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Drapham Dzong

Archaeological Excavation of a Himalayan Fortress
in Central Bhutan

This pioneering work presents the results of the first archaeological project ever undertaken in Bhutan: the excavation of Drapham Dzong, a fortress in the Choekhor Valley (Bumthang). As the final report of the project, which ran from 2008 through 2010, it is a significant and innovative contribution to the study of Bhutan's history.

The excavations successfully established the beginning of the fortress's construction in the mid-16th century as well as the historical sequence of the compound, which was completed in several stages, then renovated and extended in the late 17th century. The abandonment of the complex can be dated to the early 18th century, and numerous findings imply violent destruction by a charging assault, looting, and arson.

The assessment of the finds and features has brought to light valuable information beyond the basic history of Drapham Dzong's construction. Alongside the numerous ceramic remains, which were categorized typologically, the excavators also found traces of the plant- and animal-based diet of the fortress inhabitants, evidence of trade relations, and remnants of everyday life. A comparison of the excavated wall segments with analogous building components from other, preserved Dzongs enabled the team to prepare a rough graphic reconstruction of the main fortress.

An in-depth researched work on the history, spiritual journey and enduring legacy of the Sufi saint Khwaja Muinuddin Chisti.

Describes the life and times of the saint and the continued relevance of his much-visited shrine at Ajmer Sharif.

Features over 200 unique and evocative photographs of the tombs, monuments, rituals and pilgrims at Ajmer Sharif.



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Dr. Werner Meyer, a distinguished archaeologist, is Professor Emeritus of Medieval Studies at the University of Basel, Switzerland. Since the 1960s

he has been the leading expert on the archaeology of medieval fortifications in Switzerland. He has published widely on the cultural history and archaeology of the Middle Ages, and has also achieved success at the famous site of Krak des Chevaliers in Syria, where he led an excavation team from 2003 through 2007.

