

The place where the inhabitants of Meru had to live before they built their present houses in the bottom of the valley, is a hill spur on the right bank of the rGya river where there are extensive ruins of houses. As has been stated above, during the ascendancy of the Ladakhi kings people were not allowed to live among the fields, probably to prevent their trespassing too much on valuable ground. But, as we learnt from Moorcroft's account of rGya, the lofty sites on the top of rocks were already partly abandoned during the times of the last king, Thse-dpal-don-grub-rdo-rje-rnam-rgyal (1820 A.D). From his account it appears that at Meru also people lived in their present houses in 1820.

Several miles below Meru, the rGya brook discharges into the Indus, and at this place is situated the village of Ubshi (Moorcroft's *Ukshi*). In this village we noticed several *mchod-rten* of great age which were known to the inhabitants as *mchod-rten* of the Mons. We examined the interior of one of them and found the walls inside covered with ancient frescoes which were apparently painted with two colours only, indigo blue and brownish red. There were any number of rows of figures of blue complexion seated cross-legged. Their garments were white with red seams. The larger pictures in the centre of the four walls were too far gone to allow of any identification. The headdress of these blue figures was somewhat unusual; it looked as if the ends of a long hair-pin projected on each side. Later on, when I had examined several more similar frescoes at other ancient sites, I came to the conclusion that the Ubshi pictures represent Nāgas (*Klu*), and that these ancient *mchod-rten* may be Bon-po, and not Buddhist, structures.

We spent the night of the 20th and the 21st August at Martselang. Here I had a pleasant surprise in meeting one of the Leh mission ladies, Miss Schurter, who had travelled through the desert wilds of Rubshu from Kyelang to Leh, accompanied only by two Christian Tibetans from the former place. I might have caught her up much earlier, if she had not been alarmed by rumours of the approach of a very untrustworthy sportsman (myself!) which caused her to make double marches to escape him.

Martselang is situated at the lower end of the Shang valley (the *Changa* of Moorcroft), which contains the Hemis monastery. This monastery which was built by king Seng-ge-rnam-rgyal only about 300 years ago, has acquired quite unusual fame among European visitors to Ladakh on account of its devil-dances. These are performed here in June (originally probably on the occasion of the summer solstice), a convenient time for Europeans to attend them, whilst most of the other monasteries have the same performance in winter. The monastery was also frequently referred to fifteen or eighteen years ago, when the Russian traveller Notovitch surprised the world by stating that he had found in it a copy of a new Christian gospel written in Pāli. A great deal of learned correspondence then took place which proved that Notovitch's extraordinary find was a forgery. The interesting Tibetan account of the foundation of this monastery was brought to Europe by the Schlagintweits, and the Tibetan text with an attempt at a partial translation was published by Emil von