



Bellezza (center) on Tibetan Ice Lakes Expedition, 2006

John Bellezza is a scholar and intrepid explorer of Tibet and the Himalaya. For two decades he has traveled extensively on foot in the Great Western Himalaya and Tibet focusing on the cultural history of pre-Buddhist Upper Tibet, Zhang Zhung, and the paleoculture (Iron age) of this largely unexplored region. He has covered 30,000 miles and surveyed nearly 700 sites that include Iron Age monuments, and rock art which



Bellezza with pilgrimage friend, Gyants, 1987

have lead him to the discovery of heretofore unknown types of mountain strongholds, semi-subterranean temples, burial grounds, and necropoli. He is particularly interested in the still-practiced customs and beliefs that have correspondences to the present-day Bon religion. His extensive research and discoveries have resulted in four major scholarly books and many articles. John's formal interviews with the indigenous and remote cultures he studies have uncovered many correspondences in practice and belief to the Bon religion. He writes, "I believe that uncovering Tibet's ancient past will be of great value to the Bonpo, and will enrich our knowledge of the development of civilization in Inner Asia. That is why I have dedicated my working life to this cause." Keeping in touch with Bellezza's work is thrilling and made easy by the regular use of his website, www.tibetarcheology.com. Through all his years of work, he has maintained close contact with Lupon Tenzin Namdak and the 33rd Menri Trizin.