



NGARI, TIBET

西藏阿里



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Ngari(It has different ways of transliteration ,such as mNgav-ris and Ali, etc.), a miraculous district in the west of the Tibet Autonomous Region in China, is called “the ridge on the Roof of the World”. The Himalaya Mountain, the Kunlun Mountain and the *Kailas* (Gangs-ri-ti-se) Mountain surround it. Ngari, with a meaning of “an area under one’s jurisdiction” in Tibetan language, is also called “the third extreme of life” because of its average altitude of 4,500 meters above sea level (Some places are above the snowline.) The Elephant River (gLan-chen kha-vbabs, a river from the mouth of the elephant-shaped rock), the Horse River (rTa-mchog kha-vbabs, a river from the mouth of the horse-shaped rock), the Peacock River (rMa-bya kha-vbabs, a river from the mouth of the peacock-shaped rock) and the Lion River (Seng-ge kha-vbabs, a river from the mouth of the lion-shaped rock) flow from the *Kailas* Mountain. They form respectively four rivers at the maximum altitude above sea level in the world. The Horse River, the upper reaches of the Yar-klung-gtsang-po River, is named “the Heavenly River” and the other three rivers, which are regarded as “Holy Waters” flow through Nepal, Kashmir Region, India and Bangladesh and then pour into the Indian Ocean.

Ngari Region is 600 kilometers long from the east to the west and 550 kilometers wide from the south to the north. Seven counties are under its jurisdiction, such as dGe-rgyas

County, sPu-hreng County, Ru-thog County and others. Ngari Region occupies an area of 312,796 square kilometers and has a population of only 62,500 people, which is an administrative region with the largest geographical area in China now and the lowest population density in the world. Ngari is more than 1,800 kilometers apart from Lhasa, capital of Tibet. It lies in the remote area, but in Tibet and among other Tibetan-inhabited areas, such as Qinghai, Gansu, Yunnan and Sichuan, it is one of the most influential and popular tourist sites at home and abroad.

From the mid-9th century to the first half of the 17th century, there once existed the Gu-ge Kingdom, which was in fashion for a time and had a population of over 100,000 people. Nowadays, through all hardships, the kingdom with the glory of a thousand years has turned into dilapidated halls and walls reaching to the sky. Only desolation and misery was left, but it still remains its imposing manner and ancient customs, becoming one of the sacred sites of great historical value on the Tibetan Plateau. Bon was a primitive religion before the introduction of Buddhism into Tibet. It originated from Ngari and was spread into Tibetan hinterland and other Tibetan-inhabited areas from there. There are large numbers of monasteries and temples, such as mTho-gling Monastery, vKhor-chags Monastery and several tens of historical sites and ruins in Ngari. With a history of over a thousand years, they have not only exerted important influence on the development of Tibetan Buddhism, but also are of great value for the understanding of the history of Ngari Region and politics, economics, cultures and religions of the whole Tibetan Plateau. Thousand-Buddha Cave in rTsa-mdav County is in the same historical position as the Gu-ge Kingdom. Dong-dkar and Phyi-dbang frescoes in the Thousand-Buddha Cave still remain undeveloped, which are important cultural relics to be further verified. Rock paintings in dozens of sites within the territory of Ru-thog County in the northern Ngari are absolutely rated superb masterpieces. They have distinctly recorded productive contents and the way of life of their ancestors in Ngari. Thus it can be seen that the

history of Ngari has undoubtedly constituted the most important component in the history of the development of Tibet.

Everything in Ngari is related to religions. From the time immemorial, hundreds of millions of believers of Bonism, Buddhism, Hinduism and Jaina respectfully regard Ngari as "the core of the universe" where holy spirits inhabit. They have a common worship to Gangs-rin-po-che, the Holy Mountain and Ma-pham-g' yu-mtsho, the Holy Lake with a water area of 412 square kilometers. Every year, they attract tens of thousands of tourists and pilgrims from India, Nepal, Japan, Europe and America and believers from Tibetan-inhabited areas, such as Tibet, Qinghai, Gansu, Yunnan and Sichuan to go for a circumambulation around the Holy Mountain and the Holy Lake to pay their homage to them.

The scene in Ngari is both miraculous and charming. Blue ripples are on sPang-gong-mtsho Bird Island, which is rarely seen in plateau topography. Ten thousands of gulls are perching there. The northwest of Ngari is the world well-known Depopulated Zone of the Northern Tibet. It lies between 5,000 and 6,000 meters above sea level. Its area is vast and its air is very thin. The depopulated zone is wild and uninhabited, but it is a natural paradise for numerous wild animals. There live several ten kinds of world's rare wild animals, such as Tibetan wild asses, Tibetan yaks, Tibetan antelopes, black-necked cranes and snow leopards. Ngari Plateau is one of the best regions where national ecology and wild animals are well preserved due to its maximum altitude above sea level and its inconvenient transportation.

On China's territory, Ngari is an area with the maximum altitude above sea level, the bluest sky, the most mysterious historical sites, the lowest population density and the well-preserved wild animals. If you go to Tibet, but not to visit Ngari, you will have a lifelong regret. Ngari reveals a grand historic scene, which is not only a land of reality where spirits and beliefs root, but also a holy land on Tibetan Plateau for people to purify their souls.



在中国西藏自治区西部，有一片神奇的地域，那就是被世人称为“世界屋脊之屋脊”的阿里地区。阿里，藏语意为“辖区”，为喜马拉雅山脉、昆仑山脉和冈底斯山脉诸峰所环抱，因其平均海拔4500米，有些地方甚至高于雪线，所以这里又被称为“生命第三极”。冈底斯山脉四周溢出的象泉河、马泉河、孔雀河和狮泉河分别形成了全球海拔最高的四大河流，而马泉河即雅鲁藏布江的上游，被称为“天河”，其他三条河流分别通过尼泊尔、克什米尔地区、印度和孟加拉注入印度洋，被称为“圣水”。

阿里地区东西长600公里，南北宽500公里，辖措勤、革吉、普兰和日土等七县，面积312,796平方公里，全地区人口仅6.25万人，是中国目前地理面积最大的地区行政区，也是世界上人口密度最小的地区。阿里距西藏首府拉萨尚有1800余公里，虽地处偏僻，然而，在西藏全地区乃至青海、甘肃、云南和四川其他所有藏区中，阿里却一直是国内外最富影响、最热门的旅游地区之一。

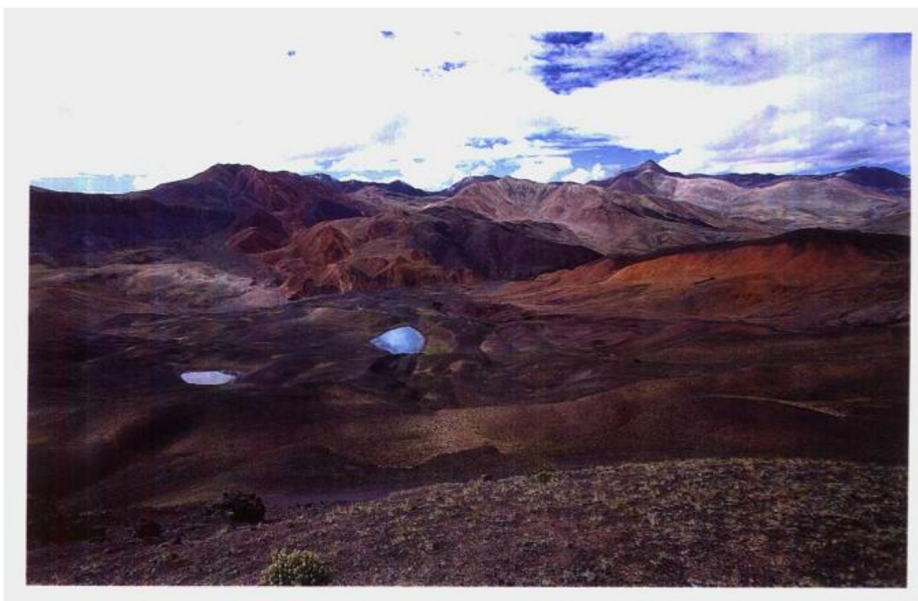
公元9世纪中叶至17世纪上半叶，这里曾出现过盛极一时、人口逾十万的古格王国。如今，在饱经历史磨难之后，这段千年前的辉煌早已化为残垣断壁耸立于天际，留下的只有苍凉与神秘，气势不减，古风犹存，成为雪域高原最有历史价值的圣地之一。本教是佛教传入西藏前的一种原始宗教，它发源于阿里，也是从这里

传入西藏腹地和其他藏区的。阿里地区留存着已有千年历史、对西藏佛教发展产生过重要影响的托林寺和科迦寺等众多寺庙和数十处历史古迹、遗址，它们对于了解阿里地区的历史和整个西藏高原的政治、经济、文化、宗教都极具价值；位于札达县、与古格王国遗址历史地位相当的千年佛窟中的东嘎、皮旺壁画，是尚未开发、有待进一步考证的另一处重要文化遗址；阿里地区北部日土县境内的数十处岩画更是堪称一绝，它清晰地记录了阿里先民们的生产内容和生活方式。由此可见，阿里的历史无疑构成了整个西藏地区发展史中最重要的组成部分。

阿里的一切都离不开宗教，从远古起，本教、佛教、印度教、耆那教等多种宗教的亿万信徒就将阿里尊为圣灵之所在的“世界中心”，他们共同崇拜的神山冈仁布钦和拥有412平方公里水域的圣湖玛旁雍措，每年都吸引着成千上万来自印度、尼泊尔、日本和欧美等国的旅游者、香客以及西藏、青海、甘肃、云南和四川藏区的信教群众前来转山、转湖、朝拜。

阿里的雪域风光神奇而迷人，高原地形中极其少见的鸟岛——班公湖鸟岛、碧波荡漾，栖息着数以万计的鸥鸟；阿里的西北部，就是闻名于世的藏北无人区，海拔在5000—6000米之间，地域广阔，空气稀薄。无人区虽寥无人烟，却是众多野生动物的天然乐园，生活着藏野驴、藏牦牛、藏羚羊、黑颈鹤、雪豹等数十种世界珍稀野生动物。由于海拔高，交通不便，因此阿里高原又是自然生态与野生动物保护最好的区域之一。

在中国的版图上，阿里的海拔最高，天最蓝，历史古迹最富神秘性，人烟最稀少，而野生动物生态又保存得最完好。到了西藏，若不踏足阿里，将会使人留下终生的遗憾。阿里夹裹着一幕宏大的历史风景，它是精神与信仰落脚的一片现实的土地，不愧为净化人心灵的雪域圣地。



Puddles on Ngari Wasteland

“Haizi” means naturally accumulated puddles. The larger ones have the same size as lakes while the smaller ones just look like puddles. “Haizi” has become a wonder on Ngari Plateau because of drought and rare rains.

阿里荒原“海子”

“海子”，天然积水坑，大如湖，小如坑。由于阿里高原严重干旱少雨，故“海子”就成为高原一大奇景。





The Dawn on the Elephant River

Ngari Plateau is called "the Summit of Thousands of Mountains and the Source of Ten Thousands of Waters". The Lion River, the Elephant River, the Peacock River and the Horse River named after four animals in the Kingdom of Heaven all originate from the *Kailas* Mountain. They respectively become the sources of the famous Indus, Ganges in South Asia and Yar-klung-gtsang-po River. This is the Elephant River flowing through the territory of rTsa-mdav County.

象泉河之晨

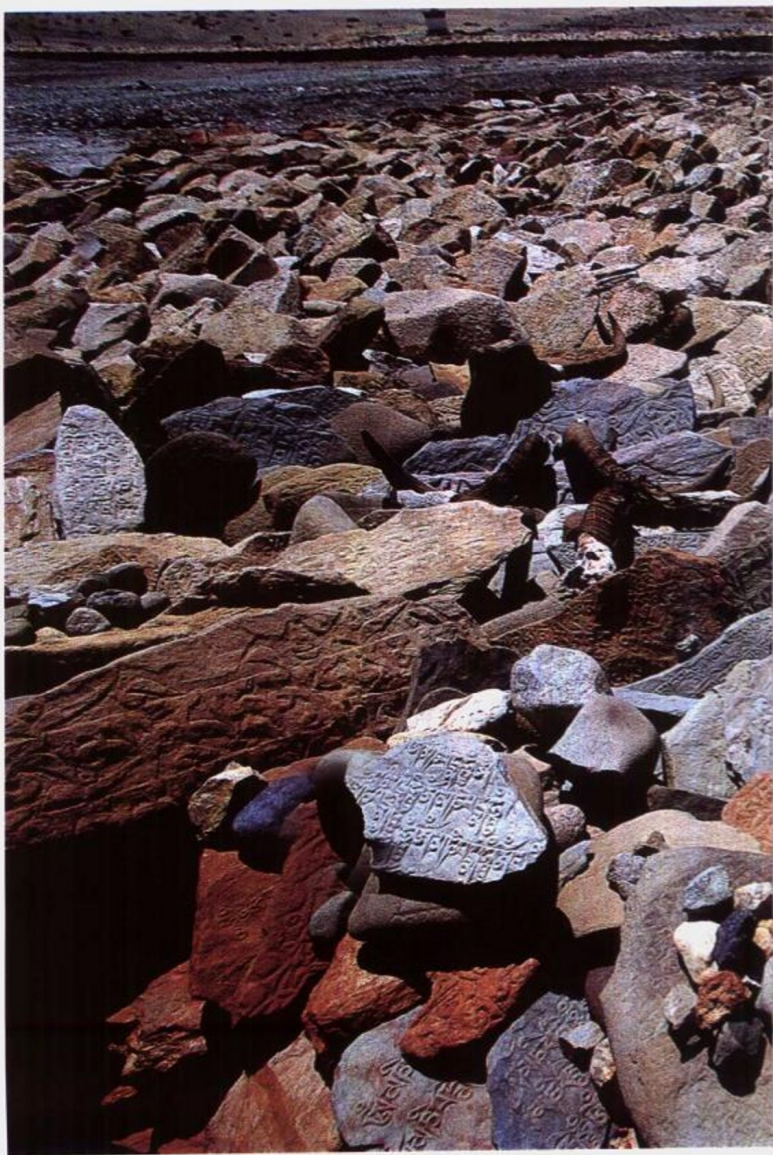
阿里高原号称“千山之巅，万水之源”，以天国之中的马、狮、象、孔雀四种动物命名的狮泉河、象泉河、孔雀河、马泉河均源于冈底斯山，而它们又分别成为南亚著名的印度河、恒河和雅鲁藏布江之源。这是流经札达县境内的象泉河。

Mani Stone Piles

Tibetan people are a nationality whose people all believe in religions. Religions penetrate every levels of social life. People place stone piles or stone plates engraved with Buddha's words, images of Buddha and Six Sacred Words on roadsides, mountain passes, holy mountains and lake banks or in monasteries or in front of images of Buddha, showing their blessings and pray.

玛尼石堆

藏族是一个全民信教的民族，宗教渗透于社会生活的各个层面。人们在路边、山口以及寺庙、神山、圣湖、佛像等处堆放上刻有佛语、佛像、六字真言的石块、石板等，以示祝福、祈祷。









rTsa-mdav Earth Forest

rTsa-mdav Earth Forest, called "horizontal bedded landforms" in geomorphology, came to peculiar "secondary tectonic landforms" through erosion by flowing water. They are sedimentary beds of lakes and rivers in the Pliocene Epoch, mainly consisting of fine sand rocks and clay mixed with coarse gravel rocks. Deep valleys and cliffy gorges constitute majestic tall and straight ancient walls and castles in varied shapes and styles. Such miraculous and magnificent earth forests encircle according to the lie of the mountains and are scattered in several hundred kilometers in rTsa-mdav County.

札达士林

在地貌学上称“水平岩层地貌”，是经过流水侵蚀形成的比较特殊的次生构造地貌，为上新世湖泊和河流的沉积地层，以粉细砂岩和粘土为主，间夹粗砂砾岩。沟谷深邃，谷坡陡立，形成雄伟挺拔、奇异多姿的古城墙和古城堡形态。如此神奇壮观的土林地貌，依山势环绕，密布于札达县数百平方公里范围内。

