name: sTag-rong (Tiger Valley); Location: sTag-rong valley, Bar-yangs township, 'Brong-pa county. According to Bon tradition, the lower sTag-rong valley in the vicinity of a sacred hot spring of the same name, was a prominent place of practice for adepts of the Zhang Zhung era such as sTag-lha Me-'bar. The Bon text *rDzogs pa chen po zhang zhung snyan rgyud* (pp. 71, 73) records that the pre-12th century saint rGya-ston Ye-shes Rin-chen was born in

and practised at the sTag-rong valley (which in Zhang Zhung times is believed to have been called dBal-rong). The only traces of early settlement I could find at sTag-rong are minor ruins in caves situated in a gorge near the banks of the sTag-rong river. There are remnants of facades built around a couple small caves and what appears to be a plinth in Zla-dbang phug, the largest cave at the site. According to lore preserved by local elders, priests of the sTag-gzig kings (their kingdom is associated with the Tibetan epic) named A-hong and Mi-bong occupied sTag-rong. While the pre-Buddhist status of the geographical site seems assured, the pre-Buddhist status of the sTag-rong archaeological evidence is provisional.

Type-4: Free-standing religious edifices

(L-35; P-38) Name: rDo-rang (= rDo-ring) dGon-pa. Location: rDo-rang, rTa-sgo township, Nyi-ma county. On the east side of the rDo-rang valley, near the settlement of the same, is the remains of a structure at least 18 metres in length which has deteriorated to the point of being almost unrecognisable. One large gully now slices right through the middle of the structure. According to senior monks at nearby Se-zhig Monastery, this structure is what remains of a Zhang Zhung monastery. With so little left for inspection above the surface, the pre-Buddhist status of the monuments at rDo-rang is provisional.

(L-36; P-39) Name: Ba'am dGon-gtag (The Upper Monastery of Ba'am). Location: Ba'am, Dang-ra g.Yu-mtsho, 'Om-bu township, Nyi-ma county. Nestling on the north side of the Ba'am valley, about 150 vertical metres above the ancient Ba'am agricultural village, are the vestiges of what knowledgeable Bon elders in the region claim was a Zhang Zhung religious centre. The ruins, found on a steep slope, formed two buildings. The lower building consists of a multi-roomed structure measuring a minimum of seven metres (north to south) and 21 metres (east to west). This all-stone structure was painstakingly constructed of many courses of flat stones and it appears to have had at least one dozen rooms, some of which have rounded corners. In places, the front (south) wall of the structure attains 2.7 metres in height and the rear (north) wall is built at least two metres into the slope. In a few sections the stone roof braces are in situ. The upper building is not as well preserved - many of its walls have collapsed and much in-filling of the structure has taken place over the centuries. This structure is roughly 27 metres in length. Like the lower building, it was built into the slope to create a semi-subterranean aspect. The southwest

room has rounded corners. Indications are that Ba'am dGon-gtag is a pre-Buddhist site.

(L-37; P-40, P-41) Name: sGo-po-rnams-gsum dGon-pa (Monastery of sGo-po-rnams-gsum). Location; on the north side of the Gangs-lung Chu defile, Dang-ra g.Yu-mtsho, 'Om-bu township, Nyi-ma county. Situated on a shelf in the sGo-po rnams-gsum formation (named after local deities) are two multi-roomed structures as well as other ruins representing the remains of perhaps 30 rooms. The two main structures are each 28 metres in length. Most of the walls have been razed but in places they attain 1.6 metres in height. The Upper Main Structure is 12 metres wide and built in tiers terminating in the cliff face. Several of the stone roof braces are in situ. The Lower Main Structure is 10 metres wide and was built at two main levels. To the south of the two main structures are less well-preserved ruins. A couple of the stone roof braces still rest on the walls found here. On a ledge below the ruins are what are identified as Mon-pa graves. According to the Bon elders of the region, sGo-po rnams-gsum was a Zhang Zhung era religious centre. Indications are that sGo-po rnams-gsum is a pre-Buddhist site.

(L-38; P-42) Name: dGon-gtag gTag-mgo (Upper Monastery Acme). Location: in the Gangs-lung valley, three kilometers upstream from Gangs-lung village, Dang-ra g.Yu-mtsho, 'Om-bu township, Nyi-ma county. Located more than 300 metres above the 4535 metre Dang-ra g.Yu-mtsho are the ruins of what Bon elders in the region say are the vestiges of a Zhang Zhung period religious centre. The largest structure at dGon-gtag gTag-mgo measures 56 metres in length and has a maximum width of 12 metres. Wall fragments up to half a metre in height have survived, but like all the structures at the site, most of the largest structure was leveled, heaped into mounds, or has sunk down into depressions formed in the ground. The next largest complex appears to be the remains of three edifices, built in a row and covering an area of six metres by 26 metres. There are also some smaller structures in the vicinity. Among the ruins are stone braces which must have been used to support a stone roof. Indications are that dGon-gtag gTag-mgo is a pre-Buddhist site.

(L-39; P-43) Name: g.Yung drung Brag-rtse (Summit Formation of the Swastika). Location: Lha-lung, Dang-ra g.Yu-mtsho, rGya-sgog township, Nyi-ma county. The ruins at g.Yung-drung brag-rtse are reputed by local elders to be that of a Zhang Zhung period monastery. These consist of densely packed structures built on two natural terraces covering an area of 600 square metres.

The best preserved structures are found on the west side of the lower terrace and on the east side of the upper terrace. The western-most room of the lower terrace has some of its stone roof braces and the lintel over the door in place. In places, walls still attain 1.5 metres but so many partition walls are missing, precluding an accurate assessment of the ground plan of the site from a visual survey alone. Indications are that g.Yung-drung Brag-rtse is a pre-Buddhist site.

(L-40; P-44) Name: Lha-lung Brag-dkar (Divine Valley White Formation). Location: La-lung, Dang-ra g.Yu-mtsho, rGya-sgog township, Nyi-ma county. According to local elders, the ruins at Lha-lung Brag-dkar constitute the vestiges of a Zhang Zhung period religious centre. The site consists of four ruined structures. The lowest structure is composed of two rooms and still has part of its roof intact. The roof is flush with the slope and thus has a semi-subterranean aspect. The best preserved structure located above the semi-subterranean building measures six metres by 13 metres and contains seven or eight small rooms. Walls up to 1.5 metres, including most of the partitions, and a couple of roof braces are in situ. Indications are that Lha-lung Brag-dkar is a pre-Buddhist site.

(L-41; P-45) Name: Phyug-'tsho Grog-po dGon-pa (Rich Locale Ravine dGon-pa); Location: Phyug-'tsho Grog-po, Dang-ra g.Yu-mtsho, rGya-sgog township, Nyi-ma county. Several Bon elders of the region attribute the ruins at Phyug-'tsho Grog-po dGon-pa to that of a monastery founded in the Zhang Zhung period.²³ The ruins are located atop a small plateau and extend over an area measuring 60 metres by 24 metres. Most of the buildings have been leveled but wall fragments up to 1.5 metres still stand and, on the northwest side of the complex, an adobe wall attains three metres in height. One structure on the west side of the complex has three stone roof braces in situ. The pre-Buddhist status of Phyug-'tsho Grog-po dGon-pa is provisional.

(L-42; P-46) Name: Rwa-skye Brag (Horn Growth Formation). Location: rTsa-lung, Dang-ra g.Yu-mtsho, rGya-sgog township, Nyi-ma county. The ruins found at Rwa-skye Brag are thought by elders of the region to be those of an ancient religious centre. The site consists of at least five complexes of ruins built on shelves above the rTsa-lung valley. Much of the site is at an advanced state of disintegration and thus it is not always possible to discern what were buildings.

²³ Phyug-'tsho dGon-pa was first visited by the author in 1995; see Bellezza 1997a: 373-75.

The Main Complex, built in tiers, boasts an agglomeration of ruined buildings measuring 40 metres by 15 metres and with walls up to one metre in height. On the upper west end of Main Complex one roof slab is still in place. The main architectural feature of what I designate the Escarpment Complex is a wall 13.5 metres in length and up to 2.5 metres in height, which encloses a section of the cliff. Indications are that Rwa-skye Brag is a pre-Buddhist site.

(L-43; P-47) Name: dGos-'dod Brag-khung (Fulfillment Rock Recess). Location: between Jag-lung and Jag-chung, Dang-ra g.Yu-mtsho, rGya-sgog township, Nyi-ma county. dGos-'dod Brag-khung is thought by local people to have been a religious retreat. Two foundations are located here: the south one measures 12 metres by six metres and the north one seven metres by three metres. The construction of these poorly preserved foundation walls raises the question whether they ever supported buildings of any kind. dGos-'dod Brag Khung may not have a pre-Buddhist status.

(L-44; P-48) Name: Sha-sha dPal-khang (Deer Meat Glorious House). Location: near Sha-sha rDo-phur, Sha-sha township, dGe-rgyas county. The ruins here comprised several structures in varying states of preservation. The largest and best preserved edifice is quite closely aligned to the cardinal directions and measures 16 metres (north to south) and seven metres (east to west). Surviving fragments of four walls reach heights up to 3.5 metres. The base of these walls is around 1.2 metres thick and, at two metres above ground level, one metre in thickness. The walls are built of flat red sandstone blocks which are finely crafted in layers of larger blocks, sandwiched between courses of smaller stones and courses laid diagonally to produce a herring-bone pattern. No appurtenances used to craft the roof are visible so no estimate of the height of the structure can be given. In close proximity to the largest building are the less well preserved remains of two other specimens. These three structures are similar in design to the type found at some of the monolithic arrays. Further west is a foundation measuring seven metres by 12 metres which was built at the base of a hill. According to the *'brog-pa* of the region, Sha-sha dPal-khang was the summer residence of a character in the Tibetan epic called Ri-shi A-thag Klu-mo. Indications are that Sha-sha dPal-khang is a pre-Buddhist monument.

Type-5: Remains of sedentary villages

(L-45; P-49) Name: Srib La (Shady Mountain). Location: on hill of the same name, west of rDzab-nag, four kilometres north of gNam msho in the sBel-nag plain, gNam-mtsho township, 'Dam-gzhung county. Situated in a saddle, the site consists of three irregularly-shaped foundations built of igneous rocks level with the surface of the ground. They measure 15 metres, nine metres and 16.5 metres in length. To the west of these structures are the remains of smaller foundations including a square-shaped one measuring three metres by three metres. According to local 'brog-pa, Srib La is the site of an ancient Bon-po habitation. Indications are that Srib La is a pre-Buddhist site.

(L-46; P-50) Name: gSer-nya (Golden Fish). Location: on hill of the same name, in the sBel-nag plain, just west of the tiny settlement of rDo-nag Chu-mgo, gNam-mtsho township, 'Dam-gzhung county. Located near the low-lying summit of gSer-nya, on three natural terraces, are structural remains covering an area of 50 metres (north to south) by 25 metres (east to west). Like Srib La, the structures here face south in the direction of Lake gNam mtsho. They appear to be the remains of various foundations which are roughly four square metres but there are few integral walls intact thus, they could not be positively identified. There are two prominent structures on the upper terrace, three on the middle terrace and probably three on the lower terrace. The 'brog-pa practice of removing stones from the site to use as construction materials has seriously compromised the integrity of gSer-nya. According to local 'brog pa, gSer-nya is the site of an ancient Bon-po habitation. Indications are that gSer-nya is a pre-Buddhist site.

(L-47; P-51) Name: A-chog (Ear). Location: on the slope of a hill of the same name near the small settlement of Ka-kyog, Dag-po township, 'Dam-gzhung county. The site covers an area of at least 100 metres (east to west) and 30 metres (north to south) and consists of a minimum of 11 structural remains each measuring three or four square metres. Most of the stones making up the structures are in disarray and only a few integral traces of walls are visible. According to local 'brog-pa, A-chog is the site of an ancient Bon-po habitation. Indications are that A-chog is a pre-Buddhist site.

(L-48; P-52) Name: sKye-lung (Growth Valley) and Lung-gsum (Three Valleys). Location: north of sBa-kha village, seven kilometres from the 'Dam-gzhung county seat. The site is centred in the mouths of the sKye-lung and

Lung-gsum valleys on an esplanade. Ruins here cover an area of roughly 15,000 square metres and consist of tumuli, man-made terraces and low-lying stone walls. The local *'brog-pa* believe that the sKye-lung and Lung-gsum site represents the vestiges of an ancient village. sKye-lung and Lung-gsum may not have a pre-Buddhist status.

(L-49; P-53) Name: Do mKhar-sgo (Headland Citadel Portal). Location: headland in Mu-tig mDa'-la g.Yu mTsho, Ba-tshwa township, Shen-rtsa county. The site consists of a rocky tumulus measuring 13 metres in diameter and four metres in height which is set in a square-shaped foundation measuring 23 meters on each of three sides. The tumulus now functions as a religious monument. The foundation wall is partially intact on three sides while the west wall has been obliterated, if indeed it ever existed. The east foundation wall was heavily disturbed in recent years by the extraction of stones to build nearby Byang-gad monastery. In the vicinity are two other foundations measuring eight metres by nine metres and 11 metres by 13 metres. According to senior monks at Byang-gad monastery, Do mKhar-sgo is an ancient site with no clear Buddhist identity. Local *'brog-pa* attribute it to the epic hero Gling Ge-sar. As it is built on a headland in the midst of a lake it occupies a location preferred by pre-Buddhist builders. The pre-Buddhist status of Do mKhar-sgo is provisional.

(L-50; P-54, P-55) Name: sTag-lung (Tiger Valley). Location: in valley of same name, 15 kilometers northwest of the Shen-rtsa county seat. sTag-lung is a site with diverse remains including the ruins of two *mchod-rten*, one of which in Bon tradition is said to have been built by the 11th century Bon practitioner Khro-tshang 'Brug-lha. Foundations up to 30 metres in length of what appear to have been buildings are found at two main locations: on the escarpment above the tiny settlement of Chag-lhas and on the slopes east of the settlement. The ruins in the escarpment include the tiered remains of a walled cave and six foundations measuring around three meters square which are elevated above the surrounding terrain to create a platform. The remains of larger structures east of Chag-lhas are situated in gullies and appear to have undergone flood damage. In Bon religious tradition, sTag-lung is known to have been a Zhang Zhung centre. Indications are that sTag-lung is a pre-Buddhist site.

(L-51; P-56, P-57) Name: mChod-rten brGya-ba (One Hundred Stupas). Location: northwest tip of rTsid skud mtsho, Srin-ya township, Shen-rtsa county. mChod-rten brGya-ba is a site with extensive remains built above the lake shore and on an adjoining plateau. The heart of this site consists of 11 rows

of cairns with 11 cairns in each of them forming a quadrangle measuring approximately 27 square metres. The cairns range in height from 50 centimetres to 1.4 metres. The bases of the cairns with their impacted soil, orange climax lichen and heavy erosion appear to have been undisturbed for a significant amount of time. I believe that the cairns may conceal menhirs.²⁴ About 13 metres west of the southwest corner of the field of cairns is a rocky truncated tumulus which sits on the west end of a foundation wall forming a perimeter measuring 13 metres (north to south) by 18.5 metres (east to west). Flanking this foundation are the remains of two somewhat smaller examples. East of this complex of cairns and foundations, along the lake shore of rTsid skud mTsho, are the remains of seven other foundations which have been leveled to the ground. At a few foundations there are small tumuli which appear to contain building rubble. On the adjoining plateau are the remains of at least four foundations and west of the cairn complex, are at least two more. Like the other structures at mChod-rten brGya-ba, these are heavily weathered and partially engulfed by the sandy soil. In a nearby cave called sTong-shong Brag-khung there are two heavily worn red ochre counterclockwise *g.yung-drung*. According to local 'brog-pa, mChod-rten brGya-ba was created by Gu-ru Rin-po-che, the 8th century *Vajrayana* master, when he struck his rosary on the ground in order to subdue the demon Mu-te Long. Many pre-Buddhist deities (such as the one associated with rTsid skud mTsho) are woven into the Gu-ru Rin-po-che legends as a way of conferring a Buddhist identity on them. Indications are that mChod-rten brGya-ba is a pre-Buddhist site.

(L-52; P-58) Name: 'Phong-chen; Location: 'Phong-chen village. Dang-ra g.Yu-mshto, 'Om-bu township, Nyi-ma county. On the edge of a steep slope, a few tens of metres above the village of the same name, are four complexes of rubble-laden tumuli up to 13.5 metres in length. No integral walls are discernible on the surface. The site is heavily disturbed as it has been mined for building stones. According to elders of 'Phong-chen village, this archaeological site represents the remnants of Zhang Zhung era domiciles. As so little is left for a visual inspection, the pre-Buddhist status of the site is provisional.

(L-53; P-59) Name: Ba'am Khang Khrog (Dilapidated Houses of Ba'am). Location: Ba'am, Dang-ra g.Yu-mtsho, 'Om-bu township, Nyi-ma county. Ba'am Khang Khrog is situated on the edge of one of the benches which make up the

²⁴ It also appears that the megalithic site discovered by George Roerich in 1927 in gNam-ru has been concealed under cairns up to 2.5 metres tall; see Bellezza 1995.

ancient agricultural community of Ba'am. The site consists of disintegrated foundations and piles of rubble distributed along the summit, flanks and base of an escarpment, in dense agglomeration. The upper sections of the ruins cover an area of 500 square metres. The site has been heavily disturbed, at least in part, by the construction of a nearby corral. According to Bon elders in the region, the ruins at Ba'am Khang Khrog represent what is left of a Zhang Zhung period palace and other habitations. In the oral history the name of one of the leaders of this ancient community, Ba-ma Lha-dar, has come down to us. Indications are that Ba'am Khang Khrog is a pre-Buddhist site.

(L-54; P-60) Name: Dar-chen Khang-khog / Dar-chen Khang-khog (Ruined Houses of dar-chen / Dilapidated Houses of Dar-chen). Location: Dar-chen, Dang-ra g.Yu-mtsho, 'Om-bu township, Nyi-ma county. Dar-chen Khang-khog is another of the ancient agricultural villages purported to date from Zhang Zhung times although some local elders believe it could have been abandoned as recently as 500 years ago. The stream which used to flow through the large valley beside the archaeological site is now dry for all but a portion of the monsoon season. The ruins of the ancient village constituting roughly 20 houses, cover an area of at least 1600 square metres. None of these structures has its roof intact and most have been leveled to their foundations. Adobe walls up to 2.5 metres tall are contiguous with a tumulus measuring approximately 13 metres across and upwards of five metres in height. These structures appear to have formed a large single complex. On the benches adjacent to the village are the faint traces of extensive agricultural parcels and terraces. The pre-Buddhist status of Dar-chen Khang-khog is provisional.

(L-55; P-61) Name: dMar-lcam (Red Cliff). Location: on the north side of the Gangs-lung valley, Dang-ra g.Yu-mtsho, 'Om-bu township, Nyi-ma county. On a shelf above the Gangs-lung Chu are defunct fields and the remains of what is reported by local people to be an ancient village. Mar-lcam is comprised of three complexes exhibiting foundations, segments of crumbling walls, piles of rubble and depressions in the ground. The visible remains of the West Complex measure at least 20 metres by 13 metres and the Central Complex, seven metres by 13 metres. The East Complex, like the West Complex, may be a group of buildings but there is not enough left on the surface for a good estimate. The pre-Buddhist status of dMar-lcam is provisional.

(L-56; P-62) Name: 'Om-mo; Location: 'Om-mo, Dang-ra g.Yu-mtsho. 'Om-bu township, Nyi-ma county. On a bench above the 'Om-mo Chu among ruins

built as recently as 1962, are several foundations said to belong to the ancient community of the same name. This community is said to have had a woman ruler called 'Om-mo dPon-mo. The largest foundation measures nine metres by nine metres and is surmounted by a tumulus. Ruins at 'Om-mo are attributed to the Buddhist period but these probably had antecedents, because the site has highly desirable water resources and arable land. 'Om-mo may not have a pre-Buddhist status.

(L-57; P-63) Name: Sog-po. Location: Lu-sngon gTsang-po valley, Dang-ra g.yu-mtsho, 'Om-bu township, Nyi-ma county. On a bench poised above the inner gorge of the Lu-sngon gTsang-po is a group of ruins which regional Bon elders say belonged to the Sog-po (Sogdians or an ancient Mongol group) and pre-date the Zhang Zhung period fort of Khyung rDzong. This site, they add, was ruled by the Sog-po spun-gsum (Three Sog-po Brothers). According to sLob-dpon bsTan-'dzin rNam-dag, Sog-po is a generic term which refers to invaders from the north and west in both the prehistoric and historic periods. Sog-po consists of various groups of ruins situated on naturally-occurring terraces and in the adjoining escarpment. The largest complex measures 29 metres (east to west) by 11 to 18 metres (north to south) and was built in tiers. The largest ruins in the escarpment are that of a three-storey high facade built around a cave. This wall is suspended above the cave mouth by stone beams that span the cave walls. In a cleft in the escarpment a 30 centimetre tall *g.yung-drung* was painted in red ochre. Indications are that Sog-po is a pre-Buddhist site.

(L-58; P-64, P-65) Name: rDza-ra dKar-gyam Mon-rdo (Clay Pot White Overhang Mon Stones). Location: sGom-'khor, gZhung-pa township, dGe-rgyas county. Located on a sloping plain, the ruins at rDza-ra dKar-gyam Mon-rdo are thought by local people to be that of an ancient Mon settlement. The dozen main structures found here with their massively built rounded walls and other morphological traits do seem to date from the pre-Buddhist period. Like many of the other ruined habitations we have surveyed, the structures face in a southerly direction. The structure I designate Upper North is approximately eight metres (north to south) by 12 metres (east to west). The foundation of this building is mostly intact and is 90 centimetres thick and rises about 50 centimetres above the ground level. In the rear (west) of the structure is a tumulus containing building rubble. Upper South is the best preserved structure at the site and measures nine metres (north to south) by 13 metres (east to west). The intact foundation is nearly one metre thick and is still as much as 60 centimetres in height. In the rear (west) of the structure is a mound of rubble with entwined

walls nearly two metres in height. The design of the building with its rectangular floor plan and more extensive walls in the rear matches those I discovered at various places at bKra-ri gNam-tsho (Bellezza: in press d). Another important structure at rDza-ra dKar-gyam Mon-rdo is the one I designate Lower IV structure. Lower IV, with what appears to be a U-shaped ground plan, is the largest at the site, and measures 21 metres (east to west) by 30 metres (north to south). The structure has deteriorated to the point of appearing like three interconnected mounds (representing the three wings of the structure) but there are also visible wall fragments. On the north side of the structure are foundation walls 50 centimetres and 70 centimetres in thickness. Indications are that rDza-ra dKar-gyam Mon-rdo is a pre-Buddhist site.

(L-59; P-66) Name: rDo-po-rag. Location: about four kilometres west of lCags-sgang township headquarters, Ru-thog county. The ruins of what is believed to have been a village including defunct fields are located near the flood plain of the Yog-ma Chu, on the left bank of the river. Given its physical aspect, (the site is covered in fluvial deposits) it might well have been destroyed in a flood. There were perhaps one dozen structures here which have been mostly reduced to rubble and depressions in the ground. From a visual appraisal, the size and character of these structures is very difficult to determine. One pair of structures appears to have covered an area of six metres (east to west) by 18 metres (north to south). The oral history of the site is muddled with some saying it was abandoned perhaps 12 generations ago while others say it was occupied by the Mon. The pre-Buddhist status of rDo-po-rag is provisional.

(L-60) Name Za-za. Location: a couple kilometres north of dBus-byang township headquarters, Ru-thog county. This site contains various types of remains, a feature that is probably indicative of several chronological phases of development. Among them is a cave shelter whose walls retain patches of plaster painted red, white and mustard which indicates that it had a religious function. Nearby there is an adobe ruin lying in a heap resembling melting ice cubes. Earth tinted red and blue is leaching from the ruin. Also in the vicinity are the extremely faint foundations of multi-roomed structures. Evidently, there is no oral history pertaining to Za-za remains. Za-za may not have a pre-Buddhist status.

(L-61; P-67) Name: 'Bur-dkar (White Hill). Location: 'Bur-dkar monastery; Zla-gzhung township, mTsho-chen county. According to 'Bur-dkar rin-po-che and other senior monks of the monastery, in ancient times it was the

site of a Bon settlement. They cite obscured remains located below the modern walls of the monastery as belonging to the ancient Bon-po. The pre-Buddhist status of 'Bur-dkar is provisional.

Type-6): Cist-type graves, both square and round in form

(L-62; P-68) Name: Mon-pa'i Dur-khung (Grave Pits of the Mon-pa); Location: outskirts of La-smad village, rGya-sgog township, Nyi-ma county. The site consists of four rectangular enclosures each measuring around 10 metres by 13 metres, and several smaller outlying structures occupying a sandy plain. These structures are fairly closely aligned with the cardinal directions. The perimeters of the enclosures have been reduced to lines of smaller stones - the larger stones were removed to build local houses and corrals. Reportedly, stelae about 50 centimetres in height once stood in the enclosures. During recent excavation of Grave IV for building stones, human osteological remains are said to have been found. Indications are that Mon-pa'i Dur-khung is a pre-Buddhist site.

(L-63; P-69) Name: Khog-ro (Corpse Receptacle); Location: several kilometres south of Shar-rtse village, rGya-sgog township, Nyi-ma county. This site is situated in the head of a small valley and consists of three rectangular structures built into a fairly steep slope, the largest of which measures 23 metres by 16 metres. The downhill walls of the structures are elevated as much as two metres above the slope. Human osteological remains are said to have been found at Khog-ro and local 'brog-pa believe it to be the remains of a Mon cemetery. Indications are that Khog-ro is a pre-Buddhist site.

(L-64; P-70) Name: rTsid-ra Mon-dur (Walled Enclosures of Mon Graves). Location: near the village of Nyi-chen, rTa-sgo township, Nyi-ma county. There are two sites at rTsid-ra: rTsid-ra South is built on a sandy plain and consists of as many as 20 square, oval and irregularly-shaped stone perimeters extending over a transect of approximately 175 metres. The structures form five contiguous clusters. The individual cells or perimeters range in length from three metres to 10 metres. rTsid-ra North is separated from rTsid-ra South by a rocky rib. There appear to be two clusters of structures here. What I designate North complex I is more intact and has a total length of 14 metres. According to local 'brog-pa, rTsid-ra represents the remains of an extensive Mon cemetery. Human bones are said to have been found here. Indications are that rTsid-ra is a pre-Buddhist site.

(L-65; P-71) Name: Brag-dkar-nag sDings (The White and Black Rock Eminence); Location: in the Sangs-rgyas Plain, rTa-ngo township, Nyi-ma county. On a ridge of the same name are two three-metre by three-metre structures with a white rock border and dark-coloured rocks in the central portion. A couple of kilometres away at 'A-rab Kya-ril is a mound three metres in diameter. These structures are said by the 'brog-pa to be tombs belonging to the Mon. Indications are that Brag-dkar-nag sDings and 'A-rab Kya-ril are pre-Buddhist sites.

(L-66; P-72) Name: Dar-chung Mon-dur (Dar-chung Graves of the Mon). Location: Dar-chung, Dang-ra g.Yu-mtsho, 'Om-bu township, Nyi-ma county. In Dar-chung, on the benches between the Dar-chung and Dar-chen valleys are three structures believed by local residents to be Mon tombs. The most southerly of these is the best preserved and its walls measure approximately four metres by four metres. North of the Dar-chung Chu are the poorly preserved remains of three more structures identified as Mon graves. Some years ago, a couple of local men excavated a tomb at Dar-chung. Inside the square masonry burial chamber they discovered a black ceramic urn full of human bones, a goat head, and the head and scapula of a sheep. From the Tun-huang manuscript dealing with Bon funerary rituals we know that in pre-Buddhist times that sheep played an important role in beliefs concerning the after-life (Lalou 1953). Indications are that the Dar-chung Mon-dur is pre-Buddhist site.

(L-67; P-73) Name: Tshwa-kha Mon-khang (Tshwa-kha House of Mon). Location: west of bKra-shis Chos-gling rGyab-ri, Tshwa-kha township, dGe-rgyas county. In a high waterless valley about 10 remains of what are ostensibly graves line the valley bottom and adjacent slopes. The northern most grave (North Grave I) was opened in pre-Communist times to reveal a stone cist measuring 2.25 metres by 1.5 metres. This burial chamber is currently 1.2 metres deep but was originally deeper as some in-filling has occurred. The walls of this chamber are made of courses of small stones which integrate a couple of naturally-occurring boulders. North Grave II has a rectangular superstructure raised 50 to 80 centimetres above the surrounding terrain which is aligned in the cardinal directions. It measures 5.2 metres (north to south) by 3.2 metres (east to west). Most of the unexcavated superstructures are oval in shape and measure 2.5 metres to five metres across. Although no one locally seemed aware of the fact, these structures, at least in part, are graves as the morphology indicates. As the name suggests, some 'brog-pa believe them to be the ancient habitations of the

Mon but many of the structures are simply too small. Indications are that Tshwa-kha Mon-khang is a pre-Buddhist site.

(L-68; P-74) Name: Rwa-'brog 'Phrang Mon Dur (Mon Graves of Horn Pasture Ledge). Location: approximately nine kilometres east of Ra-spang township headquarters, Ru-thog county. The site of what are purportedly Mon graves is situated on a shelf overlooking Rwa-'brog mTsho. There are around 18 structures visible, ranging in size from three square metres to six metres by eight metres, many of them well towards complete dissolution. Some of these structures are now just tumuli or depressions with a few wall segments lining the ground. The largest specimen is among the best preserved; its downhill wall rises up to 1.2 metres above the slope. Two other specimens have petroglyphs of a wild yak and other animals carved on the ring of stones making up the bulk of the structure.

Type-7: Graves with superstructures built on summits

(L-69 P-75) Name: Mon-pa Nag-po (Black Mon-pa). Location: Mon-pa Nag-po, several kilometres east of gZhung-pa township headquarters, dGe-rgyas county. This site is located on the summit of a mountain of the same name. According to local oral tradition, the structures of Mon-pa Nag-po represent the remains of tombs belonging to the Mon. Arrayed around the mountain top are at least 11 structures which are ostensibly above-ground tombs. These range from 1.5 to two metres in width, 1.8 to 2.5 metres in length, and a maximum of 1.5 metres in height. Built of layers of flat stones to create a cubic structure, they contain a central chamber which measures around 50 centimetres by 80 centimetres. The original depth of the central chamber cannot be determined, for many of them are damaged and none still has the cap-stone in place. The central chamber of what I call the Central Summit tomb contains human osteological remains belonging to a small adult or adolescent. The bones include those of a foot, pelvis, femur and vertebrae. Tiny remnants of cartilage and connective tissue are attached to the foot. The bones show no signs of petrification or darkening. I could not determine whether these interred remains are original or those of a subsequent adventitious burial. I did not find human remains in any of the other tombs. Indications are that Mon-pa Nag-po is a pre-Buddhist site.

(L-70; P-76) Name: Ri Ra-ser Mon dur (Mon Graves of Yellow Goat Mountain). Location: on the summit of a ridge of the same name, Khul-pa

township; Ru-thog county. The site consists of eight cube-like structures each with a central rectangular chamber which are believed locally to be the remains of tombs belonging to the Mon. The eastern-most specimen, which I designate Tomb I, is among the best preserved and measures two metres by two metres and is 1.5 metres in height. The central chamber measures 1.15 metres by 80 centimetres. Tomb VI also has a partly intact central chamber. I could not determine the depth of these central chambers because of the uncertainty surrounding the original height of the structures. The other tombs are in an advanced stage disintegration. Also on the ridge top, east of the tombs, are the remains of a building whose dimensions are 18 metres by a maximum of 4.5 metres. Although this structure is mostly leveled, wall segments up to 1.5 metres tall have survived. Indications are that Ri Ra-ser Mon-dur is a pre-Buddhist site.

(L-71; P-77) Name: rTswa-med God-sa Mon-dur (No Grass Place of Loss Mon Graves). Location: on the top of a spur overlooking the north side of Rwa-'brog mTsho, Ra-spang township, Ru-thog county. Perched on the top of a rocky ridge are six structures which are reputed by local 'brog-pa to be Mon graves. The western-most specimen is among the best preserved and measures two metres by two metres and is 1.3 metres in height. In the centre of the cube-like structure is a rectangular cavity where ostensibly human remains were interred.

(L-72; P-78) Name: Khro-thung Mon-dur. Location: Khro-thung Ri, gZhung-pa township, dGe-rgyas county. On top of the mesa-like mountain called Khro-thung are the remains of 22 cubic structures which local people believe are tombs belonging to the Mon. The mountain Khro-thung (also called Khra-rong and Khro-ri Nag-po) is named after the epic hero's paternal uncle who is believed to have spent some time here. Khro-thung commands good views in all directions and on a clear day, Mount Kailash, 120 kilometres away, can be seen. The tombs are distributed on all sides of the rim of the flat-topped mountain. Most of these structures are not well preserved but several still have the central burial chamber intact. One specimen, on the southwest rim of the mountain, has a few cap-stones over the burial chamber in place; one of these measuring 80 centimetres by 35 centimetres. A west rim specimen has a central chamber measuring 110 centimetres by 120 centimetres and is at least 1.2 metres deep. It had stones laid diagonally over the top of the chamber on which stone braces were laid. On the highest point of the northern half of the mountain is a well-preserved tomb measuring 2.25 metres by three metres and 1.2 metres in height. Its central chamber is lined with finer masonry than the surrounding walls and it is precisely oriented to the cardinal directions. The dimensions of the chamber

are 1.2 metres (east to west) by 80 centimetres (north to south) and at present, it is only 55 centimetres deep (due to the deterioration of the structure). Indications are that Khro-thung Mon-dur is a pre-Buddhist site.

(L-73; P-79) Name: rDo-khra zlum Mon-rdo (Mon Stones of rDo-khra zlum). Location: rDo khra zlum, above the plain at Lung-chen, gZhung-pa township, dGe-rgyas county. The site, located in an amphitheatre below a summit of the same name, overlooks the expansive Lung-chen plain. In this amphitheatre, on very rocky ground, there are at least nine cubic structures which appear to be tombs. According to local 'brog-pa, these were constructed by the Mon. These structures are not well preserved and none now exceed one metre in height. In a couple of the better preserved specimens the central chambers (where human remains were ostensibly deposited) can clearly be discerned. Indications are that rDo-khra zlum Mon-rdo is a pre-Buddhist site.

Type-8: Isolated pillars

(L-74; P-80) Name: Ser-Tshogs rDo-ring (Yellow Assembly Long Stones). Location: five kilometres south of Ra-spang township headquarters, Ru-thog county. This site, with its well-hewn long and slender stelae presents a graceful appearance. There are eight standing stones which have been structurally integrated into a modern corral. Six of these stelae are made of a reddish-brown stone; are heavily worn and of significant age, while the other two are made of a light-coloured igneous rock and exhibit much less weathering. The older group of six are up to 1.5 metres in height. On one of these specimens a primitive style *g.yung-drung* and two archaic style *mchod-rten* are engraved. Two other specimens, one of which has lost much of its top, have been engraved with an archaic *mchod-rten*. By virtue of the engravings these stelae appear to be no more recent than the imperial period (7th century to mid-9th century). Ser-tshogs rDo-ring may not have a pre-Buddhist status.

(L-75; P-81) Name: Blon-po rDo-ring (Long Stone of the Minister). Location: near Ngang-rtse mTsho, a few kilometers south of rGya-sgog township, Nyi-ma county. The site hosts a single reddish brown pillar, tabular in shape, 1.5 meters in height, 10 to 20 centimeters thick and a maximum of 50 centimeters in width. Local 'brog-pa believe that this pillar was self-formed during the creation of the universe (*srid-pa chag-pa'i rdo-ring*). The pre-Buddhist status of Blon-po rDo-ring is provisional.

(L-76; P-82) Name: Bsle Kham-pa rDo-ring. Location: On outskirts of Bsle Kham-pa village, Sangs-rgyas, rTa-sgo township, Nyi-ma county. At this location, in the middle of an expansive plain, is an isolated pillar made of a light-coloured stone, 1.2 metres in height. According to local 'brog-pa and monks, it is of great age. The pre-Buddhist status of Bsle Kham-pa rDo-ring is provisional.

(L-77; P-83) Name: Shar-sha rDo-ring. Location: Shar-sha village, Ma-mig township, sGer-rtse county. Within the settlement of Shar-sha is an isolated pillar 1.05 metres tall, 22 centimetres wide and 18 centimetres thick at the base. This inclined and heavily worn pillar was carefully shaped into its present form. There was once a companion stone but it was snapped off at the base less than 30 centimetres above ground level. The pillar is said by elderly residents of Shar-sha to be very old but they could offer no other information. While Shar-sha rDo-ring is of significant age it may not have a pre-Buddhist status.

(L-78; P-84) Name: Seng-'khor Byang-ma rDo-ring (North Lion Circle Long Stones). Location: west edge of mGo-phug basin, Byang-ma township, sGer-rtse county. At this site are two isolated pillars separated by about 250 metres. The west pillar is 1.8 metres tall and has a girth at the base of 1.2 metres. The stone is now inclined at a 45 degree angle, presumably the result of centuries of gravity acting upon it. The east pillar is 1.25 metres in height and has a girth at the base of 80 centimetres but it is not securely anchored in the ground. On the east side of this pillar some lettering was relatively recently inscribed - this inscription lacks patination. While the two pillars appear to be of significant age no oral history was available from which I could assess the possible pre-Buddhist status of the monuments.

Type-9: Stelae built within a quadrangular perimeter

(L-79; P-85) Name: Kya rDzong rDo-ring (Kya Fort Long Stone). Location: in side valley, approximately seven kilometres east of Ri-khrod monastery, Gro-ba township, Nyi-ma county. The site consists of a 60 centimetre tall stele located on the west end of a perimeter measuring 2.5 metres (north to south) and 7.5 metres (east to west). The lay-out of the enclosure and menhir conform to the cardinal directions. In the last couple of decades Kya rDzong rDo-ring was vandalised by local youths, consequently, the menhir is now considerably shorter than before and the wall around the site is now almost unrecognisable. The

monument is referred to as a Mon-ra (enclosure of the Mon) by the local 'brog-pa. Indications are that Kya rDzong rDo-ring is a pre-Buddhist site.

(L-80 P-86) Name: rDo-rang (= rDo-ring; Long Stone). Location: in the Mar-ru-rtse valley, Sangs-rgyas, rTa-rgo township, Nyi-ma county. On the outskirts of rDo-rang village, is rDo-ring Chung (Small Long Stone), an 85 centimetre tall stele made of a dark-coloured stone. The remains of an enclosure around the menhir measuring approximately 4.5 metres by 4.5 metres is visible. In a southerly direction, a couple of kilometres up the rDo-rang side valley, is rDo-ring Chen (Big Long Stone), a dark blue-gray pillar measuring 1.8 metres in height. There does not seem to be a perimeter wall around rDo-ring Chen.

(L-81; P-87) Name: Phe-lung rDo-ring; Location: a few kilometres east of U-ra, Zla-ba mTsho, mTsho-chen county. On the west end of a foundation forming a rectangular enclosure are three stelae, one metre, 70 centimetres and 60 centimetres in height, the first made of a blue stone and the latter two of a red-coloured stone. The top of the latter *rdo-ring* has been broken off and the pieces lie in close proximity. The perimeter measures 5.25 metres by four metres and is fairly closely aligned with the cardinal directions. The foundation making up the perimeter is about 50 centimetres thick. In local mythology, the site is where the epic hero Gling Ge-sar supposedly tied his horse. Indications are that Phe-lung rDo-ring is a pre-Buddhist site.

(L-82; P-88) Name: Mon-ra Yar-gan (The Enclosure of the Mon in the Upper Direction). Location: gLang-lhas sNgon-po, Dang-ra g.Yu-mtsho, Las-stod township, Nyi-ma county. The site consists of four stelae built of stones of two contrasting colours which have all had their tops broken off. They now measure 70, 55, 25 and 25 centimetres in height. There is some inconclusive evidence that the menhirs were situated inside an enclosure. According to local mythology, these stones appeared at the beginning of creation. Just to the north of the stelae are the faint remains of a foundation, the west wall of which is 16 metres in length. This site has been transformed into a corral and thus few of its original characteristics are visible. Local 'brog-pa believe it was a Mon habitation. Indications are that Mon-ra Yar-gan is a pre-Buddhist site.

(L-83; P-89) Name: Mon-ra'i rDo-ring (Long Stones of the Mon Enclosure). Location: near the settlement of rDzis-sna, Las-stod township, Nyi-ma county. There are two stelae at this site measuring 60 centimetres and 80 centimetres in height. At one time they were taller but the tops were broken off. The two

menhirs stand on the north side of an enclosure measuring 7.2 meters by 4.4 metres. The perimeter wall is clearly visible despite stones being recently extracted in order to build local houses. This mining has left deep cavities in the foundation. In local mythology, Mon-ra'i rDo-ring is connected with the Mon-pa of the Tibetan epic. Indications are that Mon-ra'i rDo-ring is a pre-Buddhist site.

(L-84; P-90) Name: Lam-lung Mon-ra (Path Valley Mon Enclosures). Location: Lam-lung, Las-stod township, Nyi-ma county. On a shelf overlooking the Lam-lung Chu is a stele which has lost most of its top and now only protrudes 30 centimetres from the ground. This menhir is situated near the west edge of a perimeter foundation measuring 8.4 metres (east to west) by 4.8 metres (south to north). This perimeter is built of small stones and is oriented to the cardinal directions. A little north, on the opposite side of the Lam-lung settlement, are two irregularly-shaped foundations which local people associate with the Mon. Indications are that Lam-lung Mon-ra is a pre-Buddhist site.

(L-85; P-91) Name: IDan-chu Mon-rdo (IDan-chu Stones of the Mon). Location: IDan chu village in Na chan township sGer rtse county. Three stelae are planted near the west foundation of a somewhat obscured enclosure. The menhirs have been largely destroyed and now measure less than 40 centimetres in height. The dimensions of the enclosure are six metres (north to south) and 10 metres (east to west). The three stelae are spaced between 1.3 metres and 1.8 metres apart, a larger distance than many of the other sites of this typology. Locally, no information remains on the site save that it has an association with the Mon. Indications are that IDan-chu Mon-rdo is a pre-Buddhist site.

(L-86; P-92) Name: 'O-ma rDo-ring (Milk Long Stone). Location: across the main road from the old 'O-ma Chus headquarters (a Chinese administrative unit), sGer-rtse county. The site consists of three menhirs 1.5 metres, 1.4 metres and one metre in height situated on the west end of an enclosure. The monument is not quite aligned with the cardinal directions as the stelae have a bearing of 240 degrees. There are also stones sticking 20 to 30 centimetres out of the ground near the east side of the enclosure. Due to parts of the foundation being erased from the surface, the dimensions of the perimeter is ambiguous - it is roughly four metres by 15 metres. There are also several double-coursed foundation fragments of an indeterminate configuration east of the monument. Indications are that 'O-ma rdo-ring is a pre-Buddhist site.

(L-87; P-93) Name: Zhing-chen Mon-rdo (Great Farm Stones of the Mon); Location: Zhing-chen valley, approximately 20 kilometres west of Tshwa-kha township headquarters, dGe-rgyas county. This monument is located in a sandy plain on the east side of the valley, not far from where it opens up onto the Tshwa plain. On the west end of the enclosure two stelae measuring 1.1 metres in height are in situ. There also appears to have been a third menhir but it now lies outside the perimeter. The foundation forming the enclosure is aligned with the cardinal directions and measures 9.7 metres (east to west) by 4.9 metres (north to south). Part of this foundation is now veiled by sand. Adjacent to this structure is a three metre square stone plinth raised slightly above ground level which may be the remains of a grave. Local *'brog-pa* believe Zhing-chen Mon-rdo to be an ancient Mon-pa site. Indications are that Zhing-chen Mon-rdo is a pre-Buddhist monument.

(L-88; P-94) Name: Shangs rDo-ring (Shangs Long Stone). Location: gZhung-pa township headquarters, dGe-rgyas county. The traditional name of what is now called gZhung-pa Chus is Shangs rDo-ring, derived from the stelae which are found at two locations in the environs of the town. The main site is situated between the old school compound and the old administrative compound. It was largely destroyed in the 1960s in order to build the Chinese settlement. At the main site, before the Communist period, there were no fewer than one dozen menhirs forming a large complex. Now there is only one broken specimen which is still in situ. Beside it lie the pieces of another. In close proximity are the remains of ancient foundations, some of which are right in the middle of the main road. On the roadside, about 100 metres away, in what does not appear to be its original location, is another precariously planted stele which sticks 1.3 metres out of the ground. Fortunately, about one kilometre south of the town there is a less disturbed site consisting of two stelae. These menhirs are 1.05 and 1.15 metres tall and are situated inside what appears to be an enclosure. However, this foundation perimeter is very poorly preserved. Indications are that Shangs rDo-ring is a pre-Buddhist site.

(L-89; P-95) Name: Khang-dmar rDo-ring (Red House Long Stone). Location: Khang-dmar, gZhung-pa township, dGe-rgyas county. The site consists of a complex of stelae which has been heavily impacted by local settlement and the construction of a corral. At one location there are three menhirs which have lost their tops and nearby are four more rooted stones which have been reduced to 30 centimetres or less in height. The tallest of the menhirs in this location is 75 centimetres and is made of a white igneous rock. At another location there are

four more stelae, the tallest of which protrudes 1.05 metres from the ground. Two of the menhirs in this group now form part of the wall of a stock pen. Also at Khang-dmar rDo-ring are remnants of old foundation walls and a tumulus measuring seven metres by three metres. Indications are that Khang-dmar rDo-ring is a pre-Buddhist site.

(L-90; P-96) Name: 'A-'go rDo-ring ('A-'go Long Stones); Location: sGom-'khor, gZhung-pa township, dGe-rgyas county. The site, built in a plain near the edge of a mountain, consists of four large menhirs erected on the west side of an enclosure. The North specimen is 1.2 metres in height, the North Central specimen is 95 centimetres, the South Central specimen is 1.3 metres, and the South specimen is also 1.3 metres tall. There is what appears to be a dislodged menhir lying on the site which is 1.2 metres in length. Fragments of the foundation enclosing the stelae are extant; the most intact part of it is the south wall: 12.5 metres in length. The foundation walls are about 65 centimetres thick and built of stones laid in parallel courses.

(L-91; P-97) Name: Yid-rtse-mkhar rDo-ring (Beautiful Peak Long Stones). Location: a few kilometres north of the Kong Chu township headquarters, dGe-rgyas county. At this severely disturbed site only one unbroken stele is left standing. This specimen is 1.2 metres tall. In close proximity are two more stelae rooted in the ground, but these appear to have been broken and only protrude 40 centimetres from the ground. Also on the site are two dislodged stelae 1.9 metres and 1.35 metres in length. There are traces of an enclosure on the south and west sides of the stelae. The west foundation wall was constructed of stones laid in double courses. Nearby, on a higher slope, are two *ma-ni* walls which might well have been constructed with stones extracted from the archaeological site. Indications are that Yid-rtse-mkhar rDo-ring is a pre-Buddhist site.

(L-92; P-98) Name: sPyog-po rDo-ring / mChog-po rDo-ring. Location: sPyog-po, Bar-ma Township, 'Brong-pa county. The site consists of a single stele set on the south side of an enclosure.²⁵ The menhir has been broken and now measures 90 centimetres in height. At one time, it must have been considerably taller because it has a width of 70 centimetres. The enclosure, which is roughly aligned in the cardinal directions, measures 4.3 metres (east to west) by seven

²⁵ I first surveyed this site under the alternative name Cog-pu rDo-ring (which I now know is not correct) in 1997; see Bellezza 1999c.

metres (north to south). The foundation making up the enclosure is 60 to 70 centimetres thick and built of twin courses of masonry.

(L-93; P-99) Name: Shag-gang mTho-po rDo-ring (Prominence with Rocks on Top Long Stones). Location: approximately 10 kilometres south of Lung-dkar township, 'Brong-pa county. The site is located on a rise in the broad Bul-tog gTsang-po river valley and comprises three main stelae set on the west edge of an enclosure. The three stelae range in height from 85 to 90 centimetres but were originally taller. The breaks however, occurred a long time ago as they have been worn smooth. There are also two smaller stelae which have lost much of their original height. Also on the site is an uprooted menhir one metre in length. The enclosure is precisely oriented to the cardinal directions and measures 14 metres (north to south) by 18 metres (east to west). The foundation wall comprising the enclosure is flush with the ground and between 90 centimetres and 1.1 metres in thickness. As the name of the site would suggest, there are many stones scattered about. Twenty metres north of this monument is a foundation measuring 9.5 metres by 9.5 metres which is also aligned to the cardinal directions. The foundation consists of four sections creating what appears to be a cruciform design. Nearby are the remains of more obscured foundations. Indications are that Shag-gang mTho-po is a pre-Buddhist site.

(L-94; P-100) Name: Pe-gya rDo-ring (Pe-gya Long Stones). Location: Nar Chu valley, Ri-shi township, 'Brong-pa county. The best preserved monument consists of a stele 1.1 metres in height. Also on the site is a dislodged menhir one metre in length. The enclosure foundation measures nine metres by 4.5 metres and is precisely aligned with the cardinal directions. The foundation wall, typically of this type of monument, is well constructed of double-coursed masonry. The north and west walls of the enclosure are the best preserved. Just up the Nar valley from this monument is another one of very similar characteristics. This second site, however, is less intact and the menhir is inclined at a radical angle, yet it is firmly rooted in the substrate. This stele extends 1.12 metres out of the ground and is situated on the west side of a nearly obliterated enclosure. Pe-gya rdo-ring, like sPyog-po rdo-ring and Shag-gang mTho-po, is situated in one of the three main tributaries feeding Da-roq mtsho. According to the most common mythology associated with these sites, Pe-gya rDo-ring appeared at the dawn of creation. Indications are that Pe-gya rDo-ring is a pre-Buddhist site.

(L-95; P-101) Name: Senge rDo-ring (Lion Long Stones). Location: Senge, Se-le-phug township, dGe-rgyas county. This site is comprised of menhirs which form a row on the west end of what is left of a stone enclosure. Seven bluish and whitish coloured stelae are in situ while another two lie on the ground in close proximity. The tallest specimen is 1.5 metres in height and has a girth at the base of 1.3 metres. At one time it was taller, for the top has been broken off. Only one of the seven menhirs (90 centimetres tall) is fully intact. The enclosure measures 7.5 metres by 7.5 metres and is not precisely aligned in the cardinal directions. According to local 'brog-pa, the menhirs were erected with the founding of the universe. Indications are that Senge rDo-ring is a pre-Buddhist site.

(L-96; P-102) Name: Chu-phug rDo-ring (Water Cave Long Stones). Location: Chu-phug, Brag gTsang-po valley, Hor-chu township, sPu-Hreng county. Situated on the west side of an enclosure are three menhirs 1.1 metres, 1.1 metres and 1.35 metres in height. A fourth specimen lies dislodged in close proximity and measures 1.6 metres in length. These stelae were hewn into a tabular shape. The poorly preserved foundation making up the enclosure is quite closely oriented in the cardinal directions and measures 12 metres (north to south) by eight metres (east to west). According to local legend, the monument appeared with the universe. Indications are that Chu-phug rDo-ring is a pre-Buddhist site.

(L-97; P-103) Name: Lo-ro rDo-ring (Lo-ro Long stones). Location: near the confluence of the Khug-pa'i gTsang-po (source of the Brahmaputra) with a Trans-Himalayan affluent, Bar-yangs township, 'Brong-pa county. Lo-ro rDo-ring is another of the enclosed stelae type monuments which in local lore are believed to have been self-created at the beginning of the universe. Lo-ro, like most others, was constructed in level sandy terrain. The site consists of a single menhir with a height of 1.3 metres and a basal girth of 1.2 metres, which is situated on the west side of an enclosure. The enclosure is aligned to the cardinal directions and measures 12.5 metres (north to south) by roughly 12.5 metres (east to west). Much of the east foundation wall of the perimeter has been obliterated. Indications are that Lo-ro rDo-ring is a pre-Buddhist monument.

Type-10: Monolithic arrays usually with accompanying structures

(L-98; P-104) Name: rTa-rgo rTa-'dogs-sa (Mount rTa-rgo's Horse-Hitching Place). Location: two kilometres west of Phug-pa hermitage, rGya-sgog township, Nyi-ma county. A number of ruins are found in the vicinity of the Phug-pa Bon hermitage including remains associated with a Zhang Zhung religious centre which is supposed to have stood here. These include a multi-roomed structure built in several tiers in the mouth of a gully. This structure measures six metres by six metres and contains a northwest room with part of its stone roof and stone rafters intact. About 100 metres south of this ancient domicile (?) is the rTa-rgo rTa-'dogs-sa monolithic array. The site consists of over 200 stelae which protrude 50 to 75 centimetres from the ground to form a quadrangular complex, 13 square metres, which is precisely aligned with the cardinal directions. There might have been 18 rows of 18 standing stones (a Bon holy number) in each of them but this is far from clear - about half of the stones have collapsed. The remainder are heavily inclined and worn but do not appear to have been recently disturbed. Three metres west of this field of standing stones is a tumulus 12 metres in diameter with a deep depression in the middle of it. The large number of building stones scattered about and comparison with other monolithic arrays indicates that this was once a formidably built structure. Indications are that rTa-rgo rTa-'dogs-sa and some of the proximate remains form a pre-Buddhist site.

(L-99; P-105) Name: Ser-leb Mon-rdo (Ser-leb Stones of the Mon-pa). Location: Ser-leb, g.Yu-mtsho township, sGer-rtse county. In the middle of a plain several kilometres from the settlement of Ser-leb is an array of monoliths. About 300 standing stones form a quadrangle measuring roughly 12 metres (north to south) by 21 metres (east to west) which is closely aligned with the cardinal directions. The exact extent of the quadrangle cannot be determined because a good portion of the monoliths appear to be missing. The monoliths range in size from 10 centimetres to 40 centimetres in height, but the majority of them are less than 20 centimetres tall. Most of the tallest stones are on the east side of the quadrangle. The monoliths appear to be naturally occurring stones and thus are irregularly-shaped. West of the field of monoliths are four low-lying rectangular-shaped tumuli and foundations. Three of these form a row which is 53 metres in length. The local 'brog-pa allege that Ser-leb Mon-rdo is a Mon burial ground. However, human remains have apparently not been found in living memory. Indications are that Ser-leb Mon-rdo is a pre-Buddhist site.

(L-100; P-106) Name: Klu-bdud Mon-rdo; Location: Klu-bdud Pho-brang, approximately 10 kilometres north of Kong Chu township headquarters. Located in a sandy plain, the site consists of three rows of parallel standing stones encompassing an area of two metres (north to south) by eight metres (east to west). The monument, which is not precisely aligned with the cardinal directions, contains stones which are between 12 centimetres and 40 centimetres in height. There are 20 menhirs in the south row, 19 in the central row and 18 in the north row with at least a few additional dislodged stones. On the west end of the monolithic array is an oval ring of stones measuring five metres in length. The structure consists of several rings of stones and appears to be the foundation of a structure which was associated with the standing stones. Indications are that Klu-bdud Mon-rdo is a pre-Buddhist site.

(L-101; P-107, P-108) 'Brong-pa-dpon rGyang-shig (The Broken Walls of Wild Yak District). Location: on the left side of the Indus valley, Seng-stod township, dGe-rgyas county. This is a large archaeological site consisting of five groups of menhirs and various other structures. In the northern-most group are three stelae within the faint remains of an enclosure, the tallest of which is 1.2 metres.²⁶ Thirteen metres further south is a tumulus measuring 15 metres in length and nearly two metres in height. Another 13 metres south are five more stelae in an enclosure measuring 13 metres (east to west) by six metres (north to south). Twenty metres south of this group of menhirs is the largest structure at 'Brong-pa-dpon rGyang-shig. This structure measures 12 metres (north to south) by 4.5 metres (east to west) and is a maximum of three metres tall, although originally it was taller. The structure is massively built of courses of flat stones cemented together with thick layers of clay and has a very small interior space. This structure forms the west wall of a modern stock pen. Nearly four metres south is a line of 11 menhirs, the tallest in the group being 80 centimetres. Adjacent to this row of stelae is another smaller cubic structure and just north of it is another group of standing stones. These cubic structures are reminiscent of ones found at other sites of monolithic arrays. Forty metres further south are seven menhirs laid out in a U-shaped pattern, the tallest of which is 1.25 metres. They are contained in the west end of an enclosure measuring 9.3 metres (east to west) by 6.6 metres (north to south). According to the oral history of the region, 'Brong-pa-dpon rGyang-shig was once used by chieftains. Indications are that 'Brong-pa-dpon rGyang shig is a pre-Buddhist site.

²⁶ An unnumbered photograph of this group of stelae has been published; see bsTan'dzin dBang-grags 1996.

(L-102; P-109) Name: mNa'-ma 'Dre-'khyer (Bride Carried Away by Demons). Location: plain of same name, Khul-pa township, Ru-thog county. This site consists of approximately 585 stelae arrayed in nine rows oriented to the cardinal directions. The quadrangle of monoliths extends over an area measuring 3.75 (north to south) by 27 metres (east to west). The stones protrude 10 centimetres to 40 centimetres above ground level and are arrayed in neat rows. Some of the stones are missing, and it is therefore, not clear if each row had an equal number. On the west end of the field of menhirs are the remnants of a foundation measuring five metres by five metres. There is folk tale which seems to hint at the funerary character of the site: a long, long time ago, a bride and her party traveling to meet the groom perished in a tempest created by demons. Subsequently, in order to remove the harmful influences associated with the site the *Vajrayana* hero Gu-ru Rin-po-che magically erected the stones. Indications are that mNa'-ma 'Dre-'khyer is a pre-Buddhist site.

(L-103; P-110) Name: none available. Location: on the top of Byang-sdong Gong-kha, sGar county. Byang-sdong Gong-kha is the pass on the main road to Mount Kailash which runs between the drainage basins of the Sotlej and sGar rivers. Near the prayer flag mast (*dar-icog*) are the remains of a group of monoliths covering an area of five metres (north to south) by 13 metres (east to west). The standing stones protrude 10 centimetres to 30 centimetres from the ground. The site has been heavily disturbed, with part of it being incorporated into the base of the prayer flag mast. The coherence of the rows of stones is lost, as many of the tiny stelae are missing. Indications are that the monolithic array at Byang-sdong Gong-kha constitutes a pre-Buddhist site.

(L-104; P-111, P-112, P-113) Name: Yu-kham-bu. Location: above Ra-tshang mTsho, Ri-shi Township, 'Brong-pa county. This exceptionally important site, consisting of six large complexes of standing stones and other structures, is situated on slopes, heavily covered in brush, overlooking the west side of Ra-tshang mtsho. The six main complexes I have designated Lower North, Central North, Upper North, Lower South, Upper South and Tower. Each of these complexes contains a concourse of stelae numbering in the hundreds which are closely aligned in the cardinal directions. These standing stones were built primarily of a light-bluish metamorphic rock or light-coloured granite, and are upwards of 65 centimetres in height. The fields of menhirs are heavily weathered, often covered in climax lichen and are overgrown with vegetation. On the west side of each of these fields of standing stones are massively built structures with walls up to two metres thick. These structures exhibit

sophisticated stonework whereby diagonal courses of stones alternate with courses laid horizontally. Due to very thick inner and outer walls, these edifices, at least on the ground level, have very diminutive interior spaces. The Tower Complex consists of a quadrangle of menhirs measuring 26 metres (east to west) by 12.5 metres (north to south). The dimensions of the adjoining structure are 20 metres (north to south) by 13 metres (east to west) and its walls are as much as four metres tall, the highest at Yu-kham-bu. The quadrangle of stelae of the Upper South Complex is about 50 % intact and measures 22 metres (north to south) by 26 metres (east to west). The adjoining structure is 43 metres (north to south) by a minimum of 10 metres (east to west). Lower South Complex consists of a quadrangle of standing stones measuring 30 metres by 30 metres. The dimensions of the adjoining structure are nine metres (east to west) by 37 metres (north to south). The quadrangle of menhirs composing the Lower North Complex measures 60 metres (east to west) by 28 metres (north to south). The structure on the east side of the menhirs measures 51 metres (north to south) by as much as 16 metres (east to west). Central North Complex contains a quadrangle of stelae measuring 53 metres (north to south) by 12 metres (east to west). The adjoining building is 54 metres (north to south) by 12 metres (east to west). The array of monoliths of the Upper North Complex covers an area measuring 16 metres (north to south) by 21 metres (east to west). On the opposite side of a perennial stream from these six complexes is another archaeological site of the same name. This site consists of around one dozen pits two to four metres deep, covering an area of about 10,000 square metres. Some of these pits are partially lined with fine masonry. On the top and bottom ends of the site are the remains of above ground structures. I was not able to obtain any oral history on Yu-kham-bu, which like many of the other sites I surveyed, is known only to a small number of people in the locale. Indications are that Yu-kham-bu is a pre-Buddhist site.

(L-105; P-114) Name: Khang-dmar Mon-dur (Red House Mon Graves). Location: Khang-dmar village, Ru-'thor township, 'Brong-pa county. In the midst of the corrals of Khang-dmar is a concourse of standing stones aligned in the cardinal directions, roughly measuring 15 metres by 15 metres. The site has been heavily disturbed and so its actual extent could not be determined. Many of the stelae are missing but there are still around 300 in situ. The standing stones are up to 65 centimetres in height, made of uncut stones, heavily worn and are inclined at oblique angles. In the vicinity are various fragments of foundations forming intricate patterns in the sandy plain. Despite the site being considered a Mon burial ground by the local 'brog-pa, there is no record of human

remains being found here. Indications are that Khang-dmar rDo-ring is a pre-Buddhist site.

(L-106; P-115) Name: mTho-po Mar-rang. Location: three kilometres upstream from sPre-ta-pu-ri, Mon-'tsher township, sGar county. This site is situated on a bench directly above the right bank of the Sutlej river. On the bench is a quadrangle of monoliths blanketing an area measuring 53 metres (east to west) by 19 metres (north to south). There are roughly 200 stelae in situ, perhaps only 20% of the original number. The standing stones range from less than 10 centimetres to 80 centimetres in height. In general, the smallest stones seem to have had their tops broken off. There appear to be the remains of a wall around the quadrangle and other walls dividing it into several sections which was built of stones up to 1.5 metres in length, the same size as the longest dislodged stelae found on the site. Traces of foundations extend 40 metres east of the quadrangle, terminating near a lone stele which is 30 centimetres tall. Immediately west of the concourse of menhirs are the remains of a structure whose dimensions are 25 metres (north to south) by 8 metres (east to west). This massively built structure has walls which are one to two metres thick and which have now been reduced to four metres or less in height. This formidable edifice could potentially have been much taller. A lot of rubble obscures the view of the interior but it appears to have had inner walls as well as outer walls, and to have been divided by another wall into two sections. It seems that this edifice had a relatively very small interior space, and therefore did not have a domiciliary function. According to elders in the area, mTho-po Mar-rang was built by the Mon. Indications are that mTho-po Mar-rang is a pre-Buddhist site.

Type-11: Other remains such as mountain top walls, irrigation systems, unidentified tumuli and earth-works

(L-107; P-116) Name: 'Brug-mo'i sBra-yas (The Erect Tent of 'Brug-mo). Location: La-rgan mdo village, about nine kilometres northwest of the 'Dam-gzhung county seat.²⁷ The site consists of earthen walls elevated two to three metres above the surrounding plain, measuring 80 metres (east to west) by 250 metres (north to south). Within these walls are man-made mounds, depressions and terraces. On the surface of the site one can find red glazed ceramic shards

²⁷ There are at least four groups of earthworks in the 'Dam and sNying-drung regions; see Bellezza 1999a.

and fragments of what appear to be human osteological remains. Reportedly, when the 'brog-pa mined the site for building stones other human remains were unearthed. The local 'brog-pa connect Brug-mo'i sBra-yas with Lha-mo 'Brug-mo, the wife of the epic hero, or alternatively with an ancient Mongol (Hor-pa) army. The pre-Buddhist status of 'Brug-mo'i sBra-yas is provisional.

(L-108; P-117) Name: rKyang-rag Kha-yog) (Bottom Side of the Tawny Onager). Location: just north of sBa-kha village, seven kilometres northwest of the 'Dam-gzhung county seat. The site consists of man-made earthen walls elevated 1.5 metres to two metres above the surrounding plain, measuring 80 metres by 80 metres. There is no south wall because in this direction the complex terminates in a sheer drop of several metres. Inside the walls are rocky depressions and small mounds. Outside the walls, in close proximity, are man-made terraces and a tumulus two metres tall and ten metres in diameter. The local 'brog-pa attribute the ruins at rKyang-rag Kha-yog either to figures in the Tibetan epic or to an ancient Mongol army. The pre-Buddhist status of rKyang-rag Kha-yog is provisional.

(L-109; P-118) Name: Ba'am; Location: Ba'am, Dang-ra g.Yu-mtsho, 'Om-bu township, Nyi-ma county. Vestiges of irrigation works are found in the valley above the ancient farming community of Ba'am. Nowadays, as a rule, the stream at Ba'am is completely dry (although there is little water during a heavy monsoon season). What now looks like a trail hugging the steep slopes of the north side of the Ba'am valley, is the remains of the old irrigation channel. Fragments of retaining walls up to three metres in height still cling to the slope. At one place the wall moves away from the slope to create a level area which may have been a small reservoir (like the ones still in use in the viable agricultural communities of Dang-ra g.Yu-mtsho). According to Bon elders in the region, in the pre-Buddhist period the large desiccated river bed at Ba'am supported a relatively high volume river. While local people see the irrigation works at Ba'am as part of the Zhang Zhung infrastructure of the region, until there is a scientific study it cannot be ruled out that agriculture was practised subsequent to the fall of the pre-Buddhist kingdom. The pre-Buddhist status of the Ba'am irrigation works is provisional.

(L-110; P-119) Name: Dar-chung. Location: Dar-chung, Dang-ra g.Yu-mtsho, 'Om-bu township, Nyi-ma county. On the upper edge of the benches which form Dar-chung are two sections of an old irrigation channel totaling approximately 10 metres in length. These are stone structures which were built

against a cliff face. The water feeding this channel originated from the Dar-chen Chu (River) and, according to local people, was used to water crops on the benches below in the Zhang Zhung period. The pre-Buddhist status of the irrigation works at Dar-chung is provisional.

(L-111; P-120) Name Lu-sngon. Location: Lu-sngon gTsang-po valley, Dang-ra g.Yu-mtsho, 'Om-bu township, Nyi-ma county. On the upper end of the benches overlooking the north side of the Lu-sngon valley are the vestiges of an irrigation system, which regional elders say at one time brought water to Khyung rDzong, and perhaps to agricultural parcels which some say were once located in the vicinity. In total, about 200 metres of irrigation channel have survived, allowing an appraisal of the gradient and channel width. These stone structures are built against cliffs and outcrops and attain a maximum height of 1.5 metres. In order to bring water to this elevation the channel must have originally extended about two kilometres up the Lu-sngon gTsang-po valley. The pre-Buddhist status of the site is provisional.

(L-112; P-121) Name: Dom-ri gNa'-kha Mon-ra (Mon-pa Enclosure of Bear Mountain Blue Sheep Plain). Location: Dom-ri gNa'-kha Mon-ra, dPon-stod, township, Nyi-ma county. The site consists of a rocky limestone tumulus 22 meters in length and as much as one metre tall. Some excavation of it has been carried out by local 'brog-pa. According to an elderly resident, this site is connected with the Mon king Shing-khri rGyal-po of the Tibetan epic. With so few available morphological clues, the pre-Buddhist status of Dom-ri gNa'-ka Mon-ra is provisional.

(L-113; P-122) Name: Klu-mo Pho-brang Mon-rdo (Female Water Spirits Palace Stones of the Mon); Location: Klu-mo gDong-ra, seven kilometres southeast of Yag-ra township, dGe-rgyas county. On the summit of kLu-mo gDong-ra are various ruined walls overlooking the enormous Yag-ra plain which I divide into North, Central and South complexes. The most extensive of these is the North Summit complex, which consists of foundations and wall fragments covering an area of seven metres by 17 metres. Below the summit complexes a wall one to 1.2 metres tall and up to 1.5 metres thick traverses the slopes for a distance of 72 metres. There are also the remnants of another wall which is 20 metres in length. On a saddle below the summit are the remains of what appears to be a building foundation measuring roughly seven metres by 13 metres. According to local sources, the series of walls comprising Klu-mo Pho-brang Mon-rdo represent the vestiges of a Mon-pa palace or fort, but from what is

visible, it is not clear whether these walls actually formed part of buildings. Indications are that Klu-mo Pho-brang Mon-rdo is a pre-Buddhist site.

(L-114 P-123) Name: Mi-lhas 'Khor-rdo; Location: several kilometres from the north shore of Glog-phug mTsho, Ra-spang township, Ru-thog county. This site consists of a tumulus measuring 14 metres by 8 metres which is believed to conceal the remains of structures built by the Mon. Reportedly, until recently, it was a much more coherent structure but stones were removed wholesale by truck for local construction projects. The pre-Buddhist status of Mi-lhas 'Khor-rdo is provisional.

Conclusion

The survey of pre-Buddhist archaeological sites carried out on the Changthang Circuit Expedition furnishes us with a good indication of how extensive and diverse sedentary civilisation was in the Byang-thang and sTod in the period before Buddhism came to dominate Tibet. We can no longer just speak in terms of a nomadic culture occupying the region, and we must begin to recognise that the pre-Buddhists had all the hallmarks of a civilisation: sophisticated agriculture systems, a complex infrastructure, art, and perhaps a system of writing, as Bon tradition would have us believe.

From this survey it should be clear to the reader that the largest and most immediate threat to the archaeological sites is their plunder by the local population. The trend towards the construction of houses, corrals and other buildings means that there is a high demand for building materials. The sites are often a ready source of stones and consequently they are being vigorously exploited. Only a benevolently executed awareness campaign on the part of local officials can address this problem.

I am well aware that once archaeological sites are put on the map they are vulnerable to degradation at the hands of the disreputable. As a first priority, it is imperative that this heritage, be conserved for future generations. Secondly, once those interested are aware of this heritage measures can be taken to carry the investigation to the next stage: the scientific excavation of selected sites. Until such steps are taken a huge gap will remain in our knowledge of Eurasian archaeology.

The archaeological sites documented in this paper, as well as in my previous publications, provide us with a springboard for further enquiry. At this point in the investigation there is little archaeometric data to rely on. I hope that with the publication of these findings the situation will change, and that the archaeological profession will find the interest and resources to make a thorough exploration of some of these sites. Much will depend on international academic institutions forging mutually beneficial relations with the government of the People's Republic of China and local Tibetan communities.

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P-1 Ser rDzong, sKyid-phug dGon-pa.

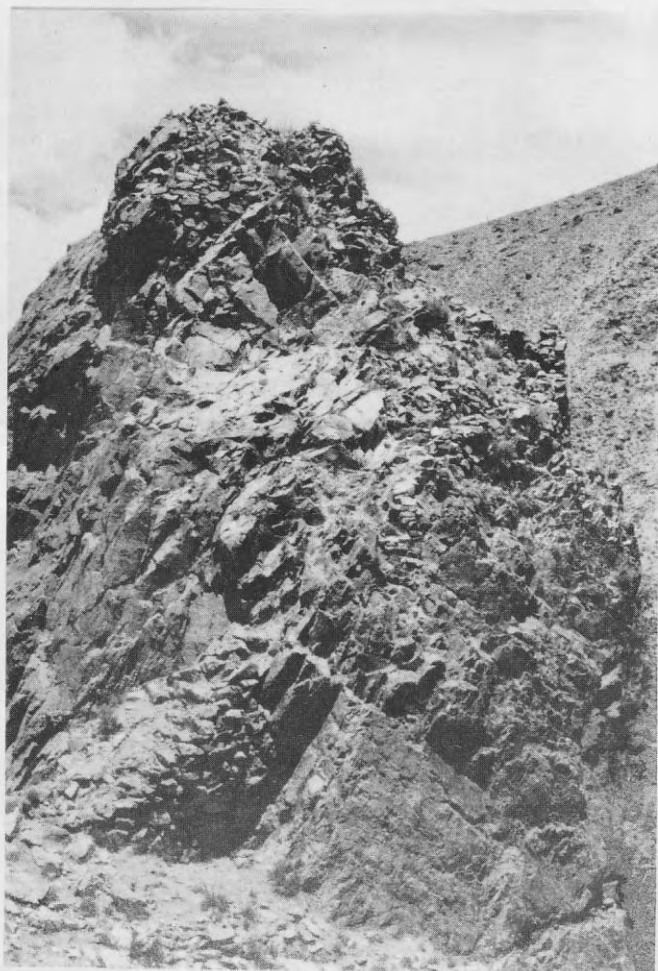


P-2 Nag rDzong. View of the Summit Complex.



P-3 Sha-ba Brag.

P-3 Sha-ba Brag. View of the Summit Complex.



P-4 'Om-bu rDzong.

P-4 Site of 'Om-bu rDzong, Tibet. This is a small percentage of the site.



P-5 Ruins at Khyung La.



P-6 Gyam-pa'i rDzong. Photo depicts just a small percentage of the site.



P-7 Ar-po rDzong. Summit Complex.



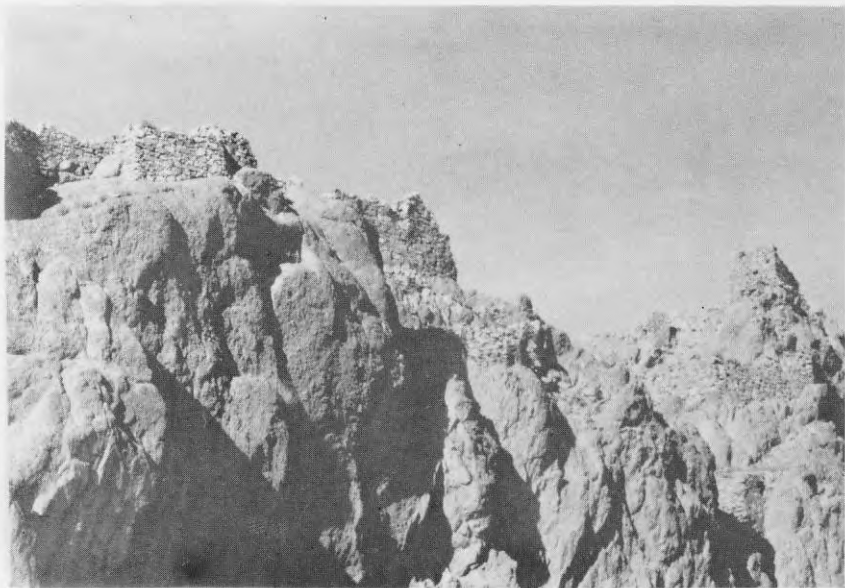
P-8 Site of Brag-chung dBu-rtse rDzong.



P-9 Gyang-pa'i-gtsug rDzong.



P-10 Phyug-'tsho Grog-po rDzong. Note the walls of adobe and stone sandwiched together.



P-11 Phyug-'tsho Grog-po rDzong. Only a small portion of the site is depicted here.



P-12 Tsan-rag.



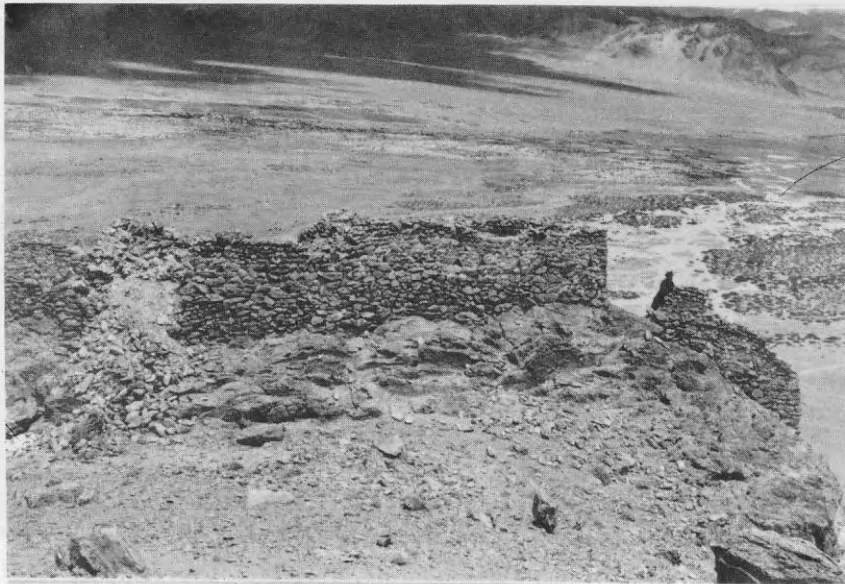
P-13 Ruins on the very top of Ser-mdzod rDzong.



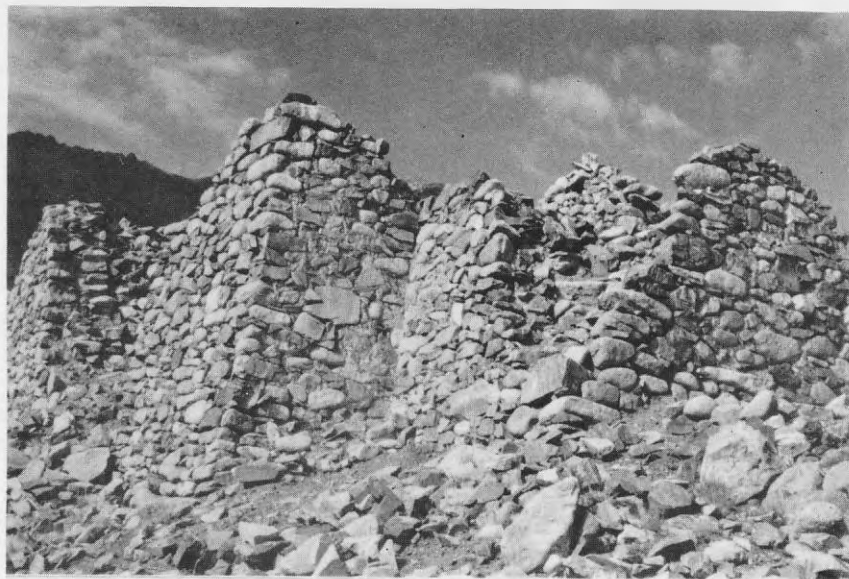
P-14 Zhing-chen Mon mKhar.



P-15 Klu Pho-brang Mon mKhar. A portion of ruins on summit are shown.



P-16 Nya-chu rDzong-dkar. West Complex.



P-17 Khu-rag mKhar-gog.



P-18 bShan-pa'i mKhar.



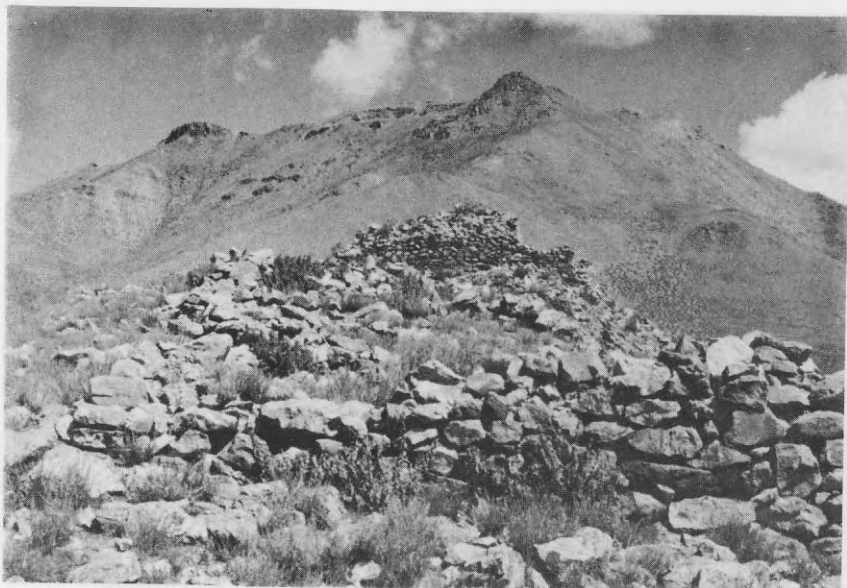
P-19 A section of the base of the dBu-byang site.



P-20 Ramparts of Glog-phug Mon mKhar.



P-21 Close-up of structure at Glog-phug Mon mKhar.



P-22 Hang-dal rDzong.



P-23 Gra-rong Mon rDzong. West Complex.



P-24 Zhing-pa'i mKhar.



P-25 A portion of A-pha 'Dre-dkar sPungs-pa Mon rDzong.



P-26 Wall at Mu-ti.



P-27 Gyer-ru Do. Cave site on north side of headland.

P-28 A portion of a pile of stones at the base of the cliff.



P-28 Brag-mthu-bo-che. Upper Complex.

P-30 Upper Brag-mthu-bo-che. Upper White Equipment Cave Lower IX Cave
contains a structure built of stone and clay which was painted with red ochre.



P-29 gNas Kun-bzang / sMon Brag-sa. Upper White Escarpment, Cave Lower VII.



P-30 gNas Kun-bzang / sMon Brag-sa. Upper White Escarpment, Cave Lower IX. Cave contains a structure built of stone and clay which was painted with red ochre.



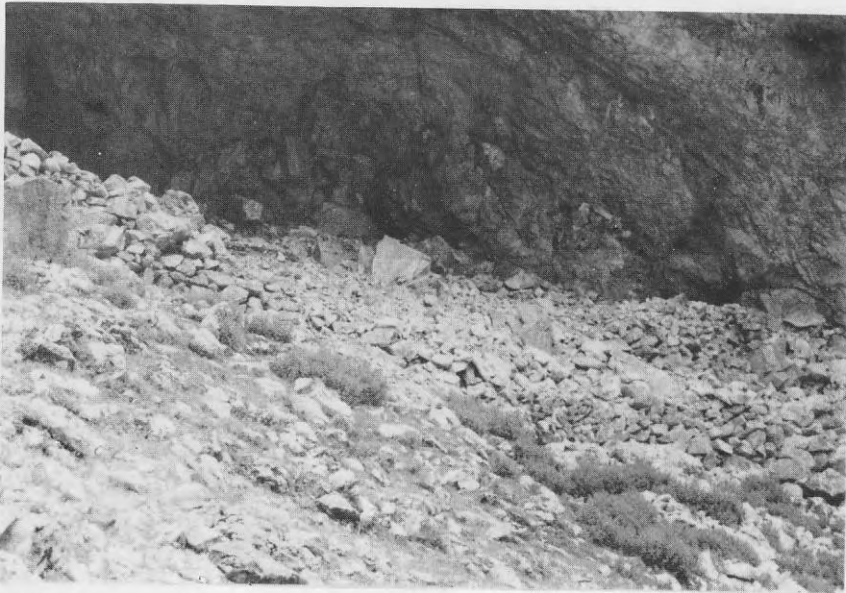
P-31 Am-nag. North Cave.



P-32 Go-bdag.



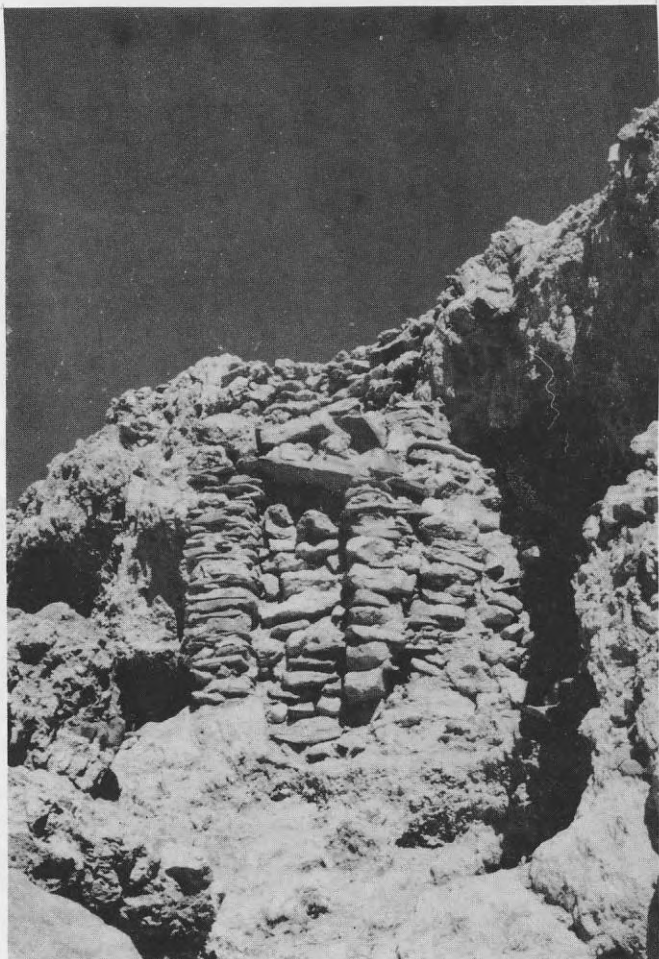
P-33 Sad-ne Ga'u sGrub-phug.



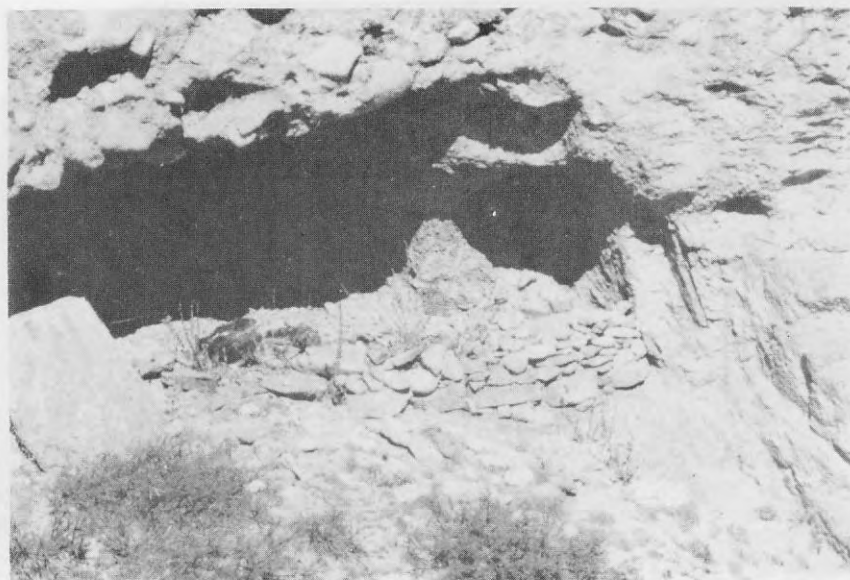
P-34 rDzong dKar-po.



P-35 Ma-mig Brag-dkar. The site is now a Buddhist meditation retreat.



P-36 Chu Phug.



P-37 sTag-rong. One of the caves with faint man-made remains.



P-38 Site of rDo-rang dGon-pa.



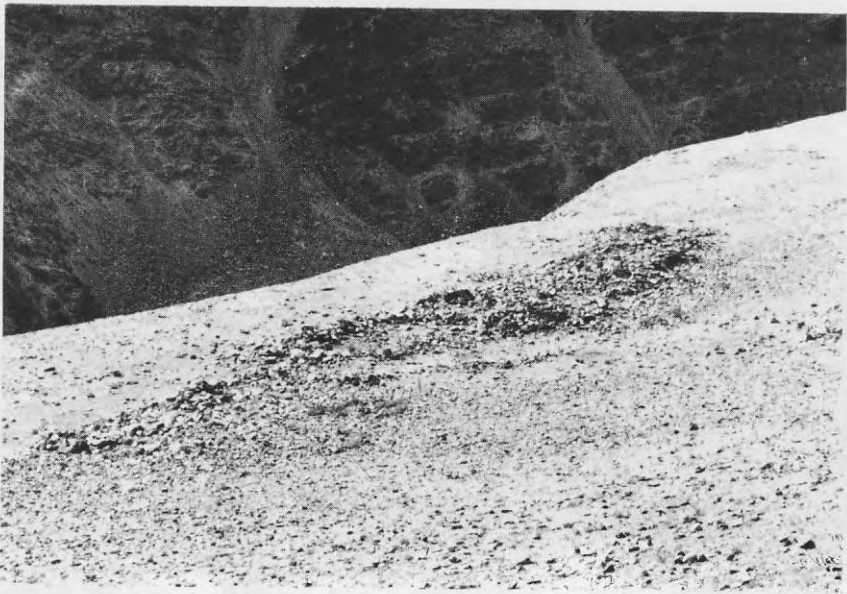
P-39 Ba'am dGon-gtag. Upper Complex.



P-40 Go-po-rnams-gsum. Note the dark-coloured stone roof brace in the corner of the structure.



P-41 Go-po-rnams-gsum. Upper Main Structure.



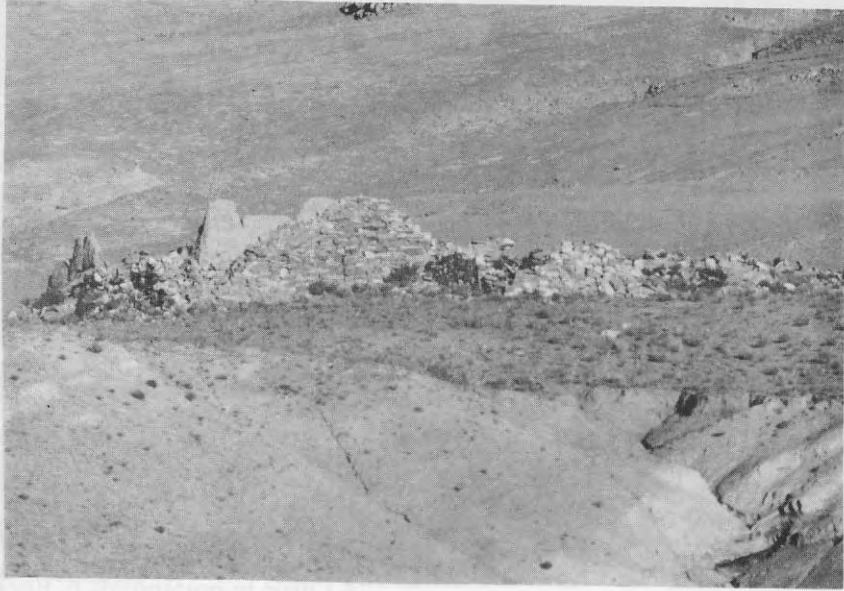
P-42 dGon-gtag gTag-mgo. The largest structure is shown.



P-43 Intact lintel at gYung-drung Brag-rtse.



P-44 La-lung Brag-dkar, Lower Middle Structure. Note the stone roof braces protruding from the rear wall.



P-45 Phyug-tsho Grog-po dGon-pa.



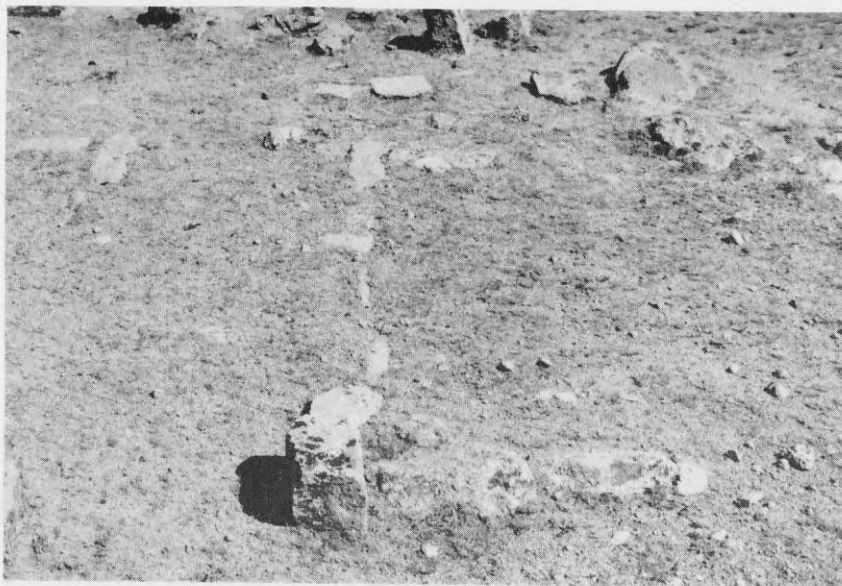
P-46 Rwa-skye Brag. Portion of Main Complex.



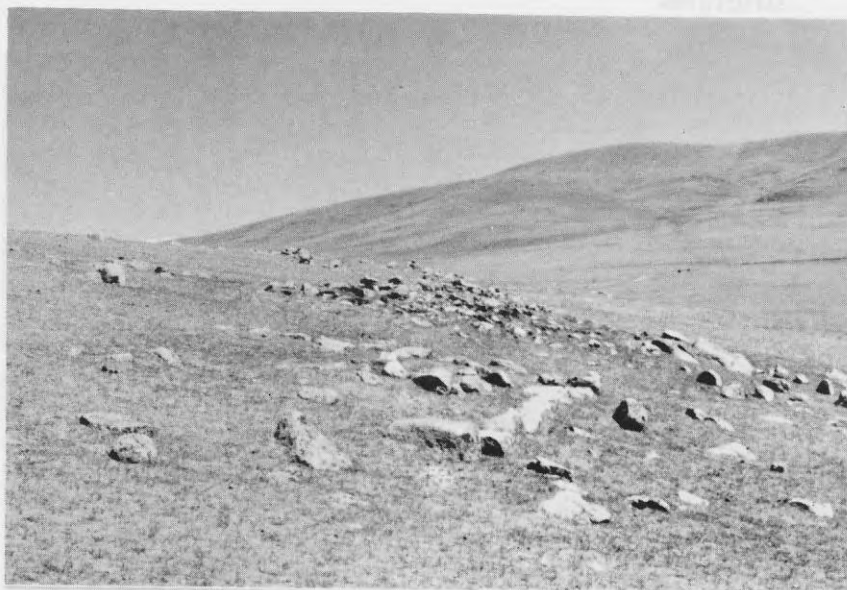
P-47 dGos-'dod Brag-khung.



P-48 Sha-sha dPal-khang.



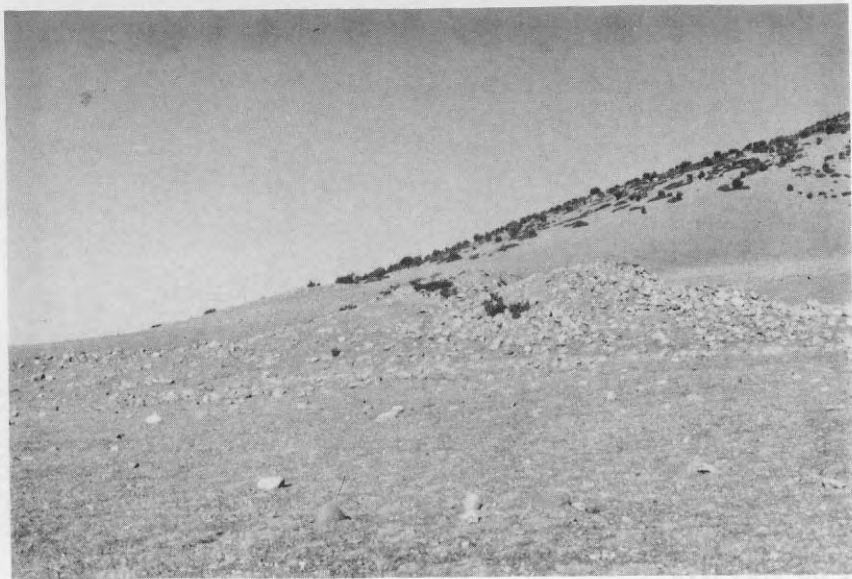
P-49 A foundation at Srib La.



P-50 gSer Nya.



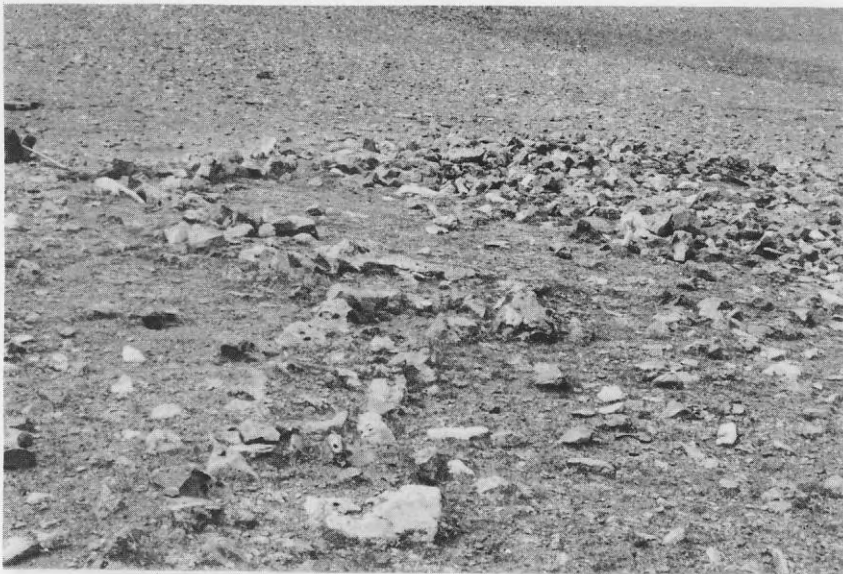
P-51 A-chog. The stony heaps in the photograph are the remains of structures.



P-52 sKye-lung and Lung-gsum. Tumulus at Lung-chen.



P-53 Do mKhar-mgo.



P-54 sTag-lung. East Site foundation.



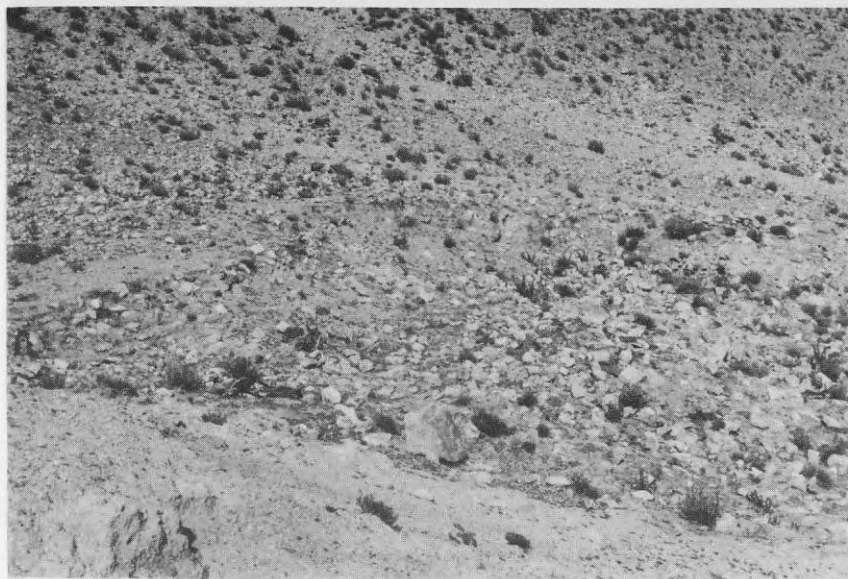
P-55 sTag-lung. West Site foundation.



P-56 Cairns at mChod-rten rGya-ba.



P-57 mChod-rten rGya-ba. Foundations immediately west of the cairn complex.



P-58 'Phong-chen. Complex I.



P-59 Ba'am.



P-60 Dar-chen Khang Khrog.



P-61 dMar-lcam. West Complex.



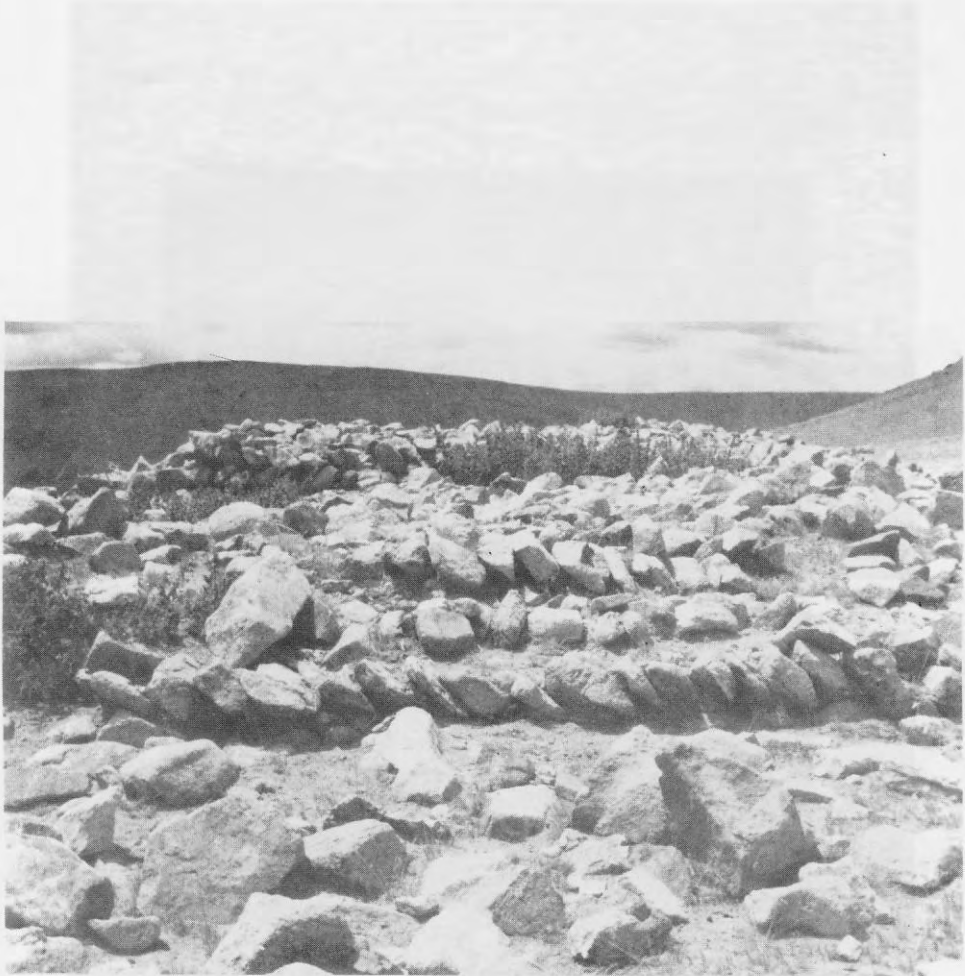
P-62 'Om-mo. Vestiges of foundations.



P-63 Sog-po. Ruins of one of around one dozen structures found on the site.



P-64 rDza-ra dKar-gyam Mon-rdo. Structure Lower IV.



P-65 rDza-ra dKar-gyam Mon-rdo. Structure Lower V. Note the remains of the lower wall which was built of diagonally-placed stones.

W26 La-wood Mon-pa'i Dze-bhag: One of the structures found here, note the faint traces of a foundation in the foreground.



P-66 Foundation wall at rDo-po Rog.



P-67 The rubble below this modern wall is said to have been part of an ancient Bon site.



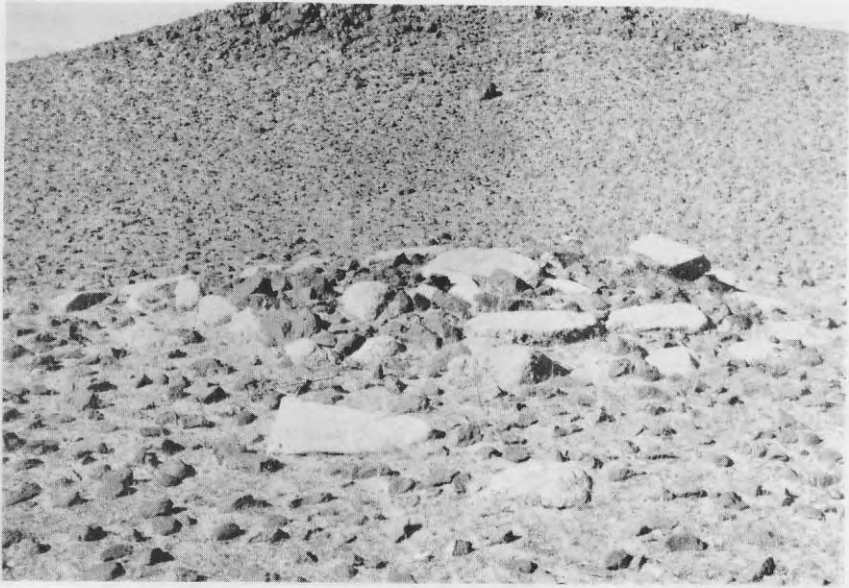
P-68 La-smad Mon-pa'i Dur-khung. One of the structures found here, note the faint traces of a foundation in the foreground.



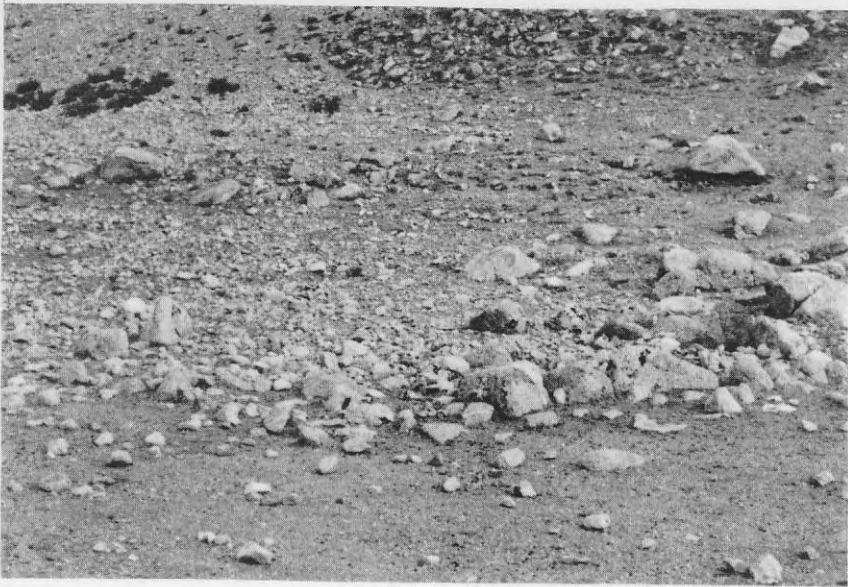
P-69 Khog-ro. One of the purported graves.



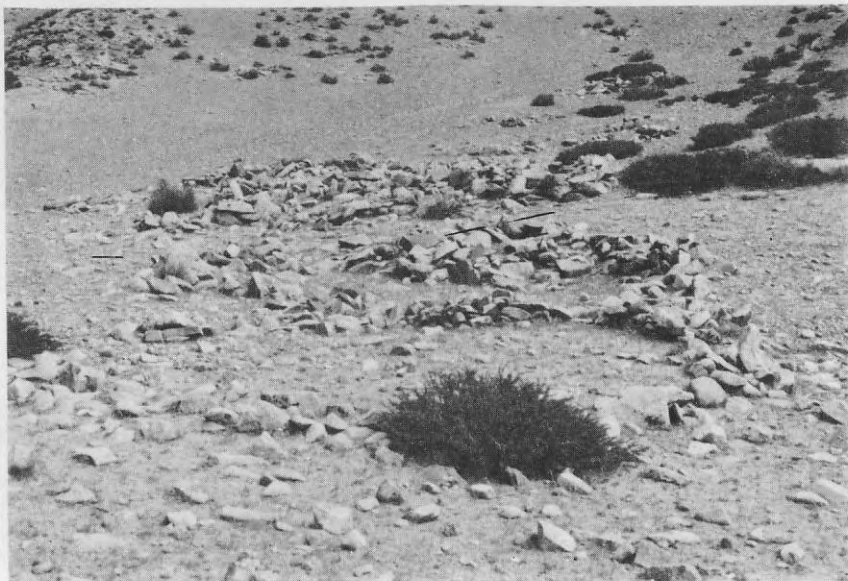
P-70 rTid-ra Mon dur. South Cluster II.



P-71 Brag-dkar-nag sDings. South Grave.



P-72 Dar-chung Mon-pa'i Dur-khung. Grave III.



P-73 Tshwa-kha Mon-Khang. Oval-shaped graves in valley bottom.



P-74 Ra-'brog 'Phrang-sgo. Three tombs are visible in the photograph



P-75 Mon-pa Nag-po. Tomb Lower West II.



P-76 Tomb at Ri Ra-ser.



P-77 rTwsa-med Gos-sa Mon-dur. Tomb I.



P-78 Khro-thung Mon-dur. North Central Outcrop Tomb.
Note the central burial chamber.



P-79 One of the tombs at rDo-khra zlum.



P-80 Ser-tshogs rDo-ring. Note the much more modern *ma-ni* inscription above the *g.yung-drung* and *mchod-rten* in the right specimen.

P-78 Khen-tshug Men-tse, North Central Duzung Tash
Note the central burial chamber.



P-81 Blon-po rDo-ring



P-82 bSe-le Kham-pa rDo-ring
an inscription above the g yung-dang and
arched stone in the right specimen.



P-83 Sha-shar rDo-ring.



P-84 Seng-'khor Byang-ma rDo-ring.



P-85 Kya rDzong rDo-ring.



P-86 rDo-rang rDo-ring Chung.

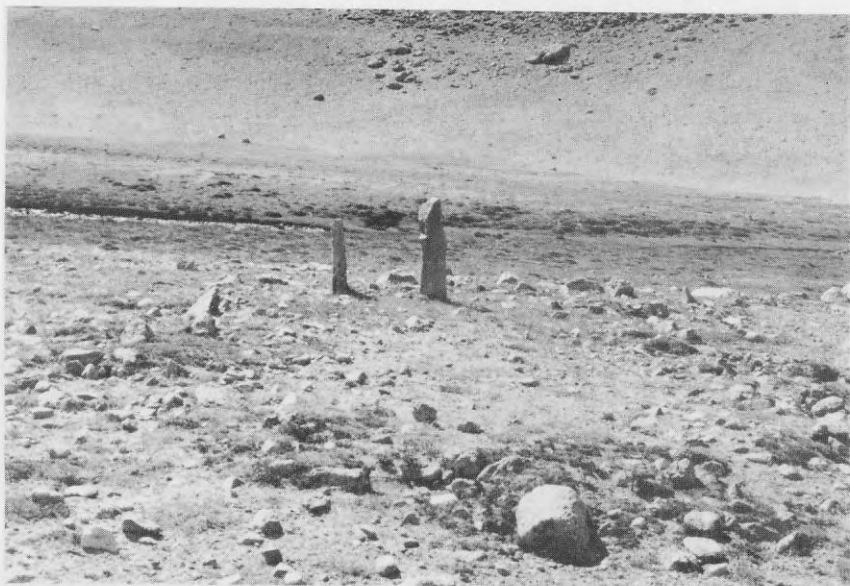
P-86 rDo-rang rDo-ring Chung.



P-87 Phe'a-lung rDo-ring.



P-88 Mon-ra Yar-gan rDo-ring.



P-89 Dzis-sna Mon'ra'i rDo-ring.



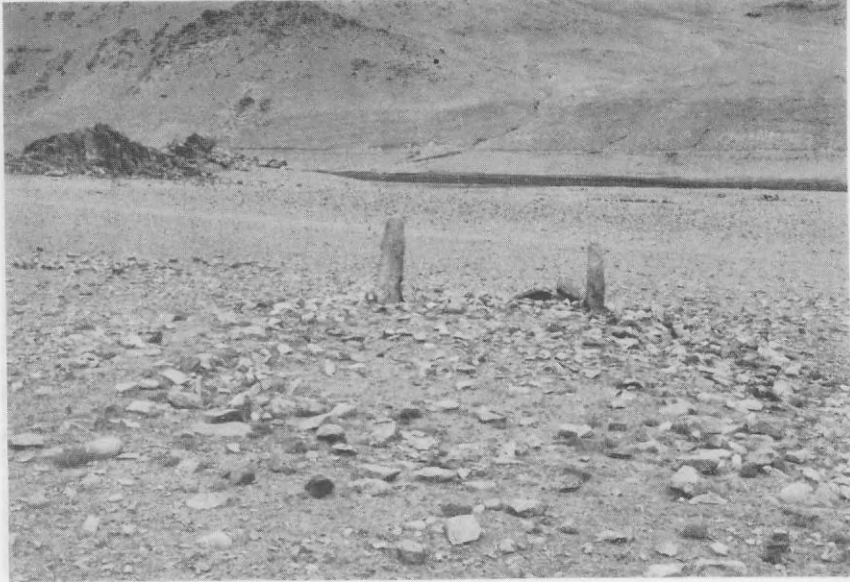
P-90 Lam-lung rDo-ring.



P-91 'Dan-chu Mon-ra.



P-92 'O-ma rDo-ring.



P-93 Zhing-chen Mon-rdo.



P-94 Shangs rDo-ring. Ancient foundations in the middle of the main road.



P-95 Khang-dmar rDo-ring.



P-96 A-'go rDo-ring.



P-97 Yid-rtse mKhar rDo-ring. Dislodged specimen.



P-98 sPyog-po rDo-ring. The enclosure around the stele is among the best preserved example found in this type of monument.



P-99 Shag-gang mTho-po.



P-100 Pe-gya rDo-ring.



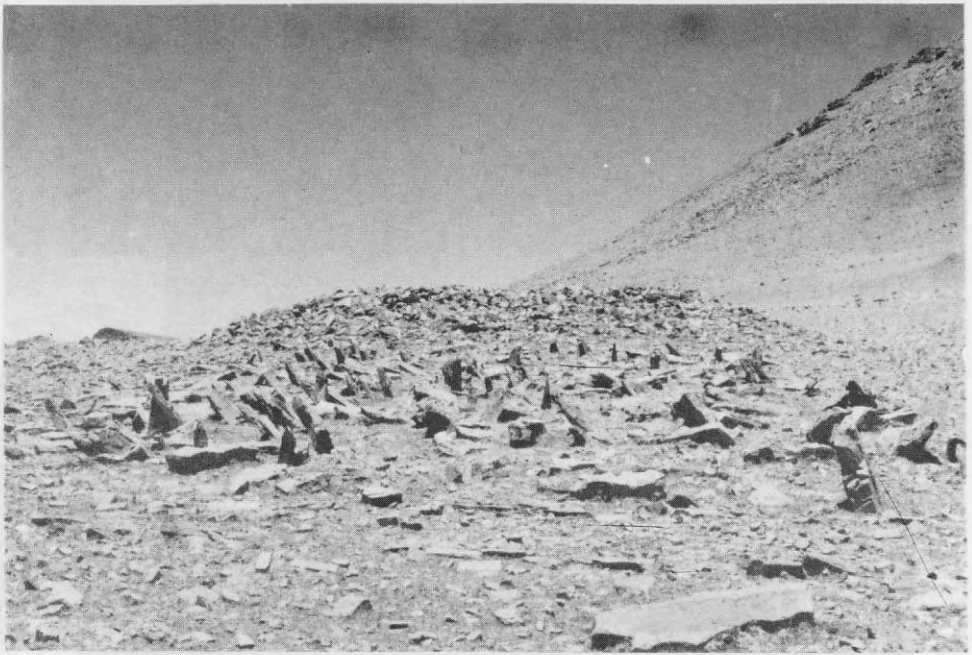
P-101 Senge rDo-ring.



P-102 Chu Phug rDo-ring. Note the east foundation
0wall of the enclosure.



P-103 Lo-ro rDo-ring.



P-104 rTa-sgo rTa-'dogs-sa. Note the structure behind the monolithic array.



P-105 Ser-leb Mon-rdo.

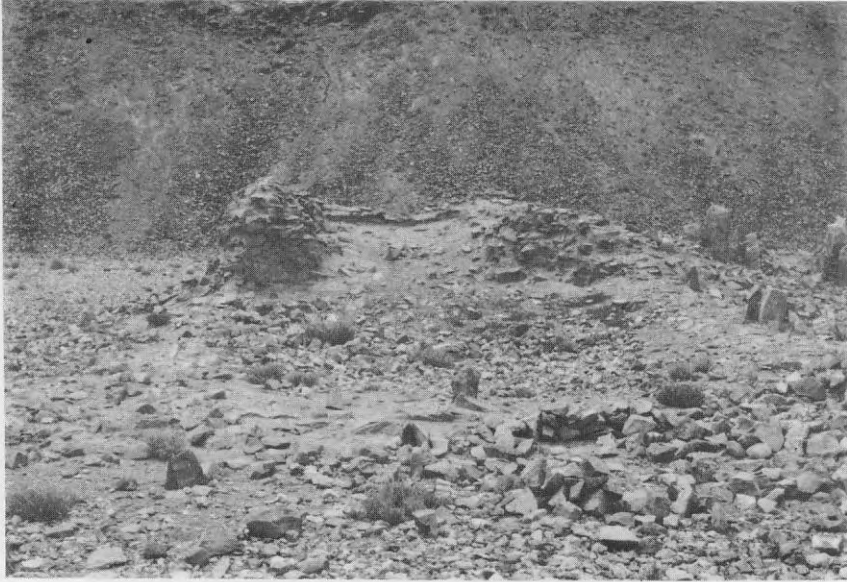


P-106 Klu-bud Mon-rdo.



P-107 Seng-stod rGyang-yig. Menhirs beside larger cubic structure.

P-108 mNā-mo Dze-khyer



P-108 Seng-stod rGyang-yig. Menhirs next to smaller cubic structure.



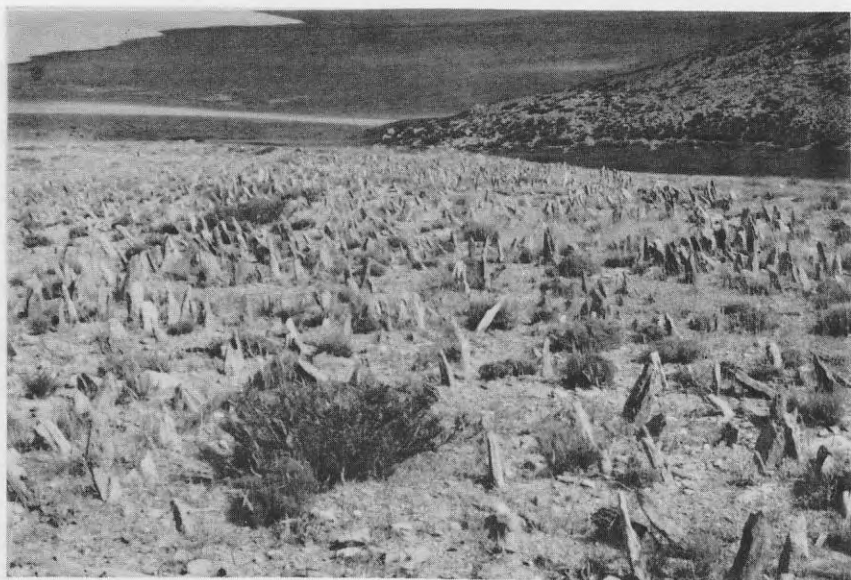
P-109 mNa'-mo 'Dre-'khyer.



P-110 Monolithic array at Byang-sdong Gong-kha.



P-111 Yu-kham-bu. Lower North Complex structure.



P-112 Yu-kham-bu. Lower North Complex concourse of stelae.



P-113 Yu-kham-bu. A portion of the stelae in the Tower Complex.



P-114 Khang-dmar Mon'dur.



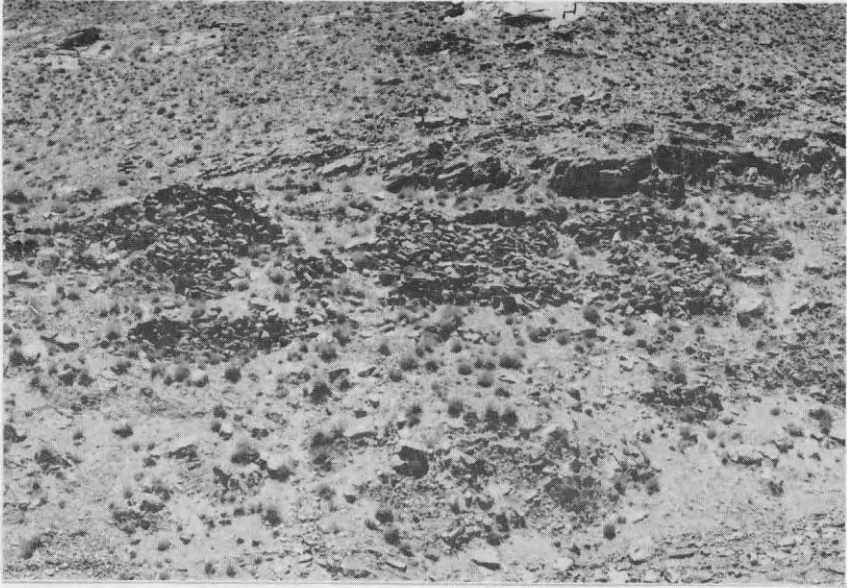
P-115 mTho-po Mar-rang.



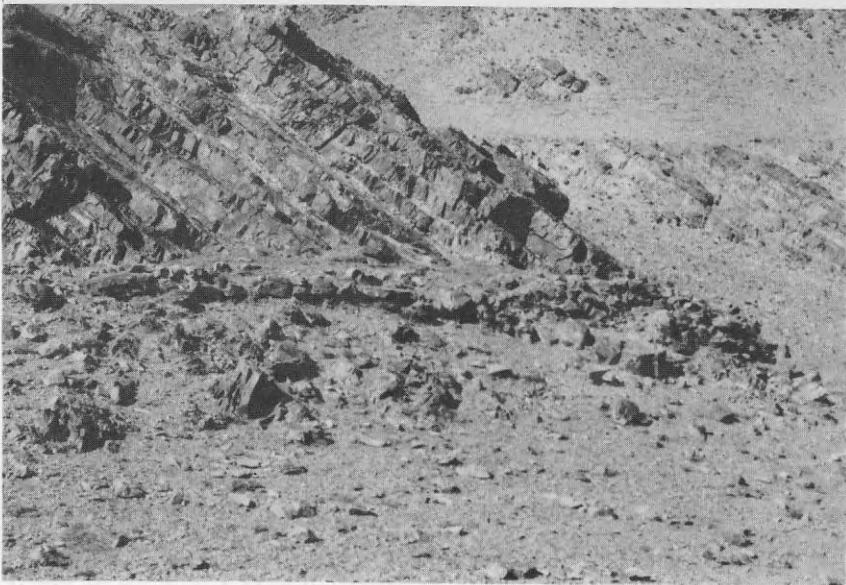
P-116 'Brug-mo'i sBra.yas. Note the earthen wall which runs across the photograph.



P-117 rKyang-rag Kha-yog. The three earthen walls of this site are visible.



P-118 Ba'am irrigation works. These channel fragments are over three metres tall.



P-119 Dar-chung irrigation channel fragment on edge of escarpment.



P-120 Lu-sngon irrigation channel segment running below escarpment.



P-121 Dom-ri Mon-ra tumulus.



P-122 Klu-mo Pho-brang. Section of wall of North Summit Complex.









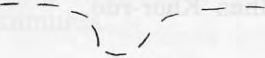


P-123 Tumulus at Med-lhas 'Khor-rdo.

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Map Legend

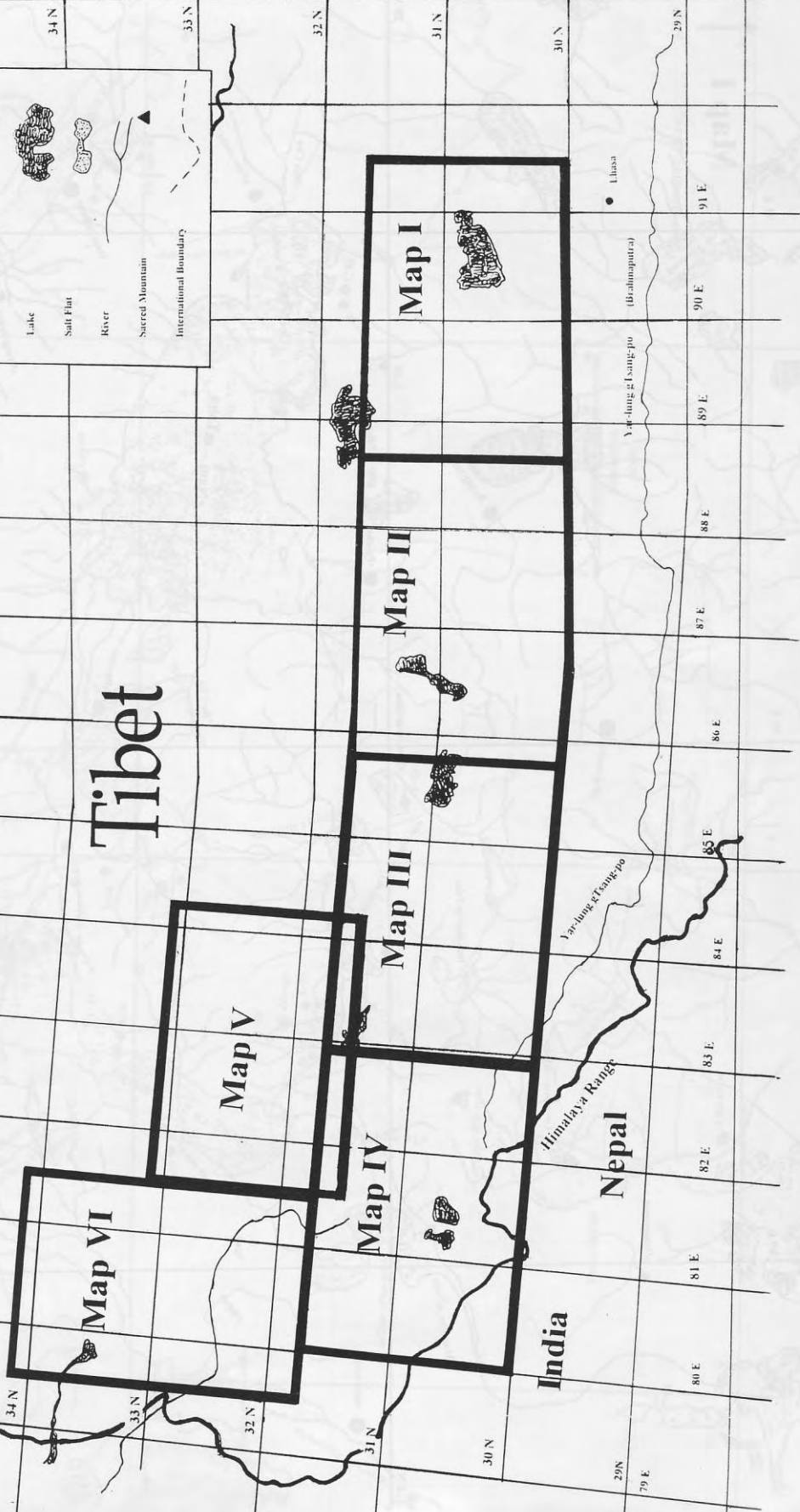
- Archaeological Site: 
- Township Headquarters: 
- County Seat: 
- Prefectural Headquarters: 
- Lake: 
- Salt Flat: 
- River: 
- Sacred Mountain: 
- International Boundary: 

Tibet

Map Legend

- Archaeological Site
- Township Headquarters
- County Seat
- Prefectural Headquarters
- Lake
- Salt Flat
- River
- Sacred Mountain
- International Boundary

0 25 50 75
Kilometres
Scale



India

Nepal

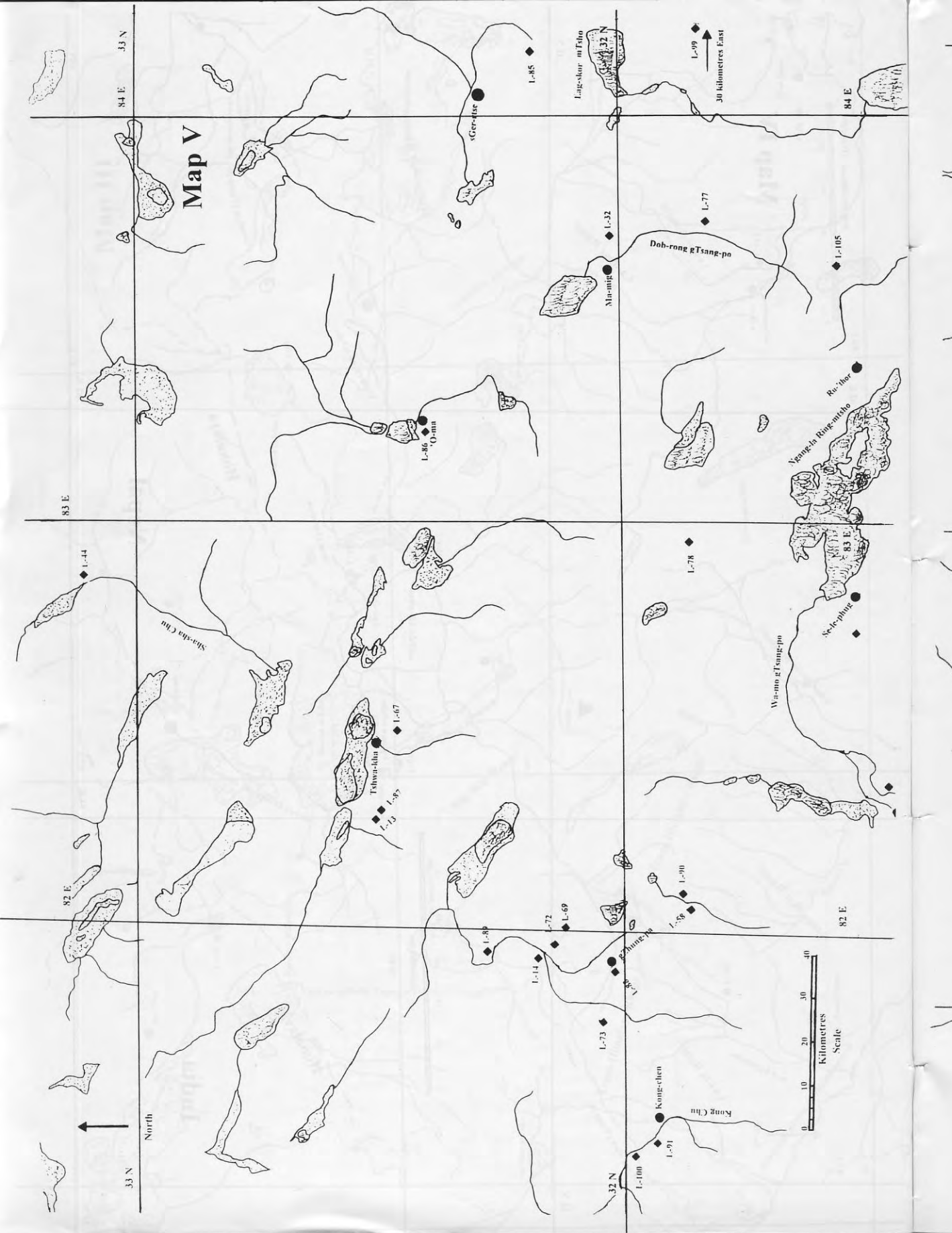
Himalaya Range

Yar-lu-ang & Tsang-po

Yar-lu-ang & Lhasang-po
(Brahmaputra)

Ulhasa

Map V



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