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# PAKISTAN HERITAGE



Editors

Shakirullah and Ruth Young



Research Journal of the  
Department of Archaeology  
Hazara University Mansehra-Pakistan

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## **Editorial Note**

*Pakistan Heritage* is a peer-reviewed journal, published annually. This volume included the papers on different aspects of the history and archaeology of Pakistan and adjacent regions with subject matter ranging from Neolithic to the Historic Period. Many of the recent cultural assets are highlighted, anticipating the dialogue and managerial efforts.

We acknowledge the efforts of the members of the Board of Editorial Advisors, the contributors, the review and colleagues of the Department of Archaeology, Hazara University Mansehra. Special thanks are due to Mr. Junaid Ahmad, Lecturer of the department for technical assistance. On the other hand we are grateful to the worthy Vice Chancellor and management of Hazara University Mansehra for support and encouragement.

## **Editors**

# **The religious practices and believes of Prehistoric Balochistan and its relation with major religions of South Asia**

JAHANZEB KHAN AND SYEDA MEHER TABAN

## **Abstract**

*The religious believes associated with man are as old as man himself and this one of the universal phenomenon found around the globe throughout the long history mankind. The debate among scholars whether the birth of religion was before the emergence of human society or it has been contracted after the emergence of social institutions, is long and abortive. Since the emergence of culture/settlement in South Asia is first found in the geographical boundaries of Balochistan, so the present paper is focused on the emergence of religion and rituals associated with it, are discussed. The emergence and evolution of religion and rituals in prehistoric Balochistan is found and its legacy/impact is related with the subsequence cultures and traditions.*

*The present work is based on the interpretation of symbolisms present in the prehistoric traditions of Balochistan and its continuity into other cultures, hence providing roots to the major religions of South Asia i.e. Hinduism and Buddhism. This symbolic and ritualistic interpretation of believes associated with prehistoric Balochistan cultures and its relationship with subsequent cultures of Indus Valley Traditions, Gandhara Grave Culture and other major religions of ancient South Asia will be the main focus of the present work. The main rational behind the present work is to find the roots of major religions of South Asia in the indigenous cultures if any.*

**Keywords:** *Religious practices, Prehistoric Balochistan, Religions of South Asia*

## **Introduction**

The history of origin of religion is as old as man himself. The nature of origin of religion is a long debate and the

participants of this debate can be categorized into two groups i.e. first group is the divine followers of religion, who suggest that religion is revealed by a “Divine Being” .Who is all

comprehensive, omnipotent, omnipresent and indivisible. The followers of divine religion can also be called “Missionary Religions” as these religions have complete codes of life and a preaching mission. The major religions of this group are Judaism, Christianity and Islam, this group is also called the *Abrahamic Religions* (Mathews, 1999). The second group advocates that religion is a social construct and man over a long period of time has devised religion as other social institutions and this group advocates that religion can also be studied in the same manner as other social institutions. This group describes religion in its social and cultural perspective where religion is way or mean for attaining the equilibrium in the society (Heehs, 2002).

There are several schools of thought which define religion in different perspectives. The *essential* school of thought emphasis on actions of individuals or societies once these individuals/ societies become religious, the *normative* school advocates that how or what a religion ought to be (Mathews, 1999). Similarly the *sociological/functionalist* school of thought advocates the working nature of religion in the

society i.e. how religion works in individual and social life of a given society, the *Marxist* school presents religion only a tool through which the exploited class is controlled by the ruling class while *Psychological* school of thought championed by Sigmand Friud advocates the experimental perspective for self-employed psychological catharsis (Mathews, 1999). There is no specific definition of religion on which two schools of thought would agree. We may define religion as a set of beliefs and principles on which the set of rituals or practices are performed by a group of people who consider such principles, rituals and objects as sacred which provide salvation and relief.

In prehistoric Balochistan cultures, the traces of religious belief and rituals are found from cave dwellers to modern period but here only pre-Indus period is described. Man at cave started worship of some supper-natural and powerful deities, whom he could not see but ask for help in the times of grief, disaster and agony (Mathews, 1999). Whether cave dwellers really worshiped those whose images they have depicted in the caves or this only shows an aesthetic

sense of human nature is a long debate among scholars. The cave painting in Balochistan have been found in Zhob and Loralai valley by Dr. F.D Kakar and he associates these caves and its paintings with the Paleolithic people and their belief systems.

During the Neolithic and chalcolithic period, the religious and ritual practices in Balochistan became more prominent. The archaeological data has made it possible that now we can reconstruct the religious beliefs of the people of Neolithic and Chalcolithic era and the major source for such religious account is found in the terracotta figurines and graves cultures rather than caves. The graves have been found in the sites scattered throughout Balochistan but Mehrgarh and Miri Qalat are the principle sites for such a study. Along with grave culture, there are other sources too which give a good account on the religious beliefs of the people and these comprise of terracotta figurines of male, female and animals on one hand and paintings, designs and motives on pottery on the other hand (Allchin B. A., 1997).

## **Burial rituals**

The Balochistan Tradition's religious perspective can be studied in a better way in grave and burial rituals. During Early Food Producing Era (MR I, II 7000 BCE to 5500 BCE) the burial rituals were based upon the system of rich grave goods (Jarrige J. J., 1995). The dead body was painted with red ochre and there were animals sacrificed which would accompany the dead body, the grave goods would consist of terracotta bangles, pottery, bitumen baskets, lithic objects comprising of axes, cherts and arrow heads, the ornaments and beads made up of sea shells, precious and semiprecious stones of lapis lazuli, steatite and turquoise were also placed in grave along the dead (C. J. Jarrige 1995) (Kenoyer 2000)(Pearsall 2008). The concept of placing goods along with the dead body might reflect the belief in the life after death and the people would think that the dead body might need these objects in the next life so the belongings of the deceased were placed along the dead. The precious items, for example sacrificed animal and precious, semiprecious stones and stone tools suggest that which kind of economy was

at that time. The presence of animals show that the people had been engaged in animal husbandry while exotic materials (precious and semiprecious objects) makes it clear that people were engage in long distance trade as these objects are not locally available (Kenoyer 1998).

The concept of grave goods changed after 5500 BCE as now the dead body did not accompany precious and scarce good like sacrificed goats and exotic goods while terracotta bangles, pottery and stone tools were still buried along with dead (Jarrige J. J., 1995). This can be due to change in the ideological and economic systems of the period. As with passage of time economy grew, the exotic material become more precious and livestock as a source of wealth so people stopped burying such items along with deceased as the items could be used by decedents of the dead person and this would result in the circulation of such wealth in the economy rather than being damped in or buried along dead body. Another reason of change in the ideology of grave goods can be the avoidance of treasure hunting. The people of the locality knew that how many precious/ valuable items have been

placed with dead body and the treasure hunters could reopen the graves and can steal the valuable items. This would result not only the stealing of precious goods rather this can be taken as dishonoring the deceased which offend the ideology and feelings of descendants of the deceased.

But this practice of reducing the precious grave goods only to few vessels and stone tools was not universal in Balochistan Traditions. As in the southern Balochistan (SohrDamb/Nal I) the graves were still rich in terms of grave goods. The dead body was ochre-covered and the grave goods would consist of beads made up of agate, lapis lazuli, carnelian, steatites and sea shells having red pigment on one hand while vessels and stone tools including grinding stones and stone weight (Pearsall 2008). There is another aspect in the study of grave goods as one finds the vessels of one type or place of origin in other parts of Balochistan i.e. the Togua Ware, Kechi Beg and Faiz Muhammad Wares are found in Nal, Shahi Tump and Mehrgarh cemeteries which show a close cultural interaction among these sites (Cardi, 1964). The burial practices also show that the

people had common belief systems with very slight differences as all cultural sites depict that life after death was a common belief among the people and Nal cemetery shows there might be communal burials (Pearsall, 2008) (Besenval, 1993). But this communal burials (multiple body remains in one grave) may not be common practice rather the people might have used one grave in multiple times as old dead body's bones were not completely removed and the next dead body might have been buried in the same grave which resulted in multiple bodies found in one grave by excavation teams.

### **Figurines of Prehistoric Balochistan**

The origin of ancient religious practices is always associated with two things i.e. cave paintings and terracotta figurines. The cave paintings are associated with the worship of animal cult and find of good hunting games while terracotta figurines are related with fertility. This fertility concept is dual in nature as the fertility of human beings and fertility of agricultural products are associated with these figurines. The people might have made anthropomorphic figurines for ritual and worship purpose, as by

worshiping abstract gods and goddess through making there figurines and making offerings, men would seek the blessings of these gods and goddesses who would fulfill their wishes and bring good fortunes to them.

The presence of terracotta figurines in Balochistan suggests that people here might have worshiped "mother goddess cult". The figurines have been found from aceramic period to post Harappan period. The first appearance of terracotta figurines were found in Mehrgarh I period with simple structure but the time of Mehrgarh III, IV (4800 BCE to 3800 BCE) saw the peak of figurine cults with well-structured and shaped anthropomorphic figurines (C. J. Jarrige 1995) (Jarrige J. , 1991). The structures of these figurines vary from site to site and time to time but here only the common features of these figurines are presented. The terracotta figurines were made. The figurines types were male, female and animal figures. The male figurines have turbans or headdress while the female figurines have different hair styles and ornaments, jointed legs and the breasts sizes are extended/ large which show the fertility and baby feeding of feminine character (C. J.

Jarrige 1995).

There is another aspect of figurine tradition of Balochistan that the figurines have been found scattered throughout site rather than being placed in a particular building or place. This suggests that there might not have been a central temple in the Balochistan sites rather people would worship and make offerings on individual bases. Besides, these figurines might have been made for a particular religious event or offering and once the event/offering was over, these figurines were used by kids as toys rather than a sacred symbol (Kenoyer 1998) (Possehl, 2006).

### **Prehistoric Balochistan and roots of South Asian religions**

Defining religious beliefs or ideology on the basis of cultural material is one of the most problematic issues in prehistory. Since we have only few religious patterns on which speculations could be made about the ideology of a given area which vanished long ago. In this perspective, Balochistan Tradition's ideological or religious beliefs can be studied in above mentioned areas (cave paintings, burials, seals and figurines). The discussion here we will start from

cave paintings because these are the oldest available activities associated with human belief systems. The cave paintings and terracotta seals can give a general pattern of symbolism in early people of Balochistan. The images of animals painted in caves might show that people would worship some animal deity or perform some rituals for better hunting of games. These cave paintings have been in practice in almost around the world during the hunting-gathering societies (Green, 1997) and Balochistan Tradition is not an exception. The practice of paintings revolutionized with the invention of ceramics and paintings become the salient feature of ceramic industry. The paintings on the pottery (zoomorphic, geometrical and plant motives) remained the basic theme of ceramic industry. This continuity of image making/paintings, from caves to ceramic industry, can be associated with some cultural and ideological beliefs as there were no place left empty or uncolored on the exterior of pots and almost entire exterior of pots were painted with zigzag or cross-cross lines so that these potteries might be saved from demons. Furthermore, the images of fish in the water were also constructed which would bring some



good fortune for the pot and eatables, placed in such pots to save them from demons so that these food items would remain pure (Kenoyer 1998).

Balochistan Tradition is defined on the basis of its ceramic industry, so a general conclusion can be made that the beliefs associated with pottery paintings of Indus Civilization has its roots in Balochistan. The continuity of painting in the religious beliefs remained intact throughout Indus period as one can observe the presences of motives during and after mature Indus Valley. The images of human, plants and animals can be seen in latter religions of Subcontinent especially Hinduism and Buddhism. The images of almost all Hindu gods and goddess are painted and they are worshiped. Similarly, Gautama Siddhartha commonly known as Buddha is always depicted as sitting beneath a tree (pipel tree) while worshiping, preaching and contemplating. The image of a pipel leave can be found on Quetta Ware, Nal Ware and later on throughout Indus Tradition which shows that pipel leaves or tree has been one of the sacred images in Subcontinent's symbolism which has its roots back in pre-Indus period of Balochistan Traditions.

Another aspect of early symbolism can be found on the seals which were made during Mehrgarh phase. These seals might have been used on the embroideries especially for buttons because the shape and a hook like structure at the interior of seals give similar impression. The symbols on the seals at an early stage show that there were some rectangular, cress-cross and swastikas like designs (C. J. Jarrige 1995) (Kenoyer, 1998). The button like seals were in various shapes and designs i.e. circular, rectangular and triangular in shape with incurved designs and these might have been used by different people. The material of these seals were also diverse (lapis lazuli, turquoise, steatites and terracotta) and this diverse material also shows the social stratigraphy of the society because exotic materials were not in the access of common people and these people would only copy the design of seals and make it by terracotta. These symbols on the seals can also be associated with belief system of the people as we find similar symbols in the later Hindu mythology especially making of swastikas for showing the cosmic activity and the wheel of law which shows uniformity and generally the

swastikas were made when there would have been some chaos and by making swastikas the ritual was performed to restore the calmness in the cosmos (Heehs, 2002). The presence of cosmic impressions on the seals, pottery and architecture show a close relation of beliefs and associated mythologies which have its roots in the thousands of year's history, starting from early Mehrgarh to mature Indus and up to Hindu-Shahi period. The cultural continuity of symbolism in South Asia can be studied in the symbols of swastika, starting from simple terracotta button seals of Mehrgarh to the complex, cosmic and main concept of *Dharma Chakra* or the *Wheel of Law* of Hindu religion. This shows that over the period of time, the beliefs associated with primitive symbolism evolved into a complex philosophical mythology Hinduism in general and Hindu Laws of life in particular. This can also be evidence that the religions evolved in South Asia have an indigenous root rather than being imported from any foreign migration, invasion and diffusion.

The study of prehistoric religions without figurines and grave rituals is

incomplete because most of the religious beliefs and rituals are associated with graves and figurines. The emergence of figurines in Balochistan Traditions is found during aceramic or Mehrgarh I period. During this period the simple terracotta figurines were made. With the passage of time, there were some changes in the shape and material of figurines and these were undergoing an evolutionary process of moving from simple to complex forms but the basic theme remained same. The sculptures of Hinduism and Buddhism might have its roots in the prehistoric figurines as the concept of giving gods and goddess anthropomorphic shapes were existing in the pre-Indus and mature Indus periods, so the cultural continuity in terms of figurines can be clearly found in the South Asia from Neolithic to Hindu Shāhi period. The concept of figurines was present in almost all regions and cultures from prehistoric to modern times and there were variations in figurines because of cultural choices but the basic concept remained same. Similarly the burial rituals were in practice in cultural sites of Balochistan Traditions (Shaffer, Balochistan Traditions, 1992) and it has also undergone evolutionary process. There

were variations in the grave goods, as the early burials of Mehrgarh (7000 BCE to 5500 BCE) had rich grave but the chalcolithic period reversed the tradition of grave goods. During this period no animal sacrifice was practiced and graves goods were limited to daily usable items and pottery. The grave or burial cultural rituals continued during mature Indus period (2600 BCE to 1900 BCE) and post-Indus with similar grave items which suggest that the ideology of Indus and post Indus period had its roots in the Neolithic traditions of Balochistan. Interesting studies can be made during the Gandhara Grave Culture (1500 BCE to 1000 BCE) and there are similarities in the burials. The Gandhara Grave Culture or pre-Buddhist period has two types of burial methods i.e. cremation and inhumation (Faccenna, 1964). The cremation is purely a latter development but inhumation can be connected with greater Indus Valley Traditions which has its roots in Balochistan Traditions. The grave goods of the Gandhara Grave Culture would consist of pottery, daily usable items and some graves would contain more valuable items made by precious and exotic materials. These grave goods would depict the social

status and gender of the deceased as the precious items, beads, ornaments and other items were placed in graves, the female ornament would mention the gender while precious items would show that the grave might be of some prominent personality of society (Faccenna, 1964) (Shaffer, Prehistoric Balochistan:(with Excavation Report on Said Qala Tepe), 1978). The methods and beliefs of such burials can be associated with cultural continuity of early Indus traditions because of similarities in the grave goods and rituals associated with it. Although most of the scholars relate Gandhara Grave Culture with Aryan's invasion and their cultural influence on Subcontinent but recent research posed serious questions on the *Aryans Theory* (Allchin B. A., 1999). The *contextual school of thought* presented a new perspective of interpreting available data in its contextual sense while making some connectivity of cultural continuity (Trigger, 1989). If the Gandhara Grave Culture is studied in its contextual perspective then lots of similarities can be found in this culture and its preceding ones which shows cultural continuity especially in the rituals associated with graves and burials because the grave

goods ritual had been started during Neolithic period of Balochistan Traditions and it remained part of dominant belief system during chalcolithic period, Indus period and Gandhara Grave Culture.

The above discussion makes it clear that socio-cultural and religious ideology in Balochistan Traditions has evolved over a long period of time and it has taken almost four millenniums (7000 BCE to 3300 BCE) to develop . This extensive tradition gives roots to all cultural/ institutional developments an indigenous flavor and if careful studies are made than it becomes clear that there were variations in the socio-economic and religious developments in the all regions of South Asia but the basic concept

remained same. This makes a cultural mosaic of traditions which are scattered over entire South Asia with very strong interaction resulting in the mutual influence of these traditions. This has also helped in the development of regional cultural interactions in terms of economic resources and technological development and there are strong evidences that Balochistan Traditions have provided roots to Indus Valley civilization in terms of religious ideology, economic resources, technological and architectural development one hand and religious ideologies/rituals of Gandhara Grave culture, Hinduism and Buddhism one the other hand.

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## Figures

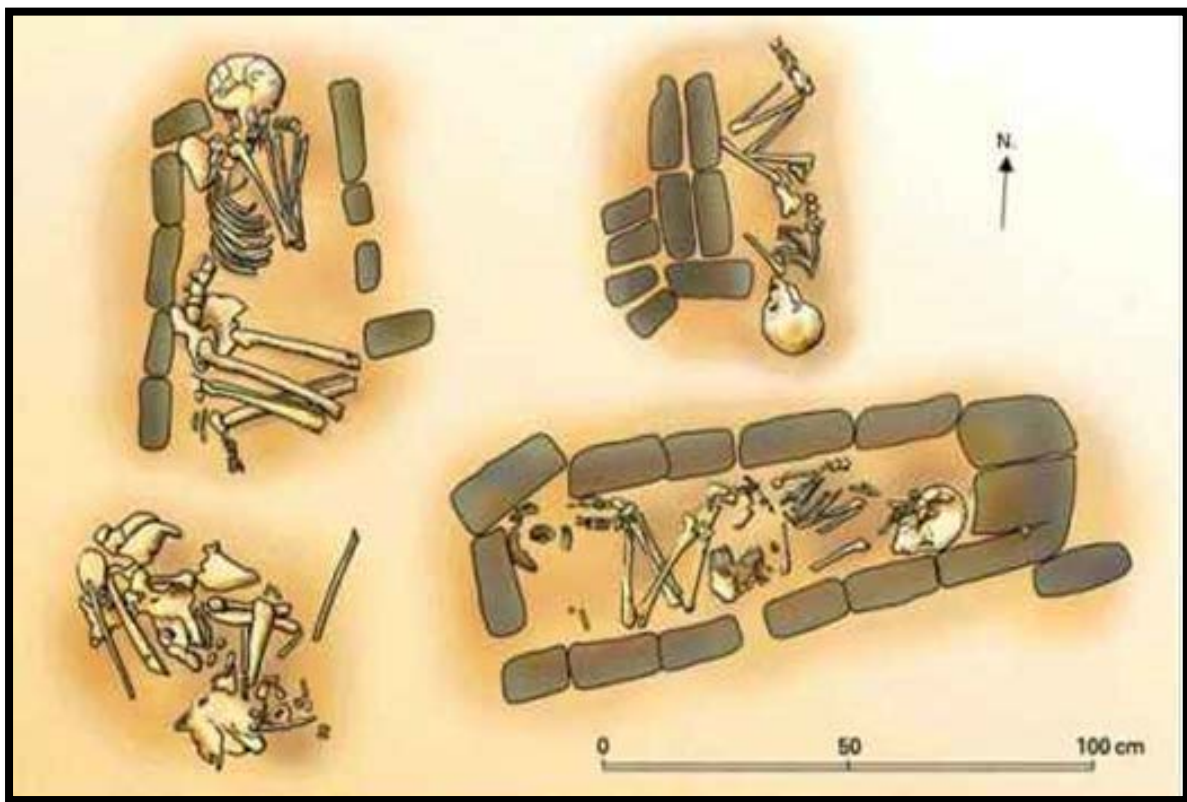


Figure 1. The Mehrgarh burials along with sacrificed animal (Courtesy J.F Jarrige)



Figure 2. SohrDamb/Nal period I. multiple fragmentary burials with grave goods (courtesy Elsevier Inc)



Figure 3. Terracotta figurines of Mehrgarh (Courtesy J.F Jarrige)



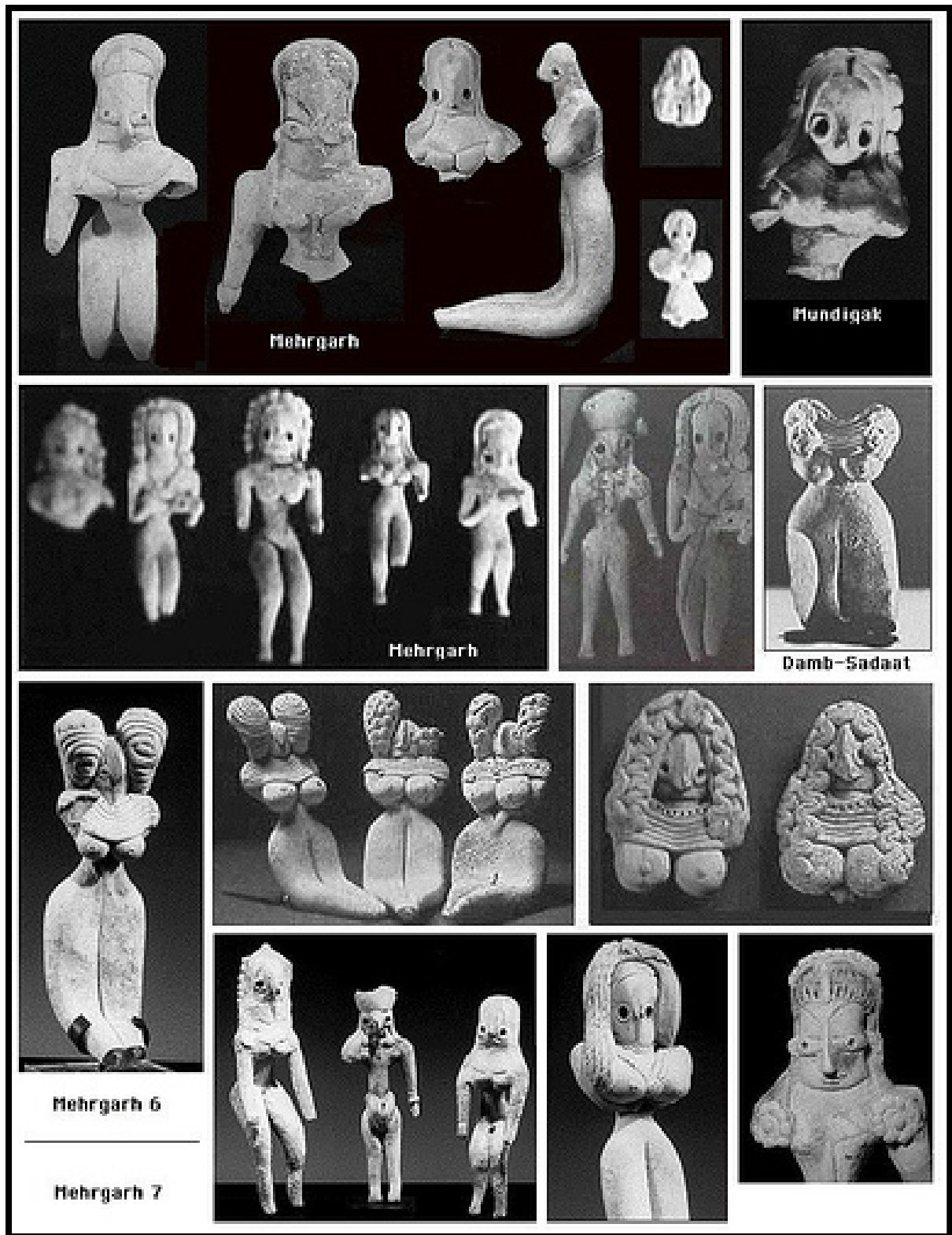


Figure 4. Terracotta figurines of Balochistan Traditions (Courtesy J.F Jarrige)



# Recent Research at Harappan Settlements along the Ancient Hakra River

QASID H. MALLAH AND TOOBA SHAFaq RAJPUT

## Abstract

*It is clear that the first urbanization occurred during 2600 to 1900 BCE. The people were living in spacious compound, double storied buildings, and bathrooms with covered drains to maintain the hygienic conditions. The cities were functioning with highly complex socioeconomic system. They had distant trade and a system to control over the technology and to assign value for exotic commodities pouring into core areas as well as the periphery.*

*This paper focuses on the settlements located in peripheral zone along a River named Hakra flowing parallel to the Mighty Indus. The Hakra, after crossing Cholistan entered into the Thar Desert and flowed along the western skirts desert. It is true that the Hakra River was not as mightier as was the Indus River but still carried sufficient water for the navigation of small boats. Within the catchment of this River at least 80 sites were recorded. Among which, a total of 24 sites were associated with the Mature Indus period. In this paper, the settlements named as the Moor Gachi, Ghob, Poongar Bhanbhro, Saran Waro and Deh Garher all located within catchments of Hakra River. These sites had interaction with settlements of Indus Plains; Cholistan and Harappa in North and settlements of Gujarat in South east and the settlements in Baluchistan and Persian Gulf As well.*

**Keywords:** *Harappan Settlements, Hakra River, Indus Valley Civilization, Thar Desert, Moor Gachi, Ghob, Poongar Bhanbhro, Saran Waro and Deh Garher*

## Introduction

Indus period of Indus civilization is an Era of prosperity, lavishness and living in hygienic conditions. Mega backed

brick cities appeared with highly complex socioeconomic interaction. The long carnelian beads, stoneware bangles, gold jewelry, bronze casting, double storied buildings, bathrooms,

covered drains, granaries, seals and writing; weight and measures and industries for manufacturing cultural objects were all in full swing. This is a time when communities were functioning as an integrated complex society using all modes of communication such as overland caravan; river boats and maritime ships roaring over the waters of Rivers and Ocean. They had courage to face every type of weather and road conditions to reach the given destiny(ies). Even the itinerants were engaged in the trade of various exotic commodities into cities, towns and villages of core area as well as the periphery. At least 15 generations enjoyed this prosperity over for 700 years starting from 2600 to 1900 BCE (Kenoyer 1998: 25). Not only big cities occurred but there were so many smaller towns and villages scattered all over the peripheral areas, for instance, the Thar Desert where recent research has shown that it was intensively occupied where numerous towns, villages and campsites existed (fig. 1 map) At present three towns, several villages and campsites were documented. The tremendous amount of burnt bricks complete or broken present on the surface of given mounded settlement(s) indicate that the

towns were built with burnt bricks as were in the cities. On the contrary, the surface scatter sites with dense scatter of cultural material show that the houses were entirely built with locally available wood and thatches. The test trenches were established on at least three sites named as Ghob, Moor Gachi and Saranwaro (Mallah 2010 in preparation). Very recently, the Poonger Bhanbthro site was documented thoroughly to understand the nature the site. For the better understanding, the geomorphology of the area and sites are discussed hereafter.

## **Geographical Setup of Research Area**

The area under investigation contained three major geomorphological features i.e. (a) Sandy Desert(fig. 2) (b) Rohri Hills (c) Nara valley along with numerous micro niches.

### **Sandy Desert**

This sandy desert is a “regular sea of Sands” in overall character and is divided into (a) the Pat and (b) The Thar (Pithawalla 1959 p-27, Panhwar 1969). Generally, the desert typify rolling surface, with high and low sand dunes

separated by sandy/ alluvial plains constitute a valley. The dunes have gentle slope on southern side and steep side on northern side. The majority of archaeological sites is found either on the top flat surface of sand dunes or on the southern slopes near the alluvial valleys. The dunes are scattered in nature and frequent in occurrence with different shapes and sizes. They are concavo-convex on southern sides and rectilinear on northern side's cross sections (Butzer 1994:60). Older dunes, however, are in a semi-stabilized or stabilized condition, and many rise to a height of almost 500 feet (150 m). Several playas (saline lakes), locally known as *Dhands*, are scattered throughout the region. These lakes when completely dries create an open alluvial valley. Such types of valleys are commonly scattered all over the Upper Thar region.

The sandy area lying on right banks of Nara Valley is actually extended part of the Upper Thar where all features like climate and vegetation and the geomorphological setup of the dunes are in similar fashion as in the main sandy land on other side of the valley. When and how this was originated requires

further research, however, the Old Stone Age i.e. Lower Paleolithic artifacts were found scattered on the top surface of sand dunes which suggests that the dunes were stabilized before the Stone Age.

The climate experiences two definite seasons as long and hot summers and cold winters. Temperatures frequently rise above 115° F (46° C) between May and August, and the average low temperature of 36° F (2° C) occurs in December and January. The annual rainfall averages about 7 inches (180 mm), or less falling mainly during July and August. Now days it has increased up to 50° C an extreme hot summer.

The desert vegetation is mostly herbaceous; or of undersized and small scrub; trees occasionally dot the landscape. The grasses form the main natural resources of the desert. The most frequent vegetation include the Khabar, *Salvadora oleoides* Kandi *Prosopis cineraria*; Phog *Calligonium polygonoides*, Ak *Calotropis procera*, Khip *Leptadenia pyrotechnica* and Booh *Avera javanica*; Lano *Haloxylon stocksii*. The herbs are: Chhapri *Neurada procumbens*, Ghorawal *Cassia italica*, and the grasses are: Katan *Cymbopogon*

*jawarancusa*, Lumb *Stipagrostis plumosa*, Boro *Saccharum bengalensis* and several other seasonal grasses of the desert area. They provide nutritive and appetizing pasturage, as well as medicines used locally by the inhabitants. After drying of the Hakra River, the drinking water has become very scarce and is found in the valleys where deep wells have been dug to acquire the water. During the seasonal monsoonal rains water is collected in tanks and reservoirs and is used for drinking and domestic purposes.

### **Nara Valley**

Another important geographical feature is the Nara Valley where Nara canal flows. Nowadays, it is connected with Indus near the Rohri town and flow due south towards Jamraho Head. In antiquity, it had separate bed coming through the desert and turn into Nara alluvial Valley at south of Saleh Pat town. The Nara Valley somewhere is very narrow up to four kilometer in width and it extends to fifteen kilometer maximum. The Nara canal flows in zigzag pattern and prior to the barrage system it created numerous small courses. During monsoonal high flux, those channels flooded alluvial plains

and valleys in the sand dunes consequently several sweet water lakes were created. The Lakes on both sides of the Nara valley supplemented subsistence resources many archaeological sites have been documented in the vicinity of lakes. The Nara now receives water from Indus. It was experimentally connected in 1858–59 with the Indus at Rohri by a supply channel connected with old Nara (the Hakra) and later on in 1932 the irrigation barrage was built, which resulted the shift of mouth of Nara to the present location.

Previously, this canal was part of ancient river Hakra, which ran throughout the desert and discharged into the sea through the Rann of Kutch. When and how this river disappeared is still an enigma. The renowned engineer Dr. M. H. Panhwar very recently commented that “from 1300-1850 AD was a period of drought specially after 1430 AD it was very cold, there was less rain fall, less snow melt, less water in the Indus and its distributaries, no spill waters from the Indus and the Sutlej to the Hakra-Nara channel of summer and it dried up. Nara was re-commissioned as canal by giving it a mouth from the

Indus, north of Rohri. In 1932 AD Sukkur Barrage created a new mouth for it from head works” (Panhwar pers. comm. March 2007). These may be valuable comments however discussion does not end here and will continue until any concrete result is not achieved.

Nevertheless, the archaeology of area confirms that Hakra had full flow during prehistoric times; the population depending on this river had established permanent settlements and conducted multiple socioeconomic activities. Their economy was supported with pastoralist and semi-nomadic behavior. The remains of these communities occur in the shape of various types of archaeological sites. In the east of Saleh Pat several ancient courses were documented. These dried courses are somewhere at least two meters in depth and up to half kilometer in width (Fig3). Apparently, two types of features such as (a) white river sand and (b) fresh water shell/ mollusks (fig4) were recorded within the bed of those dried courses assuring the high water flow.

Several types of mollusks / shells are recorded, for instance, *Viviparus*, *Australorbis*, *Nugulana*, *Panopea* and perhaps *Rillyarex*(Fig 5). The habitat of

these mollusks is fresh water, slit and mud. They have limited mobility (Walker *et al.* n.d. pp 94) and are found deposited in layers. These species are found at the places where river course turn shallow by widening the bed area and becomes slow in flow.

The deep courses still contain water that has turned saline. These courses are locally called “*Dhoro*”and several of them fall into Nara at different places. However, one major course crossing through the Bhitai waro Takeo south of Saleh Pat town is still prominent and looks like a river flowing west and turning south(Fig 6 ).

As we move south there are numerous lakes which carry the story about this lost river. Majority of lakes were inundated each year through high flood and contained fresh water. After barrage system those lakes turned saline (Fig 7) and many of them dried. The lakes have been very essential micro unit where subsistence opportunities were ample for both human and animals. The documentation of archaeological sites around the lakes indicated when and how those lakes were exploited.

Besides subsistence, the raw material for construction huts and making mats, walls and roof cover may have been obtained. The lakes remained best game ground and pasture land. Different types of wild animals can be found along the banks of lakes. The presences of archaeological sites have suggested hunting behavior of ancient people. Some of the archaeological sites are described hereafter.

### **Archaeological Settlement Pattern**

The archaeological surveys has illustrated a continuous presence of human from Old Stone Age to onwards in some parts of the Upper Thar Desert (Shaikh et al 2002). The recent research in Upper Thar has confirmed the reach of Mesolithic people towards east crossing the ancient Hakra River (Mallah 2010). The permanent settlements existed during Hakra period 3500-3000 BCE which were entirely made of thatches. Nevertheless, during Urban Period dated as 2600–1900 BCE, the larger settlement occurred and used brunt bricks for construction of the houses. To understand the local settlement pattern of the Upper Thar Desert during urban period; at least three tier settlement hierarchy i.e. towns, villages, and camp sites have been

recorded. All link together and were engaged in complex socioeconomic system (Hodder and Orton 1987: 53-97).

### **Town Settlements of the Upper Thar Desert**

A cluster of three towns is recorded in Upper Thar Desert (fig.1 map). All towns are located in deep desert near the sand dune making very gentle slope where they had an open alluvial valley and a water channel in front. Two types of settlement remains were recorded at same area (a) mounded part and (b) surface scatter suggesting that there may have been two classes living together; one of them lived in burnt brick houses and others lived in thatch houses. Here are the abstract glimpses.

### **Poongar Bhanbhro**

**Location:** The site is located approximately 2km South east of the government primary school Doonger Mangrio and north of the Miano Gas Field Taluka Saleh Pat, district Sukkur at 27, 20, 44 degrees North and 69, 19,35 degrees East. The site measured as 570 meters in length in North south direction and 300 meters in east west

having approximately 2 meters total height.

**Description:** The site was discovered by present author in early 90's and have been briefly reported at various places (Mallah 1994, 2000, 2010:56-57) The settlement of Poongar Bhanthro is situated on the right bank of the Hakra River (fig.8) At this place it is observed that Nadi makes wide bed, while the major flow might have been from other side where the traces of deep channel are still present. Now a day it is dried and the area left behind is as wide alluvial valley very suitable for cultivation purposes.

The artifacts are littered in approximately 171000 sq. meters. The main portion of the site is situated on the flat land; however, settlement extends towards the sand dunes in north south directions where a great difference in artifact concentration has been documented. On the basis of thin concentration of artifacts and absence of brunt brick pieces, it is assumed that people might have been living in the Kacha houses in the northern skirts of the settlement. Generally the brunt brick pieces and terracotta cake pieces were littered everywhere on the surface. The

brick measurement is 28x14x6 cm which makes the ratio of 1:2:4.

During previous documentation a remarkable discovery was made as a broken vessel was discovered some fifty meters north of the main structure; the vessel was filled with sandy clay which contained five pieces of broken shell bangles and a miniature pot. In the miniature pot (which was also filled with sandy clay) contained faience disc beads. Because of excessive sun heat and or the salty soil; most of the beads were in very fertile condition, almost in the powder form and cannot be put together. The vessel was broken and has no any paintings and/or decoration, just plain in nature. Was this particular vessel used for storage of exotic commodities such as disc beads and shell bangles? or this was an offering/ritual pot. These are some important and notable questions for future research.

A Jewelry hoard was also discovered from Allah Dino site (Fairservis 1976). Another pot has been discovered by J.M. Kenoyer from Harappa site that was filled with exotic material including various types of beads (Kenoyer 1998: 176). Kenoyer calls it as "bead pot" associated with late Harappan period but

still propose the tradition of keeping valuable in a pot. Most recently, a small broken pot was found from Kanmer site of Gujarat containing 11,707 steatite and faience beads ( Kharakwal *et al* 2010: 16-17).

Another noteworthy object among the collection includes a broken tip of a T/C cone with hole. The cones discovered from Mohenjo-daro are generally solid with broken tip , this is, however, a first cone that has two incised lines around the neck and a through hole like drilled bead. The outer limit of its body thickness is 1.9 cm and the perforation measures as 9mm in total dia. The intention of these lines and hole may have been to tie a thread and secure the thread knots. One may now can assume that the function utilization of such type of cone and others as well was perhaps (a) ritual: used as a bead and (b) plumb bob: to verify the vertical alignment of the given wall.

### **Artifact Description**

The artifact collection from this site consists of the various types of pottery, T/C beads and triangular cakes, bangles, various kinds of stone objects like blades, cores hammer stones and unfinished cubical weight, lime stone

piece; shell bangles, fresh water shell - disc faience beads; copper/bronze pieces; T/C vitrified slag's and a broken T/C cone with hole (fig 9).

The pottery consists of the plain and painted rim sherds, plain and painted body sherds, and various parts of Dish-on-Stand (DoS) and globular cooking pots with ledged and slipped shoulders (Dales and Kenoyer 1986).

A variety of the rim sherds have been collected from this site that includes as jar, pot, and bowls. The morphology and paintings i.e. black band around the neck correlates some of the sherds with earlier periods like Kot Dijian; otherwise collection mainly can be associated with the Harappan Indus period or the Integration era of the Indus Valley civilization.

Various types of the body sherds showing both plain and painted character of their nature. Parallel bands with zigzag lines underneath; and the cord mark design is observed. Other sherds are plain but may be decorated; their painting is vanished because of the exposure to the extreme heat of sun and blasting of sand particles which might have defaced the painting. Nevertheless,



the painting is done with black color on the red surface. Some cooking pots are part of the collection are also painted around the neck with black color.

Several parts of DoS have been gathered; those are plain - painted and incised into various designs. The painting is done with black color into parallel bands. The incised designs are created as parallel lines starting from the center of the plate; nail incised pattern bordered with two lines running parallel to each other. Another incised design is made with straight lines each band of horizontal strokes is bordered with a incised line. All these designs are identical with other settlements as Taloor-Je-Bhit, Lakhan-Jo-Daro, Kot Diji, Mohenjo-daro etc.

Among the above mentioned list of cultural objects discovered from this settlement includes Shell bangles, T/C bangles into different sizes, T/C beads, copper pieces and vitrified slag's. The T/C beads are worth mentioning here, because those are imitation of the long barrel type carnelian beads discovered from Chanho Daro and Mohenjo-daro. This carnelian imitation has been painted in red color as it may look like similar to its original counterpart. Another

halfway broken T/C bead big in the shape though, both tips are broken, and measures (as it is) length 3.5 cm and its thickness is 2.4 cm. and perforation 8mm.

The disc beads are very small and measure as 5mm, with circular perforation at center as 1.0 mm to half mm and thickness is half mm. The cut marks or sawing/cutting tool marks are visible on the beads through necked eye examination.

Shell bangle pieces, banded chert pieces, chert hammer stones pieces have been collected. Additionally, Copper/Bronze pieces; vitrified slag's, t/c bangles, t/c cakes, and broken chert blades are also part of collection from this site.

### **Ghob Bhir**

**Location:** Site is located at 27, 20, 22.7 N and 69,09,42.9 E degrees in the north of modern village of the Ghob in Deh Mamro, Taluka Saleh Pat. The site measures as 160 meters E/W in length and 90 meters N/S in width (fig 10).

**Description:** The site was initially discovered by present author in 1994 and has been investigated since then. The present documentation was done in 2009.

The site is consisting of the mound some four meters high from the surrounding areas and is located the valley where Khabar plant is dominating. The burnt brick pieces are scattered all over the site suggesting about permanent structures in the settlement. However, no any structure like wall was recorded visible on the surface. The bricks were smaller in size as 28/26x14x7; thus maintaining the ratio of 1:2:4.

From eastern side of the site was heavy concentrations of the vitrified slags are present and cover almost entire length of the site and surface looked black. However, I was unable to locate any structure of the kiln. The raised spots were probably the working areas. What things/items were being manufactured; need future research. Nevertheless, after considering the viscosity of slag's and their occupied area, one might think about industrial scale of the Pyrotechnical activity.

From N/western side, chert flaking operation was noticed; at least thirteen secondary flakes and two bullet cores were collected within short period of time. A paste bead and a banded chert weight were discovered adjacent to the chert chipping area (Mallah 1994, 2000).

What was being manufactured at this particular spot, is not clear yet.

Some parts of this settlement were destroyed- peoples have started to dig-out the burnt bricks after which the sand is covering the hollow ditches. It is noticed that sooner or later this site will be covered (like many others) underneath moving sand coming from S/eastern high sand dunes.

The thick concentration of artifacts present on the surface showed diversity of cultural assemblage like pottery, T/c cakes, bangles, beads of various types, chert stone blades, polishers, grinding stones.

### **Excavation of site**

Considering the rich diversity of cultural assemblage a total of two test trenches each measuring as 5x5 meters test were opened. One of them was on the top of mound called as 'Trench A' and other one designated as 'Trench B' was opened on the western slopes of the mound.

### **Trench A**

Surface of the trench was cleared and all diagnostic artifacts were collected. After surface cleaning the cultural material

and burnt brick rubble was appeared. It followed the wall structure almost at the center of the trench. Some outlines of the Burnt brick structure appeared which narrow down the working space. After digging up to the meter and half; the walls continued deeper into ground and it became very difficult to excavate further unless the size of trench was expanded. Thus it was decided to stop the work.

The excavation revealed nice evidence of burnt brick structure of a room. The longest wall running N/E direction measured as 175cm in length, 27cm in width and 85 cm in depth which continued down and into the eastern section. The construction courses of wall also continued deep into the ground. The corner of the room was intact and measured as 155Lx45 Wx 80 cms depth(fig 11a&b).

Both walls depict as a corner of a house and from interior side not much rubble was found. The base part of a storage jar in broken condition was unearthed. On the outside of the room from northern part, some burnt bricks were lying making an irregular platform was unearthed on which a limestone doorsill was placed which was removed after

complete documentation. This could have been entrance of a room but no any other features justifying the characteristics of a floor were observed and thus digging continued. Soon after some architectural features appeared in a small square shape with interior space measuring 65x70cms was documented. The walls of this small room vary in measurement such as western sidewall measured as 65 cms in length; eastern sidewall 95 cms in length; and northern wall 32cms in length. All walls continue deeper in the ground. In this trench, along the northern side, a drain type 20 cms wide feature occurred with three courses of construction. Around this drain, rubble was unearthed.

For the construction of wall two types of bricks were used first type measured as 30x13x6cms and other measured as 28x12x6 cms which shows only two centimeter difference in length of the brick. This may be due to use of two different size mold of brick making.

As mentioned earlier that the occurrence of walls within trench narrowed the work space because as the trench was excavated deeper and walls continued further into ground the work space was limited up to two meters and

consequently work could not be continued further down.

The nature of deposition of cultural material in this trench was mixed together; the upper layer which was approximately ten to fifteen centimeters deep was of windblown sandy silt; after which the cultural material started appearing, the pottery, charcoal, burnt brick bats along with other assemblage appeared. From this trench highly interesting discoveries of assemblage was made. Lots of **Charred grains** were exposed along with **four small jars** and **clay burnt lumps having impressions of Kana from Boro Saccharum bengalensis** plant/grass. The traces of use of this grass have been found from Kot Diji site (Marco 1995: 93-108). The grains were probably placed in some kind of clay pot? But it was not recovered during excavation. Analysis shows that the grains are of wheat *tritium* specie. A complete jar having **geometrical and floral design** was exposed; another jar in broken condition was also found (fig 12). A **copper chisel complete** (fig 13) was found and lots T/C cakes, sand stone polishers, one **large faience bead** (fig

14) and doorsill are among the diagnostic cultural assemblage.

### **Artifact Description**

The artifact repertoire from this site includes Chert blades, cores, flakes, hammer, lime stone pestle, grinding stones and polished sand and lime stones pottery, slag's, banded chert weight, paste bead, bangles, steatite stone (Fig. 12 - 17).

**Pottery:** For the collection of artifact, less emphases was placed on the pottery collection. Only few sherds were gathered from this settlement which are morphologically as similar as from other contemporary settlements of the area. Some sherds were also collected from slag area and those are highly vitrified and have yellowish lustrous and burnished slip from outside.

**Stone:** The stone objects include thirteen secondary chert flakes and two bullet cores, two broken hammer, two grinding/ polishing sand stones, one hammering and polishing lime stone and one pestle, Chert nodule.

The chert cores are small and thin, it measures as length 3.0cm and width is .9mm and other one measures as length

2.93 cm and width 1.12cm thickness 4.6mm . A metal tipped tool might be effective for flaking and blade production purposes. The flakes also measure as 3 to 3.5 cm in length and 7mm as width.

Three objects indicate the polishing and grinding activity. The grayish sand stone that is in cubical shape with flat surface and rounded end; its one side is smooth and dorsal end indicates hammering effects thus the object must have been used as hammer and polisher. A sand stone object in circular shape with flat surface; its one side is very smooth and has glassy shine thus asserting polishing activity. The limestone broken ball that has one flat side, shows hitting activity. This object can be measuring weight for which the flat side will perfectly settle on the scale.

A lime stone pestle in a shape of lingam is also discovered that measures as 15cm (6 inches); its one side is chipped off and entire object is effected by weathered thus nothing can be assumed regarding its function/ utilization. Cubical banded chert stone weight has been discovered from this settlement. Its dimensions are as length 2.6 cm, width 2.4cm and thickness is 1.7 cm . It is partially

damaged in condition. A small disk paste bead is also part of collection; it measures as external dia 6mm, thickness is 2mm and central perforation dia is 1mm.

A broken faience bangle have been discovered; it is flat in shape measuring as width 7mm and thickness 5mm and is decorated with three incised lines from outside. Was this manufactured at this site or have been traded from some elsewhere remains a question for future research. The slag's which are vitrified droplets and clay pieces, are abundant suggesting some kind of Pyrotechnical activity that involves high temperature, conducted at this settlement.

### **Trench B**

After appearance of architectural features; the excavation work in trench-A was abandoned and another 5x5 meters trench on the western slopes of mound was opened where occurring of the architectural features was not expected. This trench was designated as 'Trench B'. After following routine excavation methodology of clearing trench surface; the actual digging work was resumed. The debris consisting of sandy and clay fill along with burnt

brick pieces and other cultural material was appeared. After removing 20-30 centimeters of debris; a wall started appearing almost at the center of trench which continued into eastern section. The wall was disproportionately made and seems the reuse of material. It was placed on another wall which was very intact and wider from the upper wall. A total of eleven courses were exposed and still it was continuing deeper into ground. Besides this wall another was appeared running north south directions and it also continued further into ground and narrowed the digging space. All these walls were in disturbed conditions may be the brick robbers disturbed them.

A total of three layers were exposed in this trench; the first layer consists of sandy clay, burnt bricks and potsherds. Somewhere the compact earth also appeared. The thin sandy sub-layers were also noted. The first wall is also related with this layer. In the second layer similar feature of deposition of cultural material appeared with pottery, ashy spots, brick rubble and compact clay commonly occurred. The wider and intact wall was associated with this layer as well. The last and third layer showed very compact clay on top of the burnt

brick wall; since the wall continued into ground, we abandoned the digging work.

The majority of cultural material was collected from all three layers include the pottery in both plain and painted shapes. The T/C cakes, T/C bangles, T/C weight, T/C rattle, stone weight in round shape, polishers, chert blades, chert hammers, and fiancé and shell bangles broken are among the diagnostic cultural items.

### **Moor Gachi**

**Location:** The site is located two kilometers south of Deariro village in Deh Mamro, Taluka Saleh Pat at 27, 25, 15 North and 69,11, 05 E on the flat alluvial ground elevating almost five meters from surrounding area (fig.18, fig. 20).

**Description:** The site occupies southern side of the sand dunes and has open valley in front. The valley is dominated by Khabar plants. The site consists of a mound some two meters above the surrounding area. The burnt brick fragment is dispersed all over the site. Brick robbers have destroyed some portions of the site. There no any visible features were recorded. Thus the burnt

brick suggested some permanent structures constructed here in this settlement.

The cultural objects include pottery, chert stone, sand stone, shell bead, twisted copper rod and iron pieces. The discovery of iron pieces indicates re-habituate of the area during Iron Age as these people were settled just half kilometer away from this settlement.

The sand dunes are very closely located. The entire surface of the site is littered with artifacts sometimes the burnt brick were also observed on the ground. From surface various type of pottery, T/C cakes, Bangles, copper pieces, white disk beads, agate bead, chert stone blades, shell bangles were collected (fig 19). At some places burnt spots like hearths and/or kiln were also observed. The small dune like heaps on the surface of site made top surface uneven. After quick observation it was noticed that majority of cultural assemblage was associated with Mature Indus period, however, some potsherds showed affinity with earlier period i.e. Kot Dijian. Considering the material richness and temporal depth; three test trenches were established (a) just above the base

(B) at the mid portion of the site and on the top surface.

#### **Trench A**

This trench was established on the southern base of mound; artifacts on the surface were collected. After removing loose soil of surface, the compact clay like soil appeared. The water snails were mixed with clay and no any artifact was collected. It was observed that this might have been an artificial and/or intentional fill for making a platform – and the excavation in this trench was terminated.

#### **Trench B**

Another trench was opened at little upward to the top surface to understand and confirm the extension of artificial fill for platform. Similarly, all artifacts were collected and loose soil was removed from the surface. After scraping loose soil, the same hard compact clay appeared as was in trench - A. The excavation was continued up to one meter depth up to the level of Trench-A, but still the same hard clay continued. No any artifact was collected. The digging confirmed artificial fill for raising platform.

#### **Trench C**

This trench was established on the top of mound to resolve the confusion. Following similar method excavation continued. After one meter depth similar compact soil appeared and a few artifacts were also found along with presence of burnt bricks rubble. The complete bricks were measured the common measurement was 6x13x28 showing almost 1:2:4 ratios. Soon after a small burnt brick platform (fig 21) appeared along with other objects like small white disk beads and pottery were collected. Besides, this platform, few burnt bricks appeared and besides it a human skull discovered, since we were unable to deal with human remains- it was decided not to open it further and we reburied it.

After this excavation it was concluded that this was an artificial mound where cultural deposition was not more than meter and half and it is quite possible that this was a single period site occupied over and intentionally produced clay platform. The raised platform can be useful during high flood monsoon seasons or may have been a ritual place. Nevertheless, further large scale excavation might provide different results in future as well.

### **Artifact Description**

The majority of artifact consists of the pottery in various kinds and types ranging from huge jars to small jar pots and plates of dish on stand and other body sherds. The yellow paste slip on one sherd shows similarity of the slip use as at the Lakhan-Jo-Daro site.

The artifact collection includes T/c bangle, twisted copper rod, a sand stone ball, chert flakes, nodules and one broken small blade its one edge is used and shows wear shine; while other edge is also damaged. The blade measures as 2.8 cm and width is 8mm. Additionally, one shell bead is also discovered which measures as the external dia 8mm, perforation dia one mm and thickness is 2mm. The shell bangles, T/c cakes, faience beads both disc and barrel type were also part of collection (fig 22, 23, 24).

### **Village Settlements of Upper Thar Desert**

The numerous villages occurred in Upper Thar Desert during urban phase of 2600 to 1900 BCE. The absence of permanent construction material like burnt bricks or clay material suggests that all of them were built using thatches



available locally. And the viscosity of cultural material on the surface indicted that these villages continued throughout the entire length of urban period. Nonetheless, at only one settlement named as Saran Waro, the abode wall indications have been observed on the surface. It is quite possible that the small mud wall may have been built to avert the rain water from house. Moreover, what was intra-site setup at individual settlement is described here.

### **SARAN WARO (fig 26)**

**Location 27, 20, 32 North - 69, 12, 25 East**

**Description:** The site is located in the valley on the small sand dune or the raised place covering a total of 170x65x2 meters area. The long axis is in the north/south direction. On the surface of site several hearths, vitrified slag, and thick concentration of pottery, T/C cakes and other cultural objects were noticed. The semiprecious beads, shell bangles and white disk beads were also found from surface (Fig 25). No any baked brick was noticed and/or recorded that have possibly suggested for the utilization of permanent material for residential structures.

Nevertheless, the density of cultural material scattered on the surface actually indicated that this was a permanent village entirely made of thatches; however, there might have been some mud wall at the base. During surface analysis of the site, traces of mud structures were observed for example, almost at the center of site the traces of mud wall in square shape were present (Fig28).

On the Northern side a small heap or mound like raised place with cultural material was selected for test trench and a small 5x5 meters test trench was demarketed. Within this trench one meter balk was left and four meters area was actually excavated. Before starting actual digging, cultural material from surface was collected. Just from the start of surface; the cultural material continued upto the one meter depth without any architectural evidence. No any compact clay like deposit and or layer was encountered. It was the sandy silt along with cultural deposit of pottery, T/C cakes, T/C bangles and chert stone blades etc. In the eastern section of trench was just natural soil and no any artifact appeared.

After almost one meter depth natural soil appeared (fig 27). The deposition of cultural material suggested that this was a single period site where the houses were made of thatches and the bases houses were made of mud locally available. There were no indications for manufacturing any item that required complex technology viz the semiprecious stone beads.

Nevertheless, considering the thick deposition of pottery, T/C cakes bangles and other material it can be hypothesised that the given spot was practically occupied for long time period and people must have engaged in the pastoralist activity. The cattle, goat, sheep are still favored and preferred domesticates which can adapt the desert environment.

During excavation several artifacts were collected majority was of pottery both plain and painted, Terracotta cakes and bangles, Sandstone polishers, shell bangles and chert blades were collected. Nevertheless, the surface showed more diversity of artifacts in which all above types along with white disk beads and copper pieces, T/C animal figurines were observed. The site needs further excavation and some more test trenches

to understand the actual function and length of occupancy/ inhabitancy.

### **Lani Waro**

**Location:** 27°, 18', 21" North and 69°, 09', 04" East degrees.

**Description:** The site is located on the southern slopes of sand dune where it has an open valley. Thick concentration of artifacts was recorded over the huge area and it might have been a permanent **village**. The given place is rich in ecological resources; the valley might have been a lake and was permanent source of drinking water. People still live in this area.

### **Lundro Kalo Waro**

**Location:** 27°, 19', 25" North and 69°, 10', 44" East degrees.

**Description:** The site is located just one kilometer of Khabri Waro Muquam where a thin concentration of cultural assemblage was evident over the surface. At just little distance in the east, the entire slope of sand dune is covered with potsherd over huge area which indicates that this was a huge **village** site entirely made of wood & thatch houses where people lived permanently.

**Wari Jee**

**Location:** 27°, 02', 53" North and 69°, 07', 17" East degrees.

**Description:** the site is located on the southern slopes where some Muslim graves are present in destroyed condition. Thick concentration of cultural material mainly the pottery suggests the longer occupation of the spot and may have been a permanent **village**. The thick concentration of pottery in sporadic clusters suggests an individual house (fig 29). The proper counting of each spot can provide an estimated idea about the total houses within this village.

**Deh Garhar**

**Location** 27°, 19', 58" North and 69°, 21', 34" East degrees.

**Description:** The site lies on the southern slopes of sand dunes and at two kilometers distance from Sawan village in Deh Garhar. The traces of ancient river channel were documented flowing at the base of dunes towards south and then turned west towards Miano which is located approximately five kilometers from this site. This channel is coming from Angiario village in east and this may have been branch of Wahinda/Reni River Channel. From Miano the channel

turn at 27, 19, 04N – 69, 14, 47 E to the southwest and west directions towards Nara canal.

The cultural material at this site is in good concentration and may have been a village where from pottery, T/C cakes, and some stone objects were collected(fig 30).

**Ghob-B (fig 31)**

**Location:** 27, 20, 24 North and 68, 09, 55 East degrees.

**Description:** Sit is located at about 150 meters east of Gob Mound near to the sand dunes. Blowing wind has created a small low-lying sand dune that covers this area of site. The surface of the site is covered with high density of artifacts. No architectural features and/or burnt brick pieces were found which suggests that people were living in wooden-thatch houses for which the construction material was easily and locally available. Somewhere the clusters of potsherd were present suggesting the places for individual houses. This part of Ghob also enjoyed similar ecological setup as the mounded part of the site. The site is actually located in the southern part of alluvial valley making a corridor for connection to another valley in the east.

The cultural assemblage from this site consists of pottery in various shapes, sizes and decoration, T/C cakes, bangles, bead, perforated pottery, chert blade etc(fig 32, 33). The site must have been connected with Ghob mound which is the Mound A indicating regular identity of Mature Indus period as Upper and lower mound. The upper mound situated in west and lower in east. The excavation is required to understand actual stratigraphical sequence of deposition of cultural material at site.

### **Campsites of Upper Thar Desert**

The Thar Desert is vast open land having with floral diversity very suitable for goat, cattle, and sheep and large herds are still seen roaming over the rolling sand dunes and valleys. The land becomes green after first showers of the monsoonal rains. This supplementary diversity of grasses turns heydays for the herds and herders who take their animals far from villages and live there as long as grasses and water in the low-lying area is available. They take only few items like cooking pots and pans, glasses and cups, storage of food item and liquids like ghee, honey and the cutting tools. They construct temporary simple

huts and sleeping beds. Happy herder return at same spot each year.

This pattern was observed archaeologically as well. Far from towns and village sites, numerous spots were recorded with thinly scattered potsherds over small area. The objects were present in such manner that each potsherd can be counted and plotted on the map. During the survey along ancient Hakra River several such type sites have been recorded. At some sites, the artifacts associated with Hakra and Kot Dijian periods were also collected suggesting the repetitive occupation of the very same spot.

### **Beraroe**

**Location:** 26°, 36', 20" North and 68°, 56', 12" East degrees.

**Description:** The site is located in the west of Beraroe Lake at least five to six kilometers of the Nara Canal flowing in the west direction. The cultural material is scattered in thin manner which suggest short stay and may have been a **campsite**. The lake provides best resource for animal grazing as it is utilized today as well. A variety of potsherd in different sizes and decorations was collected.

**Kandan Waro- A**

**Location:** 26, 28, 09, North and 68, 56, 54 East

**Description:** The site is located half kilometer south of village Dilmurad Aradin on low flat area. The cultural material scattered on the surface was in low concentration. Each artifact is present at considerable are because of the kicking of animals specially the goat. While surveying the area some geometric tools like flakes, trapeze, and potsherds associated with Hakra and Indus period were recorded. The surface soil was compact and rain water may have been collected in the southern side. This is the main attraction to find such thin concentration of artifacts as this spot could have been a hunt area and / or temporary **campsite**.

**Summary**

The knowledge about Indus archaeology is growing; the more sites are excavated or surveyed, the better understanding is established. Hence, the present research has added some more information that has increased the statistical data on the settlements and has thrown light on the socioeconomic patterns. Now it is certain that there was greater number of

settlements on the Hakra River flowing parallel to the Indus River. The survey of Cholistan has brought more than 300 settlements and survey along lower Hakra system has 80 sites this number will change as research still continues. The concentration of settlements grows in the Rajasthan and Gujarat of India. Within this huge geographical unit, large number of population was settled indicating that Indus valley was one of the densely populated region of the ancient world with very complex socioeconomic system.

The arrival of semiprecious stones like carnelian, steatite, lapis lazuli, agate, quartz and chert; some varieties of sea shells and copper suggest a scale of interaction network among the communities for utilization of resources within and beyond the Indus land. The raw material pieces and processing debris was seen only at the cities and towns; none of the village site situated either in Indus plain or on Hakra River has revealed manufacturing or processing exotic commodities. Only finished items have been recorded at the village settlements.

The priority of using items was also different among the cities, towns, and

village and camp sites. For example, the white disc beads and dish-on-stand were common items in the cities and towns, on the contrary both of these items are found rare and may have been precious in the villages and were totally absent at campsites. Copper was rare and T/C cones were absolutely absent in the villages. The exotic material was kept/stored securely into pots and was buried under the floor of house. This type of analysis may also help to understand aspects of including the socio-ritual life of the Indus people.

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## Figures

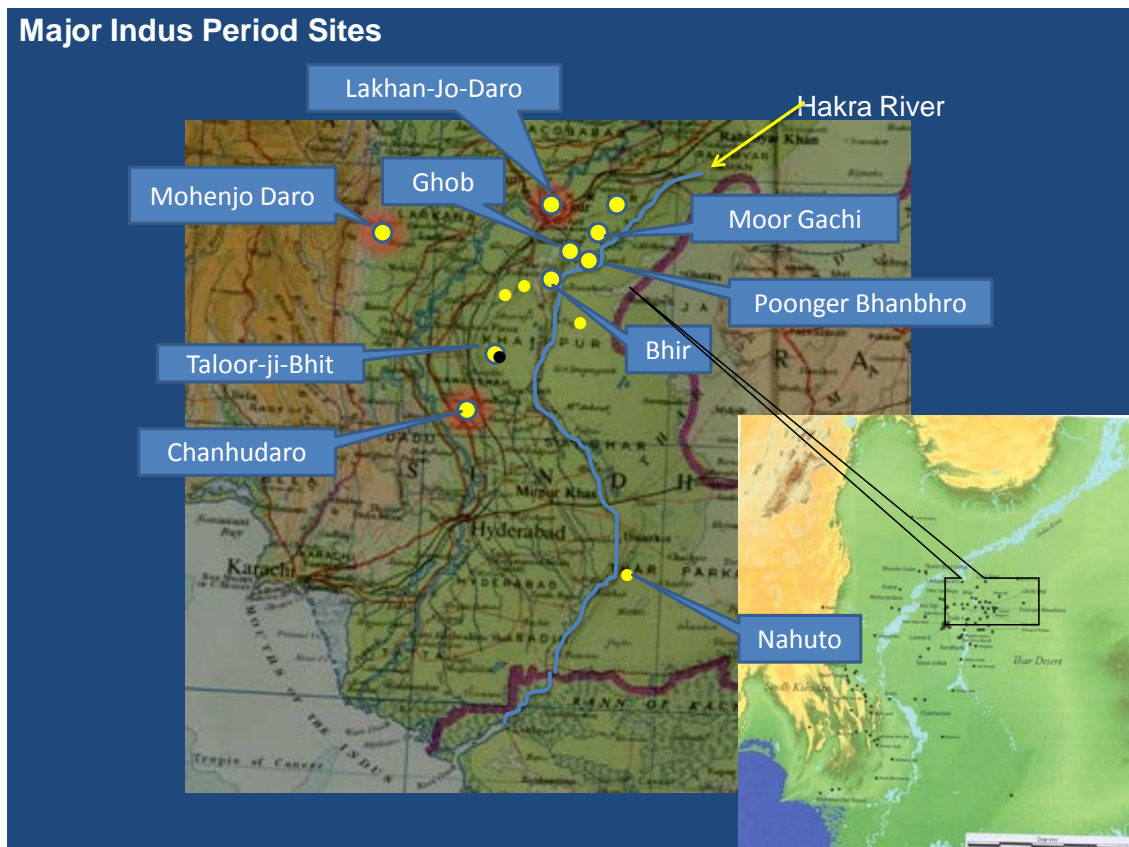


Figure 1: Map of the region showing location of the sites.



Figure 2. Sandy Desert with alluvial valley and various types of flora





**Figure 3: Traces of dried river course running through the desert area.**



**Figure 4: Deposition of various types of Mollusks and white sand.**



**Figure 5: different type of Mollusks present on the surface.**



**Figure 6: Remains of the Hakra river in shape of Dhoro running through the desert region.**



**Figure 7: Lakes located within Desert region.**



**Figure 8: General view of the Poongar Bhanbhro site.**



Figure 9: Some important object present in *in-situ* positions on the surface of site.



Figure 10: General view of the site

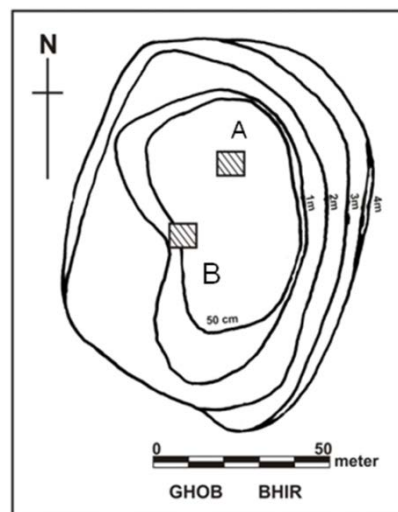


Figure: Topographic map of Ghob Bhir site





**Figure 11a: Architectural features found at the site**



**Figure 11a: Architectural features found at the site**

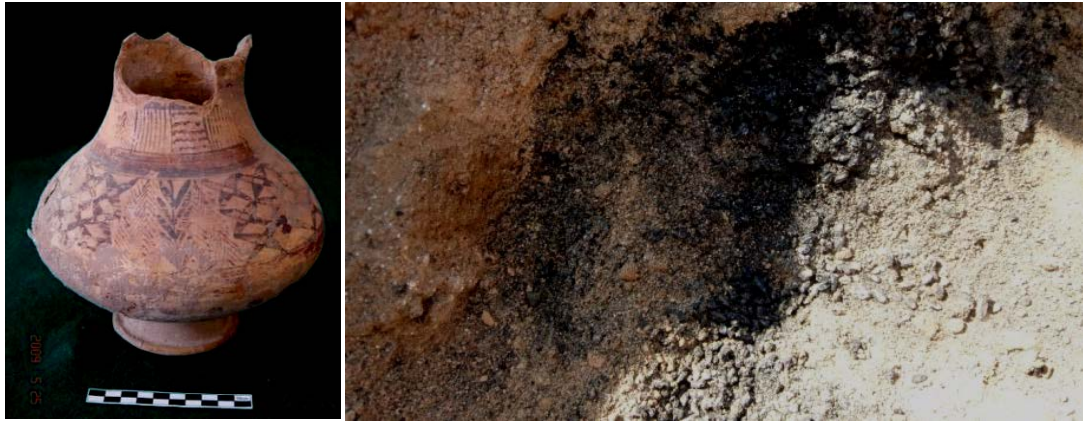


Figure 12: Medium size jar A *in situ* and B: Charred wheat grains



Fig 13: Copper object (chisel) *in situ* and *Ex situ*.



A.

B.

Figure 14: A: broken copper objects and a carnelian bead; B: Faience bangle pieces and bead.



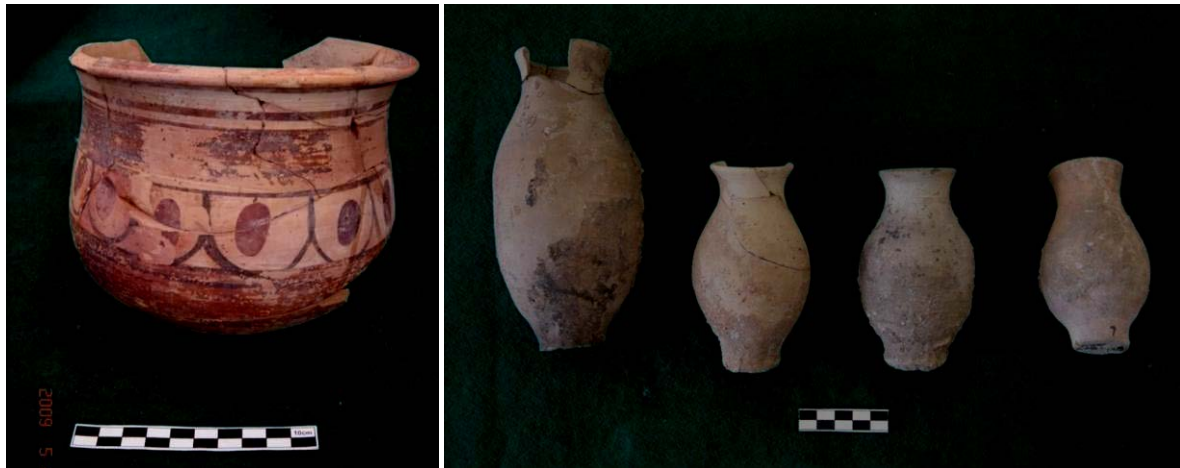


Figure 15: Pots in different shapes and sizes.

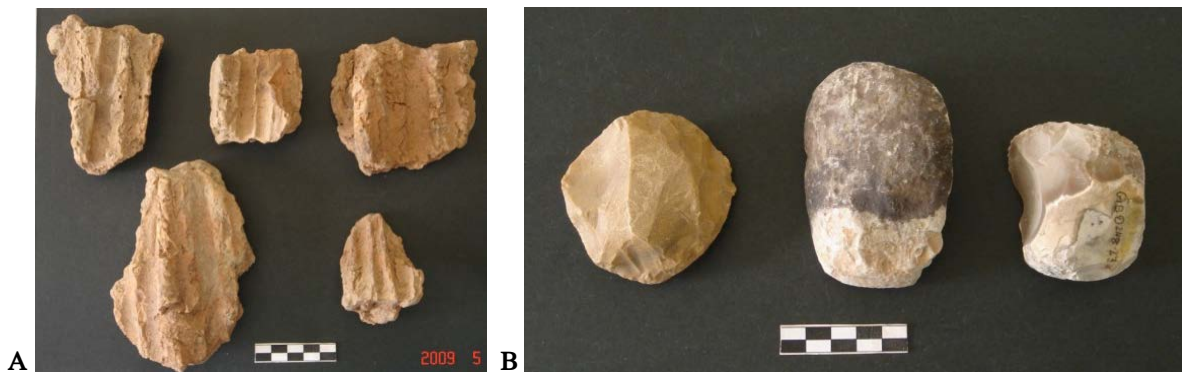


Figure 16: A: Burnt clay with impression of Kana and B: different chert stone hammers.



Figure 17: Various chert stone balls may have been used as weights.



Fig 18: General view of the Moor Gichi site.



Figure 19: Some important artifacts collected form site.

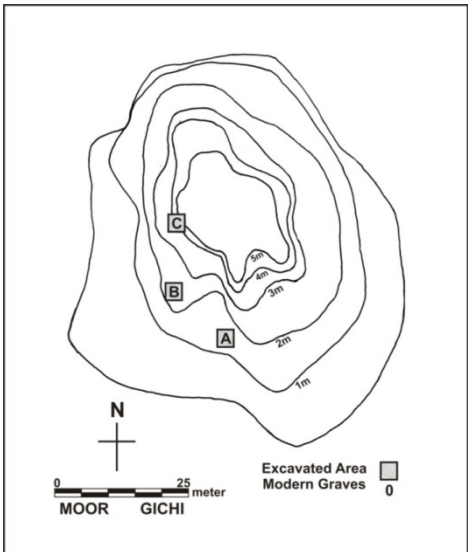


Figure 20: Contour map of the Site.



Figure 21: A disturbed burnt brick platform was exposed in trench C



Figure 22: Shell bangles in different dia and sizes. Figure 23: Shell Bangles and white barrel shape bead and white disk beads



Figure 24: Different sizes of Terracotta cakes





Figure 25: Some artifacts present on the surface of site

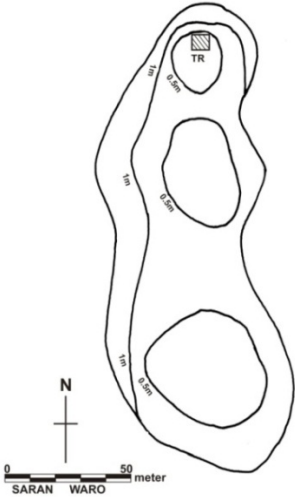
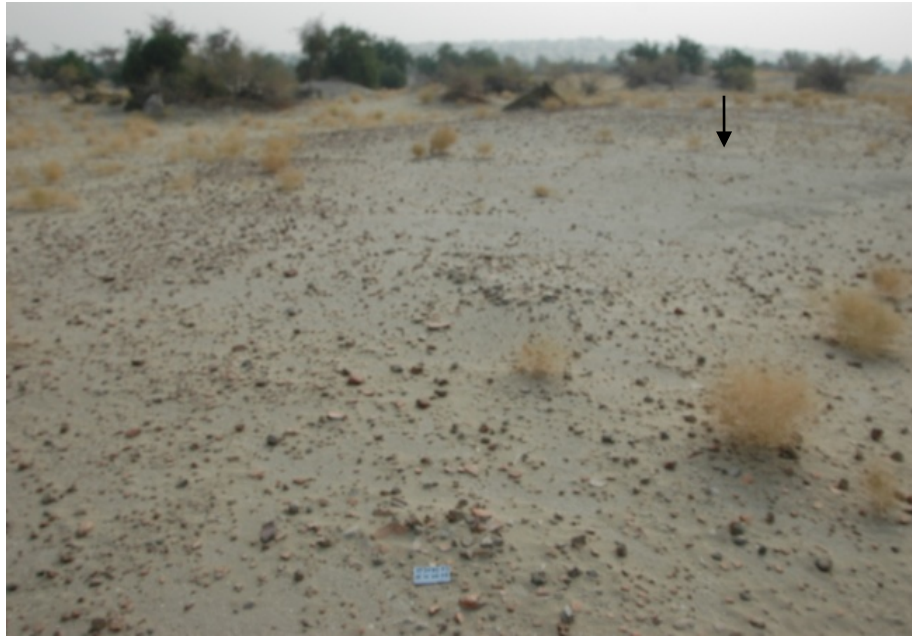


Fig26: Contour map of Site



Fig27: Thick deposition of cultural material in the section of the test trench.



**Figure 28: Traces of the mudwall house**



**Fig29: General view of the site shows the concentration of artifacts on the surface.**



**Fig30: General view of site, shows the concentration of artifacts on the surface.**



**Fig31: General view of site shows the concentration of artifacts on the surface**





Figure 32: Pottery collected from site.



Figure 33: Stone artifacts collected from site

# Buddhist Heritage of Gujarat: An Account from 300BC-400AD

AMBIKA B. PATEL

## Abstract

*Buddhist studies have come through a long way by the contributions of various disciplines and also through their multidisciplinary approaches. However the region of Gujarat, the north western state India, remained as an area which calls for more attention from scholars and indicates great scope for research in Buddhist heritage. The testimony of early existence of Buddhism in Gujarat is assigned to Girnar Rock Edict by Emperor Asoka, while chronologically, Boriya stupa in Junnagadh is assigned to post Mauryan times, followed by an yield of innumerable architectural evidences of consists of stupas and rock cut caves established by Kshatrapas (100AD-400AD). Thus the time period 300BC-400AD stands as a noteworthy period of Buddhist heritage. The present paper is an attempt to elucidate the Buddhist heritage of Gujarat from 300BC-400AD and is a preliminary effort in generating data for multidisciplinary research in the field of Buddhist studies of this region.*

**Keywords:** Buddhist heritage, rock cut caves, stupas, viharas, sculptures, relic caskets, terracotta sealing.

## Introduction

Study of Buddhist cultural heritage structures and remains by academic disciplines like archaeology, art history, history and religious studies have evolved through time. Study of Buddhist Stupas by Alexander Cunningham

during the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century elevated the Buddhist art and architecture to the forefront of academic study for the first time. During the second half of 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the remains of Buddhist Stupas assumed a prominent position in art and architecture studies. The study of carved architectural and

sculptural remains was mainly focused on chronology of stylistic development. Some scholars viewed architectural and sculptural remains of stupas in the light of the “psychology” and “meaning” of art as expressed in the philosophical and aesthetic traditions (Hawkes & Shimada 2009).

Gujarat, the north western state of India, holds the testimony of existence of Buddhism since Mauryan times with the popular Girnar Rock Edict of Emperor Asoka, located in Junagadh, Saurashtra. Evidence of a brick built stupa at Boriya, Junagadh region is dated to post Mauryan times. This region yielded evidences of both stupas and rock cut caves (in large number) established during the early historic period (100AD-400AD). On the basis of archaeological and art historical perspectives, data generated on early Buddhism (Mauryan and post Mauryan cultural periods) of this region is limited, leaving immense scope for research and exploration. Except few excavation and exploration reports of rock-cut caves, stupas, and reports of other material remains and few museum catalogues, publication is scanty in the field of Buddhist studies in Gujarat. Thus the study and research of

Buddhist heritage is of great importance. The present paper is an attempt to elucidate the Buddhist heritage materials of Gujarat from 300BC-400AD so as to generate information on the basis of a multidisciplinary research in the field of Buddhist studies in Gujarat.

### **Early Historic Gujarat from 300BC-400AD**

The verifiable political history of Gujarat begins with Mauryan dynasty and urbanism in the early historic period of Gujarat emerged after the conquest by Mauryans around 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC (Allchin 1995). Sankalia (1941), opines that, the status of this region during Mauryan period seems to be that of an ‘outlying’ province ruled by a raja under the direct control of ‘viceroy’ of Malwa and the province might have been autonomous and independent for its internal matters. Traditional records of Pandits, Yatis, Bhatas, folk-literature and travelogues are the literary sources which draw information on early historic Gujarat (Majumdar 1960).

According to Allchin (1995) “it appears that the period between the Harappan and Early Historic was less of a dark age, but more of a period of gradual

stable growth and innovation which culminated in the emergence of the Early Historic world". The material evidences prior to 4<sup>th</sup> century BC from the archaeological excavations at Dwaraka (Ansari 1966; IAR 1979), Nagara (Mehta and Shah 1968) and Prabhas Patan (Nanavati *et.al.*1971) hold up the view. Allchin (1995) further proposed that urbanism in the Early Historic Period in Gujarat emerged after the conquest by Mauryans around 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC.

The Girnar rock inscription, one of the significant rock edict of Asoka, stand as the earliest evidence to hold up the occurrence of Buddhism in this region. It appears that the erstwhile population of Saurashtra was quite a sizable population and for whose benefit this inscription was engraved and this implies how important this region was as an annexure to the Mauryan empire to merit such an endeavor. Based on Buddhist literature *Dipavamsa*, *Mahavamsa* and Asokan edicts, Sankalia (1941) suggests *Dharmaraksita* were acted as the convoys who introduced Buddhism to Kathiawar/Saurashtra. On stylistic grounds, scholars assigned some of the rock cut caves of Junagadh to the

2<sup>nd</sup> century BC contemporary to Mauryans, though this needs cross verification and authentication. The absence of dating material and other relative archaeological evidences from the site makes it difficult to assign a definite date for these caves.

The strategic location of this region might have played a major role in its continuous cultural growth. There is no clear evidence available to indicate the direct control of Sungas, Satvahanas and Andhras over Gujarat. During early centuries of Christian era, this area might have served as an area of amalgamation between the indigenous rulers and Kushan and Greek invaders. It appears that Buddhism was adopted by the Greeks during Menander's time and they acted as donors to many Buddhist establishments. Along with Pali textual references which mention the role of Indo-Greeks in missionary activities, the numismatic evidences from northwestern frontier designate the jurisdictional influence of Greeks. Thus it has turned out to be the Greeks who were responsible for evolving a new style of Buddhist art, usually known as Indo-Greek art, flourished in North-Western sub-continent. Indo-Greek rule

over Gujarat is mainly attested by numismatic evidence. *Milindapanha*, the famous Buddhist text immortalized Indo-Greek king Menander as a Buddhist devotee. It appears that some caves in Gujarat can be assigned to Indo-Greek rule dating 1<sup>st</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup> century AD. Gandhara school of Art under the Kushanas also influenced the north western states of modern India including Gujarat. The influences of the foreign elements are well illustrated in the artistic representation of this period.

Though Sakas said to have conquered sea provinces of Kutch and *Surastrene*, details of ruling of this north-western region is uncertain. According to the traditional records, Sakas were driven out from Ujjain in 58BC and is uncertain what happened to their territories in Gujarat (Sankalia 1941).

The earliest undeniable evidence of the succeeding rulers, the Western Kshatrapas comes from Andhau inscription dated to 89AD (Gokhale 1972) from Kutch. Another six inscriptions from the same area, four of them on the same stone slab (Banerji 1921) attest the joint rule of Rudradaman and Chastana for at least a decade. The most popular Devnimori

Buddhist settlement was constructed by Kshatrapas and their rule appears to have ended by c.305AD. During Kshatrapa time, many viharas were excavated in the rocky areas at Junagadh, Sana, Talaja, Dhank, Zinurizar and Khambalida (Sankalia 1960).

The main traits of early historic period, such as the existence of agro pastoral economy, development of script, rise of urban settlements; brick built structural remains and monumental buildings, international trade and occurrence of Jainism, Vaishnavism and Buddhism. The excavated sites like Devnimori (Mehta *etal* 1966), Vadnagar (Subbarao 1955, Rawat 2011), Amreli (Rao 1966) and Siyot (IAR 1988-89) revealed art and architectural remains of Buddhist settlements (Map 1). The material cultural assemblages consists of variety of ceramics, coins, glass objects, shell artifacts, metal artifacts enable us to appreciate the Buddhism and the early historic period of Gujarat from 300BC-400AD in deeper dimensions.

### **Monumental Heritage:**

#### **Architectural Edifices (Stupas, Viharas and Rock cut Caves)**



For the first several centuries of Buddhist history, disciples and monks led an ascetic life, often wandering and depended on donations of food and begging. Once institutionalized, this lifestyle allowed the pursuit of enlightenment among the monkish community (sangha) which formed around the Buddhist doctrine. It became customary for the itinerant monks to meet for periodic retreats at monasteries, often for two or three months during the rainy season, to confirm the teachings of the community. Later, settled monasteries were established and maintained through donations by lay persons of both high and low status (Barnes 1995). The built heritage and its environment are full of meaning and functional perspectives in relation to time and space as well as to the communities who have built it by their participation in its planning, construction and maintenance and it remains same for Buddhist built heritage as well.

Buddhist worship thus was focused on stupas, especially large ones containing relics of the great master. The smaller ones either held relics of close disciples of him or were built as

commemorative/votive constructions within the stupa and monastic establishments. Buddhist religious centers received the patronage of kings, guilds, merchants, bankers and even by the clergy themselves.

The free standing monuments, stupas, viharas/monasteries in the plains consisting of large open air complexes (built with a focus on pilgrimage by the Buddhist laity) were located in the plains of North Gujarat. Buddhist monasteries carved into the rocky cliffs at various pockets of Gujarat as rock cut caves were distributed in Saurashtra, Kutch and south Gujarat. They functioned either as *chaitya halls* (for meditation/prayer) or as *chaitya grihas* (for living) or for combined purposes by the Buddhists. Innumerable number of both these types of structures was built during Kshatrapa time (100-300AD).

### **Rock-Cut Caves**

The rock cut caves are majorly located in the rocky cliff areas of Junagadh, Kutch and South Gujarat, and were of mainly two types, Chaitya halls and Viharas (*Chaityagruhas*). The isolated rocky cliffs might have served peaceful environment for Buddhist monks to

meditate and stay. Approximately 200 Buddhist caves at various stages of preservation have been reported from Gujarat (IAR 1953-2000). Junagadh itself reported more than 50 caves spread in three locations; Uparkot, Khaprakodia and Bavapyara (IAR 1958-59, Gosh 1989). Though some of the rock cut caves are assigned to Mauryan and post Mauryan period by some scholars, the absence of archaeological evidence makes it difficult to accept it. However, Sankalia (1941) assigned some of the rock cut monuments at Junnagadh, Talaja and Sana to the early Hinayana type based on stylistic grounds. Majority of the caves are simple and consist of plain cells without much ornamentation except Uparkot with ornate pillars and rows of chaitya arches (Figure1), above the cells and chequer design band in between. Bavapyara caves showcase chaitya arches, Khaprakodia caves indicate fragmentary remains of capital/bracket figures and Talaja caves with weathered vedika designs on the façade of Ebhal mandapa).

Kshatrapa period being the blooming time of Buddhism in Gujarat, majority of the rock cut caves were assigned to

this time viz., Uparkot, Sana, Talaja, Khaprakodia, Dhank (in Saurashtra), Siddhsar, Siyot, Lakhpat (in Kutch), Kadiyadungar (in South Gujarat) and are probably occupied from 1<sup>st</sup>- 4<sup>th</sup> Century AD. Based on the vedika ornamentation, Sankalia (1941) dates Zinzurizar caves to 1<sup>st</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup> century AD. The ornamentation of Chaitya arches and chequer design on the facade of the lower halls at Uparkot caves show similarity with Devnimori stylistic elements, perhaps indicate their contemporaneous existence. The excavated material remains from Uparkot (IAR 1958-59) namely, coins of Kshatrapa king Rudrasena II, and terracotta figurines show similarity with those from Devnimori to hold up the aforesaid view. The caves at Khambalida dated to Kshatrapa - Maitraka period have shown elaborate ornamentation at the facade of the chaitya hall. Vajrapani and Padmapani are illustrated with attendant figures on either side of the façade in life size highlighting pervasiveness of Mahayanism (Figure 2). Perhaps some of these caves continued to be occupied by the monks during the succeeding Maitraka period.

## Stupas

Elaborate structural monuments namely stupa and vihara were excavated from Devnimori, Vadnagar, Boriya etc. Devnimori, located 2kms in the south of Shamalaji, Bhiloda Taluka of North Gujarat is a popular Buddhist settlement excavated by the Department of Archaeology and Ancient History, The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda in 1959-63 (Mehta and Chowdhary 1966). This Buddhist complex revealed one Mahastupa, two Viharas and four votive stupas and an apsidal chaitya hall (Figure: 3) along with large number of antiquities and an inscribed stone casket with bodily relics of Buddha (casket contained a copper vessel having gold bottle in it with relics). The stupa was built of brick and mortar and has two platforms topped by an elongated hemispherical dome (*anda*) and perhaps originally had a harmika and umbrellas (*chatrayashti*) which is missing. The height of the ruined stupa structure (Figure.4) was 11m from the ground with a shallow and broad base. The first tier was a square platform and might have been the circumambulatory path (*pradakshinapatha*). The platform on its elevation had four mouldings, with

tiny moulded cornice with rounded bricks seen as string course, super imposed with wall mouldings and in between pilasters with plain base and Indo-Corinthian capitals with acanthus leaves. In between each pilaster, on the second platform arches under which Buddha images in *dhyanamudra* were placed. The arches were decorated with *ghatapallava* motifs, lotus petals, chequer designs etc. This stupa shows close similarities with those from Mirpurkhas, Taktibahi in Pakistan and others located in the north western frontier.

Two votive stupas were excavated at Vadnagar, one with a square plan and other is a circular one near the north eastern corner of the monastery, dated to 5<sup>th</sup> century AD (Rawat 2011). The stupa, square in plan is erected in terraced fashion with three diminishing terraces and with an elevation of 1.25m extant, the *anda* is missing. The second circular votive stupa had at least three courses extant. The stupa at Boriya, Junagadh excavated by Cousens (1891) revealed a solid brick core and structural remains decorated with herring-bone pattern of brick alignment. The relics were embedded in the brick structure at

considerable depth above ground level and the relic casket is now part of Junagadh museum collection. Numerous small mounds seen in the vicinity appears to be votive stupas (Majumdar 1960) and to confirm the same it needs more research.

### **Viharas**

The Chatusala vihara at Devnimori measured (36x36m) with an open courtyard (Figure 3) paved with diagonally placed bricks, having rooms/cells all around was single storied structure with flat rectangular roof tiles. The southern side central cell was in different plan with raised platform with moulded bands, floor with rectangular schist slabs perhaps functioned as a chamber for prayer and the platform on the western side might have been used as a preaching dais. Absence of Buddha images in the vihara perhaps highlights inhabitation of Samitya school of monks (Mehta Chowdhary 1966).

Vadnagar reported a Buddhist monastery made of burnt bricks located within a fortified area during the recent excavations from 2008-09. The plan of the monastery is quadrangle with an open square courtyard in the middle

surrounded by cells on all sides. The construction and arrangement of cells around the courtyard followed a swastika pattern which was possibly meant to provide easy access to the cells located at the corners (Rawat 2011) which is comparable to monasteries from Taxila. The Vadnagar monastery was provided with narrow veranda on the front side and the postholes on the front wall indicate the erstwhile existence of a wooden roof structure.

Vihara at Intwa, a brick built monastery, excavated by Acharya (1949) is known as Rudrasena monastery on the basis of the inscribed round seal. The eastern outer structure with six rooms and a veranda, brick floors, platform and remnants of brick walls etc. were uncovered during excavation. Covered gutters as part of drainage system, water closets etc. along with roof tiles, terracotta beads, red polished ware and other material remains provide evidence of flourishing ancient vihara at Intwa (Majumdar 1960).

### **Art Heritage**

Buddhists practicing autonomous and distinctive aesthetic art tradition perhaps act as the first mature expression of

Indian Art following the collapse of the proto-historic (Harappan /Chalcolithic) art. Buddhist art tradition was increasingly favored by special characters of its doctrine especially meditation (which remained as the central discipline leading to the attainment of spiritual grace representing images of the seer seated in deep contemplation or dispensing the fruit of his meditations, the *Dhamma*. Though, the doctrines were later divided into separate sectarian lines, they nonetheless exerted a pervasive unifying power over the realm of artistic expression (Rosenfield 1965). Buddhist Art in Gujarat represents diverse forms of sculptures, decorative motives of architectural edifices, rock paintings and sealings. Among the sculptures, Buddha images remain as the dominant category.

### **Buddha Sculptures**

As per the Buddhist scriptures, after the death of Great Master, Buddhism got divided into two schools; Hinayana relied in the doctrines preached by Buddha in original form while and Mahayana emphasized on human representation of Buddha as Sakyamuni, an eternally supreme deity. Early Buddhist art being an-iconic never

depicted Buddha in anthropomorphic form, instead, his presence was generally indicated by a footprint, an empty throne, royal umbrella/parasol. Texts such as *Suddharma Pundarika* (lotus sutra) and *Mahavastu* emphasize worship as supreme means of salvation, brought an end to aniconic stage of Buddhism and provided a suitable climate for the creation of the anthropomorphic image of Buddha.

The genesis of the Buddha image is one of the inexplicable issues in Indian art (Foucher 1917; Rowland 1936; Krishnan 1996). The first images of Buddha are generally said to have produced either in the ancient province of Gandhara, in the northwest of the Indian subcontinent or at Mathura (125km away from Delhi) was a flourishing commercial and religious center once formed the focus of southern part of erstwhile Kushana Empire. The earliest Buddha images are those that bear dates in the reign of Kanishka, viz., the Saranath Bodhisattva dated to the 3rd regnal year of Kanishka (Agrawala 1965). The growing practice of Buddha-puja (the cult of devotion of the Buddha as lord), creation of images as manifestation of bhakti, growing popularity and prevalence of Mahayana

cult perhaps flourished hand in hand. Image making was known by the end of 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC as a figural style and based on the concept of *Mahapurusha* (great man) with distinctive *lakshanas* (identification features), the images of the great master was created in different regional styles based on certain art traditions and techniques (Sharma 2004).

By the first century AD., followers of the Buddha elevated him to the status of god and symbolically stupa became synonymous to Buddha himself representing his presence in structural form. Buddha images became popular by middle of second century AD, and in the case of Gujarat, their early appearance is assigned to 1st/2nd century AD and dominantly seen in Kshatrap period (2nd-4th century AD). The human figure of the Buddha wearing a monastic robe began to dominate the art of India.

Asokavandana referred to the use of wood and clay for making Buddha images at many parts of India (c.f. Strong 1983). The material evidences from the early historic sites in Gujarat showcase iconic representation of Buddha in stone, metal and terracotta.

Early evidences during Kshatrapa period, terracotta dominated as a major media of image making. The finely made Buddha images in terracotta (Figure 5) from Gujarat are master pieces of Kshatrap-Gupta Art highlighting the balanced blending of artistic expression and technical skill of the maker.

Stone Image of Bodhisattava (sits on lotus in *padmasana* posture on *simhasana*) from Vadnagar is akin to Katara Buddha in its depiction. The hair style of this image as well as the depiction of animals on the base is similar to typical early Katara images. This seated red sand stone image is dated to 1st/2nd century AD from the inscription on its base. The inscription reads as "*Sammatiyo Bhikhuno yo Devo Bodhisattvas tayo chataye kuteye Acharyen Mahasayaken pariyoh*" means that Acharya Mahasayak brought the image of Bodhisattva, who is the God of Sammatiya Bhikshus for installing in the chaitya. This image is very significant as it directs towards the existence of Samitya School in Gujarat during early centuries of Christian era.

### **Stone Relic Casket**

The inscribed relic casket (Figure.6) is made of greenish schist stone and measures 7-inch diameter and 5-inch height, found *insitu* position, placed in an earthen pot at a depth of 13 feet from the top of the *stupa* at the core part, from the *Mahastupa* of the Buddhist establishment at Devnimori, Sabarkantha District, North Gujarat, dated between 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> century AD (Mehta and Chaudhary 1966). It is one of the exclusive artistic object created in stone with a lid having separable knob. This greenish-grey casket is a squat cylindrical box of chlorite schist and its shape corresponds to a woven bamboo (Pitaka) basket with a lid. The stopper appears as handmade while the lid and the box are finished on a fast turning lathe as indicated the lathe marks.

This relic Casket is inscribed all around its body, base as well as inside and outside of the lid. The appearance of the inscription namely thick bold lines on the body and thin long incisions on inside as well as outside of the lid gives an impression that, these represent skills of different scribes. The rounded rim appears elegant ornamentation on the rims of the lid and base of the casket. The flank of the lid is decorated with a

pair of grooved lines. The lid is inscribed both inside out side with doctrine of *Pratityasamutpada*, the Buddhist ideology. This exclusive art object act as an excellent source of information with regard to the built heritage.

### **Terracotta Sealings**

The circular inscribed seal from Intwa vihara with chaitya symbol at the center with brahmi legend around it on the borders is a noteworthy object for terracotta art. It also stands as a source to assess the role of then monks and monasteries. The inscription on the seal read as *Maharaja rudrasena vihare bhikshusamghasya*, indicate that it belong to the bikshu samgha of Maharaja Rudrasena monastery. The terracotta seals and sealing obtained from excavations at Nagara are very interesting as one among them read as *Buddhapasya* along with few other seals read as *(Shiri?)vijayamitra, Mahasena etc.*(Mehta & Chowdhary 1968). Some of the black ware sherds with high polish from Vadnagar is inscribed with brahmi legends, like *Devshririshi, Shakasya and Dhamma* (personal communication with excavator, Shri.Y.S.Rawat).

## Conclusion

The Buddhist architectural heritage in this region acted as a strong vehicle for the propagation of the religion from Maurayn times onwards and served as an annexure to the great empire. Though Buddhism occur in Gujarat during Maurayan times and grown during post – Maurayn time, the built and the art heritage remain as potential evidences to highlight the booming of the religion during Khastrapa period (100AD-400AD). The location of the major Buddhist settlement sites like Devnimori, Vadnagar, Siyot etc. on the ancient trade routes indicate the influence of merchant support. The Girnar rock edict and the inscription on Devnimori relic casket corroborate the royal patronage for the establishment of their construction. The built heritage specially, stupas are stylistically different from those in various regions of India. They show close similarity with those in Pakistan and Afghanistan more specifically to that of stupas of Mirpurkhas, Taktibahi etc. Hence the architectural heritage stands as the media to highlight the stylistic parallels within the region as well as with the neighboring countries.

The data accumulated through the present paper on the structural heritage can be used to study further on the lines of use of architectural monuments as ritual spaces. This information can act as the basic records to start with in comparing the use of ritual space in an open air stupa complex and in the rock cut caves.

The artistic representations and architectural edifices augment Hinayana to Mahayana transformation. The Buddha images in terracotta were splendors representing artistic skill. The stone image from Vadnagar highlights the Katara style in depiction and therefore establishes connection between the two regions. Thus the Buddhist heritage from 300BC-400AD highlight the emergence of Buddhism in the region, the centers of its growth, followed by booming of the religion during Kshatrapa times. The variety of built heritage and the art heritage contribute each other in showcasing the growth of Buddhism in this region from Mauryan to Kshatrapa times.



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Figures

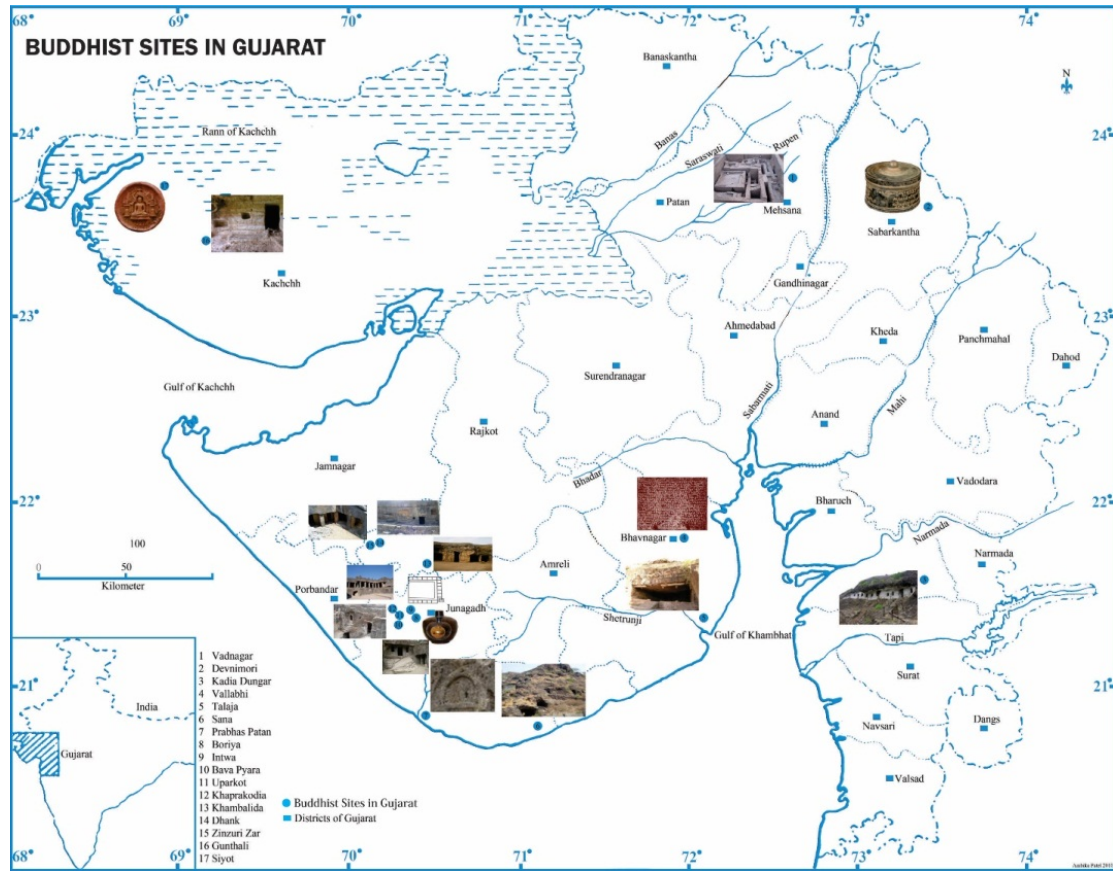


Figure 1. Buddhist sites/settlements in Early Historic Gujarat

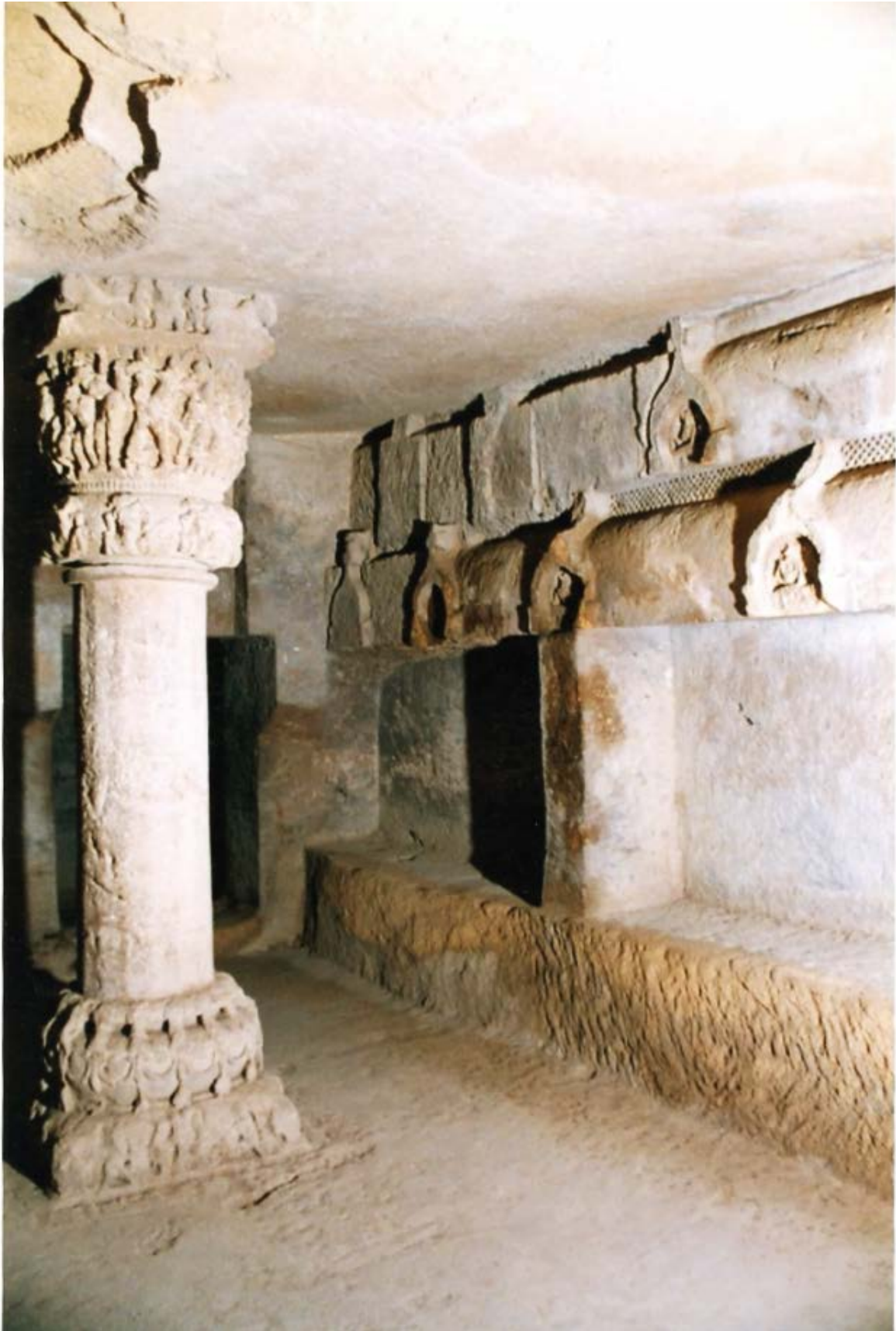


Figure 1: Ornamentation in the cave Façade, Khambalida Caves



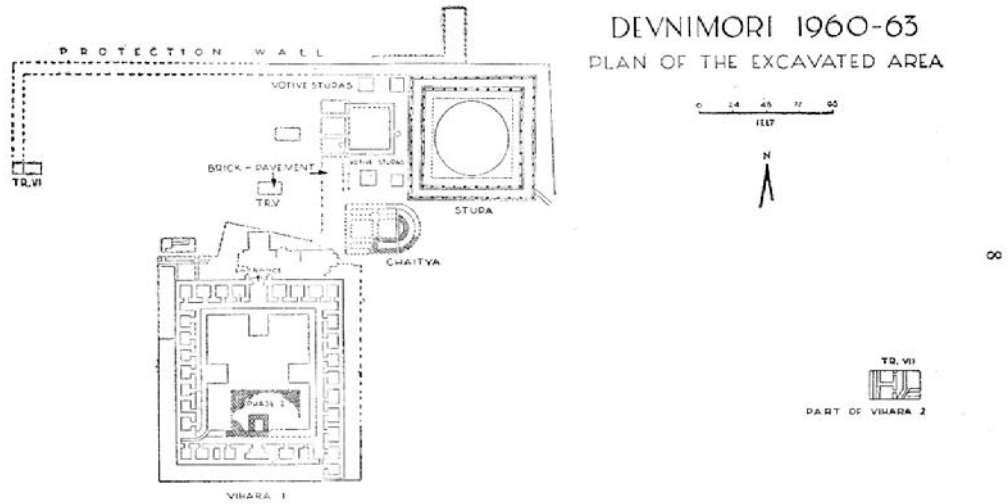


Figure 2:

Figure 3: Plan and Layout of Devnimori Stupa Compound



Figure 4 : Excavated Stupa, Devnimori



Figure 5 : Terracotta Buddha images, Devnimori



Figure 6 : Relic Casket

# A Late Kushan Urban Temple from Bazira/Vajīrasthāna - Data from the 2016 Excavation Campaign at Barikot, Swat

C. MOSCATELLI, S. NIAZ ALI SHAH AND L.M. OLIVIERI

## Abstract

*This paper deals with a new sacred building discovered during the 2016 excavation campaign at the urban site of Barikot, Swat (NW, Pakistan). The campaign was focusing on the Unit (or Block) B of the ancient city, where already in 2013 evidence of an important Late Kushan cultic building was brought to light.*

**Keywords:** *Barikot, urban cults, Buddhism, Hariti, wine.*

## Introductory Note

The site of Barikot or Bīr-koṭ-ghwaṇḍai (Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, NW Pakistan), identified as the ancient Bazira/Vajīrasthāna, has been a project of the Italian Archaeological Mission in Swat since 1978. In the last five years excavations focused on a large stretch (about 1 ha.), corresponding to the south-western quarters of the ancient city. The site, at the foot of a hill overlooking the Swat River, is located west of the present-day Barikot village. The 2016 excavation campaign brought to light a sacred building (henceforth, Temple B) in Unit B (or Block B), Sector 1-2 W of trench BKG 11. Temple B is connected through a raised corridor

to Sacred Precinct B unearthed in 2013, the latter situated immediately to the south (Olivieri et al. 2014: 106-18; Olivieri 2016). The two coeval buildings (Periods VII/VIII, i.e. 3rd century CE)<sup>2</sup> are therefore part of the same complex located in the northern

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<sup>1</sup> In that article (Olivieri 2016: 9) I wrongly defined the *extra muros* temple of Mohra Maliaran (Taxila) as “small”, by that inferring a dimensional comparison with the (indeed smaller) Late Kushan temple of the Unit K (or Temple K) at Barikot. My mistake would have certainly be avoided if had read an important contribution by Claude Rapin on Mohra Maliaran (Rapin 1995). I take this occasion to correct my mistake, as well as to fill the bibliographic *lacuna*.

<sup>2</sup> Period VII is dated to the first half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century CE; Period VIII falls into the second half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century CE. For the complete archaeological sequence of Barikot see Olivieri *et al.* 2014: 5-9.

area of the late Kushan city, accessible from Street 10 (Fig. 1).

The excavations were carried out in 2016 in the framework of the Archaeology – Community - Tourism Field School Project (ACT Project) implemented by the ISMEO Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan and the Directorate of Archaeology and Museums, Government of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (DOAM), and funded by the Pakistan-Italian Debt Swap Agreement (PIDSA).

Both the excavations at Barikot and the Project were led by the writer of this Note, as Director of the ISMEO Mission. The 2016 fieldwork at Sector 1-2 W was entrusted by me to Mr. C. Moscatelli (University of Naples, “L’Orientale”), who was responsible for the April-May campaign, and to Mr. S. Niaz Ali Shah (DOAM), responsible for the digging carried out in August-September of the same year. Therefore, I requested both the field-directors to prepare a preliminary report, a task that was eventually accomplished in an admirably short span of time. In the first part of the report, Mr. Niaz Ali Shah describes the structural aspects of the building, while Mr. Moscatelli, in the

second part, deals with the religious aspects of the discovery. The discovery of Temple B was first announced by me in a post-script to Olivieri 2016, and by Ms. E. Iori (University of Bologna “Alma Mater”) on the behalf of the ISMEO Mission, at the 23rd Conference of the European Association of South Asian Art and Archaeology (EASAA, Cardiff, July 2016).

*L.M. Olivieri*

## **The Building**

### **Temple B**

Temple B (Fig. 2) consists of a rectangular space (cella), closed on three sides and facing Court 1710 to the east. The platform, constructed in diaper-masonry technique, has a moulded base. The most striking feature is the façade, which we suppose was originally arranged in a single row of four massive wooden pillars, now lost, resting on quadrangular stone bases. Although only three bases have been found so far, the reconstruction (Fig. 3) appears visibly coherent in virtue of a rough stone altar placed between the second and the third base (i.e. at the centre of the façade) in Court 1710. Two post-holes, probably meant to sustain poles in additional



support to a flat roof, were uncovered behind the pillars bases; a rough stone base in the centre of the cella may have been used for the same purpose (Fig. 4).

### **Court 1710**

A short flight of steps at the southern corner of the platform leads to a lower walled space (Court 1710) (Fig. 5). The steps were also connecting the Court to a slightly narrow open space (Room 1711), marked by a low bench built along the western wall. The steps are connected to a low bench running alongside the southern and eastern walls; between them is a doorway leading into the eastern unexcavated spaces of Unit B. On the southern wall there was probably a niche. We infer its existence from the recovery of a stele (BKG 3636, see below) from the debris of the southern wall collapsed inside the Court, along with a fragmentary frieze carved with a phytomorphic motif. Some noteworthy elements were discovered in the Court: (1) a low rectangular tank close to the steps, cut directly into the ground, partly encased with stone slabs and provided with two holes; (2) an almost complete condenser, found in situ near the tank; (3) the aforementioned stone altar, roughly rectangular in shape,

installed against the Temple B platform at a short distance from (4) two traces of clay fireplaces (most probably the remains of a single larger one) (Figs. 6 a-c).

### **Earlier architectural phases**

A closer examination of the Temple B layout (Period VIII) highlighted structural elements belonging to an earlier building (Period VI, i.e. around the end of the 2nd century CE and the beginning of the 3rd century CE). In particular, the western wall is marked by a door (visible in Fig. 5) originally opening into Street 10, which was then walled-up in the 3rd century CE; additionally, the cleaning of the Court 1710 southern wall revealed a previous arrangement of the western corner. A former residential complex was thus completely transformed into a new building by means of architectural features consistent with a place of worship. Adaptive reuse was also documented in the coeval Sacred Precinct K (Sector 11 E 5/6-7-8) excavated in 2013 (Olivieri 2016).

We still do not know if such adaptive reuses may reflect the social change occurred in Swat with the rise of the new

post-Kushan élite in the 3rd century CE. Indeed, Sub-Kushan coins appear in layers of Period VIII along with the first Kushan-Sasanian specimens. They provide a strong sign of the deep crisis following the rise of the Sasanian power in the West, culminated in the collapse of the Kushan dynasty who quite certainly ruled the region through alliances with local noble families (Olivieri 2012). The final abandonment of Barikot, a Kushan city in all respects, falls in concurrence with this political upheaval. Period IX (i.e. 4th century CE) shows non-urban forms of occupation from a group confined to the peripheral area of the ruined settlement (Olivieri et al. 2014: 141-42). A different picture emerges from the countryside, where the usual renovation and enlargement works of the Buddhist sacred areas testify the unceasing vitality of the monastic communities. A concrete example is Amluk-dara, a stunning Great Stūpa founded around the 2nd century CE in the valley of the same name, ca. 3.50 km from Barikot as the crow flies.<sup>3</sup> During the 3rd century CE the monument displays a new decoration made of

<sup>3</sup> Amluk-dara was excavated and restored by the Italian Archaeological Mission in the years 2011-2012. See Olivieri *et al.* 2014: 322-94.

plastered and painted kanjur (local name for organogenic limestone), in conjunction with the elongation of the staircase (AKD Periods II/IV). The introduction of the new decorative technique totally replaces schist decoration at Amluk-dara, the latter continuing to be used only for the small size steles at Barikot, a production typical of the 3rd century CE mainly linked to domestic cults.

*S. Niaz Ali Shah*

## The Function

### Stele BKG 3636 from Court 17104

BKG 3636 (Fig. 7) is a grey-schist stele depicting the goddess Hariti, the wicked yakṣiṇī devourer of children who turned into a lay-follower of the doctrine (upāsikā) and a maternal protector of infants.<sup>5</sup> The piece is well-preserved and traces of the original gilding are still evident. The goddess is sitting on a throne, which is not represented, but it is merely suggested by the goddess's

<sup>4</sup> Dimensions: l. max. 16.2, h. max. 24.4, t. max. 5.1. The stele was discovered by one of the Authors, S. Niaz Ali Shah, during the second excavation season at the Temple B, in August 2016.

<sup>5</sup> The story of Hariti is preserved in several versions. A collection of the main texts is found in Peri 1917; see also Misra 1979: 73-87.

posture. She is wearing a long tunic with an overtunic and jewellery (heavy earrings, long necklace, bracelets and anklets). Her flowing long-wavy hair is covered by a wreath. Her right hand is holding a bunch of grapes; her left hand is bracing the head of the child who is seated on her lap. The latter is completely naked and is touching the goddess' bosom with his left hand. Hariti is surrounded by four children in various postures. Clockwise from bottom left: a naked child with his right leg raised up and right hand resting on Hariti's right leg, as he is climbing on her; a naked child with hands joined; a naked child holding a bowl; a child (?) wearing a long tunic with short sleeves and bearing an undefined object in his overlapping hands. Finally, the rectangular base of the stele is decorated with a single row of saw-teeth.

### **Cultic activity**

No positive evidence of the religious function was recorded within Temple B. Nonetheless, the elements in Court 1710 allow for a hypothetical reconstruction of the ritual activity. Some significant similarities with our context are additionally found at Shaikhan-dheri (Charsadda), specifically in the so-called

'House of Naradakha', identified by Dani as the dwelling of a Buddhist teacher later transformed into a sacred space (Dani 1965-66: 28-29), but most probably a Buddhist urban shrine throughout its life (Allchin 1979: 777).

The condenser (Figs. 8) is generally considered a container employed in the production of alcohol, and its recovery next to the tank may be suggestive of a ritual purpose for such beverage; however, the actual function of the tank appears unclear, especially considering the two holes.

The condenser, a wheel-made red-slipped red ware, was restored from several fragments (more than half is preserved). It has a subglobular body, most probably with no foot. The lateral spout has a thick rim, and a central seam runs all around the outer surface.

The condenser perfectly matches the coeval ones collected from the Kushan and late Kushan layers of Shaikhan-dheri (Periods II/I, Allchin 1979: 769; fig. 7b). They share the same subglobular body, on average with equal height and diameter, different from the earlier elongated-shaped condensers occurring in layers spanning from later

Indo-Greek and early Kushan periods of the same site (Periods V-III/II); earlier condenser specimens were also found at Taxila (Marshall 1951, II: 420-21; III: Pl. 125, no. 129, a) and Sirkap (Ghosh 1948: 64-65). As a whole, the evidence seems to confirm distillation as one of the activities carried out in urban settlements.

Since alcohol substances are strictly banned in Buddhist texts, such vessels within Buddhist spaces arise some interpretative difficulties. Allchin was aware of this matter, and he speculated on the consumption of alcohol in the shrine (i.e. the so-called 'House of Naradakha') with understandable hesitation (Allchin 1979: 779).<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Offering of liquid – whether alcoholic or not – was also documented at Barikot in the related Sacred Precinct B and Sacred Precinct K, where additionally two distinctive rituals were hypothesised on the basis of the ceramic classes recovered in the respective areas (Olivieri 2016). Moreover, the material collected in the religious spaces may supply useful data concerning the social fabric of the city. In particular the archaeological evidence from Unit B may denote a female component in the cult activity, as the breaking of shell bangles seems to suggest (Olivieri *et al.* 2014: 233-34; Olivieri 2016); the female attendance of the area may be further supported by the stele of Hariti, a deity who was still worshipped in later Gandhara to foster pregnancy and childbirth (Beal 1884, I: 110-11).

Another element of similarity between our Temple B and the 'House of Naradakha' at Shaikhan-dheri, is the recovery in the latter of a similar stele depicting Hariti (Dani 1965-66: 29; Pl. XVI). According to the excavation report, it was unearthed along with a meditating Buddha image, but no information is given about the exact position of the finds (cf. Olivieri *et al.* 2014: 95-96; Olivieri 2011 [2015]: 10-11).

The stele of Hariti brings us back to the possible use of intoxicating drinks, as hinted by the presence of the condenser in Court 1710. From one side, the iconography of Hariti is conceptually coherent with a religious orientation allowing (or implying) wine consumption. From another side, wine had such a significant cultural role in the region that it became a completing theme in the decorative program of the stūpas, as witnessed by the well-known reliefs depicting scenes of libation and ceremonial consumption of inebriating substances. Their symbolic meaning is still a matter of uncertainty among scholars. Recently Falk (2009) has underlined the relationship between Buddhist monastic communities and

production of alcohol, while Filigenzi (in press) has stressed the same relationship in the framework of a wider cultural environment, i.e. the economical, social and pre-Buddhist religious background of Swat.<sup>7</sup> In fact, albeit Buddhism appears from the archaeological context as the preeminent religious movement, data review and new evidence are increasingly highlighting the role local religions and popular customs played in shaping the cultural horizon of the region. In this regard, the analysis of urban contexts is crucial to define cultural factors. A good case in point is Barikot, since for the very first time a systematic excavation offers preliminary insights into the religious panorama of a North-West city, where different belief systems, both Buddhist and non-Buddhist, might have coexisted side by side within the same religious spaces.

*C. Moscatelli*

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<sup>7</sup> Many thanks are due to Dr. Filigenzi (University of Naples, "L'Orientale") for allowing one of the Author to refer to her seminal paper before its publication. Regarding the libation scenes, the reader is also referred to Brancaccio and Xinru Liu (2009). For the evidence on wine-making in Swat, see Olivieri and Vidale 2006; Olivieri 2013: 190-93.

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## Figures

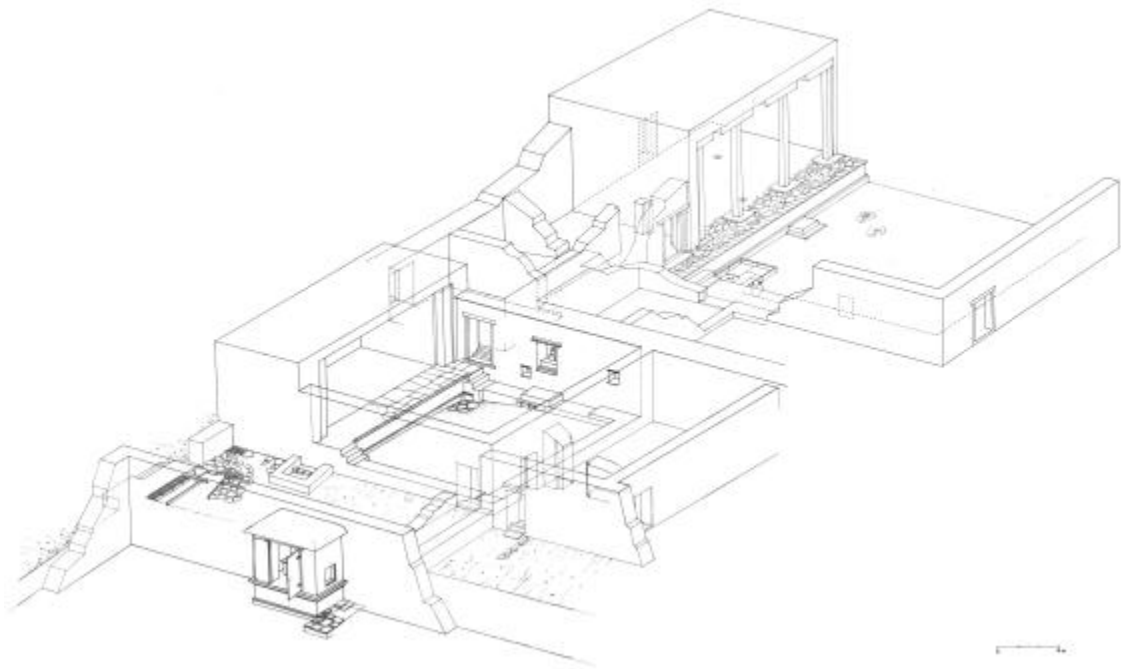


Figure 1. Trench BKG 4-5/11. Areas of Temple B (north) and Sacred Precinct B (south), to the north-west of the trench, are shaded in gray (after Olivieri et al. 2014).





Figure 2. Temple B (BKG 11 Sector 1-2 W), view from N (April-May campaign) (photo by LMO).



**Figure 3. Axonometric restitution of Temple B and Court 1710, including Court 28 of Unit D and Sacred Precinct B (processed by CM after drawings by F. Martore).**



**Figure 4. Inner space of Temple B, view from W (August-September campaign) (photo by LMO).**





Figure 5. Court 1710, view from N (photo by LMO).





**Figures 6. Elements in Court 1710 (photos by LMO).**

**Tank.**

**Condenser.**

**Altar and remains of the clay oven(s).**





Figure 7. Stele BKG 3636 (photo by Elisa Iori) (h. mx. 24.4, w. max. 16.2, t. max. 5.1).



Figures 8. Condenser from Court 1710 (photos by Elisa Iori) (Scale: see Fig. 6.b).

# Rock Art in the Swat Valley of Pakistan: Documentation and its Present State of Preservation

BADSHAH SARDAR

## Abstract

*The innumerable ancient remains—stupas, monasteries, viharas, forts, castles, rock inscriptions, painted shelters and stelae are scattered in the plains and the hilly slopes all over the valley. The archaeological materials from these sites bear testimony of its cultural relations with the East and West. Several hundred archaeological sites spanning 5000 years of history speak about this. This paper will also focus on the phenomenon of Taliban movement emerged in the Swat valley since 2006. The author will try to underscore Taliban insurgency in Swat and its impacts on the Buddhist legacy (rock relief's, engraving, painted shelters, inscriptions, stupas & monasteries) of the Swat valley. It will highlight the Buddhist period treasury and the cultural wealth of area and would expose the damage caused by the militants. The basic theme of this paper is to appraise the efforts made by militants for destruction of past glory of the Swat valley.*

*This paper concentrates on the discovery of about 100 rock art sites, including carvings, petroglyphs, painting and inscriptions in the Swat valley. Tremendous concentration of Buddhist period reliefs, petroglyphs and inscriptions have been documented in successive campaigns by the indigenous and foreign scholars (Stein 1930; Faccenna et al. 1993:257; Ashraf Khan 1994: 455; Ashraf Khan 1996; Filigenzi 2006; Filigenzi 2014; Olivieri 1993: 257; Olivieri 1994: 467; Olivieri et al. 1994: 333; Olivieri & Vidale 2002: 173; Olivieri & Vidale 2004: 121; Olivieri 2005: 215; Olivieri & Vidale 2005: 445; Olivieri & Vidale 2006:73; Olivieri 2008:15; Olivieri 2010:13; Olivieri 2011: 123; Olivieri 2012: 1; Olivieri 2012:185; Olivieri 2015; Olivieri 2016: 20). The connection between China and ancient Udiyana across the hanging passages is well attested in Chinese sources (Tucci 1958: 279).*

**Keywords:** *Udiyana, Suvastu, Swat, Ora or Oora (Udegram), Bazira (Barikot), Buddhist period rock reliefs, petroglyphs, painted shelters and inscriptions.*

## Introduction

Swat valley is an administrative district in the Province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa of Pakistan. The fertile valley drained by the Swat River together with the adjacent territories of Buner, Dir and Bajour correspond to the ancient Udiyana (modern Swat Valley). Swat River which rises in the Hindu Kush range is mentioned in the Rig Veda as Suvastu. Swat has been inhabited since 3300 BC. Historically, the region has played host to Alexander of Macedonia, the Mauryans, the Indo-Greeks, the Indo-Sythians, the Kushans, the Turk-Shahis and the Hindu-Shahis in different periods. In 327 BC., Alexander the great fought his way to the local towns; Ora (Udegram) and Bazira (Barikot). By 305 BC., the region became a part of the Mauryan Empire. Ashoka patronize Buddhism in Swat and the inhabitants of Udiyana were converted to Buddhism. Buddhism left its mark in the form of stupas, monasteries, rock art, paintings, coins, pottery and other relics. Numerous religious monuments of the ancient Udiyana testified wide spread influence of Buddhism even today.

The innumerable ancient remains—stupas, monasteries, viharas, forts,

castles, rock inscriptions, painted shelters and stelae are scattered in the plains and the hilly slopes all over the valley. The archaeological materials from these sites bear testimony of its cultural relations with the East and West. Several hundred archaeological sites spanning 5000 years of history speak about this. Four hundred archaeological sites from Palaeolithic to medieval time have been explored (Olivieri 2006: 25). Fifty Buddhist sites have been scientifically excavated and hundred rock reliefs have been documented. Fort painted rock shelters ranging from Bronze Age to historic period have documented by IsIAO Mission (Olivieri 2004: 373).

Swat valley maintained one of the richest rock art traditions in northern-western regions of Pakistan. Evidence from the site of Gogdara site shows that an artistic traditions and ritual associated with it, extends back at least 2000 BC (Olivieri 2005: 215) The earliest evidence of engravings is 3000 years old, but new finds could extend this as well. During my field for data collection in the Swat I come across with three kinds of rock art sites. They are;

- Reliefs engravings



- Rock paintings
- Rock inscriptions

The entire data is divided into two groups;

- Non-Buddhist reliefs
- Buddhist period reliefs

### **Buddhist Reliefs**

The Buddhist rock reliefs of the Swat valley usually represent Buddha often together with Bodhisattvas. The figures were preferably carved on rock outcrops or blocks with smooth surfaces. The rock reliefs are usually hundreds of meters away from the sacred areas and they are likely to mark old routes towards them. The rock reliefs and stelae so far described, show Mahayanist subject, represent isolated Bodhisattvas and sometime triads of Buddhist period (Filigenzi, 1995: 625). The figure of Bodhisattvas, flanking the enthroned Buddha. Speaking chronologically and stylistically they belong to the late-Kushan period. They are often occurring in the vicinity of sacred areas. The magnificent collection of the Buddhist rock reliefs may be divided in three groups. Buddha images, Bodhisattva figures and Brahmanical images

### **Buddha Images**

Although the figure of the Buddha was widespread and popular in Gandhara art and it is generally agreed that the earliest images of Buddha appeared in the Gandhara. I seldom found the image of Buddha among the rock reliefs of the Swat. The elaborated Buddha image in Swat valley with both shoulders usually covered by the monastic robe with undulating folds, curly hair, the *ushnisha*, the *urna* on the forehead; long ears and haloed head. Among the rock reliefs the few known examples are, however, of high aesthetic quality. The only surviving principal/colossal image of *Dhyani* Buddha of Jahanabad.

Buddha is mostly found seated with crossed legs, hands joined at the lap, eyes are half closed. The meditative Buddha some time is seated on a double petalled lotus cushion. Seated Buddha is shown in *Dhyani* pose but rarely represented in standing or preaching pose. In a triad reliefs Buddha sometimes represented in center of the scenes. In other cases he even occupies a small space on the edge of the boulder. In addition to the Buddha image, there are also representations of Bodhisattvas.

## Bodhisattvas

It is a general idea among the scholars of Buddhism that the concept of doctrine of the Bodhisattvas belongs to the Mahayana phase of Buddhism (Krishan 1984:199). Bodhisattvas commonly appear as cult images showing complex scenes, particularly in later periods, and they display diverse iconographic forms. Traditionally Bodhisattva wore the dress of the Indian princes; his naked torso was adorned with jewels, necklace garlands, ear-rings and bracelets, a turban and a diadem were placed on an elegant curled coiffure, a rich robe was draped round his hips.

Their representation are numerous than those of the Buddha. Buddha figures are found seated frontally, and have a strictly symmetrical posture, while Bodhisattvas are generally emerged in two forms; seated in *lalitasana* and standing in *varadamudra*: in his left hand he holds a kind of stick. Contemplating Bodhisattva images of a seated Padmapani, with one leg extended and the right hand rose near the face with the elbow resting on top of the knee are very common in Swat. Among a variety of Bodhisattvas represented in Swat rock reliefs four prominent types

emerged. The most popular Bodhisattvas are Avalokitesvara or Padmapani, Maitreya, Mañjūśri and Vajrapani.

## Avalokitesvara

Avalokitesvara is always represented as a personification of mercy and wisdom, invoked by those in need or danger. In his simplest form, generally distinguishable from the Buddha by his headdress, Avalokitesvara might be holding a full-blown lotus-flower. Avalokitesvara the most favorite deity of the Buddhist creed is known as the lord of mercy. He is found seated on *simhasana* and some time on *padmasanainlalitasana*. Always dressed in Indian dhoti and adorned with neckbands and bracelet, his headdress is highly elaborate with pyramidal crown, bearing *Dhyani* Buddha Amitabha (fourth *Dhyani* Buddha) cross-legged or in yoga pose. The curling tresses of hair lock gracefully fall on the shoulders. In this simplest form he is shown either as an ascetic or a princely figure. His is always depicted in a contemplative mood constantly engaged in finding ways to alleviate human suffering and misery.

In Gandhara and Udiyana his worship become popular towards 3rd century AD., and reached its climax in the 7th century AD (Getty 1928: 68), Fa-Hien and Hsuan-Tsang speak of him in reverences in the accounts of their travelers in India. In Swat rock reliefs the highest numerical representation, however, is that of Avalokitesvara and Padmapani. Apart from some stelae or triads where he is depicted in standing. He is usually represented sitting in *ardhaparyankasana*, with his left leg pointing downwards and his right leg folded upon the seat, in pensive attitude with a long stemmed lotus in his left hand. Avalokitesvara was especially worshipped in Swat. Hsuan-Tsang is the first to mention an image and a temple Avalokitesvara on the right bank of the river Swat (Tucci 1958: 322).

### **Padmapani**

After Buddha's death, Padmapani is believed to have undertaken the assignment of propagation of Buddhism, for this reason he is extremely popular in Tibet and Japan. He is also said to be the favorite deity of the Nagas (Getty 1928:61). Padmapani not only saves all living beings from immediate danger, but also watches over the world until the

appearance of the future Buddha Maitreya. Because of his role as savior, the cult of Padmapani became extremely popular among the Mahayana Buddhist by the Gupta period in India. Lotus is the most distinctive attribute of the Padmapani and hence his name Padmapani or lotus bearer the characteristic attribute. Large scale standing and seated figures of Padmapani have been noticed in Swat rock reliefs. Standing figures are shown on lotus thrones holding a lotus stalk, in the left hand, while the right hand in *varadamudra*. In rare cases he is also represented seated on a high throne in *lalitasana*, his right hand rests on the right thigh in *varadamudra*, while his left one is resting on the left thigh holds a lotus stalk.

### **Maitreya**

A Bodhisattva holding an ascetic staff and a Kamandalu, shaped like a conical vase with a semicircular handle, represents another iconographic type that could be identified as Maitreya or future Buddha. The third most important figure after Padmapani, who if represented in the rock sculptures of Swat is Maitreya. The Buddhists regard Maitreya as the messiah who is yet to

appear. Maitreya is the future Buddha and is yet to make his appearance; it is believed that he lives in the meantime as a Bodhisattva in the Tushita heaven, where he is engaged in preaching the true religion and will land after 1400 years from now (Getty 1928: 78.).

Maitreya carries the bottle of immortality and sometime a stupa in his crown. His right hand with the palm turned towards the *vesmayamudra* (surprise or pride pose) is frequently encountered in Swat rock reliefs. As compared to those of Avalokitesvara and Padmapani, very few images of Maitreya have been recorded. Maitreya images are found always standing on a low lotus throne holding a Kamandalu or water flask in his left hand, while stretches the right one in *varadmudra*.

### **Vajrapani**

The Mahayana pantheon easily adopted him as a Bodhisattva later on it evolved into Vajrayana Buddhism. Vajrapani began his career in early Buddhist literature as well as in Gandhara art as a constant companion and guardian of Buddha. Conceptually, of course, he is none other than Indra, the thunderbolt-wielder. Later on in Vajrayana

Buddhism, and especially in China and Tibet, where his cult was significantly popular and he was frequently worshiped in his angry aspect (Getty 1928: 57).

He is the bearer of vajra, (thunderbolt) and was originally presented as companion of Indra, but soon became the faithful assistant and protective of the Buddha. He was to assume the rank of Bodhisattva in the Mahayanist pantheon, figuring next to the leading protectors of the Law. Like Maitreya the carvings of Swat area represent Vajrapani on a low throne wearing Indian dhoti, right hand stretched down in *varadamudra*, while the left one he holding a thunderbolt. I noticed the image of Vajrapani in Shanglow Mera stele opposite to Kukarai village in Jambil valley.

### **Mañjūśri**

The word Mañjūśri means of pleasing appearance. Mañjūśri is the Buddhist god of wisdom and as such is the counterpart of the Brahmanical goddess of wisdom, Sarasvati (Getty 1928:79). He is commonly represented with a manuscript and a sword. The manuscript symbolizes gnus, while the sword is to

dispel ignorance. He is always represented as a normal human being, very much like the simple image of Avalokitesvara and Maitreya. Mañjūsri personage represents the manifestation of the wisdom and supreme perfection of the master's doctrine, Mañjūsri being more particularly the Bodhisattva of the word and sound. Mañjūsri, often endowed with a youthful aspect, sometimes bears a sword, a book or the blue lotus, which distinguishes him from Avalokitesvara. In Swat valley too, Mañjūsri is represented as a normal human being, very much like the simple image of Avalokitesvara and Maitreya. He is commonly represented with a manuscript and a sword. One of his figures was identified at Rehman Cheena site in the tributary valley of Jambil.

### **Brahmanical Images in rock reliefs**

Till today it was considered that Gandhara and Udiyana have produced only one or two earliest figures of Hindu deities. But Hindu deities are not lacking among the rock reliefs of Swat valley. According to Tucci that Buddhism did not completely dominate the kingdom of Swat. The collected data from the field reveals few Brahmanical art pieces, the bulk of the rock reliefs remained

Buddhist. Hindu representation and its influence should not be flatly denied. The collected data reveals two Hindu deities, e. g. Ganesha and Shiva (Sardar 2005: 85, 97 & 107). Both are in situ and are intact to some extent. Their presence is important because they are the only relics of non-Buddhist religion.

### **Ganesha**

Ganesha venerated both by the Hindus and Buddhists, is one of the most popular of the Hindu deities. He is immediately recognizable on account of his elephant head joined to a childlike human body. It represents an elephant headed figure with four hands, but occasionally having six, eight or even more hands and faces. The Hindu regards him as the symbol of good fortune (Getty 1928: 91). He is also known as Ganapati and both words mean lord of the tribe or people. Like Indra and Brahma, Ganesha was also a Brahmanical god accommodated by the Buddhists in their religion. Only two sites reveal the image of this divinity in the entire Swat valley. The representation of Ganesha found on top of Ghaligai hill and NangriyalQala.

### **Shiva**

Shiva is one of the most influential members of the Hindu mythology. He is associated with the act of *samhara* (destruction) or (absorption) in particular. The earliest figures of Shiva which show him in purely human form come from Gandhara. His figure is recorded from Gandhara sculptures dated 1st century AD (Blurton 1992: 92). The followers of Shiva consider him to be associated with the acts of creation and preservation. All these powers when put together make up his fivefold activities. He has numerous manifestations given to him by his worshippers. He has many attributes, but one of the most important is the trident. He may appear in many forms both peaceful and angry. Three rock art sites reveal Shiva image in entire rock reliefs horizon of Swat. The first one is a triad scene on the rock at Supalbandai village. The 2nd one is the individual image of Shiva on the boulder at Banjotvillage, the last and third one is another triad scene on a rock spur at Ghaligai.

More interesting are the manifestations of two Brahmanical deities of Shiva and Ganesha in a single relief was recorded for the first time in valley. Their existence in the Swat valley is testified

from Hsuan-tsang's accounts (Beal 1969: 122). It is fact that in the late Mahayana philosophy, Buddhism adopted Brahmanic divinities, its ideas and practices. The portrait of two Brahmanical divinities in a single engraved relief provides evidence, that the then rulers of Udiyana were equally tolerated towards Buddhism as well as Hinduism. It also demonstrate that, with the passage of time the Mahayana beliefs accepted the influence of Hinduism and prepared the way for the ultimate merging of the non-monastic form of Buddhism with Hinduism (Sardar 2006: 134).

### **Pre-Buddhist**

In Swat valley pre-Buddhist engravings have been found at Gogdara village. At the time of their discovery, the rock carvings of Gogdara were dated as prehistoric. After a detailed studies conducted by the IsIAO, the engravings of Gogdara were dated between Late Bronze and the Early Iron Age. According to Olivieri the mature phase of Gogdara could possibly be attributed to the beginning of the 1st millennium BC (Olivieri 1998: 82). During the survey conducted by the author in the valley, discovered two new sites of

engravings (petroglyphs) belonging non-Buddhist culture.

### **Charai (Madiyan)<sup>1</sup>**

The most outstanding is a group of archaic petroglyphs that distinguish them clearly from the historic reliefs. This site of petroglyphs is not been reported earlier. The exposed portion of the boulder reveals a rough outline of two human bodies, both are in standing position. The natural form of man is not portrayed by the artist. Sufficient details are given to recognize the forms as human, it looks like that the artist was interested in man's action rather than in human form. Rough outline of the human body in a rectangular shape with rounded head on top, hands extended sideways, legs are straight down. The face could not be reproduced in its true form. These archaic pictures are technically reveals a common theme of hunting, which was the chief means of livelihood of the primitive society.

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<sup>1</sup>Charai (Madiyan) is a famous small hamlet in upper Swat valley, situated on the road side leading to Kalam, about 2 km short of Madiyan. The locality is famous for Buddhist archaeological vestiges. Charai hamlet is situated on the left bank of the river Swat. The site of petroglyphs is on the left side of the road leading to Madiyan.

On the other hand we have got solid body made up in a bi-triangular style, well known in metal from TepeHissar dating to third millennium BC. Such a bi-triangular form of the body is seen in another example in which the hands make a bracket. This style is known in the trans-Pamir region and could be dated to 3rd or 4th millennium BC. (Samashev 1993: 36). The artistic details of this petroglyphs reveal close similarity with carvings of Muhammad-patai, Bang-doghal and Lekha-gata of Kandak valley (Olivieri&Vidale 2004:134-35). These primitive engravings bear patina over the rock surface due to climatic action

The Petroglyphs of CharaiMadiyan reveal solid body, made up in a bi-triangular style, well known in metal from TepeHissar dating to third millennium BC. This style is known in the trans-Pamir region and dated to 3rd millennium BC. (Samashev 1993: 36). They also reveal close similarity with engravings of Muhammad-patai, Bang-doghal and Lekhe-Gati of Kandak valley discovered by IsIAO Mission. While designed of the Bang-doghal, are carved in depth, together with other examples

from Hatiano Kandao and Bajaur sites dated to the same horizon.

### **Painted rock shelter**

Ancient paintings are found in almost every part of the Sub-continent where there are rock shelters or overhangs paintings were applied to them in many ways by using fingers or brushes. The painters always used natural substance of red, yellow, black and fine clay for white. Executions of ancient paintings were not done for aesthetic reasons to decorate or beautify a shelter. It represents a cultural activity, which existed in the everyday life of the artists of ancient time. Painting is a key to understand the complex symbolic rituals and ceremonies of the remote antiquities. Although it seems that few paintings may be executed as a record of everyday occurrences. Symbolism and ritual played an extremely important part in the lives of these people, who possessed no written language. Painting is one of the mediums in which ancient artist has tried to express his mind, his desires and aspirations. This medium of expression started in Pakistan much earlier than other continents of the World.

The limited archaeological explorations so far conducted by the scholars have now been confirmed that shelters bearing Palaeolithic time traces of paintings are situated in the province of Baluchistan (Kakar 2005: 21-25). The paintings discovered in Tor Ghar area of Loralai District and Sulaiman Range of Zhob District in Baluchistan. In Tor Ghar area 20 shelters and Sulaiman Range 27 shelters of paintings are reported (Kakar 2005: 22). Subject matter of both the sites is representations of fighting and hunting. They are figural paintings of animals and human beings, painted in red or black on the undressed surfaces of rock-shelters. Some of the animals are shown in triangular form, rendering the body by two triangles at one corner. This method is commonly used in the rock-engravings of the Upper Indus Valley (Nasim Khan 2000; 2).

In the Swat valley painted shelters were reported in Kafir-Kot area, near Thana village, representing a Buddhist sacred area with bow men (Nazir Khan et al. 1995: 333). Traces of the paintings were also reported from Hinduanohtai, Shamo and Marano-tangai. Marano-tangai shelter reveals a set of abstract symbols, squares intersected by a cross



and square filled with a single dot (Nazir Khan et al. 1995: fig. 14). Paintings of all these sites were dated between 1<sup>st</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> century AD. (Nazir Khan et al. 1995: 350).

In 2000, IsIAO Mission discovered three painted rock shelters in Kandag valley of Swat, namely Sargah-Sar, Kalkai-kandao & Dwolasmannai-patai (Vidale & Olivieri 2002: 173). Sargah-Sar paintings reveal, human figures, carrying weapons, animals and elaborate geometric symbols. Kalkai-kandao shelter represents crowded designs, vivid composition of animals, humans & geometric patterns. Dwolasmannai-patai shelter shows complex, irregular geometric pattern and human carrying weapons. They are dated between 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Century AD (Vidale & Olivieri 2002: 189). Another important painted shelter known as Kaferi Smasta near Kukrai village in Murghazar valley of Swat was discovered by the author (Sardar 2016: 125-38).

### **Kaferi Smasta<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>2</sup>In 2000 I found a shelter with the vestiges of paintings in Charoona Dara locality on south of present Kukrai village in Murghazar valley of Swat. This shelter is about three-km south of Kukrai village in Charoona Dara locality.

The Kaferi Smasta (shelter), with paintings of hunters and human figures, is shallow, semi-circular of about 1.50m in depth and 5m height. No signs of artificial intervention were found. It is open to southeast side. The paintings executed inside the natural undressed surface of the shelter. The images are painted on the right side wall of the shelter, with a mud pigment. On the right side wall where the ceiling begins to slope down reveal seven figures and representation of a monument. The paintings may be divided into two groups although they make up a uniform composition. The top register reveals a person standing in front of monument in akimbo position. The stairs like structure/monument, branches out on top, almost like vertical antennae. A stupa like structure with six stages, a human figure on top of stupa. This monument, in my opinion has a marked affinity with the so-called derivative stupa. Human figures of the lower register are standing frontally in different position. All figures are opened wide hands and legs. It seems that they are celebrating a hunting scene. The technique most commonly used for the

Situated on the crest of Gishar hill in west of Mt. Ilam.

painting is that of outlined figures, but human figures are more realistic on the wall of the shelter. The original paintings there were in white, and a faint white line remains visible round figures subsequently repainted in yellow. KaferiSmasta paintings are characteristically in a yellowish cream shade, which at times can be made to look pink from the underlying red sandstone.

However, the shelter greater exposure to the weather is responsible for demolishing many of the paintings. Shepherds have frequently utilized the site for shelter, the fleece of their flocks rubbing paintings from the walls, or smoke from their fires eliminating those most of the artistic details.

### Rock Inscriptions

In result of my field survey conducted in 2002 and in the subsequent years in the valley, I visited Jahanabad hamlet, previously known as Shakori famous for Buddhist establishments (Stein 1929: 78). This hamlet is situated at distance of about one and half kilometer Northeast of Shakhorai village and about five kms Northeast of Manglaur village on the left bank of Sairkhar, is approachable by a

Jeep track from main Malamjaba road. I found three inscriptions on two gigantic living rocks, one is known as “Oba Ghat” while other is “KhazanaGhat”, disclose engravings of Buddhist period inscriptions. Two inscriptions are on “Oba Ghat”, meaning the rock of the water and there being a spring below it. The third inscription is on a huge isolated rock of “KhazanaGhat”. Their location, existing state of preservation, stylistic details and literary compositions are as below;

#### Inscription-I

- Line 1:  
sarvvapāpasyākaranakusalasyopa  
sampada
- Line 2: svacittavyavadānam
- Line 3: caetadbudanusasanam

Translation: “Not to commit any sin, to acquire merit, to purify one’s mind—that is the teaching of Buddha”

Inscription-I is a Sanskrit rendering of Dhammapada, verse 183 (Bühler, 1979: 135). It carved on the upper portion of the rock immediately above the cave is engraved in bold and deeply incised characters. The inscription contains three lines in north south direction,

carved high up in the center of the rock face; no one can reach or touch it from the ground surface. This inscription has suffered mostly by weathering.

### Inscription-II

- Line 1: vācānurakst
- Line 2: samvrtahkkāyanacaivakusalannak  
urvan
- Line 3: tāstrāyinkarmapathānuisokyaārag  
hye
- Line 4: nmārgamrppipraveditam

Translation: “(let him be one) who guards his speech, is well restrained in mind, and commits no evil with his body. Keeping these three roads of action clear, one may gain the path taught by the Sages.”

### Inscription-III

Inscription-III is a rather free Sanskrit rendering of Dhammapada, verse 281(Bühler, 1979: 135). Engraved in bold and deeply incised characters, having four lines, extends over a surface of about four meters in length in north south direction. The lower inscription is carved in the right lower corner of the rock and easily accessible to human

activities. It is exposed to both natural and human vandalism. Both inscriptions engraved on the western face of the rock, contain Sanskrit verses from the Dhammapada. The palaeographic character of their letters, according to Bühler’s analysis, seems to date the inscriptions as from the early Kushan period (Stein, 1929: 78).

### Inscription-III:

- Line 1: anityāvava (sic! for vata)  
samskāraūtpādayaya
- Line 2: dharminahutpadya hi  
nirud (dh)yantetepā (read tesām)
- Line 3: vyupasamassukham

Translation: “the Samskaras are truly subject to originating and decay. For, after originated the disappear. Calming them is happiness”

This is the famous verse spoken according the Maha-Parinibbana-Sutta, vi. 16, by Indra at the time of Sakyanuni’s death, or proclaimed by Buddha himself according to the Maha-Sudassana-Jataka (Bühler 1979: 134). According to P. O. v. Hinüber, the inscription is well written in spite of two very obvious mistakes as indicated. On basis of palaeographical detail the

inscription can be dated roughly to the 6<sup>th</sup> century AD. It is certainly not younger than about 650 at the very latest. All the three are deeply and boldly incised on rough stones. The letters, which vary between two and four inches in height, resemble in many respects the so called North-Western Gupta Brahmi characters.

However, the paleographic investigation in the Swat valley is still in its very beginnings, and final classification can be reached only after a comprehensive study of the entire materials. Large numbers of inscriptions have been found in area during the last few decades, an enormous amount of work is still required for its study and documentation. The great mass of material still scattered un-noticed and un-documented in the entire valley. Since it is dispersed over an extensively inaccessible area and over a long span of time, when read and translated fully, will help in dating and interpreting the connected rock reliefs and stelae.

### **Purpose of this Art**

The work is of strictly religious character, being concerned specifically with worship and ritual. Reliefs

sculpture on rocks and stelae in the Swat valley display Buddhist subject of the Mahayana sect. Most of them show isolated figures of Bodhisattva Padmapani. The reliefs are chiefly found in the tributary valleys on the banks of the river Swat and near ravines (*khwars*) of different dales. This distribution of the images negates the idea put forward by some scholars regarding the carvings of Swat valley on the routes followed by the Chinese pilgrims.

The Buddhist period rock art discussed in this research studies were produced over a period of about three hundred years (6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> century AD). They do reflect the basic characteristics of homogenous aesthetic traditions, and reveal a rich variety of forms and style. As stated earlier, these sacred images on rocks, boulders and stelae have been carved with specific purpose. The Buddhist zealous artists and those patronizing Buddhist faith, specially the late Mahayana Buddhism with its different schools developed various gods and goddesses such as the mountain gods, river gods, highway gods, gods of valleys, etc. However, the centre of all

religious activities one way or the other remained in the Buddhism.

The concept of Bodhisattvas that had found important places in the Buddhist pantheon at a very early stage got popularity with the passage of time. In the late Mahayana Buddhism, the popularity and number of Bodhisattvas increased manifold. It was during this period that the Buddhist turned to carve sacred reliefs on living boulders and rocks. However the concept might have come to mind and into practice at a fairly early time as is usually thought by the scholars. It is certain that the purpose of carving of these sacred images on rocks at isolated places and sometimes even beyond reach of man to a greater extent was no other than religious.

A large number of images in stone and bronze conforming to the dhyanas have been found in various parts of the valley. The most popular deities were the Buddha, the Avalokitesvara, Padmapani and Maiterya. The material in question is fairly late probably 6th 7<sup>th</sup> century AD and displays iconographic characteristics linked with the world of Mahayana Buddhism, with the presence of Hindu elements identified in a few cases. Speaking chronologically and

stylistically these belong to the post-Kushana period.

After the detailed study of the entire data two groups of figures come to light i.e. Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. The first group includes DhyaniBuddhas in typical Gandharan style of the late period as is obvious from the semi-circular fall of the robe in front of their seat. How far late they should be dated, must be decided on the evidence of the possible time when Buddhism received the last patronage in this region. Apparently this must be before the coming of Hindu Shahi Period.

The second group includes the Bodhisattvas most of whom are the figures of Padmapani. All the Bodhisattvas reveal influence from the Gupta classical type. Some of them also show the diaphanous dresses of the Gupta classical art. These figures of Padmapani along with those forms Dir, Buner and Puran areas seems to belong between same last periods. They can be dated to the 6<sup>th</sup>–8<sup>th</sup> century A D., when the Indian influences had brought in Gupta classical element in this region.

Most of the reliefs were found in the vicinity of the sacred areas, which

suggest that they might have been dedicated to the sacred areas and had some sort of close association with those religious places. In most cases the groups of sculptures are located in close vicinity to already known sacred areas, or ruins most probably once important belonging, to residential establishments. These reliefs bear no inscription and carrying no reference as to the creators of these wide spread carvings and stelae. It is certain that some of them were unquestionably creative geniuses, as is apparent from a cursory glance at such rock carvings as RehmanCheena and Jahanabad.

### **Present State of preservation**

The rock reliefs have been vandalized since early 1970's when Wali (ruler) of Swat lost his power over the area. Most of them were found badly disfigured because of neglect, human hazards and weathering, thereby, creating great difficulty in their scientific analysis. Besides the rock reliefs still in situ, visits were made to different localities where rock reliefs were earlier reported but many of them were found blasted and destroyed. Rock carving near Sapalbandai Bridge in Mughazar valley and the one near Slampur areas known

as (Baluo) are now completely missing. Similarly the owner of the land has blasted the rock carving and inscription of Teerat area (Madiyan).

Another one in the Manglaur valley at the locality of Shingrai near the stupa remains (ruined) on the right side of the Banjot khwar was blasted by the landowner for the construction and extension of his house. The remains of the stupa and the blasted rock can be seen from the roadside. In Banjot village in the reliefs near Bus-Stand was blasted for road extensions. Near the main bridge of Manglaur in the locality of Salanda (village) just above the road leading towards Malamjaba there was a rock carving now blasted by the local for constructing a mosque. In Jahanabad not only colossal rock image of Buddha was defaced, but a statue of Padmapani in middle of apple orchard on isolated rock has been blasted by the local Taliban, once published by the author (Sardar 2005:10 fig. 71). No different was the story of the rock reliefs in the area of Kokarai village in the Jambil valley.

No doubt that the exposure to the elements is causing damage. Major threat to the rock art is humans. Mostly background of these rock reliefs are

obscure and is hard to photograph properly. Most of them have lost the sharpness and luster. Majority of them are extremely fuzzy. They preserve dark gray patina over the surface particular stylistic features, partially covered or overlapped by engravings of more recent periods. It may be added that modern iconoclasts, who have written over a large surfaces of the rocks, have caused damages.

These sculptures are not in satisfactory state of preservation today. Most of the reliefs have been washed and defaced by the floodwater of the river such as the images at Gogdara. In few places they were blasted and destroyed and also fired with guns by the ignorant people such as the site of Kokrai and Nangriyal. They are much decayed and it is difficult to recognize the figures. Years of exposure to open sky with climatic affects have blackened the surface and camera could hardly catch the lines of the figures. In a few instances, the people have be-headed the images and only the lower parts of the bodies were left which are now surviving as in the case of Padmapani of Nangriyal. These images were not only damaged by the cruel hands of man, but also weathered

by the climatic conditions, humidity, pollution with foam, which appear directly on the boulders and penetrate into the surface. Sometime a natural crack in the middle of the boulder played vital role in the damaging process of the reliefs.

## **Conclusion**

Stone has been used from the time of immemorial for engraving, paintings and writing purposes. It was undying material, used by the primitive man and one of its great functions was to make the rock art everlasting. We must remember that any form of rock art has the capacity to display the unknown scene before our eyes. It should not be simply viewed as events depicting daily lives of the remote society. Rock art also renders a spiritual reality before us. These carvings are the living evidence of our cultural history and are the legacy of the Buddhist period that prevailed here up to 8th centuries A D. The Buddhist artisan revealed on rocks and boulders the soul-inspiring story of their gods and other religious divinities. Their presences are living proofs of the fact that Udiyana (modern Swat valley) was once the center of Buddhism. Although neglected for few decades and if

properly preserved can still attract Buddhist community, religious pilgrims, social scientists, scholars, archaeologists, historians and visitors from far and wide. I believe that proper stewardship and proper investigation of these sites may provide important information that is crucial to the understanding of the people and cultures that have existed here over the millennia.



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# Analytical Study of Sculptures of Ladakh with preliminary Account on Kashmir Sculptures

SONAM SAPLAZIN

## Abstract

*Sculptures are representational divinity in India whose origin and end is expressed through the religion and the spiritual beliefs. It is tough to state that when and where the first Buddha images appeared in the sculptural form and scholars have different opinion on this. It has been argued that the Buddha image is of Greek origin and first came into being at Gandhāra or in India proper, Buddha image known to be earlier than the first century A.D. It is admitted that Buddhist figures in Gandhāra are adaptations of western types.*

*With these leading facts established, the narrative of the School's development automatically resolved itself into three topics: its infancy under the Sakas; its childhood and early adolescence under the Parthians; and its later adolescence and maturity under the Kushans. The most prolific and best known period in the history for producing sculpture is Kushana period. During this period; Gandhāra art was introduced which is basic art of later School of Arts. The first production of Buddha image could be associated with the time of Kushana's period especially with Kanishka.*

*The purpose of sculptures was to glorify the Buddha. In the Early Indian School there is no clue of the Buddha ever having been so portrayed because of the fact that as per Buddhist tradition, the making of image was prohibited and Buddha himself discouraged the idea of making his image. Lastly to be believed that under the patronage of Kanishka, religious revolution was possible in the form of Buddhist Council. The outcome of the Fourth Buddhist Council was the creation of Buddha images was common under the start of new tradition of Mahayana and this Council sanctioned the worship of the Buddha through his iconic forms. Regarding the origin of Buddha images there are two schools of thought; Produce in Gandhāra area could be associated with the foreign influence of*

*Gandhāra art and the one produce in Mathura area associated with the result of indigenous atmosphere.*

*Even in Kashmiri art style sculpture, the roots lay in the Gandhāra sculptural tradition. It had been a great centre of art and culture during ancient and medieval period. It received the same amount of recognition in the medieval time as a centre of academic activities as Nalanda enjoyed in the east. Kashmir produced a number of Buddhist images in the medieval period. The Kashmiri style was very assorted and attracted many different influences during its development which reflected to a large scale, the political conditions of the time and the relative position of Kashmir. Since Kashmir was once an integral part of the vast Kushana Empire, it is not surprising that the Gandhāra tradition to a great extent formed the roots of the Kashmiri Art style.*

*Ladakh apart from monasteries and picturesque beauty also famous for colossal images located at important ancient routes. The colossal images originated in Ladakh region especially Kargil District are considered to be the second largest sculptures in world after Bamiyan and witnessed the influences of Gandhāra art. The sculptures have been found across the northern region of India from Kashmir Valley to Kargil of Ladakh. The stray Sculptures of Kashmir region and colossal images of Kargil regions are the affluent of Gandhāra which are subsequently influenced to Gupta and Tibetan art. The Mulbek, Apathy and Kartse Maitreya of Kargil District proclaim from their magnificent appearance that it was one of the major trade route from Gandhāra region because reflecting the same art in those sculptures and also signifies that Buddhism was its zenith during Kushana period.*

**Keywords:** *Buddha, Gandhāra, Ladakh, Kargil, Maitreya, Greek, Kushana, Sculpture, Art, colossal image, Kanishka, Kushanas.*

### **General Introduction**

In India sculptures are symbolic representation of divinity whose origin and end is expressed through the religion and the spiritual beliefs. The

construction of the divine images and their subsequent meditation and adoration brought pureness in thinking and mental peace to the human being. Nothing could be said with assurance

that when and where the 1<sup>st</sup> Buddha appeared in the sculptural form and also scholars have different esteem opinion on this. According to Sir John Marshall the earliest examples of Buddhist sculpture in stone dated from the reign of the Mauryan emperor Asoka, and they were the handiwork of Greek or Perso-Greek wood sculptors supported by local craftsmen. However, a century later, stone came to be employed on a large scale in place of wood by the Buddhist sculptors of Central India and the Jumna valley; and it are logical, therefore, to suppose that the idea of using the less perishable material was borrowed from the Bactrian Greeks who were then established in the neighboring kingdom of the Eastern Punjab (Marshall 1980; 7).<sup>1</sup>

It has been argued among scholars that the Buddha image is of Greek origin and first came into being at Gandhara or in Indian origin (Coomaraswamy 1966; 36-37).<sup>2</sup> It is believe that in both the areas appeared simultaneously Hellenistic types at Gandhara, and in the tradition of ancient Indian art at Mathura. It is

<sup>1</sup> Sir John Marshall, *The Buddhist art of Gandhara*, Oriental Books Reprint Corporation, New Delhi, 1980, p. 7

<sup>2</sup> A. K. Coomaraswamy, *Introduction of Indian Art*, Munshiram Manoharlal, Oriental Publishers, Delhi, 1966, pp. 36-37

admitted that Buddhist figures in Gandhara are adaptations of western types and the earliest Gandhara figures must have been made as early as the first century A.D. A certain amount of originality is proved by the occurrence of such types as those of the realistic emaciated Buddhas, which have no part even in later Indian Buddhist art. Early Indian religious art, on the other hand, makes use of primal symbols without anthropomorphic icons.

According to Marshall during late Sakas period, to which the oldest examples of Buddhist carvings are concerned, the old Hellenistic art in Gandhara had turned to low level, however better work appears to have been done by sculptors of the early Indian School. The evidence from Taxila proves that a strong revival of Hellenistic art took place under the Parthians, who succeeded the Sakas in the north-west in the first century A.D., and that this Partho-Hellenistic art played an important part in the later evolution of the Gandhara School. According to Alfred Foucher, with these leading facts established, the story of the Gandhara School's development automatically resolved by distributing it in three categories: it is now abundantly

clear that the it passed through its adolescence or infancy under the Sakas; its childhood and early adolescence under the Parthians; and its later adolescence and maturity under the Kushans, who overthrew the Parthians in circa A.D. 64, and that it came to an abrupt end in the reign of Vasudeva I; when the Buddhist monasteries throughout the north-west overrun and destroyed. It is confirmed that different varieties of stone were in use at different periods in the history of School of Art, and that the nature of their stones can help materially in determining the age of the sculptures.

Marshall said the most fertile and best known period in the history for producing sculpture is Kushana period and during this period; Gandhāra art was introduced which is basic art of later School of arts. It was the period when produced the bulk of the sculptures usually found in public and private collections. But, according to some of the well-known scholars, under the circumstances and on the basis of evidence, the first production of Buddha image could be associated with the time of Kushana's period especially with Kanishka. Maximum number of

Buddhist sculpture A.D. 50 and 300 associated with the monuments and monasteries of Taxila, and of the Gandhara provinces of the North-West Frontier (Coomaraswamy 1966; 36).<sup>3</sup>

The purpose of sculptures was to glorify the Buddha. In the Early Indian School there is no trace of the Buddha ever having been so portrayed because of the fact that as per Buddhist tradition, the making of image was prohibited and Buddha himself discouraged the idea of making his image. In that school it was an inflexible rule that his presence should be indicated by means only of a symbol, for example; by his foot prints or his throne, or the promenade (*cankrama*) on which he want to take his daily exercise, or by his special Bodhi tree or his funeral mound (stupa). This rule, which extended also to the previous life of a Buddha's was religiously observed until the last days of the Early Indian School and was one of the chief characteristics that distinguished it from the School of Gandhāra (Marshall 1980; 85).<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> A. K. Coomaraswamy, *Introduction of Indian Art*, Munshiram Manoharlal, Delhi, 1966, p. 36

<sup>4</sup> Sir John Marshall, *The Buddhist art of Gandhara*, Oriental Books Reprint Corporation, New Delhi, 1980, p. 85

Lastly to be believed that under the patronage of Kanishka, religious revolution was possible in the form of Buddhist Council. The outcome of the Fourth Buddhist Council was the creation of Buddha images was common under the start of new tradition of Mahayana and this council sanctioned the worship of the Buddha through his iconic forms (Watters 1904-05; 270-71).<sup>5</sup> Regarding the origin of Buddha images there are two schools of thought; Produce in Gandhāra area could be associated with the foreign influence of Gandhāra art and the one produce in Mathura area associated with the result of indigenous atmosphere. Scholars like Cunningham, Smitha, Blakh, etc. the first Buddhist image was produced in Gandhāra area with foreign influence on it but a follower of this hypothesis considering it to be controversial. According to Marshall, Gandhāra sculpture was introduced later in many parts of India and sculptures belong to this period “Gandhāra Art” named as scattered all over the world; displayed in world renowned Museums.

If one is not familiar with the word ‘Gandhāra it was the ancient name of the

tract of country on the west bank of the Indus River which comprises the Peshawar valley and the modern Swat, Buner and Bajaur. It was the country with rich, well-watered valleys, clear-cut hills and a pleasant climate; a country where a Greeks might well dream of being back in his homeland situated on the borderland between Indus and Western Asia, Gandhāra belonged as much and as little to the one as to the other. In the sixth and fifth century B.C. it formed part of the Achaemenid Empire of Persia. In the fourth it was occupied for a brief period by the armies of Alexander the great. Thereafter it was conquered by Chandragupta Maurya, but after a century of Indian rule the west again asserted itself, and for another century (roughly the second century B.C.) Greeks dynasty took the place of Indian then came, early in the first century B.C., the victorious Sakas or Scythians, to be followed, after yet another century, by the Parthians and Kushans and even then the tale of foreign conquest was not ended. For in the third century of our era Gandhara again reverted to Persia, now under Sasanid sovereigns, and was again re conquered by the Kidara Kushans in the fourth. Finally, the dealt below to its

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<sup>5</sup>Thomas Watters, *Yuan Chwang*, Vol. I, London, 1904-05, pp. 270-271

prosperity was given by the Ephthalites or white Huns, who swept over the country about A.D. 465, carrying fire and sword wherever they went and destroying the Buddhist monasteries (Marshall 1980; 1).<sup>6</sup>

### **The Setting**

Ladakh apart from monasteries and scenic beauty also famous for colossal images (sculptures) located at important ancient routes. The colossal images originated in Ladakh region especially Kargil District are considered to be the second largest in world after Bamiyan and witnessed the influences of Gandhāra art. The colossal images have been found across the northern region of India from Kashmir Valley to Kargil district of Ladakh. As with other regions of the subcontinent, Gandhāra Art (2<sup>nd</sup> Century B.C. to 1<sup>st</sup> Century A.D.) provides the evidence for the presence of Buddhism in Northern most part of India. The stray Sculptures of Kashmir region and colossal images of Kargil regions are the affluent of Gandhāra which are subsequently influenced to Gupta and Tibetan art. The Tibetan sculptures are the last to be promulgated,

example of these has so far been found in monasteries of Ladakh and Tibet. These Buddhist sculptures express remorse and grandeur of the Buddhism of that period. The Mulbek, Apathy and Kartse Maitreya of Kargil District proclaim from their magnificent appearance that it was one of the major trade route from Gandhāra region because reflecting the same art in those sculptures and also signifies that Buddhism was its zenith during Kushana period.

### **Gandhāra Art influences in Kashmir and Ladakh Sculptures**

Gandhāra was an ancient kingdom in the Swat valley, Potohar Plateau and Peshawar regions, in modern-day states of northern Pakistan and north eastern Afghanistan. Its main cities were *Purushapura* (modern Peshawar), literally meaning "city of men", and *Takshashila* (modern Taxila). The Kingdom of Gandhāra lasted from the Vedic period (C. 1500-500 BC). As a center of Hinduism, Buddhism, and Greco-Buddhism, Gandhara attained its height from the 1st century to the 5th century A.D. under the Kushana Kings and its art propagated during this period.

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<sup>6</sup> Sir John Marshall, *The Buddhist Art of Gandhara*, Oriental Books Reprint Co., New Delhi, 1980, p. 1



Even in Kashmiri art style sculpture, the roots lay in the Gandhāra sculptural tradition. It had been a great centre of art and culture during ancient and medieval period. But Kashmir yielded a number of Buddhist images in the medieval period. It received the same amount of recognition in the medieval time as a centre of academic activities as Nalanda enjoyed in the east (Malla 1990; 1).<sup>7</sup>

The influence of Gandhara in Kashmir sculpture is prominently perceptible in pre-Karkota, but by the 7<sup>th</sup> century Kashmiri artists seem to have become more aware of the 5<sup>th</sup> century Gupta style of the Gangetic plains. Because of their strong reliance on the earlier Gandhara style, Kashmiri sculptors continued to model their figures in a more naturalistic style. The two articles by John Siudmak and Fisher on “*The Stone Sculptures of Kashmir*” cover six centuries of Kashmir history from C. A.D. 600 to 1200. This is when Kashmiri sculptors were at their busiest and most creative. Yet to date no attempts have been made by scholars to provide a substantial overview of the history of Kashmiri sculpture during this period. This article not only fills an

important gap in our knowledge of the history and development of Kashmiri sculpture but also the origin of the sculptures in the region.

The Kashmiri style was very eclectic and attracted many during its development which reflected, to a large degree, the political conditions of the time and the relative position of Kashmir (Siudmak 1989; 41).<sup>8</sup> Since Kashmir was once an integral part of the vast Kushana Empire, it is not surprising that the Gandhāra tradition to a great extent formed the roots of the Kashmiri Art style. Although this is undoubtedly the case, the Kashmiri School absorbed all those influences and transformed them into an idiom that is uniquely Gandhāra affinity is the most. Gandhārais however, but one factor contributing to this complex style, which is equally strongly influenced by the plasticity and spirituality of Gupta arts. The style thus created is characterized by great elegance and sophistication with slightly elongated figures that exhibit the naturalistic modeling of Gandhāra and the sensuality of Gupta Art (Czuma

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<sup>7</sup>Bansilal Malla, *Sculptures of Kashmir*, Agam Kala Prakashan, Delhi-52, 1990; p. 1

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<sup>8</sup>John Siudmak, *Art and Architecture of Ancient Kashmir, Early Stone and Terracotta Sculpture*, Marg Publications, Bombay, 1989, p.41

1989; 62).<sup>9</sup> However, although there is some evidence of direct Gupta influence, the predominant influence was from the north-west, either from Gandhāra or from the post Gandhāra tradition which survived in the region. This was natural given the geographical proximity of Gandhāra to Kashmir and was generally the case historically with the exception of the Mauryan period when the local art must have followed the Mauryan conventions. Hermann Goetz in his extensive work on Kashmir justified this assorted character of style by the presence of artists of various foreign backgrounds who found refuge in Kashmir and played an active role in the formulation of this unusual style.

The migration of Kashmiri sculptures beyond the territories of Kashmir was to a certain extent possible also by conquests made by the powerful Kashmiri kings. When these powerful kings extended their empire, they not only intended to subdue the conquered people politically but also tried to influence them culturally as well. One of the notable Kashmiri kings was Duralabhavardhana (625-661A.D.) who

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<sup>9</sup> Stanislaw Czuma, *Art and Architecture of Ancient Kashmir, Ivory Sculpture*, Marg Publications, Bombay, 1989, p.62

was the founder of Karkota dynasty and who extended his empire to Taxila, Ursar, Hazara, Simhapur or the salt range and also his conquests included Rajapuri (Rajouri) and Parnotsa (Poonch)<sup>10</sup>. The next ruler was Lalitaditya (724-761 A.D.), who was the greatest king of Karkota dynasty and lifted his country to the pinnacle of fame and desire for world conquest (Bamzai 1962; 111).<sup>11</sup> According to Kalhana, he made wide conquests and extended his territory (Kapur 1983; 20).<sup>12</sup> It was during 8<sup>th</sup> century A.D. that Lalitaditya expanded his empire towards eastern India and his contacts with this region led to the introduction to Vajrayana gods and goddesses in Kashmir (Singh 1968; 62).<sup>13</sup> Subsequently, Kashmir supplied skilled craftsmen, exported its craft and dispatched illustrated and un-illustrated manuscripts along with distinguished religious teachers to different places. The results of this cultural fusion are, therefore, found in some of the artifacts of other places. One of the nearer places that experienced the strong impact of

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<sup>10</sup> Samuel Beal, *Life of Hiuen-Tsiang*, New Delhi, 1884, p.68

<sup>11</sup> P. N. K. Bamzai, *A History of Kashmir*, Delhi 1962, p.111

<sup>12</sup> M. L. Kapur, *Kingdom of Kashmir*, Kashmir History Publications, Jammu, 1983, p.20

<sup>13</sup> M. Singh, *Himalayan Art*, Melbourne, 1968, p.62

Kashmir between the 8<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> century A.D. was Ladakh (Malla 1990; 96-97).<sup>14</sup>

Ladakh is one of the important centers of Buddhism. Colossal images, stray sculptures, rock engraving of Buddhist divinities are found in abundant almost from every parts of Ladakh (Francke 1907; 80).<sup>15</sup> However, there is no doubt, that many of the impressive huge rock-cut figures (colossal images) such as the famous *Maitreya* at Mulbek, Tumail, Kartse is fashioned out of cliff showing clear affinity in style and execution to Kashmiri art prototypes which is influenced from Gandhara art, and the impressive wood sculpture also representing *Maitreya*, are the result of local talent which are also broadly reflect strong influences of the Kashmiri sculptural traditional too. It is important to note that the aesthetic traditions of Kashmiri art in Ladakh which is rooted from Gandhāra should come as no surprise as geographically it is contiguous to Kashmir. We do get ample of evidences that in the “Second Phase of Buddhism” sculptures and colossal images are introduced in Ladakh region at larger extent during 7<sup>th</sup> century A.D.

<sup>14</sup>Bansilal Malla, *Sculptures of Kashmir*, Agam Kala Prakashan, Delhi, 1990, pp. 96-97

<sup>15</sup>A. H. Francke, *Antiquities of Indian Tibet*, Archaeological Survey of India, New Delhi, p.80

and the evidences reveals that sculptural art is link to Gandhāra (Spalzin 2015; 69).<sup>16</sup>

These sculptures are usually found on the ancient routes passing through Ladakh carved mostly by missionaries on their way from mainland India and Gandhāra region to Tibet and other Central Asian countries. It is considered that India in general and Kashmir in particular were connected with southern silk route: two of them passed through Gilgit and Yassin valley up to Tashkurgan and joined the Kashgar route and the third one reached Khotan through Ladakh and from there it proceeded to Yarkand route.

The custom of carving colossal images from live rock in Ladakh may well have been inspired by rock-carved reliefs in the Swat Valley and Afghanistan (Fisher 1989; 122).<sup>17</sup> Kargil witnessed the giant and finest example of rock cut sculptures in India. In general we get evidences that dissemination of Buddhism is from Kashmir region but the custom of engraving giant colossal images is not available in Kashmir but traced from

<sup>16</sup>Sonam Spalzin, *gSter-rNying-Archaeological Remains of Ladakh*, Bangkokok Publishers, 2015, p.69

<sup>17</sup>Robert E. Fisher, *Art and Architecture of Ancient Kashmir, Later Stone Sculpture*, Marg Publications, Bombay, 1989, p.122

many regions of Pakistan. After doing research on this subject and area for years I came to the conclusion that it may be the reason that mountain and hillock landscape in Ladakh and Pakistan are almost same which is differing in Kashmir where moisture and vegetation on hillocks are not favorable for huge colossal images to engrave. Whatever the reason but Kashmir is richest region in containing stray sculptures and sculptures which is now housed in Museums in many parts of India and outside India.

The colossal images in Ladakh region is generally found in a close proximity to a settlement by a river, a stream or natural springs and probably these would be the halted places of traders, itinerants, travelers and monks travelling from Kashmir and probably directly from Gandhara region and other places. All these were erected in or near the political centre of smaller chiefdoms. According to the historians, these Buddhist rock sculptures bear witness to early introduction of Buddhism and Buddhist art in Ladakh from Kashmir and others much before the Tibetan influence on Buddhism began in the region. Kargil falls on a route from

Kashmir and Gandhara while travelling towards Leh was followed by the traders and Buddhist missionaries alike, the first evidence to support this inference can be seen in Drass valley after crossing Zojila pass on a way side of Srinagar-Leh National Highway. Some 65 km from Drass entering into the densely populated Shia town of Kargil gives you the least idea that its outskirts are repositories of perhaps some of the world's most remarkable and biggest Buddhist colossal images of 7<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> century A.D. are found on the major trade routes. From about the middle of the 7<sup>th</sup> century, the grand route between Lhasa and Kashmir was frequented by travelers. This paved the way for the models of Kashmiri art to travel to Western Tibet (Malla 1990; 97).<sup>18</sup> The impact of Kashmiri on the Tibetan art of this period was conspicuous by its presence. The impact of Kashmiri is visible on the technique of bronze casting of Tibet (Schroeder 1981; 158).<sup>19</sup> Mulbek *Maitreya* is also constructed on major trade route and this might be partially true for Kartse too. However there is no major trade route from

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<sup>18</sup>Bansilal Malla, *Sculptures of Kashmir*, Agam Kala Prakashan, 1990, p. 97

<sup>19</sup>U. V. Schroeder, *Indo-Tibetan Bronzes*, Hongkong, 1981, p.158

Tumail (Apathi) to the north or east, it is presumed that this sub-route was followed by traders and Buddhist missionaries alike. In Ladakh region maximum of the images are found of *Maitreya*, Main attribute of *Maitreya* is stupa on his crown, holding *Nagakesvara* flower, standing or half seated posture, adorned by rich ornaments, holding vase in right hand.

Although the rock sculptures and rock-reliefs of Kargil District belong to more or less geographical coherent area, they were constructed on the base of totally different concept. Federic Drew in his book "*Jummoo and Kashmir Territories*" mentioned Kartse Chamba near Sankoo which he compared with Kargah (Naupur) in Gilgit which is now a day well known (Drew 1875; 257).<sup>20</sup> Petech Lucarno in his book the '*Kingdom of Ladakh*' has attributed Buddhist rock-reliefs in Ladakh to the 8<sup>th</sup> and subsequent centuries, representing direct influence of rock relief from India (Petech 1977: 15).<sup>21</sup> Similarly Dr. B.R.Mani of Archaeological Survey of India says; prior to the first Tibetan invasion in the 7<sup>th</sup> century and for

several centuries afterwards the cultural inspiration came almost entirely from the west, namely Kashmir (IAR 1988-89; 28).<sup>22</sup> There are sculptures or rock reliefs are scattered in almost every parts of Ladakh region Central Leh, Kargil and Nubra. It is tough to approach as there is a narrow passage leading to the site.

### The Sites

The important and unique sculptures or rock reliefs of Ladakh are mentioned below:

**Drass (34°25'N 75°46'E)** is a hamlet sited at a distance of 60 km from Kargil and is second coldest region in the world. After crossing Zojila pass Maitin is the first village of Ladakh and Drass is the second village falling on a trade route of Srinagar-Leh. It is presumed that this route was followed by traders, itinerants and Buddhist missionaries alike in the past. At Skitbu village of Drass, on the road side some of the stray rock sculptures are installed under a shelter (Moorcraft 1841; 41).<sup>23</sup> This stray sculptures placed on a low level

<sup>20</sup>Federic Drew, *The Jummoo and Kashmir Territories*, Jammu, 1875, p. 257

<sup>21</sup> Luciano Petech, *Kingdom of Ladakh*, University of Michigan, 1977, p. 15

<sup>22</sup>*Indian Archaeology-A Review*, 1988-89, p. 28

<sup>23</sup> William Moorcraft, *Travels in Himalayan provinces of Hindustan, Punjab, Ladakh, and Kashmir*, Low Prices Publications, 1841, p. 41

plinth in one single row comes under Archaeological Survey of India (Pl. 1). The stray stone sculptures represents are Avalokitesvara (Snellgrove 1979; 9)<sup>24</sup>, six feet height standing Maitreya where three devotees are depicted on the same reach up to the knees and the left side of the head of a *Maitreya* is carved with very small human figure and to the right *sarada* inscription is inscribed, man riding horse holding sword in left hand bridle wielding pose, depiction of human figurine and a lotus flower are placed in a row next to the old road which assignable to circa 8<sup>th</sup> century A.D. (Francke 2008; 52).<sup>25</sup>

There are some more detached sculptures are installed these are a wheel engraved on a boulder, detached *chatravali* and a probably lower portion seated posture Buddha etc. Probably these stray sculptures were detached from a monastery close to the Drass river introduction of Buddhist art from Kashmir. These sculptures placed on a platform by the side in a row where it is close to the Drass River.

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<sup>24</sup>D. L. Snellgrove, *The Cultural Heritage of Ladakh*, Vikas Publishing House, New Delhi, 1979, p. 9

<sup>25</sup>A. H. Francke, *A History of Western Tibet*, Gulshan Publishers, Kashmir, 2008, p. 52

**Kartse (N34°16'; E76°0')** is some 65 km from Drass and 40 km from Kargil town. It is an extensive valley with lots of greenery towards south of Kargil town. Kartse-Suru valley is known all over for its magnificent colossal image of *Maitreya* belongs to 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> century A.D. which is 40 feet high (Snellgrove 1979; 9).<sup>26</sup> This colossal image which is perfect example of rock relief engraved on a huge boulder attached with a hillock overlooks a cluster of mud houses and a mosque at the foot of a picturesque and glaciated mountain, in between flows a fully blown stream with sparkling waves and its sound (Pl. 2). The sculpture of the Kartse is badly weathered and quality seems inferior comparatively to the *Maitreyas* available at other places of Kargil. To approach this site a link road is connected via bridge across Suru River and from the last stoppage of village there is a narrow path along water channel approaching to the site. Before the narrow passage starts a beautiful *maqbara* of queen embellished with green marble located in the centre of a garden.

This *Maitreya* is fully ornamented and embellished with crown and flanked by

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<sup>26</sup>D. L. Snellgrove, *The Cultural Heritage of Ladakh*, Vikas Publishing House, New Delhi, 1979, p. 9

two flying goddesses (*apsaras*) on both side of the head. The inscription of later period is inscribed on the both sides of the *Maitreya* is later addition. Federic Drew in his book “*Jummoo and Kashmir Territories*” mentioned Kartse Chamba near Sankoo is almost similar to Kargah (Naupur) in Gilgit (Drew 1875; 257).<sup>27</sup> Technique for engraving of Tumail and Kartse *Maitreya* is almost similar.

There is a ruin of Kartse fortresses straight across the Kartse River flowing through Kartse village which is popularly known as Kartse Khar summer residence of the local king Tri Sultans. Tri Sultans remained in the hands of the Dogras for long, and they further improved their hold on the country by building a fort at Suru, and taking the neighboring unoccupied fort of Shagkar (Francke 2008; 140).<sup>28</sup>

**Tumail (34°33'N 76°12'E)** is situated at a distance of 20 km from Kargil main city. It is located in a rugged terrain between the war zone of Battalik and Pashkyum valley. It comes in the area of Soth adjoining Kargil town towards north. The village is covered with poplar trees

and a stream is following deep downhill from the village. The sculpture is located across the other side of the stream, the poplar grove of Tumail hamlet hides strikingly imposing *Maitreya* image deeply carved on rock surface of a mountain. This is semi rock shelter kind of relief and the quality of the rock is inferior because of weathered it is much effected. The *Maitreya* is embellished with crown and fully ornamented and on the right side of the *Maitreya*, a small sized attendant deity shown in seated posture is depicted (Pl. 3). The engraving technique and style of Kartse and Tumail is almost similar except the crown and facial expression and feature. It is depends on the place to place so there is difference in texture and surface material of boulder. This colossal image is 21 feet height and comparative to Kartse and Mulbek, this is smaller in height. The colossal images are generally found on major trade route but there is no major trade route from Tumail (Apathi) to the north or east. Probably this sub-route was followed by traders and Buddhist missionaries alike.

**Mulbek (34°23'N 76°25'E)** is sited at a distance of 40 km from Kargil situated on the right bank of the Paskhyum River

<sup>27</sup>Federic Drew, *The Jummoo and Kashmir Territories*, 1875, Jammu, p. 257

<sup>28</sup>A. H. Francke, *A History of Ladakh*, ed. Gulshan Publishers, Srinagar, 2008, p.140

(Wakha Chu) on Srinagar-Leh National Highway (Francke 1994; 102).<sup>29</sup> It is a largest rock relief sculpture of Buddha *Maitreya* (*Byams-pa*) on the road-side assignable stylistically to circa 9<sup>th</sup> century A.D (Koul 1977; 21).<sup>30</sup> This colossal image of Mulbek is the finest and the largest figure of northern region bears affluent of Kashmiri stylistic (Singh 1968; 59).<sup>31</sup> It was noticed by Moorcroft in 1820, also mentioned that *Maitreya* sculpture of Mulbek is shown with Brahminical cord (Francke 1994; 101).<sup>32</sup> Moreover outer appearance is totally different from those of the *Maitreya* of Kartse and Tumail (Apathi). It is interesting to note that there is only one huge boulder in the middle of the village where the craftsman chooses this to engrave deep relief beautiful figure of *Maitreya*. This hand poses of *Maitreya* Mulbek are *Varada mudra* and *Kamandalu*. Details of associated divinities are depicted on the corner of the boulder in which one of the depictions is shown like dress of

Kushana (Moorcroft 1841; 17).<sup>33</sup> Mulbek *Maitreya* is in controversy whether the figure is of *Maitreya* or something else. According to me this is the *Maitreya* Buddha as it is embellished with rich ornaments and holding in his right hand the stalk of lotus (*Nagakesra* flower) and a small stupa adorning his crown (Pl. 4).

A monastery is perched on a cliff about 200 feet high situated on the right bank of the Paskhyum river (or Wakha-chu), and passed between Shergol and Kharbu on the route from Srinagar to Leh. The monastery and the rock relief of *Maitreya* are 4 miles from Shergol. The village of Mulbek contains hundreds of houses (Gazetteer 1974; 610).<sup>34</sup> It is easy to understand that in the early times this site of the monastery might also have served as a guard post for the caravan route. On a rock at Mulbek is carved a wedding congratulation to king Jamyang and his new Queen. Soon after the wedding Ali Mir had a remarkable dream which proved to be of the greatest

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<sup>29</sup> A. H. Francke, *Antiquities of Indian Tibet*, Archaeological Survey of India Publications, New Delhi, 1994, p. 102

<sup>30</sup> Samsar Chand Koul, *Ladakh*, Utpal Publications, Srinagar, 1977, p. 21

<sup>31</sup> M. Singh, *Himalayan Art*, Melbourne, 1968, p. 59

<sup>32</sup> A. H. Francke, *Antiquities of Indian Tibet*, Archaeological Survey of India Publications, New Delhi, 1994, p. 101

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<sup>33</sup> William Moorcroft, *Travels in Himalayan provinces of Hindustan, Punjab, Ladakh, and Kashmir*, Low Prices Publications, 1841, p. 17

<sup>34</sup> *Gazetteer Jammu & Kashmir*, Vivek Publishing House, Delhi, 1974, p. 610



importance to his son-in-law (Francke 1979; 93).<sup>35</sup>

**Hunder Nallah (N34°35'04"; E77°27'31"):** This site is located at a distance of 10 km from Disket, capital of Nubra region. There is a major route from Phyang to Nubra via Hunder Dok. Phyang-Nubra pass is one of the important passages of Ladakh to Khotan, connecting the historical silk route. On Hunder - Phyang pass before approach Hunder village there is a *Maitreya* rock relief near river resource which witnessed the introduction of Buddhism in Nubra valley (IAR 1992-93; 112).<sup>36</sup> This route was frequently used by nomads and Buddhist monks who follow each other in Central Asia. This image of *Maitreya* is carved in deep relief situated in the main stream near the bridge (Pl. 5). It is badly weathered as its features are washed out to make any identification. The time period of Hunder *Maitreya* is 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> century A.D. Almost same type of sculpture of *Maitreya* also found from Panamik and Tirith dated 8<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> century A.D. (IAR 1992-93; 36-37).<sup>37</sup> Rock cut sculpture of

*Yensa Maitreya* datable to 8<sup>th</sup> century A.D.

**Igoo (N33°53'; E77°46'):** There are countless sculptures in Leh region but the sculpture found from Igoo is one of the unique and significant important findings of rock relief of five Dhyani Buddha depicted on a pillar facing four cardinal directions (Pl. 6). The site is located at a distance of approx. 45 km from Leh city connecting a link road from Himachal-Leh National Highway and off to the river Indus. This sculpture is credit with the name of master piece and unique because this kind of sculpture is not found anywhere in Ladakh as well as outside. It is fixed on a socket which is lotus petal pedestrian and is installed in the centre of a chapel. Probably in the ancient time it was three tier small chapels, but now it is in ruin and pathetic condition, only the last tier is left. But the sculpture is in very good condition and probably time period goes to 7<sup>th</sup> century A.D. This seems to be influenced from Kashmir (Spalzin 2014; 2).<sup>38</sup> It is sculpture of *Gyalwa Rig-nya* (five dhyani Buddha) depicted on a pillar facing four cardinal directions. AkshyaBhya is facing towards the east

<sup>35</sup>A. H. Francke, *History Folklore & Culture of Tibet*, Ess Publications, Ansari Road, New Delhi, 1979, p. 93

<sup>36</sup>*Indian Archaeology-A Review*, 1992-93, p. 112

<sup>37</sup>*Indian Archaeology-A Review*, 1992-93, pp. 36-37

<sup>38</sup>Sonam Spalzin, *Journey from Prehistoric to Historical Period-Ladakh*, *Greater Jammu*, 2014, p. 2

in Bhumi Spatsh Mudra, Amitabh Bhya is facing towards west in Dhyani Mudra, Ratnasambhava facing towards the south with Varada Mudra, Amoghasiddhi facing towards the north with AbhyaMudha and Vairochana on the top or in the centre. To cover the fifth depiction, fourth and fifth Buddha in a seated posture one above the other on fourth pillar.

**Padum (33o28'N 76o54'E)** was the capital since from ancient kingdom of Zanskar and at present day it is administrative centre and sub-division of Kargil District. In Zanskar, during my exploration found sculptures and early stupa depiction on rock boulders and on rock pillar in different places like Sani, Rantaksha, Zangla, Muni (Snellgrove 1977; 26)<sup>39</sup>, Tongde, Karsha, Lungnak (Phugtal bridge) indicate the existence of Buddhism in the land at a very early time. These explorations led to the discovery of petroglyphs along with rock-cut sculptures of Buddhist divinities particularly at Phe and Tonde. Rock relief of Gyalwa Rig-nya (Five Dhyani Buddhas) of 7th century A.D. in one row (Pl. 7) are found from Piyu, Padum. At a few distances away from

this site one more Dhyani Buddha are found engraved on a smooth rock boulder surface. So, Zanskar Padum is having countless archaeological sites. Among all most fascinating remains is numerous small early stupa (*mchod-rten*) in an inch sizes engravings on rock relief technique on huge boulder at Piyu Padum (Indian Archaeology 1988-89; 28).<sup>40</sup> Padum Monastery is situated on a pyramidal hillock in the middle of the village which lies on the left side of the Zanskar River.

## Conclusion

Above study presents that colossal images in Ladakh region are directly or indirectly enter from Gandhāra region. The fact established with the help of literary and archaeological evidences reveals that Gandhāra Art entered to the valley of Kashmir and from Kashmir it reached to Ladakh region and also directly from the ancient trade route of Pakistan to Kargil valley. The colossal images originated in Ladakh region especially Kargil District are considered to be the second largest in world after Bamiyan and witnessed the influences of Gandhāra Art.

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<sup>39</sup>D. L. Snellgrove, *The Cultural Heritage of Ladakh*, Vikas Publishing House, New Delhi, 1979; p. 26

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<sup>40</sup>*Indian Archaeology-A Review*; 1988-89; p. 28

It is to be believed that under the patronage of Kanishka, religious revolution was possible in the form of Buddhist Council was the creation of Buddha images was common under the start of new tradition of Mahayana and this council sanctioned the worship of the Buddha through his iconic forms.

Kashmir yielded a number of Buddhist images in the medieval period. The influence of Gandhara in Kashmir sculpture is prominently perceptible in pre-Karkota, but by the 7th century Kashmiri artists seem to have become more aware of the 5th century Gupta style of the Gangetic plains. Because of their strong reliance on the earlier Gandhara style, Kashmiri sculptors continued to model their figures in a more naturalistic style.

Ladakh is also one of the important centers of Buddhism. Colossal images,

stray sculptures, rock engraving of Buddhist divinities found in abundant almost from every parts of Ladakh. However, there is no doubt, that many of the impressive huge rock-cut figures such as the famous Maitreya at Mulbek, Tumail, Kartse is fashioned out of cliff showing clear affinity in style and execution to Kashmiri art prototypes which is influenced from Gandhara art, and the impressive wood sculpture also representing Maitreya, are the result of local talent which are also broadly reflect strong influences of the Kashmiri sculptural traditional too. The aesthetic traditions of Kashmiri art in Ladakh which is rooted from Gandhāra should come as no surprise as geographically it is contiguous to Kashmir.

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## Figures

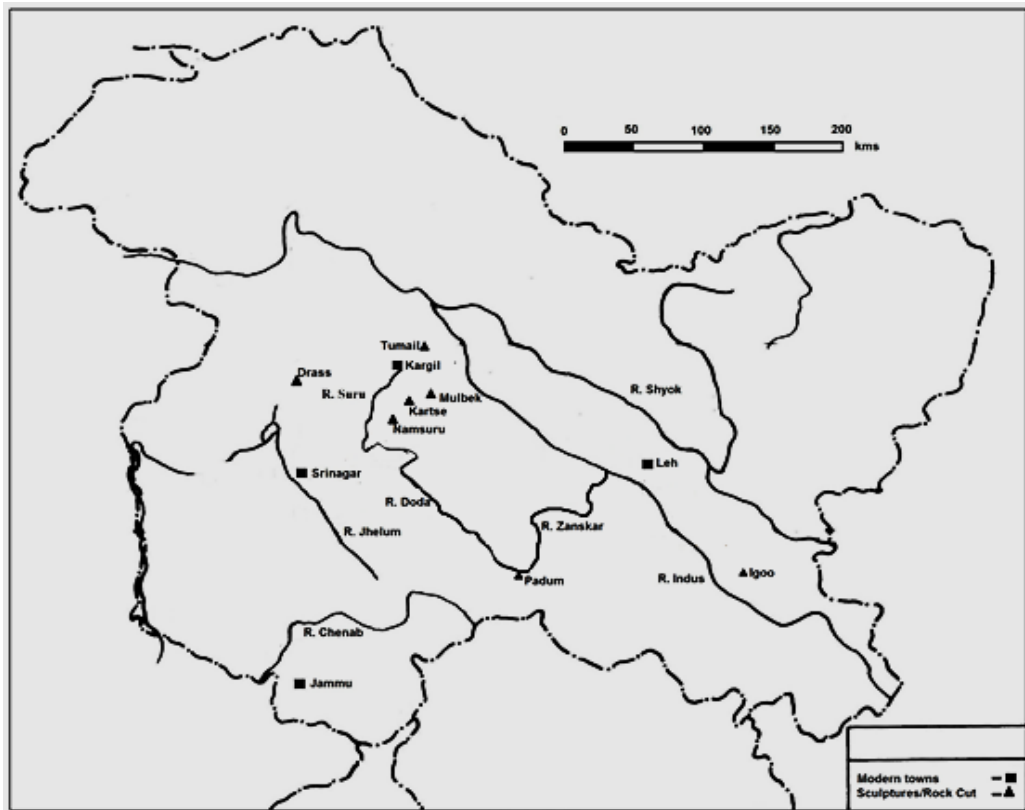
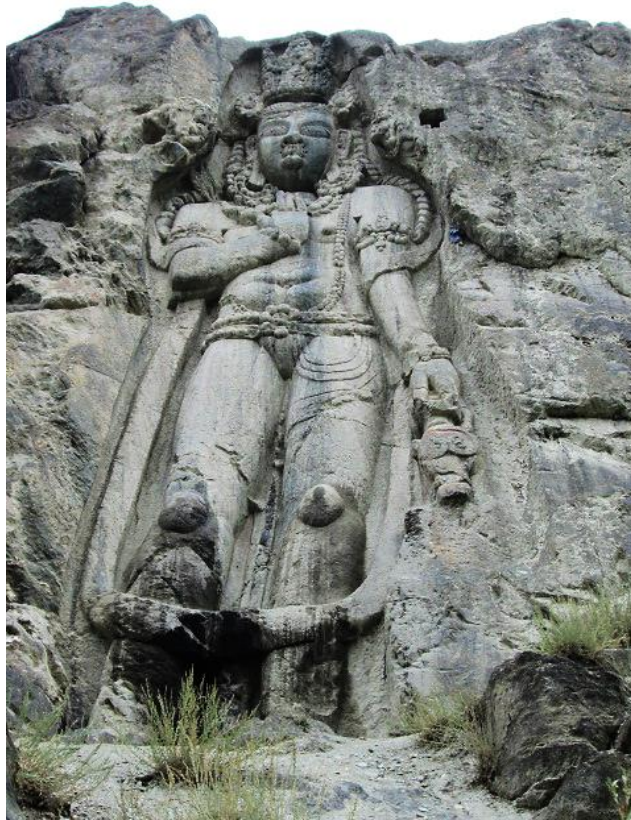


Figure 1. Map showing sites of the sculptures of Ladakh



Figure 2. Drass Maitreya, Kargil; Ladakh (Jammu & Kashmir)



**Figure 3.**Kartse Maitreya, Kargil; Ladakh (Jammu & Kashmir)



**Figure 4.**Tumail Maitreya, Kargil; Ladakh (Jammu & Kashmir)





**Figure 5. Mulbek Maitreya, Kargil; Ladakh (Jammu & Kashmir)**

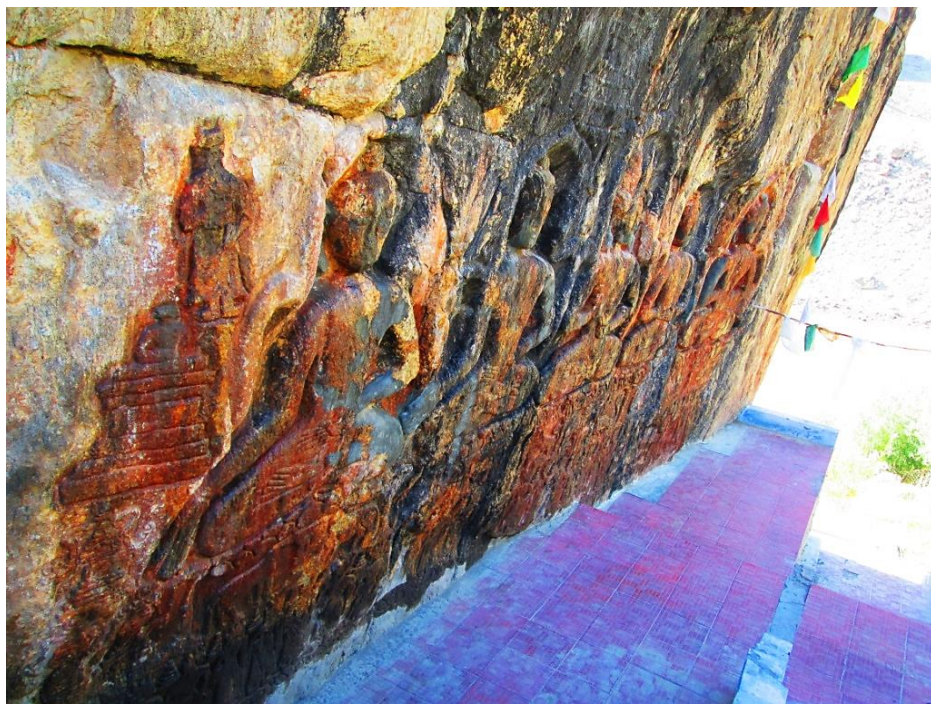


**Figure 6. Hunder Maitreya, Nubra; Ladakh (Jammu & Kashmir)**





**Figure 7. Gyalwa rig-nya (Five Dhyani Buddha) Rock relief Igoo, Leh (Jammu & Kashmir)**



**Figure 8. Gyalwa rig-nya (five dhyani buddha rock relief), Zanskar, Kargil; Ladakh (Jammu & Kashmir)**



# Śarda Temple: A Legacy of the Stone Temples of Kashmir

JUNAID AHMAD AND ABDUL SAMAD

## Abstract

*The current paper deals with an archaeological site in Sharda village of Neelum Valley in Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Pakistan. It is known with different identities however its general features are close to the style of stone temples in Kashmir. The structural remains are on the verge of extinction due to weathering and neglect. The paper tries to document the very remains on the basis of their architectural features and location in the contemporary landscape to bring it into the notice of the scholars.*

**Keywords:** *Kashmir, Hindu Temple Architecture, Stone Temples of Kashmir, Neelum Valley*

## Introduction

The village of Sharda is remote and isolated. It is lying beside the two confluences. One is that of Neelum or Kiṣāṅgaṅgā River and Sharda Nar, the Madhumati of Stein (1900) and the other is of Sorgan *Nala*, the Kankatori of Bates (1873). Here, the Neelum River, is little relaxed by the mountains and its eastern bank takes the form of an alluvial plain little raised like a small plateau. The ruins of an old building catches the eye in the south of the populated area. Large blocks of stone are well dressed and layed out to set up as a structure. Local people usually use

to call it Sharda University, which is a Hindu Temple of Karkotas' Kashmir (Ahmad and Samad 2015).

## Architectural Features

The structure of Śarda Temple is on a raised platform. The ground is not perfectly levelled. It inclines toward the west and a ridge to the south by the side of Sharda *Nar* (see map. 1). Huge stone slabs are used to balance this unevenness achieving a leveled platform, matching the farms in its east and to support the superstructures. The structure as a whole is rectangular in plan and it is aligned to E-W with a small difference of about 5 degrees. The lengthy sides are

distributed east to west. It measures about 35m in length and 26 m in width. The platform is provided with a massive staircase to the western side. Above this platform, a large courtyard forms the quadrangle with massive stone wall compound. Main structure is a square cell in its middle with a little raised podium.

The Temple is composed of different structural levels. These levels can be categorised as the staircase, portal or the gateway, the quadrangle and the main sanctuary.

### **Staircase**

Stairs are provided as the main access to the structure (Figure 1). The structure of the staircase is itself a huge project. It is in close similarity to the architectural traditions of the stone temples of Kashmir (Ahmad & Samad 2015). Similar massive stair cases are found at many instances in Kashmir (Cunningham 1848; Stein 1900; Brown 1959; Fisher 1982; Mitra 1993). It is at about 35-45% rough slope. One can be fascinated by the lofty stone slabs used in it and the massive portal at its upper end.

There are 63 steps in this staircase. The lowest step has a 15 cm high strip in high relief to a height of 15 cm and then 25 cm high regular step. All the steps have the same height to the top. The horizontal facing is 43 cm wide whereas the breadth of the staircase is 3m and is uniform up to the top.

Guardrails are provided to both sides of the staircase, constructed in same massive stones. It is broken in 5 steps; each one being 4 m long, running parallel on both sides. Aural Stein (1900:283) mentions 6 steps of them. Each of the 5 steps of guard railing is having same style, length and height. There is a square indent 10X10 cm made in both of their facing corners. It is most probable that it was carved after laying the courses of the stones. Their lowest courses are little larger i.e. 2.4 m and then they are 2 m wide above 30 cm.

The whole structure is shaken, possibly with some earthquake. The staircase is also misaligned in a way that some of the guard rails are inclined inside and vice versa.

### **Gateway**

The staircase joins a massive podium jutting out from the western side from

foundations of the main structure about 2 m from the south-western corner of the main court. On both sides, this portal is 1.5 m broader than the width of the staircases. The portal structure resting above it is of same level as that of the court (Figure 2).

Stein (1900:181) suggests that by conjecturing the southern wall and allocating the south-western corner, portal sets in the middle of the western wall.

It is a massive structure with half side (Southern) completely ruined. Fortunately, the remaining half portion is in place for the conjectural reconstruction.

Horizontally, the portal is made up of two parts, a larger part of 1.8 m deep toward the stairs and a little smaller about 1 m from the cella court. Both were separated by wooden gate of which the square hook holes in a little raised pilaster, is still noticeable. This separating pilaster is provided with a small projection in the western edge where it is attached to the northern wall of the portal. Panelling is achieved by carving in the centre. These are two panels, achieved as high relief, each being about 15 cm (Figure 4).

Walls around the entrance are decorated with a geometrical design which is unique all around the monument however square below it is exceptional. The size of this leitmotif is different at any point to match the size of both parts in which they are executed.

A couple of one circular and a square pilasters are at the ends of the porch facing cella (Figure 5-a). Both are portraying a pedestal, a shaft and capital. Capital is relatively better preserved where square echinus, necking and astragal can easily be distinguished.

One at the end of the main courtyard is little nudged inside the way. This pilaster is supporting the only existing curved projection of the arch. This arch was ultimately supporting the superstructure above this porch, the pedimental roof. It is also carved out of the huge stones after setting them in place. The inner face of the portal had the vault of this arch. The arch directly rests on the circular pilaster and the square one is little far from it to the northern side. The intermediate space and the square pilaster have a small panel above the dado level (Figure 5-a). Both of the panels are of the same size and same pyramidal design on their top.

The traces of stucco and few pinkish colour pigments can also be seen around them.

### **The main court/ Quadrangle**

The quadrangle is formed in a rectangular plan (Figure 6). Portal is providing entrance to its western wall and it extends inside to about 2 m. The portal and staircase are not just in the front of the main sanctuary as in general case but they are little nudged to the southern corner.

There is a little raised layer of stones to form a, 20 cm wide, string course, running all the way around the structure matching with same to the inner side of the enclosure wall just 40 cm above the general ground level of the court inside (Figure 6). Assuming this as ground level, the average height of the walls is 2.6 m.

### **Western wall**

The western wall is mostly covered with the entrance portal (Figure 7-a). Including half of the entrance and southern corner of this wall as well as coping of the northern side is missing. The southern corner of the portal area deludes for south-western corner of the

wall. At the confluence of northern and western walls, a later superstructure is made up as a small picket.

### **Niche Recess, the *Taqchah* (تاقچه)**

To the 50 cm north from the joint of portal and northern segment of western wall, is a 1.3 m deep niche (Figure 7-b). It is 1.3 m wide and 1.5 m high. There is a stone topping it. The upper portion from outside is provided with a false pyramid like geometrical motif.

It directly faces the entrance to the main sanctuary. It might also been linked to the entrance.

### **Northern wall**

The northern side of the main courtyard is 43.5 m long with a stone wall of 2 m thickness and 2.6 m height (from court level). It has deep foundations, sunk into the ground to about an approximate of 2-3 meters. Its western side is particularly massive as the ground is not plan in the whole area and it is raised about 3 m to achieve the level of the quadrangle. However to the east of northern wall, due to the raised ground level, its foundations are just matching with relative ground level (Figure 6).

The now barren stone in the northern wall are easily visible from outside. At some instances, it looks that discarded stone from other portions are also used here. For example, there is a perfectly carved, little raised square on a stone surface and also there are stone having indents and carvings identical to the architectural decorations in the Temple.

Some places on this wall are provided with coping. The coping was possibly introduced around the entire enclosure wall (Figure 8). There are some such remains in the northern wall. These extend to a length of about 3 m in the eastern corner of this wall and then it is followed by continuations of a ruined superstructure. This coping is projected above the wall making an eave. From outside this coping is has a small groove beneath the eave, possibly to prevent the rain water from getting stuck with the wall (Fig).

### **Niche, the *Taqchah***

The wall above the level of the quadrangle is not different outside view. However from inside, there is a deep niche in its middle, fronting the main sanctuary (Figure 9). It is located just above the dado level. It is projected

about 30 cm out into the court. However being at a little raised level it is supported with small sloped projection like that of a common type for the balcony. Stein (1900: 283) says about the geometrical design of this niche. It is nearly a cubical of 1.25 X 1.18 X 1.25 m from inside. It once contained two small *Linghams* (Stein 1900: 283), as it looks that it was originally built for receiving such cult. The opening wall of the niche is projected in a way that it could be easily accessible for the worshippers. Opening is little designed and once had same pyramidal panelling (Stein 1900: 283) however they are not that clear now.

### **Eastern Wall**

The eastern wall is also made up in similar style and material. The stone blocks in this side are also relatively better preserved. Wild growth is however is deteriorating it vigorously. The whole span of this wall is intact excluding coping and other crowning features (Figure. 8 a).

It has the continuation of the super structure found on the eastern corner of the northern wall. There is an exit or backdoor in the centre of this wall.

## Postern

The doorway is simple and a flat slab of stone topping it as a lintel. Here the wall is little wider. Though its base is covered with stone debris, it is still clear that it is rising from the level of the string course (Figure 10-a).

It is 2.2 m high and 1.5 m wide at the inner opening which is uniform till the depth of 1.9 m where it narrows. The width is reduced to 1.38 m at a culmination point at which a step projection makes it narrower (i.e. about 40 cm) suddenly. It is 30 cm wide. In the midway of the narrowing, there are two square holes in both sides.

On the top corners, there are two circular holes. Similar may be in the base which are buried in the debris. Fragments of *kanjur* stone can be seen in the debris.

## Niche, the Taqchah

To its north just 1.5 m away is a recess matching all the aspects of other niches with the exception of the height (Figure 10-a). The depth in the wall is 1.4 m and width is 1.2 m. It look higher however it is missing with its crowning elements. Instead it has a small 50 cm wide string

course at 1.3 m from its base. Here it joins the possible superstructure. Above this string course, it narrows a bit and extends in a continued pattern up to 2.6 m of height from the base of the niche. It is damaged above this level.

## Southern Wall

There is an austere steep leading to the hill stream, Madhumati, in the southern side of the Temple. It has cast havoc for the structure by claiming its southern foundations. Stein (1900: 181) has mentioned the same situation and also confirmed the missing of southern wall (Figure 11).

The eastern corner has left with some part of it. The stones of this wall can be seen dispersed on its place as well as in the strata of the steep below. There are wild olive plants found abundantly on this steep. These plants have destroyed by moving the existing foundation stones. However, currently, they are strengthening the remaining structure by minimising the erosion.

The remains of, once a niche in its midst, are obvious in the form of the fragmentary traces of *kanjur* stones. They are dispersed on the surface where a modern strengthening wall is built on

the same place. Such walls are currently built in the gapes and crevasses are reinforced with meshing of steel wires.

### **The superstructure**

Above the enclosure wall in the eastern side of the quadrangle, there is a continuation of the wall above its level of coping. It is not only true for the eastern wall but also extends to about 4 m into the northern wall. In the eastern wall it raises as a pediment with 1.3 m height at its apex. However it is not finished at the top. It looks like it is decayed (Figure 12).

It is a 60 cm thick stone wall positioned on the outer side of the all below.

### **The Main Sanctuary or Cella**

In the centre of the quadrangle, there are the remains of a square structure, raising above the level of enclosure walls. It was built with elaborate craftsmanship. A 1m high podium is provided to make it prominent. The entrance is provided from the western side. There must have been huge elaborate superstructure, which is now missing (Figure 13).

The main shrine is decorated to the existing height from all the sides other

than one at entrances. Trefoil arch is exquisitely used to decorate the exterior. This arch is achieved by high and low relief system.

It was possibly plastered with lime mortar. There are the traces of stucco found inside as well as outside.

The plan of the main sanctuary is square. Along the vertical line, the sanctuary is provided with two levels, base and cella or sanctuary and a probable 3<sup>rd</sup> level, pyramidal surmounting, as the general motif suggested, which is now gone but can be conjectured. These levels can be compared with the Hindu temple order in India with *pitha*, *mandika* and *shikara* respectively.

### **Base of the cella**

The main chamber of the whole structure is provided with a podium which raises to about 1m. This podium gets higher than the string course in the compound wall. Stones used in the base are relatively bulkier. There is no clear traces of decoration or plastering found at this level.

There are harder basalt stone slabs, used beneath the podium which can be seen



as they are little projected outward in the current ground level.

To the western side of this plinth, a small humble staircase is attached to ease the only access in the sanctuary (Figure 14). It is 1.85 m wide and each step is about 60 cm flat and has same height. Both sides of the staircase are provided with a covering by using a long stone of about 0.5 m width.

### **The Sanctuary**

The room of the sanctuary is like a hallow cube with more height than other dimensions. At the plan, it is a square of 3.8 m from inside. The doorway allows entrance in the middle of the west side. It sets about 1.3 m wide in the middle of the western wall with the same length (i.e. 1.3 m) on both ends. Presently, only an open place represents it, rather it would have been a wooden door barring the entrance.

From inner side, walls are flat with few traces of plasters. Mostly, they are new, possibly around 1940s based on the grade of used cement. The entrance step is also covered with a layer of cement. There is a narrow string course at a height of about 2.9 m. it is about 45 cm wide. There is about 10 cm setback in

2.1 m of the walls above this string course which extends to the level of the cornice.

Currently, herbs are growing on the floor sides, while shady area is muddy and humid. Small plants are growing on the walls too.

In the southern wall at 1.1 m from the western corner and 0.9 m high is a hole. It might have been used to hook-support the cults or other worship necessities like incense burners, etc.

From exterior, three sides, north, east and south, are decorated with the common pedimental motif. The motif is wrought in relief design of successive pediments and trefoil arches.

The door has fronted with a kind of canopy to cover the small flight of steps, of which only pillars in the northern side can be seen. The other side is lacking with such remains. There is small gap (about 60 cm) between the pillar at the end and the pillar attached to the sanctuary at front. Currently it is filled with small chips, but it yet clear that originally it was open (Figure 15).

### **Excavation**

On the course of the archaeological survey of Kashmir, a team of archaeologists from Taxila Institute of Asian Civilization (TIAC), Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad, also documented the site. A trial trench was laid out, located 10 m east of the eastern wall in a farm. An elaborate ashy layer is clearly visible along with concentration of the potsherds. The report of the exploration will shed light on the site (Figure 16).

### **Pottery from the Site**

The cultural material that can be found abundantly in the whole area is the pottery shards (Figure 17). They can be found in near surroundings of the temple and temple itself. Apart from conventional offering bowls, pieces of rough textured bricks can also be found.

### **Kiśan Ghatī and Śraḥśilā Castle**

Kiśan Ghatī is a cave located about 2.5 km downstream of Sharda, on the left bank of Neelum River (Kiṣangaṅgā). Here, a slender cape, projecting toward the river and small stream touches the river. To the west of this small tributary, a high stony section can be found of large boulders. On close examination of

the surface of the boulder, traces of stucco-like material can be observed. The word “OOM” is written in Śāradā script that can be visualized as dim lining in pinkish red pigments. In addition a Swāstīka can be seen (Figure 18-a). Stein (1900) explains the Sharda Muhatmya’s story that a muni, Muni Śandliya (Kumari 1988) saw here a Gneśa figure.

At the head of this boulder, a cave is located in a position that it is hard to get in there. It’s a natural cave for which local peoples’ referral is quiet often. They believe it is a sacred Hindu Site where they used to visit before partition. Accordingly, many cults are located in a square room. On the contrary, the cave looks like a natural phenomenon. It is irregular in symmetry (Figure 18-b). The upper portion of the cave is littered with stalactites posing fearing ghostly effects which possibly mystified it.

Some remains of structures can be seen some way downstream from Kiśan Ghatī. The Kalhana’s Śraḥśilā Castle (Ahmad & Samad 2015) can also be placed here. Therefore it can be the same site.

## Water Sources

Water sources are crucial to any Hindu Temple and particularly in Kashmir. Qadir (1993) allotted the name of Amara Kund to the water source of this temple. There are three main water sources while walking along the Sharda *Nar*, at about a furlong upstream is a waters spring (Figure 19-a). Moving upward, there is another spring (Figure 19-b). From this spring water supply schemes are leading to the inhabited area around the Sharda Temple.

A third source of water is to the north of the temple about two farms away (Figure 20). It is still used by the locals who took their animals there to drink from a prepared tank.

## Summary & Conclusion

The Śarda Temple is lying in the Sharda Village around the confluences of waters. Most of the structure has been deteriorated out of weathering. The structure is provided with a massive podium in order to match the uneven ground. The whole structure portrays a rectangular, enclosed walled quadrangle with a main square building in the centre. In the west, entrance is provided

with a massive portal way comparable to the central building. There are niches in the walls and portal. In the eastern wall, there is a postern, like sally port in a fort.

The primary building material of the structure is large sand stoneslabs cut with huge labour and care. Decorations are also carved in the similar manner. The other material include wood. A very few remains are now apparent in the form of stakes once inserted in the holes of doors, etc. It was possibly used in doors and niches. On the other hand, there are traces of stucco found in the cella presenting that it might have been plastered.

Such structure can be prevailed for a religious purpose rather than a secular one. Massive stone work also presents not only the prestige of the responsible authority or authorities, but also the zeal of the stone workers who took part in this huge construction project. The absence of plaster or the other fragile materials like wood is evident to infer that it is old enough and environmental ravages washed all of it. The roofs bore the same fate, though it was probably built in stone.

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## Figures



Map 1. A topographic view of Sharda Temple and associated sites





Figure 1: Staircase in the western side from the lowest step



Figure 2: Staircase joining the portal's podium. A view of northern and southern faces respectively.

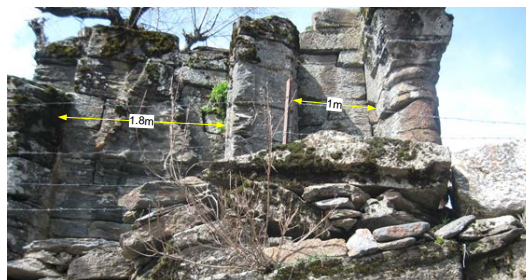


Figure 3. Parts of portal from southern side





Figure 4. Eastern side of the portal's existing structure a. from inside, b. from outside

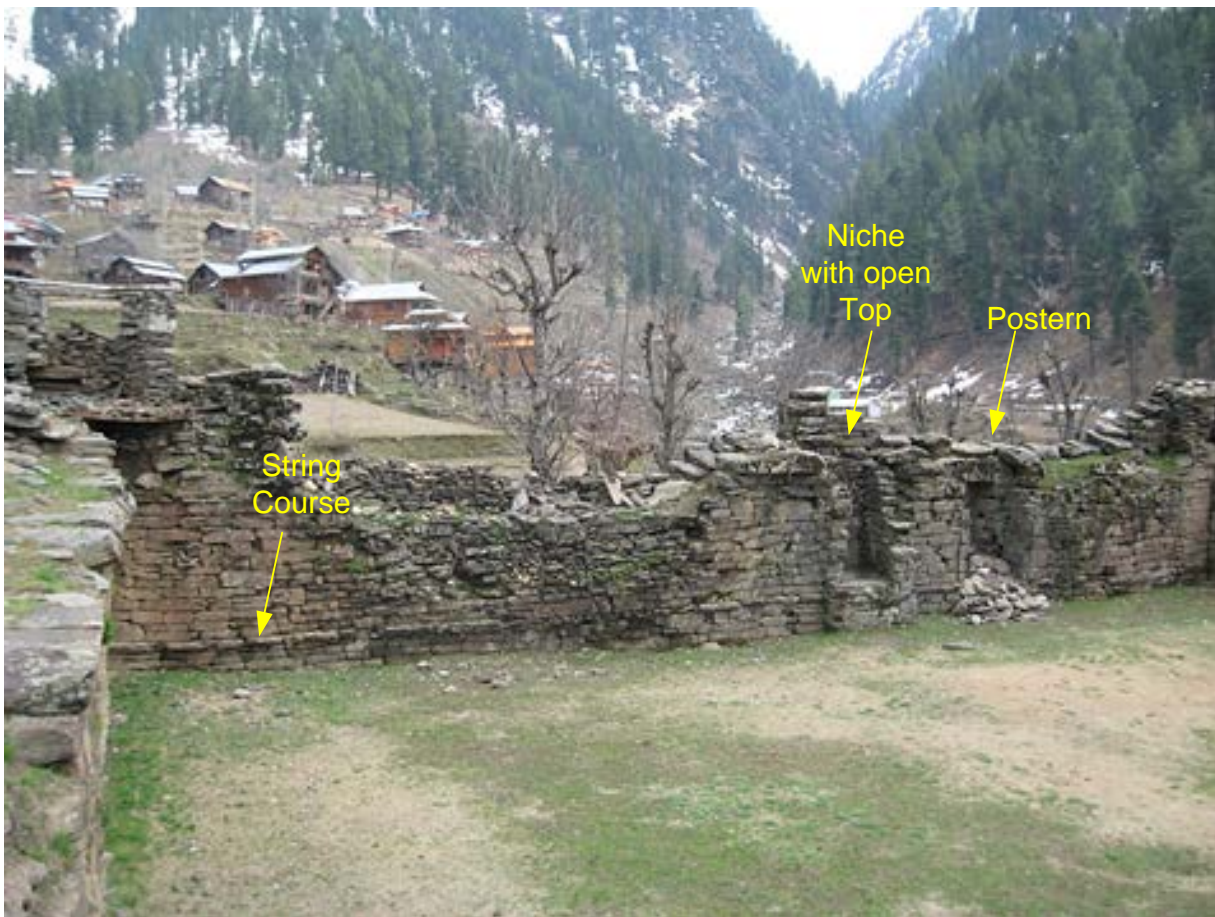


Figure 5. Eastern side of the courtyard





Figure 6. Western Wall



a. portal

b. niche along the portal



Figure 7. Coping in the Northern Wall



Figure 8. Northern wall and the niche



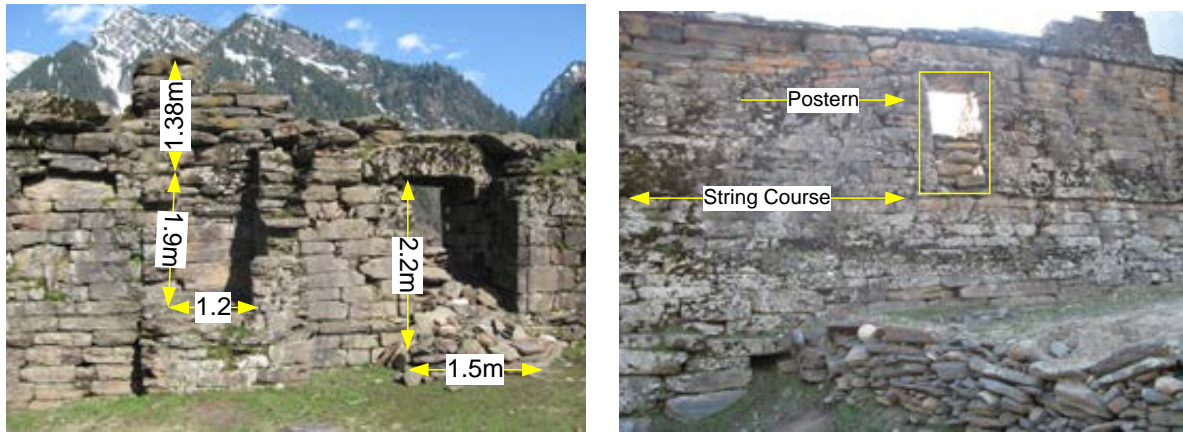


Figure 9. Eastern Wall

a. Internal View

b. External View

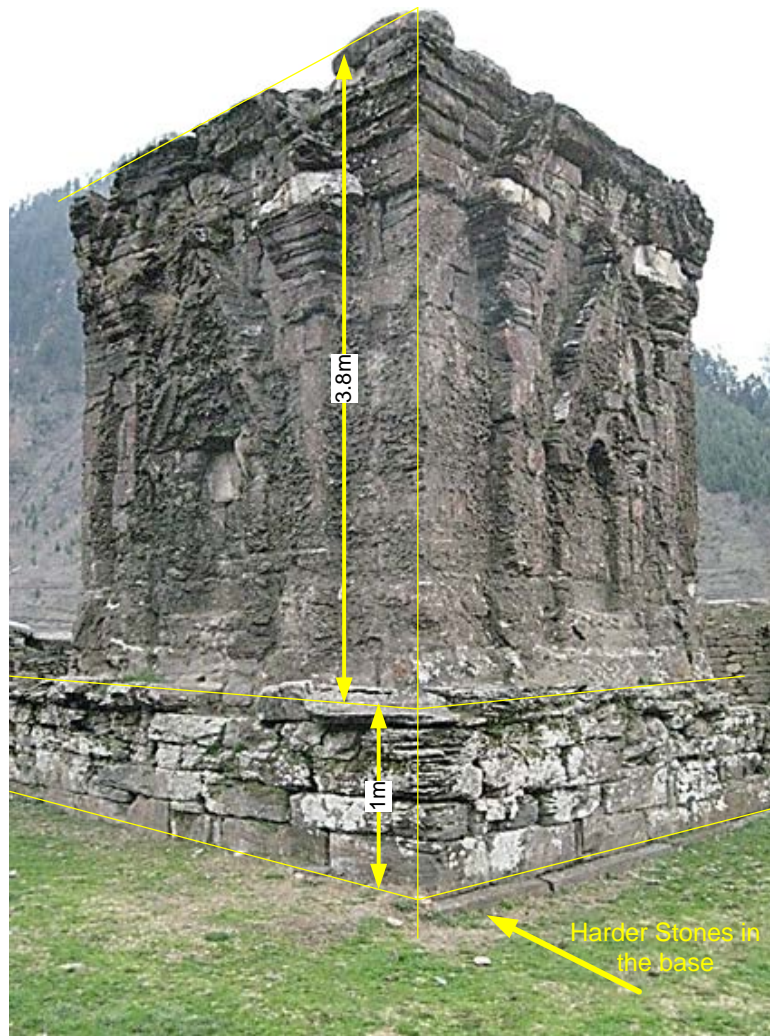


Figure 10. Reinforcements for southern wall



Figure 11. Observation post in the north-eastern corner (possibly Sikh Period). Old wall continuation to its east. (Encircled)





**Figure 12. Main Shrine from western side**



**Figure 13. The entrance to the sanctuary**



Figure 14. The remaining pillar of the canopy to the door from southern side in front of door. These repairs have cement used in some instances.



Figure 15. Trial Trench in a farm to the east of the site (



Figure 16. Terracotta from the Site



Figure 17. a. Kiśan Gatī

b. Cave in Kiśan Gatī (Inner View)



Figure 18. Two water sources along the Sharda Nar a. along the bank and b. little above the stream.





**Figure 19. Water source to the north of the Temple**

# Shāh – Mīr: The founder of Muslim state in Kashmir

FAZAL SHER AND ABDUR REHMAN

## Abstract

The Muslim rule established in Kashmir during a period of turmoil in Kashmīr. Numbers of adventurers are reported to have created anarchy in the valley. The current paper tries to uncover the haze from the emergence of Muslim rule and the personality of Shāh Mīr.

**Key words:** *Shāh Mīr, Rīñchana, Dulucha, Koṭadevi, Muslim state in Kashmir.*

## Introduction

The charming and beautiful valley of Kashmir had always been a target of adventurers and fortune-seekers from the north and the south. Some of them collected spoils and went away; others stayed on and established their own rule in the valley. The story of such exploits, and also of the local dynasties which ruled this valley, would have been forgotten but for the predilection of some of its poets who made history the theme for showing their poetical skill. The extant records make it clear that it was not done for the love of history, which literally means a “researched report” (it is an Indo-European word of which the root is connected with *wit* (English) and *Veda* (Sanskrit) to lay bare

or sift plain historical facts from the confused mass of myths. There were other reasons too, which motivated the poets to take up themes connected with the historical past of Kashmir. The panegyric and eugological aspect of the works of these poets is a common knowledge. Nevertheless the prime importance of these works lies in the fact that without them we shall find ourselves in complete darkness regarding the ancient history of Kashmir.

The chief among these was Kalhaṇa, son of Chaṇapaka, a minister of the king Harsha (AD 1089-1101). The connection explains the exact and graphic account of the later part of his work as compared to the mythical character of the earlier

part. There is no doubt that Kalhaṇa's family was Brahman by caste. The Sanskrit learning of the type displayed in the work entitled the *Rājatarāṅgi* (the stream of kings), was cultivated chiefly by Paṇḍits of Brahman descent. It was written in the form of a long poem in Śāradā characters. The work initiated AD 1148-49 was completed in the following year. Kalhaṇa's example was followed by Jonarāja (AD 1459) who continued the narrative up to the reign of the Sultan Zain al-'Ābidīn (actual name Shāhi Khān) who ascended the throne in AD 1420 (Kabir 1992:363). Śrīvira, another poet, covers the periods from 1459 to 1486 (Dani 1992:19). In AD1586 Kashmīr was annexed by the Mughal emperor Jalāl ad-Dīn Akbar.

Of the Muslim (Turuṣka) invaders the first was a certain Kajjala who defeated and killed Lakṣmaṇdeva, the king of Kashmīr in about AD 1286 (Ray 1973:176). How long did he stay in Kashmīr is not known but this plundering raid left behind a bleeding Kashmīr in which nothing but complete anarchy prevailed for a while. Out of this chaos emerged the figures of Saṅgrām Chander, the Lahara chief, and Simhadeva who, according to Abū al-

Fazl (n.d.: 1083) was the "Chief of Ledār (misprinted as Labdar) of Dakṣiṇapārā," the river Ledār joins the Vitastā (Jehlam) between Anantnāg and Vijabror. Simhadeva declared himself king but his jurisdiction was restricted to the Ledar valley and only when his rival Saṅgrām died in about AD 1301, he was able to extend the frontiers of his kingdom. Even then his kingdom was much reduced in size. After a reign of 14 year 5 months and 27 days he died in about AD 1301, and was succeeded by his brothers Sūhadeva who brought the entire valley of Kashmīr under his control. His success owed much to the bravery Shāh Mir, a Muslim adventurer who joined his service in about AD 1313. This is the first time we hear about the name of a person who was destined to change the destiny Kashmīr.

Kashmīr prospered during the reign of Sūhadeva but fortune did not smile on him. The peace and prosperity of his reign was spoiled by two foreign invasions. One of these was led by Dulucha, a commander of the great king Karmasena, as Jonarāja puts it, or a commanders (Bakhshi) of the ruler of Qandahār (probably Gandhāra) as Abū al-Fazl (*Ā'in-i Akbari*, vol. I: 1093)



writes, through the name recorded by him is Dalīju instead of Dulucha. It is to be noted here that Abū al-Fazl apparently took this information from the Persian translation of the Sanskrit histories of Kashmīr order by Jalāl ad-Din Akbar when he visited that charming valley (see Ā'in-i Akbari, Vol I :1085) Dulucha and Dalīju therefore refer to one and the same person. The formation of this 60,000 strong army included Tajika, Turuṣka and Mleccha troops which suggests that he was a Muslim (Ray 1973: 178). According to Stein (1979: II, 408) he was probably a Turk who early in the fourteenth century entered Kashmīr via the Zōjī-Lā (pass). Jonarāja says that having collected the spoils, for the collection of which the king had to impose a special tax on all castes on account of which the Brahmans began to hold solemn fasts as a protest against the cowardly conduct of the king, and being scared of the excessive cold of Kashmīr, Dulucha retraced his footsteps through a “good military road”. Before that however he had caused great destruction to places of worship and had taken numerous slaves. In this highly exaggerated poetic express Jonarāja writes: “When the Rākṣasa Dulucha went away, the son found not

his father, nor fathers his son, nor did brothers meet their brothers. Kashmīr become almost like a region meet their brothers, Kashmīr become almost like a region before the creation, a vast field with few men, without food and full of grass” (Ray 1973 : 179). In the turbulence, caused by the invader, the king Sūhadeva lost his life.

Kashmīr had not yet taken a sigh of relief when another foreign invader, this time from Tibet, named Riñchana (Tibetan Rin-Chen) invaded the unlucky valley. Dulucha went away but Riñchana had come to stay. A relative of the deceased king offered some resistance but he was treacherously killed by the invader. After this he made a plan to extend his rule to the entire valley. Knowing that only a brave commander such as Shāh Mīr could help him in the realization of his ambition, he employed him, and with his help occupied the whole valley. In order to give legitimacy to his rule, he married Koṭadevi, the daughter of Sūhadeva.

Under Riñchana Kashmīr once again enjoyed a short period of prosperity. Abū al-Fazl says (Ā'in-i Akbari: I, 1093) that he was famous for his munificence, and under the influence of

Shāh Mīr accepted his religion. Jonarāja tells us that he was a both Bhatta and therefore Devaswāmi refused to initiate him into Śaivism. Riñchana was serious by wounded in the head as the result of a conspiracy against him and died in about 1323. He left his queen Koṭadevi and son Haidara in the charge of Shāh Mir.

Haidara being still a minor, Shāh Mīr raised Udayanadeva, a relative of Riñchana to the throne. He married the widowed queen Koṭadevi and conferred important offices on Jyamśara and Ālleśara, the two son of the king-maker. The king proved unworthy of his office and leaving the task of administration in the hands of his wife, Koṭadevi, spent his own time in prayers and penance. The turbulent Lavanyas as usual raised their head while Shāh Mīr who kept on strengthening this position by matrimonial alliances, frightened him by bringing Haidar in his presence. Udayanadeva died in 1338. At the time of his death his rules was virtually confined to his place.

Koṭadevi kept the death secret for four days and, fearful of Shāh Mīr's intentions, searched a compromise with the Lavanayas and with their help assumed the supreme power. Shāh Mīr

at first was in favour of accepting the status quo, but soon after, when the Queen shifted the headquarters to Jayāpīḍapura (near the present Andar Koṭṭ), where she felt secure among the Lavanyas, he changed his mind and took control of the capital and then marched to the headquarter of the Queen. The Lavanyas troops of the Queen were quickly put to the flight while the fort where Queen lived was invested. As the fort was strong and surrounded by water, Shāh Mīr resorted to negotiation and offered to marry the twice widowed Queen. Duped into believing the promises made to her, the Queen agreed to his proposal and thus, unthinkingly, fell into the trap prepared for her. One day after the marriage, she was imprisoned (some say murdered) and Shāh Mīr declared himself king under the title Shams ad-Din in AD 1339.

Thus was founded the Muslim state in Kashmīr. The dynasty of Shams ad-Dīn was succeeded by the Chakk dynasty in AD 1561. In the reign of the fifth Chakk ruler, Yaqūb Shāh, Kashmīr was annexed by the Mughal emperor Akbar in AD 1586.

Who was this Shāh Mīr? There is no doubt that he was a Muslim by faith.

Stein (1979: I, 130) remark that he “was a powerful condottiere who had come to Kashmīr from the south”. According to Kabir (1992: II, 134) “Shah Mirza or Shah Mir, an adventurer who came from Swat to Kashmīr in AD 1313... entered the service of Sūhadeva”, Raverty (1976:278n) records: “Shāh Mīr, afterwards Sulṭān Shams ad-Din, who ruled over Kashmīr and its dependencies from AH 742 to 746 H (AD 1341-42 to 1345-46) – some say from AH 743 to AH 747 – and who introduced the Muhammadan religion into Kashmīr, was a Gibari from Suwāt. According some accounts, however, he is said to have traced his decent from Arjun, the third son of Paṇḍu”. H.C Ray (1973:177-78) writes that Śāhmera (Shāh Mīr), a Muslim adventurer of Rajput origin ... with his relative migrated to Kashmīr and entered the king’s service in about AD 1313”. On page 178, ft.1, he further remarks: “Jonarāja (v.143 and 146) gives the name of his father and grandfather as Kuruśāha and Tāharāja”.

Whether he was a Gibari from Swāt or a Rājput converted to Islam, is hard to decide, for, both the views are equally balanced. Shāh Mīr entered Kashmīr in AD 1313, while the Gibari Sulṭān Pakhal

conquered Swāt shortly afterwards. It is not unlikely that freebooter Gibari horseman already existed there. On the other hand Jonarāja, writing in AD 1459, was a near contemporary whose statement carries equal weight.

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# The Short Lived Gibari Empire: A Little Known Chapter of the History of Medieval Hazāra

ABDUR RAHMAN AND SHAKIRULLAH

## Abstract

*Pakhlāe, the heartland of Hazārah, has been changing hands from time to time. In about the middle of the fourteenth AD or a little earlier, the exact date is not known but it must be placed before Amīr Tīmūr's invasion of India (AD 1398- 99), it fell into the hands the Tājik Gibari Sulṭān Pakhal; hence its name pakhlāe, Sulṭān Pakhal's father, was named Sulṭān Jahāngīr; hence the dynastic title Jahāngīrian. All Jahāngīrian Sulṭāns of Swāt were descendants of Sulṭān Jahāngīr. An attempt has been made to bring into limelight for the lovers of history, historians, researchers and academicians this almost forgotten chapter of the history of the region.*

**Keywords:** *Gibari, Pakhlāe, Jahāngīrain, Yūsufzais, Akhūnd*

Pakhlāe, the heartland of Hazārah, has been changing hands from time to time. In about the middle of the fourteenth AD or a little earlier, the exact date is not known but it must be placed before Amīr Tīmūr's invasion of India (AD 1398- 99), as we shall see below – it fell into the hands the Tājik Gibari Sulṭān Pakhal; hence its name Pakhlāe, Sulṭān Pakhal's father, according to Khwāju (1977: 134) was named Sulṭān Jahāngīr; hence the dynastic title Jahāngīrian. All Jahāngīrian Sulṭāns of swāt were descendants of Sulṭān Jahāngīr (Ibid).

Surprisingly, the Akhūnd, Darwezā, the celebrated saint of the Pakhtūns who lies

buried in the Hazārkhāni graveyard in Peshāwar , and who, on his mother's side, was related to one section of these Sulṭāns, and whose words therefore carry much greater weight than those of Khwāju, does not mention Jahāngīr in the pedigree of these Sulṭāns. The pedigree runs as follows: Qarāri (Akhūnd's mother) daughter of Nāzo Khān, son of Malik Dāwaryāe, son of Malik Bālo, son of Sulṭān Qirān , son of Sulṭān Khwāja, son of Sulṭān Tomnā , son of Sulṭān Bahrām , son of Sulṭān Khajāman , son of Sulṭān Handu , son of Jaras, son of Sulṭān Jamār. The last mentioned, the Akhūnd (1960: 113-14) remarks, was one of the

descendants of Sulṭān Shamūs, a son of Sikandar Zulqarnain (the two – horned Alexander). According to the Akhūnd Sulṭān Pakhal (written as Fakhal) was a brother of Sulṭān Bahrām. Thus Khajāman and Jahāngīr refer to one and the same person. Whether Khajāman was the original name and Jahāngīr his title is not known for certain.

After a brief diversion in which he gives his own pedigree and also mentions an untoward incident which happened to his grandfather, the Akhūnd tells us that when the mantle of power fell upon the shoulders of the two brothers- Sulṭān Bahrām and Sulṭān Pakhal – the latter marched towards the mountains and brought the entire territory stretching from Bajaur to Swat and Kashmir under his control; while Sulṭān Bahrām conquered Lamghān and Nangrahār, fixed his capital at Pāpīn in the territory of Nangrahār, and drove out a tribe called Budni (Budīni) which predominated over the Nangrahāris as the Akhūnd styles the Tājik inhabitants of that part. After sometime he made up his mind to conquer Kashmir- a task which was perhaps left incomplete by Sulṭān Pakhal. Leaving his own son Tomnā in Nangrahār as his deputy, he invaded Kashmir and brought the whole valley under his control. On coming back he wanted to dispatch Tomnā and his family to Kashmir but when he reached Kot, a

village in Nangrahār, he died. His offspring in Kashmir, apparently from a Kashmiri wife, settled in Kashmir and that from a Nangrahāri wife settled in Nangrahār.

Throwing light on his own genealogical table, the Akhūnd (p. 105) writes that his ancestor named Jannati was a Turk and related, on his mother's side, to the Sulṭāns of Balkh. Jannati's son Jīwan was a very pious person who came to be known as Shaikh in his neighbourhood. It so happened that due to some unknown reasons he shifted his residence from Lamghān to the Mohmand darah and settled on the bank of a stream. A white bearded gentleman, he was generous to all, and, in order perhaps to appease the Mohmands, he invited them to a sumptuous meal and treated them with great generosity. But the behaviour of at least one of the guests was too outrageous to be set aside as an ordinary affair. Passing his own judgement on the incident, the Akhūnd remarks: whenever a mean person is treated with grace and generosity, he in turn shows insolence and arrogance which springs from his sheer baseness, and tries, out of jealousy, to humiliate you. But when you treat him with a heavy hand, his arrogance at once turns into humble submission.

Quite astonishingly, after the meal was finished one of the guests got up and

approaching the Shaikh cleansed his dirty hands on his white beard. It must have created a moment of great laughter amongst the cowboy guests, but they did not know that they would be made to pay heavily for this insulting behaviour. As the news spread around and reached the Sulṭān of Balkh, he dispatched a strong force to chastise the Mohmands and bring them under his own control. The rule of the Darah, the Akhūnd remarks, was still in the hands of the descendants of Jīwan at the time he wrote his *Tazkirat al- Abrār wa al- Ashrār* (An Account of the Pious and Wicked). It was completed in the year 1021 H/1612-13.

Of the seven sons of Jīwan one was Mattah, whose son, Aḥmad was the father of Darghān who shifted his residence from the Mohmand Darah to Pāpīn - the capital of the Gibari Sulṭān Bahram. When the Yūsufzais shifted from Nangrahār to Peshāwar, Darghān's son Shaikh Sa'adi accompanied them and was accounted, at the time of Shaikh Mali's distribution of Lands, among the Mandizai section of the Daulatzai division of the Malizais and was assigned a share for 30 persons, the number of his family and dependents. Subsequently the ruler of the country (Mirzā Kāmran probably, at the time he held the fief of Kābul and its dependencies) had occasion to chastise the ulūs (subject people in general) and

dispatched the Amīr, Qodāni, with a body of horse, to make a raid upon them. Some of these horsemen fell in with Shaikh Sa'adi and his family, and, taking him for one of the Afghān ulūs, put him to death, and carried away his son Gadāe, captive. Soon afterwards it was found out, through the Amīr Qodāni's, inquiries about the Shaikh, that he had been unjustly killed; and the horsemen who had done the deed were severely punished for it, but there was no remedy for what was past. However, the Amīr forthwith set Gadāe at liberty, and, for the late Shaikh's sake, liberated all the other captives in his hands.

Subsequently, from some cause or other, Gadāe left the Mandizai Malizais and joined the Ismā'īlzai khel of Chagharzai Malizais; and, by them, he was assigned a share of land for ten persons. This Gadāe was Akhūnd Darwezā's father.

While the Akhūnd has preserved the pedigree of the descendants of Sulṭān Bahrām, Khwājū-the original author of the *Tārīkh-i Afgāhana*—likewise, gives us an almost complete genealogical tree of the successors of Sulṭān Pakhal. This Sulṭān, we are told, was succeeded by his son Sulṭān Awais, the last Jahangīrian ruler of Swāt, who, owing to the constant harassment of his people whom he was unable to provide security and depended merely on the strength of the fort he was



residing in, decided to abandon his capital Manglawar in upper Swāt, of which some substantial remains can still be seen, and take up his residence in the Nihāk Darah, also called Lahore, further north. There he had a strong fort built amidst the hills and there he continued to dwell till his death.

Khwāju does not tell us how Sulṭān Awais came to power. He mentions only the plain fact that he succeeded his father Sulṭān Pakhal. Akhūnd Darwezā however makes it clear that Sulṭān Awais' succession was not as smooth as it appears from Khwāju's statement. The Akhūnd (1960: 108) says that Sulṭān Pakhal's death was followed by a fierce fratricidal war of succession which upset even Sulṭān Awais's mother—a kind-hearted lady—to such a degree that she hurled a curse upon the country that it should not last long. And this is precisely what happened. The empire created by Sulṭān Pakhal which extended from Jehlam to Manglawar and Bajaur to Kashmīr quickly fell apart as a result of the war of succession. Sulṭān Awais occupied the territory between Hashtnagar and Manglawar. Similarly some territory on the right bank of the river Swāt fell under the control of the Mutrāwis who vaguely claimed descent from the Yūsufzais but appear to have been related to the same Gibari family as Sulṭān Awais and others. Both Sulṭān 'Alā ad-Din and Sulṭān Awais are known to have waited

upon Zahīr ad-Dīn Bābur (1987: 372) during his invasion of Bajaur in AD 1519. The country of Bajaur was then ruled by Sulṭān Ḥaider 'Ali Gibari.

When the Yūsufzais got entrenched in the Doābah, so graciously assigned to them by the Dilazāks, they began to look upon Hashtnagar with greedy eyes. It was then peopled by the Shalmānis (originally from Shalūzān) and Dihqāns (farmers) and formed part of the dominions of Sulṭān Awais whose governor Mīr Handā, son of Azru of the (Tājik) Dodāl tribe, lived in the Bālā Hisār fort (the actual words are “fort of Hashtnagar”)

In order to initiating hostilities with Mīr Handā, the Yūsufzais sent a party of mauraders to lift some of his animals. As the news reached Mīr Handā he dispatched some of his horsemen to retrieve the situation. Perceiving that their lives were in danger, the animal-lifters left the animals and fled to their own territory. The Yūsufzais once again repeated the exercise but, this time also sent a body of horsemen to provide the animal-lifters additional cover. The horsemen hid themselves in a grove of trees so that they could not be spotted. Mīr Handā as usual dispatched a small contingent of his cavalry to repel the animal-lifters without knowing that a bigger force was waiting for them. As Mīr Handā's men approached the grove of trees they were suddenly attacked and

repulsed. Meanwhile more and more Yūsufzai warriors joined their countrymen and forced Mīr Handā's army to take shelter behind the citadel walls. The Yūsufzais got even more encouraged and went ahead to invest the fort cutting off water supply and other necessities of life; Mīr Handā was left with no alternative but to negotiate. According to the terms of the treaty agreed upon, he was given a safe passage and allowed to carry all that he could and hand over the fort to the Yūsufzais. Mīr Handā hurriedly packed up and took the road to Swāt to join his family at Thāna. The Yūsufzais took control of the entire country up to the foot hills of the Mālākand range. Sulṭān Awais thus lost the richest part of his kingdom.

The Yūsufzais were still not content with what they had achieved. They wanted more; they wanted to occupy Swāt indeed. Many of them therefore gathered near the Shāhkoṭ pass and got busy with planning how to scale the mountains which obstructed their advance. Only two routes provided access to the valley—the Shāh Koṭ and Mora, in front which they had fixed their camp, and the Mālākand which lay further west at some distance. Shāh Koṭ was most effectively guarded by Mīr Handā who successfully foiled several Yūsufzai attempts to scale it. The Yūsufzais then turned to the Mālākand under cover of darkness and climbed up

the mountain without facing any resistance. To their surprise, Shāh Awais (confused by Caroe (p. 180) with Sulṭān Awais) and Farrukhzād, both eminent Amīrs of Swāt, who had been posted to guard the pass, were found asleep and when they were awakened by the loud clamour of invaders they fled to Thāna (actually Atan Jāe or place of Jirgah), where the Sulṭān had already convened a Jirgah to prepare a strategy to check the advance of the Yūsufzais. When the news of this disaster reached Mīr Handā he, too, abandoned the Shāh Koṭ and Mora and rushed to Thāna to strength its defence. In the meeting it was decided to face the enemy one and a half mile to the south of Thāna.

Meanwhile the Yūsufzai Lashkar reached Malkūt, a stone-built fortress used for storing provisions, and took control of it. Then the Lashkar advanced to 'Khār' in the open country and halted for some time and then ravaging the country side reached Ala Ḍanḍ and Shinkar, the Yūsufzais took foodstuff from the local Swātis and let their horses graze in their crops. In the clash of arms which took place near Thāna the Sulṭān suffered a disastrous defeat in which a great number of his relations and Amīrs, including Farrukhzād and Shāh Awais, lost their lives. The Sulṭān fled to Manglawar and reached home with great difficulty. The entire country, except

Manglawar, fell into the hands of the Yūsufzais. The invaders had no siege equipment and found the fort of Manglawar impregnable, therefore, they decided to harass the Swātis in general and ravage the countryside (Khwāju1971: 145, 170).

The Sulṭān held out against constant Yūsufzai attacks for sixteen long years (Khwāju says that it took the Yūsufzais sixteen years to get possession of that part of Swāt which was formerly under the control of Sulṭān Awais). Meanwhile the Sulṭān paved the way for shifting to Nihāk Darah further north of Manglawar, brought the non- Muslim tribes of the Darah under his control and got a strong citadel built for his residence. And one fine morning he abandoned Manglawar forever and halted at Tāj khela on way to Nihāk Darah. From Tāj khela it took him four days to reach his newly built residence where he lived till his death and was buried there.

Sulṭān Awais was succeeded by Fīrūz Shāh who ruled for many years. His brother Qazān Shāh was killed by the Yūsufzais in a surprise attack and his head brought to Khān Kaju when, on the left bank of the Landae river, he was poised to engage the Ghorias khels in battle at Shaikh Tapūr (original name ‘Abd al- Ghafūr) incorrectly identified by Raverty and Caroe, and following them by many others, the most recent of which is Maria

Shaheen (2015:136), with Shāh ‘Ālam branch of the river Kābul. The tomb of Shaikh Tapūr, a brick-built sizeable domed structure still stands in a graveyard between Pīr Piyāe and Nowshera. The Grand Trunk road passes through this graveyard and the site is marked by an overhead bridge for the railway line to pass underneath. The “Dab” (a marshy land marked by Dab—a kind of tall grass) which separated the Khalīl and Yūsufzai lashkars, after the latter had crossed over to the right bank of the Landae has since been dried up and brought under cultivation.

Fīrūz Shāh was succeeded by his son Sulṭān Māh, and he, by his son Sulṭān Zain ‘Ali; in this way the descendants of Sulṭān Awais continued to rule over the Nihāk Darah for many generations and may have extended their dominions in the direction of Chitrāl of which the rulers likewise claimed descent from Sikandar Zulqarnain (the two-horned Alexander). Muslim writers in general consider Sikandar Zulqarnain as a person different from Alexander, the Great, who conquered western Asia and also the Indus region in the fourth century BC. But the epithet Zulqarnain (two-horned) can help decide the issue. The coins of Alexander, the Macedonian ruler, show him wearing a helmet marked by two horns. Thus

Sikandar Zulqarnain was none other than Alexander, the Great.

How this idea germinated and got stuck in the minds of the Gibari rulers, and those of Chitral, and also of some parts of Asia is not known. In the case of the Gibari Sultāns at least it does not stand the test of reasoning. Alexander passed through Kabul in 326 BC, whereas the last of the descendants of Sultān, Bahrām to adopt the epithet Sultān, suggesting sovereignty, was Sultān Qirān. His successors took the inferior titles malik or khān. This according to the Akhūnd happened at the time when Amīr Tīmūr (AD 1398-99) swept across the Kābul valley and brought it under his control. This may be taken to suggest that Sultān Qirān was the contemporary of Amīr Tīmūr and that his predecessors had died long before this. From Sultān Shamūs to Qarāri the number of generations is 13, and from Alexander to the Akhūnd (Qarāri's son) the total number of years (1612+326) comes to 1938. According to this computation the average duration of one generation (1938÷13) is 149 years, which is an impossible proposition. Descent from Alexander appears nothing more than a myth.

### **The Mutrawis**

Another Tājik tribe or perhaps a section of the Gibaris established its rule, under its

chief Malik Ḥasan in lower Swāt, possibly after the war of succession, in the territory defined by Khwāju (1977: 144,172) as extending from the top of Shāh Melah to Landakae and Mora. Much of the country was occupied by mountains, he remarks. Malik Ḥasan was one of the deadliest enemies of Sultān Awais, and when the latter, after his defeat in the battle of Thāna fled to Manglawar, he, by mistake entered the territory of Malik Ḥasan and was constantly haunted by the fear that, if discovered, he would be instantly put to death. He therefore took the most arduous route to conceal his identity and also shed his royal robe for the same purpose. Only when he reached Damghār, his own territory, he took a sigh of relief.

Malik Ḥasan lived in Bālgrām (perhaps Bālāgrām meaning 'high village') — a very strong citadel built on top of a mountain, a circumstance which made it difficult for any invading force to access it without taking the utmost pains.

The Yūsufzai *lashkars* stationed in Khār, Thāna, Chakdara and Rāmora, in their advance towards Bālgram got together and encamped at Kāt Gali, the only open space in the Mutrāwi country. Daily skirmishes became the rule of the day. Whenever the Yūsufzais attempted to approach the citadel, they were repulsed by the Mutrāwi fighters. The invaders then resorted to their favourite tactics: they ravaged the

countryside, and after some time they even succeeded in investing the citadel. Malik Ḥasan then lost heart and one night taking his dependents with him he abandoned the citadel and took refuge in the high mountains. The invaders took control of the citadel and found huge quantities of provisions. The Yūsufzais had now conquered the hole of Swāt. This happened, Khwaju says (p.172) in the seventeenth year (since the beginning of the Swāt invasion). Our sources are deficient in dates, but Sir Olaf Caroe (1958: 181) believes “AD 1515 would not be far wrong” for the completion of the Swāt operation. But wrong it certainly is, for, Awais and his rival ‘Alā ad-Dīn, both are styled Sultān of Swāt by Bābur (1987: 372) waited on him when he was in Bajaur in AD 1519 that is, four year after the date suggested by Caroe.

As a result of the occupation of Swāt by the Yūsufzais, the Tājik tribes of Swāt (i.e. Gibaries and Mutrāwis) fled to the east, crossed the river Indus at Thākot and, inundated Alai and Pakhlae where they overcame the local Khakhas (Khasas) and Bambhas (and Domas) whose chiefs had been ruling these areas in the past. Having for the most part come from Swāt they were styled Swatis by their immediate neighbours. They now speak Pushto but they are neither from the Afghān race, nor are they of Afghān descent.

### **Pakhlae**

Who won the choice land of Sultān Pakhal, which came to be known as Pakhlae after his name, in the fratricidal war of succession which broke out amongst his sons after his death, and as a result of which the Gibari empire fell apart into several independent and rival units paring the way for their own down fall, neither the Akhūnd, nor Khwāju, has anything to say. However the Akhūnd’s remarks that their mother (i.e. Pakhal’s wife) was so much moved by the carnage that she hurled her imprecation at the country that it should not last long. The Akhūnd firmly believed that the early fall of the Gibari Empire was due to this curse. But he does not name any natural disaster or human agent who under the influence of this curse brought about the breakup of the empire.

In the case of Nangrahār however, he tells us that the kingdom founded by Sultān Bahrām suffered at the hands of Amīr Tīmūr (AD 1398-99). That the same Tīmūr was responsible for putting an end to the Gibari rule in Pakhlae, we know from several sources including the *Tūzuk-i-Jahāngīrī* (1978: ii, 124 -26) where it is written that “The Sarkar of Pakli is 35 koss in length and 25 in breadth, on the east, on two sides, is the hill country of Kashmir; on the west. Aṭak Benares; on the north,

Kator; and on the south, the Gakhar country. At the time when Timur, after conquering Hindustan, turned his reins backwards towards the capital of Tūrān, they say that he placed in these regions this body of people, who were in attendance on the victorious stirrup. They say themselves that they are Qārlughs, but do not know for certain who was their leader at that time”. Tīmūr is said to have left behind a ming (in Persian Hazār) of his troops in this land; hence the name Hazārah.

Our next question is who suffered at the hands of Tīmūr? This question is likewise shrouded in complete darkness except for a ray of light in the *Babur Nama* (1987: 372, 376) which records that on Wednesday the 17<sup>th</sup> of Muḥarram (Jan. 19<sup>th</sup>, 1519) Sulṭān ‘Alā ad-Dīn of Swāt, the rival of Sulṭān Awais, waited on Bābur. Both were given horses and robes of honour and allowed to go back on Wednesday, Feb. 9<sup>th</sup>, 1519 (p. 376). Who this ‘Alāud ad-Dīn was, we have no clue. It is probable however that he or possibly his father possessed Pakhlae when Amīr Tīmūr (AD 1398-99) drove him out and assigned that land to his Qārluq regiment. Our assumption that the person driven out of Pakhlae by Tīmūr was ‘Alā ad-Dīn’s father is based on the fact that, had ‘Alā ad-Dīn assumed power early in his life and was about twenty when Tīmūr drove him

out, he would have been 140 years old in 1519 when he waited on Bābur. This no doubt is too long a life-span for one person. Having lost his own country to the Qārluq Turks, he might have been living in Swāt as an honourable guest considered by Bābur as a rival of Sulṭān Awais who, as Khwāju tells us, was the undisputed sovereign of Swāt, except for the Mutrāwi country and of the plain to the south of Mālākand down to the Hashtnagar (land of the Hashti or, as abbreviated the Asti people).

### **Nangrahār (Nagarahāra: City Land)**

It has been mentioned above how Sulṭān Bahrām, brother of Sulṭān Pakhal, conquered Nangrahār, fixed his capital at Pāpīn and drove out the Budīnis. Akhūnd Darwezā has more details (pp 107-09). The original seat of this Gibari tribe was Darah-i- Pīch, west of the better known Chaghān sarāe. The Budnis (correctly Budīni) consisted of several powerful tribes and predominated over the Tājik population of Nangrahār and Tīrah (correctly Tīrath: place of pilgrimage). The Akhūnd mentions two reasons for the expulsion of the Budnīs. Firstly, they were Kāfirs (non-Muslim) and left no stone unturned in creating troubles for the Muslims. Over and above this was the cold-blooded murder of Shaikh Muḥammad, who was known for his piety

and had converted several un-believers to Islam. His murder enraged Sulṭān Bahrām who took action against the Budnis and dispersed them.

The Akhūnd, who strongly believed in the efficacy of a curse, says that when the sister of Muḥammad, a pious lady, although she was glad that her brother had obtained martyrdom, was very much hurt at heart. She took out a log of burning wood and furiously struck it on the ground so that her finger broke into pieces (i.e. severely injured) while hurling a curse on the Budnis, as a result of which, the Akhūnd tell us, Sulṭān Bahrām took action against them.

The second reason was a secret plan prepared by the Budnis to murder Sulṭān Bahrām. It so happened, the Akhūnd says that having extended his supremacy over Lamghān and Nangrahār, the Sulṭān was one day sitting upon his throne, when a person passed a costly prayer-mat of Markhor's (stag) (skin) before his eyes. Fascinated by the beauty of the animal, the Sulṭān enquired about its natural habitat and was told that it lived in the mountain recesses of the Sufed Koh (Snowy Mountain). With a view to hunting the animal, he organized an expedition and taking a number of his dependents and servants with him, he, one fine day, set out towards the Snowy Mountain, where one

of the Budni chiefs entertained him with a plentiful and delicious meal.

In accordance with a custom specific to the Budnis, the wife of the host in such a case becomes the adopted sister of the guest who could see and talk to her, and he, in turn become the adopted brother. Thus every time the Sulṭān went there, he was obliged to bring costly clothes for his sister. For some time it went very well, but in the course of time the Budnis in general suspected that, in view of the fondness of the Sulṭān for the territory, he might one day decide to snatch it from them. They therefore secretly decided to poison him to death.

On one occasion the Sulṭān, unaware of the plot, was staying with the Budni chief as usual when he observed something abnormal: his adopted sister neither welcomed nor talked to him. Suspecting that she might disclose the secret to her adopted brother, the Budni chief had apparently forbidden her to approach him, although she happened to pass before the Sulṭān a couple of times in her best accoutrements. At heart the Sulṭān was annoyed at the uncivility shown by her, but, more importantly, his sixth sense told him that he was in danger. Instantly the Sulṭān moved out of the city and encamped in an open space, and ordered the food prepared by his host to be brought there. He was still not satisfied and gave a



little bit of the food to a dog to test its purity. As suspected the dog instantly died. Having seen what happened to the dog the awful truth now fully dawned upon him.

As a precautionary the Sultān massacred all those who had come to serve the food so that nobody could go back to spy on the weakness or strength of the Sultān's attendants and quickly packed up to reach a safer place. Nevertheless, the news that the ploy to murder the Sultān had failed to work, spread like wild fire, and fearing a dreadful reprisal, the Budnis hurriedly packed up and, saying goodbye to their home country, fled to Peshāwār from where they scattered in different directions and lost their strength as a tribe. The most southerly of the branches of river Kābul, now flowing in the vicinity of Peshāwar, still bears their name and is called the Budni (wrongly interpreted so far as "old"). This also clarifies the mystery who the much venerated Shaikh Budīn whose graves lies on top of a hill near the Pezu Gap on the road connecting Dera Ismā'īl Khān with Bannu. The town called Badīn in lower Sindh shows how far the Budnis had spread in the course of centuries. A Budīni tribe still exists in Balūchistan. Sultān Bahrām was succeeded by his son Sultān Tomnā who somehow fell into the hands of the Nangrahāris (Akhūnd 1960: 113). What happened to him after this, the Akhūnd has nothing to say. The last of the

descendants of Sultān Bahrām to take the title Sultān was Sultān Qirān whose descendants took the inferior title malik. This shows that they no more enjoyed sovereign status. This happened when Tīmūr (1398-99) brought the Kabul valley under his control.

### **Kashmīr**

Raverty (1976: 278 n) gives a short account of the first Muslim ruler of Kashmīr. Shāh Mīr, afterwards Sultān Shamsud ad-Dīn, who ruled over Kashmīr and its dependencies from 742 H to 746 H (1341- 42 to 1345 -46) – some say from 743 H to 747 H – and who introduced the Muslim religion into Kashmīr, was a Gibari from Swāt. The role of Shāh Mīr in Kashmīr is a very confused problem. We therefore put it aside for some other occasion, for, further enquiry in this matter would be irrelevant for the moment.

### **Bajaur**

Another part of the Gibari empire was Bajaur (=Āb Johar meaning "Lake Water") where the Sultān, named Mīr Ḥaider 'Ali, had established an independent kingdom long before any of the Afghāns moved into it. The Gibari Sultān lived in a strongly built fort. In AD 1519 Zahīr ad-din Bābur, the then ruler of Kābul made up his mind to chastise the Yūsufzais of Swāt after the refusal of

Malik Aḥmad, the Yūsufzai chief, to attend his court, the second time. He set out from Kabul with a considerable army for Swāt by way of Bajaur. He had a reason for taking this route. The Gibari Sulṭān of Bajaur, Khwāju says (1977: 159), had, in former years, manifested insolence towards Mirzā Ulugh Beg, Bābur's paternal uncle, when he ruled Kābul and its dependencies.

Having entered Bajaur, Bābur invested the fort and took it by storm on Friday, 15<sup>th</sup> of Muḥarram (7<sup>th</sup> Jan, AD 1519). Khwāju's narrative of the siege differs from that of the *Bābur Nāma*. As the siege prolonged, Khwāju says, people inside the fort began defecting to Bābur for fear of dire consequences. Even a nephew of the Sulṭān dispatched a petition to Bābur tendering his allegiance, and offering to come out and present himself to him. Fearful of the thought that his own kinsmen might one day seize him to be delivered to Bābur, he took poison and committed suicide. Having reduced the fortress Bābur elevated the same nephew of Ḥaider 'Ali to the position of king and assigned Bajaur to him (Khwāju 1977: 160)

This stands in total contrast to what Bābur writes with his own pen; "By the favour and pleasure of the most High God this strong and mighty fort was taken in two or three astronomical hours! Matching the

fort were the utter struggle and effort of our braves; distinguish themselves they did; and won the name and fame of heroes. The country of Bajaur we bestowed on Khwāja Kalān, assigning a large number of braves to reinforce him" (*Bābur Nāma* 1987: 370)

What precisely happened to Mīr Ḥaider 'Ali, the *Bābur Nāma* has nothing to say. He probably laid down his life in the defence of his fort, or perhaps he was one of the "Sulṭāns" who were put to death and their heads sent to different destinations, while the rest of the captives were set at liberty. This was the last blow to the Gibari Empire which once extended from Bajaur to Kashmīr and Swāt to western Panjāb. The Gibaris disappeared as a ruling race.

A distinctive feature of the Gibari Sulṭāns of Swāt, Khwāju says, was that they wore gold earrings. Only the Sulṭān had the privilege of wearing such earrings. People in general could wear silver earrings. The Sulṭāns spoke their own Gibari dialect, while the subject people spoke Dari. The people of Swāt used only these two dialects (Ibid: 135).

The Tājik tribes, perhaps closely related to each other, who burst out from Darah Pīch, west of Chaghān Sarāe (white inn), in a blitz under their leaders Sulṭān Pakhal and Sulṭān Bahrām, and conquered a vast tract of land as shown above, consisted of,

besides the Gibaries, Mutrāwis, and Mamiālis which contained several ramifications such as Dudāl, Jahāngīri, Begāl. The termination “al” affixed to the names of Pulāl and Handoāl of Tunawul shows that they were also of the same stock. The success of the Gibaries owed much to the destruction caused by Chingiz Khan who had uprooted all centres of power in the territories subsequently seized by the Gibaris. But the Gibari empire lacked centrality and quickly fell apart into independent units whose rivalries brought about the total collapse of the empire. They never acted in uniformity against their enemies, and one by one fell before the grasping Yūsufzais and the Mughals.

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# Is the Paktue- Pakhtūn /Pushtūn Equation Valid?

ABDUR RAHMAN AND FAZAL SHER

## Abstract

*The equation is simple and not as simple as Sir Olaf Caroe has tried to make it. His Paktue- Pakhtūn equation which he firmly believes is correct, is not borne out by other more convincing evidence than what he has been able to present. We have approached this problem from a different angle not so far touched by anybody and tried to give more convincing answer.*

*Pushtūn as used by different writers and spoken the same variety by different casts of Pashtūns at different parts of the Pashtūns' occupied areas. An approach has been made in this paper to present before the readers the enigma of these words using and writing as interpreted by different writers and scholars.*

**Keywords:** *Paktue, Pakhtūn, Pushtūn, Sakas, Gandhāra*

Sir Olaf Caroe in his much reputed book entitled *The Pathans: 550 B.C –A.D. 1957* answers this question in the affirmative in a loud and clear voice. He repudiates the arguments of Bailey and Morgenstierne who, on phonetic grounds, answer this question in the negative. “In short”, he boldly declares “let us break a lance with the phoneticians, and, adopting the hard variant (of Pushto), boldly link Pakhtun with Paktues. It all fits too neatly to be as naïve as Bailey thinks.”

Sir Olaf Caroe was not the first to suggest this equation. Before him

Grierson in his *Linguistic Survey of India* had suggested that in the Paktues and Paktuik of Herodotus, we may see the prototype of the Pakhtūns. But it should be said at once that Grierson expressed this opinion at a time when nothing much was known about the history of the Pakhtūns, what to speak of their ethnicity. On the contrary, Sir Olaf was well aware of the accounts written by contemporary Pakhtūn writers of the perigrinations of Pushtūn or Pakhtūn tribes, a section of whom, starting from the vicinity of Qandahār (Afghānistān) finally settled in the Peshāwar valley

towards the end of the fifteenth century AD. But he was so fascinated with the idea of Paktue – Pakhtūn equation that throwing all precautions to the winds and forgetting his other view- points on the subject; he firmly stuck to his own identification. His other views are as follows (pp 64-65):

“Both advances that of the Parthians into Persia, and of the Sakas into Gandhāra, were part of a vast southern movement of the scythic tribes .... It so came about that the Parthians were ready to resist Saka incursions in the direction of Persia, and did so with effect. In the result the Sakas were forced south – eastward, overran Bactria and moved thence some towards Gandhāra, and some toward Sind .... It is to this period of history that we are told we must assign the first beginning of the language of the Pathans, which according to the latest authorities is probably a Saka dialect.... This language whether Pakhtu or Pashtu, is the most obvious symbol to day of Pathan identity.” Now, if Pashtu (or Pushto), an east Iranian Saka dialect, is a symbol of Pathān identity, as Sir Olaf believes, the Paṭhān themselves who speak this language, can be no other than the Sakas. If the Paṭhāns are Sakas (2<sup>nd</sup>

cent BC), one may naturally ask, how can they be Paktues of Herodotus (5<sup>th</sup> cent. BC). Furthermore, on page 87 he writes: “My conviction is that many of the khan khel of tribes such as Yusufzais could claim Ephthalite (5<sup>th</sup> cent AD) forbears. It is probable that Ephthalite blood is to be found among the Afghans of the plains (i.e. the Peshāwar valley) rather than among the Pathans of the hills.”

Having gone through the above statements, we find ourselves in the midst of an inexplicable puzzle: in the fifth century BC the Yūsufzais were Paktues, in the second century BC they were Scythians, in the fifth century AD, they were Ephthalites. Moreover, no valid blood relationship between the Yūsufzais and Ephthāl, also written as Hepthāl and Abdāl or Abdele (Simocatta 1828: 282), the great ancestor of the Abdālis whose king, Aḥmad Shāh Abdāli (1747-1772) took the title Durr-i Daurān (Pearl of the Age), later abbreviated as Durrani, on the advice of his *pīr* (mentor) Sābir Shāh, (Singh 1981: 27) and issued a royal proclamation to the effect that all Abdālis would be called Durrānis in future can justifiably be visualized. Thus it is the Durrānis, not the Yūsufzais, who

can reasonably claim Ephthalite ancestry.

At present the Pathāns (Pakhtūn or Pushtūn) occupy a vast territory stretching from Qandadhār to the Indus and from Swāt to Sibi. In the remote past however they were confined merely to the southern slopes of Koh Sulaimān called Pusht (back) –a large tract of hill country forming a rough parallelogram of which the sides marked by high mountains, measure about 75 miles on the north, 175 miles on the south, 250 miles on the east and 300 miles on the west (Raverty 1878:464). Within these limits forming an extensive territory, there are numerous darahs and plateaus; and it was herein, but specially in the vicinity of, and around Kāsi-Ghar, or Shuāl, that the Afghān tribes, according to their own traditions, first took up their abode and subsequently spread out in all directions. The *pusht* gave its name to the inhabitants who came to be known as Pushtūn and their language Pushto (Ibid).

Modern writers divide the Pakhtūns/Pushtūns into two main groups: those in and around Qandahār are designated “Western Afghāns” and those in the Peshāwar Valley and

adjacent areas “Western Afghāns”. This division is primarily based upon the use of the letter *shin* (ش) pronounced by the Western Afghāns as sh in English (for instance Pushto, Peshāwar, Nowshera) whereas the Eastern Afghāns province it as (پش) as in Pukhto, Pekhāwar, Nowkhār. These different modes of expression have been given a wider meaning to suggest two different waves of the arrival of the Pakhtūns/ Pushtūns in the Sulaimān range (or Koh Sulaimān). On the whole, it is not an unlikely surmise, for, we know about a number of other tribes such as Tori, Budīni, Neuri and Geloni (Gīlāni) who according to Herodotus (1973: 305) were in his time (5<sup>th</sup> cent. BC) in the Caspian region and took active part against the forces of Darius, the Achaemenian emperor of Iran (522-486 BC), when he invaded the Scythian lands to avenge the murder of Cyrus, the Great. These tribes are at present in Pakistan and Afghānistān. Of these tribes the Dāwars are now in the tribal territory of Pakistan; their homeland in Afghānistān is still known as Zamīn-i Dāwar (i.e. the Dāwar land). The Neuris have given their name to the vast *Darah* at the foot of the Hindū Kush Mountain. It is called Nūristān. This name is



generally misinterpreted as “The land of radiance or brightness”. This misinterpretation owes to its being taken for a Persian word, which it is not. As a matter of fact the words *Nūr* and *Neur* fit with each other so snugly that the present writer is inclined to think that Nūristan is actually Neuristān meaning “land of the Neuris”

The Budinis too are located by Herodotus (484-430 BC) in the border land of Scythia. They were a very powerful people and consisted of several tribes and clans. Akhūnd Darwezā (1960:107) mentions Budni tribes who predominated over the Nangrahāris (local Tājik population) in Nangrahār and Tīrāh (actually Tīrath meaning place of pilgrimage). They hatched a conspiracy to kill Sultan Bahrām of Pāpīn in about the middle of fourteenth century AD. But the mischief, having boomeranged on its perpetrators by its early exposure, the Budnis, fearful of a terrible reprisal, fled *en bloc* from their home country and headed towards Peshāwar from where they dispersed in different directions, and consequently lost their power as a tribe. The Budnis in our view are no other than the Budīnis. A Budīni tribe still exists in Balūchistān.

The Gelonis (present Gīlānis or Jīlānis), Herodotus (1973: 306) remarks, were originally Greeks, but, having been pushed out of the coastal areas of Greece, they settled amongst the Budīnis. Their language was half Scythian, half Greek at the time when Herodotus wrote his *Histories*. The Gīlānis are now found dispersed in Iran, Afghānistān and Pakistan.

The Tauris (present Tori or Toru) who, along with some other tribes, refused to take part in the fight against Darius, are now found in the tribal territory of Pakistan. When did these and other Scythian tribes succeed in finding a niche where they could reside in the eastern borderland of the Iranian Plateau – present Afghānistān and Pakistan—is not known for certain, though the great push exerted by the Scythians in about the second century BC, as a result of which they penetrated deep into the south-eastern districts of Iran, Afghānistān, Sind, Punjāb and western India, may point to the approximate time of their arrival. It may be interesting to note that the Scythian tribes who settled in the Pusht of Koh Sulaimān came to be known under the blanket term Pushtūn (pl. Pushtāna) but those who found other

places in the vast borderland retained their original tribal designations.

Both Morganstiere and Bailey (quoted by Caroe 1958: 37) regard the replacement of the digraph *sh* by *kh* as a modern dialectical development. Sir Olaf has also drawn attention to Afghān Government spokesmen “who are very definite in their assertions that the ‘soft’ Pashtu of Kandahār, which employs the *sh*, is the original and classical variant of the language” whereas the hard pronunciation which employs *kh* is a comparatively new development. But neither the statement of the orthodox linguists, nor the assertion of the spokesmen of the Kabul government are enough to convince Sir Olaf to change his mind, “I should require for more convincing proof”, he concludes, “to compel agreement to the proposition that the ‘hard’ pronunciation is quite new around Peshawar” (Ibid).

There can be nothing more credible and compelling than the statements of the following two writers, which may be termed as nearly eyewitness accounts of the arrival of the Pakhtūns in the Peshāwar valley. Both concur in saying that in the remote past the so-called “eastern” and the “western” Afghāns or

Pakhtūns / Pushtūns lived together in the Koh Sulaiman.

Of these two writers, the first is the Akhūnd, Darwezā – the most celebrated saint of the Afghāns in general and a learned *sūfi*. He was born in 956H/1549 (Dani 1969: 183) and completed his work *Tazkirat al- Abrār wa al- Ashrar* (an account of the Pious and the Wicked) in 1021 H/1612-13. His grandfather accompanied the Yūsufzais to Peshāwar when they were driven out of Nangrahār, after the murder of their chiefs, by Mirzā Ulugh Beg, the then ruler of Kabul. This according to Sir Olaf Caroe (1958: 183) happened in about AD 1485. The Akhūnd must have learned about this event from his father, Gadāe, who was an eyewitness.

The next, the historian Khwāju, does not mention the precise date of the completion of his work entitled *Tārīkh Afāghana* (History of the Afghāns), written in Pushto. The work mentions the year 1033H/1623-24 in which a certain Saudā – a respectable elderly person, son of Malik Zewar – was still alive. The narrative ends in the reign of the Mughal emperor, Nūr ad- Din Jahangīr (1014-1037 H/ 1606-1627). Khwajū’s work was subsequently

abridged (again in Pushto) by the Pīr (spiritual guide) Muazzam Shāh, of Pīr Sabāk (near Nowshera) under the command of the Nawwāb Ḥāfiz Rahmat Khān, the ruler of Rohīlkhand, and title *Tawārīkh Ḥāfiz Raḥmat Khāni*. It has now been translated into Urdu. Both the Pushto and Urdu editions are before us at present.

Khwāju must have written this work towards the end of his life, for, in his description of the battle of Shaikh Tapūr (AD 1550) he mentions to have met some people who had actually taken part in the fight. This shows that Khwāju too was a nearly contemporary writer and had firsthand information about the arrival of the Yūsufzais in Peshāwar.

The arrival of the Yusufzai Pakhtūns, who use *khīn* instead of *shīn*, in the Peshāwar valley towards the end of the fifteenth century AD, as is evident from the statement of the above mentioned almost contemporary writers is so compelling and convincing that it cannot be brushed aside by a fanciful similarity between Pakhtūns and Paktue. Sir Olaf Caroe's identification of Pakhtūns with Paktue is therefore not valid. There is no doubt that the Pakhtūns and Paktues

were two different peoples who lived in different eras and at different places.

Some writers have identified Pakhtūns with the Vedic Pakthas (see Mujumdar 1951: I, 247). But the Pakhtūns, if they were really Scythian in origin as suggested above, they were nowhere in Afghānistān or anywhere near it in the second half of the second millennium BC when the Pakthas along with other Āryan tribes overran Afghānistān, Gandhāra and the Panjāb and settled therein. This equation is too not valid and may be dropped forthwith.

Who then were the Paktues? In our view they, not the Pakhtūns, were descendants of the Vedic Pakthas and their homeland in Afghānistān was Paktia—still the name of a province east of Ghazani. Paktia literally means “land of the Paktas or Pakthas”, as India means “land of the Indus”. The *ia* at the end of Pakt, is a Greek superscript indicating land. The Pakthas, softened into Paktas were a powerful tribe and took active part in the “Battle of the Ten Kings” fought on the bank of the river Rāvi.

The existence of Paktues in Gandhāra merely suggests that the Pakthas had brought the Peshāwar valley under their

control perhaps long before Herodotus  
came to know about them.

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# The Intellectual Contribution of Islamic Civilization to the West—an Impact Analysis

HABIB ELAHI SAHIBZADA, MUHAMMAD ASIF KHAN AND IRFANULLAH

## Abstract

*The research article titled as, “the intellectual contribution of Islamic civilization to the West—an impact analysis”, is a historical cum descriptive paper. Its aim is to eradicate certain misconceptions about the grandeur of the cherished Islamic civilization that once laminated the rest of humanity. Three objectives pertaining to: highlighting the then socio-cultural state of the Western civilization, revealing some of the influencing characteristics of Islamic civilization, and pinpointing the intellectual, and socio-cultural contribution of the Islamic civilization to the West, were addressed. The methodology was historical cum descriptive where authentic scholars were relied upon. An analysis of the historical fact as recorded by some prominent scholars in the field was carried out. Cross-current remarks of various scholars were also put close together so as to obtain a relatively clearer picture of the facts. It was explored that actually the Muslim scholars laid the very foundation of nearly all disciplines such as mathematics, physics, chemistry, geography, astronomy, agriculture and medicine, together with education, sociology, art and architecture, music and literature etc. It was found that Islamic civilization contributed in nearly all streams of knowledge and its application, hence, exerted enormous influence the rest of world civilizations especially the West.*

**Keywords:** *Islamic civilization, Muslim contribution, the West, Dark Ages, Cultural impact*

## Introduction

Huntington’s “the clash of civilizations” is an often-referred to intellectual contribution in the study of civilizations. He has given a comprehensive forecast of inter-impact of different world

civilizations—especially with reference to the West and the Islamic civilization. The same has been expounded by Isma’il Ragi al Faruqi in his, “Historical Atlas of the Religions of the World”. Since the dawn of the human

civilization, cultural growth and rise followed by fall and decay has remained a permanent trait of all civilizations, such as: the early Greeks, the Byzantium and the Romans, the Persians, and the Muslim civilization—to name a few. Counterpart civilizations have exerted certain influence as well as being influenced by each other. This article is about analyzing the impact of the Muslim civilization during its prime (the period from the mid-eight to mid-eleventh centuries that was marked by a profound cultural and economic expansion) on its counterpart western civilization.

### **The Advent of Islamic Civilization**

As a religion Islam is a complete code of life with some exceptional cultural attributes, hence, it laid the foundation of a gigantic civilization that overpowered all its counterpart civilizations. In the words of Hitti, “the term Islam may be treated in three senses: originally a religion, Islam later became a state, and finally a culture”. At the time of the advent of Islam, the world was in the abyss of frustration, ignorance, and barbarism. The Holy Prophet (SAW) came on the most

opportune time as aptly remarked by Syed Amir Ali, “The stage was set, the moment was psychological for the appearance of a great leader”. As a potential religion, having some very influencing characteristics, Islam highlighted the genuine path for the growth and development of human civilization. In the following are some of the cherished ideals/ outstanding characteristics of Islamic culture and civilization that onwards were pursued by the rest of civilizations especially the West.

### **Human Dignity and rule of Law**

Islam’s outstanding, rather core, value is justice and equality for all in all walks of life. This fact has been appreciated even by some Western scholars as well. Philip K. Hitti, in ‘History of the Arabs’ has rightly remarked, “of all world religions, Islam seems to have attained the largest measure of success in demolishing the barriers of race, color, and nationality”.

### **Freedom and Liberty in faith and politics**

Another remarkable trait of the Islamic culture is that it strictly believes in religious freedom. In the city-state of Medina, religious toleration became a



fundamental principle for bringing about harmony and reconciliation among the previously warring tribes. The Prophet (SAW) explicitly emphasized religious tolerance. The Muslims were commanded to believe in all the Prophets of Allah. No one should utter ill of the other's faith. The Prophet (SAW) aimed at establishing a universal brotherhood of Men so that the people must live in harmony and peace with each other. In this respect, the Quranic injunction, "there is no compulsion in religion" (Al-Quran) is self-explanatory.

So the mischievous theory that Islam spread at the point of the sword has been discarded by many impartial scholars who carried out an independent study of the teachings and practice of Islam. W. Montgomery Watt, in "the Majesty that was Islam" clearly discarded the view of some Europeans who thought that Islam spread by 'sword' and 'forced conversion' in the following words: "the accusation that Islam was spread by force of arms and that men were given a choice of 'Islam or the sword' is true only to a limited extent" and "there was no suggestion of forced conversion here, and far the most part it was only gradually that members of the minorities

went over to Islam, usually because of some form of social pressure". This fact is beautifully summarized by a late 20<sup>th</sup> century Patriarch of Constantinople in the following words,

Let the Muslim be my master in outward things rather than the Latin dominates me in matters of the spirit. For if, I am subject to the Muslim, at least, he will not force me to share his faith. But if I have to be under the Frankish rule and united with Roman Church, I may have to separate myself from my God. (Whitting 1981).

Commenting on this excerpt (Greaves, R.L) concludes, "it was an eloquent comment on the intolerance of Christianity and the greater freedom of Islam in this period. Similarly, he asserts, "in general the Ottomans proved more tolerant than Christian monarchs in Europe who subjected heretics and Jews to forcible conversion and sometimes expelled them and even executed them".

Similarly, pagans were compelled to accept baptism; missionaries were sent to convert those of western Asia; even those who failed to adopt Christianity were penalized for prohibition of inheritance (Greaves, R.L). Prior to the Arabs entry into the Iberian Peninsula, the ruling Germanic Visigoths severely persecuted the Jewish inhabitants of Spain and Portuguese. The Muslims not only treated the Jews with kindness, but also extended a very moderate attitude of kindness and tolerance towards their fellow Christians. As a result of this kind attitude of the Muslims, the Iberian Jews had to welcome the Muslim army as a liberating force and even joined this conquering force against the tyrant Visigoths (Lewis 1993).

This fact is evident from many examples such as, the outstanding Christian Spanish poet Federico Garcia Lorca (1898-1936) in the twentieth century lamented and deplored the incident of the expulsion of the Muslims from the Spanish Peninsula where the Muslim civilization stood for its religious and racial tolerance in his own country by writing: "It was a disastrous event,... an admirable civilization and a poetry,

architecture and delicacy unique in the world - all were lost..."(Shabbas 1996).

### **Islam's Rationalism and Universalism**

Unlike Christianity and Judaism, Islam, being aware of its weaknesses, strongly supports rationalism. The Creator-creation dilemma was resolved once and for all. For the first time in man's history, creation became totally and absolutely profane, providing natural science with its first and essential principle (Al-Faruqi). Such ideological stance led to an enormous cultural growth the instances of which are presented in the following paragraphs.

### **Public welfare**

Regarding this aspect it would be sufficient just to mention the civilizational grandeur of the magnificent city of Cordoba. At around 10th century, the capital city of Cordoba, was a towering center of cultural progress that had a record population of half million people as compared to this, no European city had a population of even 10,000 people. Muslim Cordoba was the largest as well as the most cultured city, having no match in all of Europe. Its civilizational tools in the

form of such products like: jewelry, woven silk leather work, and elaborate brocades were appreciated all over the world. Muslim women in Cordoba were relatively far better copyists who excelled most of the European Christian monks regarding the production of religious works. The confession of a German traveler Nun (Hrosvitha) is self-explanatory who was so impressed by the mesmerizing beauty and grandeur of Cordoba that she called it "the jewel of the world". An excerpt of her writings is presented here: "... there shone forth a fair ornament...a city well cultured...rich and known by the famous name of Cordoba,...renowned for all resources, especially abounding in the seven streams of knowledge, and ever famous for continual victories"(Townson 1979).

This is the true picture of the city while in sharp contrast the dust and mud were the familiar features of the streets of London and Paris at that time and even for the seven centuries to come. Cordoba had clean and paved luminous streets London had to wait for around 700 centuries to have such streets. There were 113,000 houses with lavatories and water drainage system together with 700 mosques; 70 public libraries; numerous

bookstores; parks and palaces; and 300 public baths (Townson 1979). Above all, the Great Mosque of Cordoba (Masjid-e-Qurtaba, on which Allama Iqbal wrote the famous poem that is considered the zenith of his all poetical works), was an unsurpassing religious shrine, that was the second largest mosque in size only to the Great Mosque of Makkah. This Great Mosque, is still a major tourist spot in modern Spain.

Another remarkable place in Muslim Cordoba was the famous public library that had over 440,000 books, a figure that could not be reached by counting all of the books in the whole of France. Together with this, there were 69 other public libraries in Cordoba. These libraries had been using paper for over 200 years at a time when the rest of Europe was using animal skins for writing purposes. Very close to Cordoba, in the city of al-Zahra, was the magnificent Palace of Madinat al-Zahra which had a sort of magical hall, having eight splendid doors on all sides, a beautiful room in the center surrounded by a pool of mercury, producing dazzling reflections during sunrises time. With a quiver on the pool surface, the room was automatically made luminous,

giving a sort of floating impression to the room. Many scholars admit that the magnificence of this mesmerizing hall was never surpassed by any civilization in the human history (Townson 1979).

Muslim Granada was another towering city after Cordoba that was famous for its trade especially in silk and silk-related products. The forte of Al-Hambra is situated in this city. This unique palace is considered to be the most magnificent and glorious of all Muslim monuments in Spain. The Al-Hambra Forte, took about 100 years to build and is today a major tourist attraction and is an evidence of the mastery of Muslim architecture in Spain. Furthermore, Seville and Toledo also remained the greatest houses of Arab Andalusian knowledge. Toledo was the center of scientific translation from Arabic to Latin.

### **Justice as a central value in Islam**

Justice is an important value in Islam. Mohammad Aslam Chaudhry has elaborated this trait of the Islamic civilization by saying; Justice was an indispensable part of administration in the Islamic state. It is manifestly based upon equality negating all traits of rich

and poor, slave and master. Right from Abu Bakr, Caliph 1, till Caliph Ali, all the Caliphs were very much sensitive for administering justice according to the injunctions of the Quran. The very basis of apostle hood is said to be justice between man and man, for it is related that the patriarchs and prophets of the old times were sent with books of Divine Law so that they might be able to decide internecine feuds (Al-Quran) and the apostle of Islam declares that he has been commanded to be just, (Al-Quran). This principle was laid down that whosoever makes a false prosecution should be punished with an iron hand, so that law must not be applied wrongly and the very basic idea of justice must not be tarnished.

### **Scientific attitude and critical thinking**

Islam held some cherished values one of such is scientific attitude. This fact has been acknowledged by some very outstanding Western scholars such as Greaves, R.L et.al, (1817) who opine, “The most influential Muslim contribution to the modern world however was in science and medicine”.

## **Impact of Islamic Civilization on the Rest of Civilizations especially The West**

Islamic civilization contributed in nearly all aspects of human life and civilization. A brief description is given below.

### **Philosophy and Metaphysics**

Muslim thinkers imprinted heavy influence on Western philosophical thought. Instances of such influence are many, however, a few glimpses are: St. Thomas Aquinas (1224-74) work who literally copied from the works of a Muslim scholar, Ibne Rushd, commonly known in Europe as Averroes (1126-98); Ibn Rushds' writings proved as the main source for St. Thomas' 'Summa'. The former had profound influence on the French philosopher, Rene Descartes (1596-1650). Similarly, St. Thomas' 'The Dominican' owes much to the doctrines of the renowned Muslim philosopher al-Farabi (Landau). Similarly, Italy's renowned poet, Dante (1265-1321), copied his famous writing, the Divine Comedy, from the intellectual contributions of Muslim scholars such as: Ibn al-Arabi, and al-Ma'arri. (Khouri, M.A.). Mansoor al-Hallaj (858-922) a leading mystic of the Islamic world, exerted enormous influence on the

Spanish mystic Ramon Llull (1235-1316).

This influence was so strong that the Western philosophers and scholars had to admit their great indebtedness in this area to the Muslims. Instances of such attribution can be seen in the works of the Scottish scholar John Duns Scotus (1266-1308) who followed the style and pattern of the Fons Vitae—written in Arabic by an Arab philosopher, Abu Ayyub Ibn Gabirut (Landau). Among other such scholars were Abu Haroon Moussa and Abu Imran Moussa Ibn Maymun who once remained the physician of Salah ud-Din Ayubi—the liberator of Palestine.

### **Mathematics**

In the discipline of mathematics, Muslims contribution is far greater than any other field of inquiry, neither was this contribution surpassed by any other civilization. Such aspects of mathematics like: algebra, basic arithmetic, geometry, trigonometry, algorithm, decimal system, and above all the inclusion of "zero" in the counting system, that was originated in Arabic land—the ancient Babylonians as early as 500 B.C.(Anderson 1972). A

mathematician, Prof. Karl J. Smith thinks that Indians of the ancient times developed digital symbols in mathematics, but with no "zero". Developed by the early Semitic Arabs in Iraq, the "zero", it was properly incorporated by the Muslims in mathematics. The Europeans had to adopt this cherished, 'zero' after 300 years.

Other towering Muslim mathematicians were: al-Khawarizmi (780-850), the founder of algebra, who wrote *Kitab al-Jabr wa al-Muqabalah*; Abu Rehan al-Biruni—a leading mathematician, an expert astronomer, a seasoned physician, geographer, and a towering historian—the greatest scientist ever produced by the medieval Islam; Naseer al-Din at-Tusi (1201-1274) a great contributor to the specialized area of trigonometry (Sabra 1992). This field was excelled by the Muslims during the 12th and 13th centuries which not only influenced the West, but also penetrated to other corners of the world as the Chinese trigonometry used by Kuo Shouching is considered an offspring of the Muslim origin (Landau).

## **Astronomy**

In the field of astronomy, the most intellectual scholar was Abu Abdullah al-Battani (858-929) who refined the then existing values for: the occurrence of ecliptic, the length of a year and of the four seasons and demonstrated that the position of the Sun's apogee varies which leads to the occurrence of annular eclipses of the Sun. Furthermore, he improved the astronomical calculations of the famous Greek Ptolemy by replacing certain geometrical techniques for trigonometry. His astronomical works regarding compendium of astronomical tables was translated in due course of time, into Spanish language and was published with the title *De motu stellarum* which stands for 'Our Stellar Motion' (Encyclopedia Britannica 1989). Other such remarkable names in the field are: Ahmad al-Farghani who is regarded as the fore-runner of Italian Alighieri Dante (Landau). The expertise of the Muslim astronomers is admitted by many European scholars such as, Nicolaus Copernicus (1473-1543) who referred to many Muslim scientists in his writings, especially al-Zarkali (Landau). He prepared a beautiful water clock that was meant for measuring hours in a day as well in a night together with

determining lunar month days (Lund 1982).

### **Chemistry**

The word "chemistry" is a modification of the Arabic word alchemy (al-Keem'ya'). Here the towering intellectual of the Muslim world is Jabir Ibn Hayyan (721-815) who wrote 2,000 scientific works (Encyclopedia Britannica, 1989). The chemical names he used, like: "alkali", "antimony", "realgar", and "sal-amoniac" were actually discovered by him and even today the nearly same nomenclature is used in English. His works were translated by Robert of Chester into Latin (Landau). Similarly explosive for gunpowder was introduced by the Muslims, rather than by the Chinese (Encyclopedia Britannica, 1989) as mistakenly believed in Europe. Chinese learnt this invention from Muslims. Furthermore, at around 1304 A.D, the Muslims introduced the World's first ever gun (Encyclopedia Britannica 1989).

### **Physics**

Physics is another modern discipline to which the famous Muslim intellectual, Ibn al-Haytham (965-1039) contributed. He demonstrated an accurate

explanation of vision (Encyclopedia Britannica, 1989). His works were translated into Latin with the title *Opticae Thesaurus Alhazeni Libri VII*. He also presented theories related to reflection; binocular vision; focusing with lenses; the rainbow; parabolic and spherical mirrors; and the artificial and unreal increase in size of planetary bodies near the Earth's horizon (Landau). Roger Bacon (1242-92) together with Leonardo da Vinci and Johannes Kepler openly admitted the scientific contribution of this Muslim genius.

### **Medicine**

The Muslim scientist Abu Bakr al-Razi (865-925) was regarded as a medical authority in his era. Al-Razi gave the world's first explanation on smallpox and measles; explored and expounded the contagious nature of diseases; and highlighted colic pain, kidney-stone pain, and many other related pains. He wrote a book, 'at-Tibb al-Mansuri', on various diseases. He also wrote, at-Tibb ar-Ruhani, dealing primarily in psychotherapy, and composed a medical encyclopedia, al-Hawi fi at-Tibb. Another genius in the field of surgery was Abu al-Qasim Az-Zahrawi (936-

1013), who wrote a 30-part medical encyclopedia, *At-Tasrif*, containing over 200 surgical instruments. Its translated version remained for nearly 500 years as the most authentic source as well as textbook on surgery in Europe. Another Muslim medical authority was Abu Ali Ibn Sina (980-1037). He is regarded as the most influential philosopher-scientist in the whole era of Islamic civilization. He wrote: *Kitab ash-Shifa*—an encyclopedia in medicine and psychology; and *al-Qanun fi at-Tibb*, that were of high reputation in East and West. This contribution remained an authority for European scholars as late as till the 19<sup>th</sup> c. (Hayes). The concept of hospitals and mobile hospitals were established by the Muslims as early as in the 9<sup>th</sup> c. for which the West had to wait till 13<sup>th</sup> c. Even in the 17<sup>th</sup> c. and even beyond especially in France and Germany (Landau).

### **Pharmacy and Pharmacology**

Pharmacy was developed by the Islamic World. It attained the status of an independent science. The first privately owned pharmacies were established by the Muslims in Baghdad as early as in the 9<sup>th</sup> c. (Hamarneh, S.K.). Muslims civilization produced the most famous

pharmacist/botanist Ibn al-Baytar who wrote renowned scholarly book on plants. He elaborated round about 1,400 medical drugs. For a considerable period of time, European dispensaries had to rely on recipes prepared by the Muslim pharmaceutics (Landau). Muslim pharmacology remained an authority in the West till the 19<sup>th</sup> c. (Landau).

One of the outstanding occidental scholar, though very critical of Islam, admitted that the knowledge and skill of how to cure diseases and how to make surgical operations respectively were the two endowments for the Western world that was developed by the Muslim and Jewish physicians, and was actually learnt by the Christian world in due course of time (Gustave 1974).

### **Trade and Agriculture**

The Muslim rulers took interest in establishing new cities in all directions of the empire. These cities afterwards became financial hubs in most cases. Muslim governors and local rulers kept all the overland roads safe and in tradable condition. These way efficient trade routes were maintained with *caravanserais*. Such places were meant for the overnight stay and rest of the



trading personnel. The Muslims developed sound irrigation systems in the far and wide of the land for boosting agricultural productivity. The strength of the Muslim agricultural system can be assessed from the fact that even today Muslim agricultural and ornamental irrigation systems are in use in Spain.

The Muslim Spain was the leading agricultural zone in the whole Europe where a relatively modern canal system, irrigation, and land drainage were some of the outstanding features of the land. Under the Muslims Spain was the richest country of Europe with reference to agriculture. This fact is beautifully summarized by an American author, that developments regarding agriculture "constituted the finest legacies of Islam, and the gardens of Spain proclaim to this day one of the noblest virtues of her Muslim conquerors" (Landau). Furthermore, Muslim Spain produced some of the world's leading agricultural scientists as well. Such as: Ibn al-Bassal who composed a remarkable book—the worth of which can be judged from the fact that its Spanish translation came to the fore as late as in 1955 with the title *Libro de Agricultura* (Hamarnah, S.K.). Similarly, Ibn al-Awwam wrote *Kitab*

*al-Filahah* ("Book of Agriculture") containing the detail of 585 plants, together with agronomy, cattle and poultry raising, and beekeeping, which was, afterward, translated into Spanish and French languages as late as in the 19<sup>th</sup> C.

### **Art**

Regarding art, the European artists followed the Muslim art when they used the Arabic letters for decoration and calligraphy. The European Gothic script became subservient to Muslim calligraphy. The glimpses of the artistic writing of the Muslims can be seen in the works of Italian painters: Giotto Di Bondone, Fra Angelico, and Fra Lippi. The Muslims introduced various handcraft industries such as; ceramics; and manufacturing crystal etc. Even Muslim terminology such as 'Amir', and 'Imam' were used in European nomenclature. Alfonso VIII, a Spanish Catholic prince, started a coin having Arabic inscription, together with a clause written on the coin for himself as "Ameer of the Catholics" and for the Pope in Rome the inscription was "Imam of the Church of Christ".

## Architecture

The popularity of the Muslim architecture was so binding that it was followed by constructors both in the West as well as in America. Peculiar shapes of the arches of Masjid-e-Qurtaba and that of Al-Hambra Forte remained the models for the construction of arches in France and England. The Muslim brick tracery of the facades of some famous constructions of the Muslim world especially the Islamic Giralda (Seville), the Kutubia (Morocco) were the main samples followed in most of the Gothic architecture in Europe, particularly in the Bell Tower in England (Landau). Similarly some churches in Sicily and Italy were also influenced by the Muslim architecture such as Capella Palatina in Palermo; the Palazzo Ca' d'Oro; Cromer Church and Christ Hall in England (Landau).

Furthermore, the influence of the Muslim architecture can be seen in the works of Torre del Commune, the Palazzo Vecchio and Piazza San Marco, (Landau). This influence penetrated beyond Europe to America to the constructions of the famous architect Louis Sullivan (1856 certain civilizations exerted relatively more

permanent impact on their contemporary ones. The American architects owe much to the architecture of the Madrasah erected by the famous Sultan Hasan in Cairo, Egypt.

## Conclusion

Based on the above discussion, it can be concluded that during the course of time, the Byzantines contribution to the world was in law and the legal and political system. Byzantine law that was codified by Justinian, proved as a guiding force for much of the legal and political systems prevalent in Europe even today. However, Islamic civilization, being relatively stronger in science and scholarship, surpassed nearly all the Byzantines contributions and even exerted tremendous impact on other neighboring civilizations such as in the Indian sub-continent, the Far East, and North Africa. In this respect, the contribution of the Muslim civilization to the West was manifold, ranging from the philosophical level to that of practical level such as science. The Muslims influenced the ideas and theories prevalent at that time, and paved way for modern science and technology. Muslim scientists developed

the fundamental disciplines of both natural and social sciences such as: mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, geography, astronomy, agriculture, medicine, pharmacy, in the main area of natural sciences together with education, economics, sociology, psychology, law, jurisprudence, art, architecture, calligraphy, music and literature in social sciences and humanities. In fact, the modern world owes much to the once prominent Islamic civilization in nearly all streams of knowledge that are characteristic of any civilized society.

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