

PANEL: Aryans, Harvesters and Nomads (Thursday July 6 2.00 – 5.00)

Convenor: Prof. Asko Parpola: Department of Asian & African Studies University of Helsinki

Excavations at Parwak, Chitral - Pakistan.

Ihsan Ali: Directorate of Archaeology & Museums, Government of NWFP & Muhammad Zahir: Lecturer, Government College, Peshawar

The Directorate of Archaeology & Museums, Government of NWFP, under the supervision of Prof. (Dr.) Ihsan Ali, Director, Directorate of Archaeology & Museums, Government of NWFP, Peshawar has completed the first ever excavations in Chitral at the site of Parwak. The team included Muhammad Zahir, Lecturer, Government College, Peshawar and graduates of the Department of Archaeology, University of Peshawar.

Chitral, known throughout the world for its culture, traditions and scenic beauty, has many archaeological sites. The sites mostly ranging from 1800 B.C. to the early 600 B.C, are popularly known as Gandhara Grave Culture. Though brief surveys and explorations were conducted in the area earlier, but no excavations were conducted. The site of Parwak was discovered by a team of Archaeologists from Directorate of Archaeology and Museums, Government of NWFP and Boston University, USA in a survey conducted in June 2003 under the direction of Prof. (Dr.) Ihsan Ali and Dr. Rafique Mughal.

The site is at about 110 km north east of Chitral, near the town of Buni, on the right bank of river Chitral and set in a beautiful environment. The site measures 121 x 84 meter, divided in to three mounds. On comparative basis, the site is datable to the beginning of 2nd millennium BC and represents a culture, commonly known as Gandhara Grave Culture of the Aryans, known through graves and grave goods.

A total of 14 trenches were laid on the site, covering an area of 309.5 square meters, of which 8 represents only single period belonging to the Gandhara Grave Culture. A total of 12 Aryan Graves were excavated, which contained skeletons and grave goods. Four types of burials i.e. inhumation, cremation and fractional burials were excavated during our excavations of the site. The inhumation burials were also of three different types; extended, inflexed and crouched. These graves were mostly oriented east west but not north south oriented graves were also exposed, all containing grave goods.

The grave goods included pots, weapons, tools, jewellery and seal/stamp. The excavated artifacts included 10 copper and iron bangles, 06 gold and copper earrings, 01 semi precious stone finger ring, 04 copper finger rings, 128 semi precious stones, paste and faience beads, 06 iron arrow heads, 02 iron knife blades, 01 iron hook, 02 iron axes, 01 iron chisel head, 02 tool's sharpeners, 02 grinding stones, 06 ceramic opened mouth bowls, 12 handled drinking pots and a copper seal. The excavated materials, along with skeletons and samples, were handed to the newly established Chitral Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Chitral and for record and display.

The excavations at Parwak are playing an important role in the establishment of the cultural profile of Chitral and provide evidence for testing the theories regarding the Aryan invasions and the origin of Kalashas and Chitralis. The research is in progress

and we plan to invite scholars to analyse our data for comparing the dead bodies with Kalashas, Chitralies, Greeks and others to pin point the original home of the Kalashas and the inhabitants of the Gandhara Grave Culture.

The Vedic Aryans' burial rites and their archaeological parallels

E. Kuzmina: Institute for Cultural Research, Russian Academy of Sciences

The burial rite of the Vedic Aryans has been reconstructed on the basis of Rigveda (X: 14 - 18), Atharvaveda (XVIII: 1 - 4), Shatapatha-brahmana (XIII, 8), and later texts (Caland 1896; Pandey 1982; Smirnov 1997). In the cemeteries outside the settlements the dead were cremated or inhumed and buried in a flexed position, head to the west. The pit grave was sometimes supplied with frame of logs as a house for the dead. A round or rectangular stone enclosure was built around the grave and above it a barrow was erected (the rite of Pitrimedha). The ashes were brought in a vessel (kumbha). There also occurred the cremation of man with wife (sati). Vessels accompanied both cremations and inhumations. A horse was sacrificed on the occasion of the burial of a king or kshatriya (Puhvel 1981). When one had died far away from home, he was cremated and a cenotaph was erected in his homeland. In other cases the body in a vessel with oil, or 33 bones of skeleton were sent home for cremation (Baudhana-pitrimedha sutra III: 6, 2).

These burial rites have nothing in common with the burial rites in Baluchistan and in the Harappan civilization (Marshall 1931; Wheeler 1947; 1953; 1968; Singh 1970; Possehl 2002) and post-Harappan cemeteries H, R-37, Jhukar and Chanhu-daro in India and Rana-Ghundai, Shahi-Tump, Khurab in neighbouring lands.

The total combination of all specific burial rites characterizes only the Vedic tradition and the Andronovo culture, especially in North Bactria. There are a lot of cenotaphs in Bactria (Vinogradova 2004). They may belong to Aryans who migrated to India.

The evolution of the moulding techniques in the ceramic sequence of the Swat Valley (North-West Pakistan)

Emanuele Morigi: Conservazione dei Beni Culturali, Italy

In spring 2004, we resumed the survey of the Kandak and adjacent areas in front of the Barikot hill for the Italian archaeological mission in the Swat Valley (North-West Pakistan). During the examination of the ceramic materials recovered in the survey and excavated in the past in different archaeological sites, we realized the importance of moulding as a primary form technique.

Moulding, frequently used with coils or with the potter's wheel, consists in adapting clay into special moulds or chucks for obtaining a preliminary structure on which the form could be further elaborated. Attested for the first time in some vases of Period III of the Swat archaeological sequence (1900-1700 BC) the presence of this class of techniques in continuous evolution, being still very popular in Saka-Parthian and Kushana times. The paper shows the archaeological indicators of moulding in different types of ceramics across the archaeological periods so far considered

The face urns of Gandhâra and the cult of the Nâsatyas

Prof. Asko Parpola: Department of Asian & African Studies University of Helsinki

The Gandhâra Graves represent the first archaeological culture in the Swât Valley region to have the domesticated horse. The two successive cultural phases beginning about 1600 BC and 1300 BC, respectively, probably reflect the arrival of the earlier and later wave of the Indo-Aryan speakers associated with the Rigveda. On the basis of river names and other indications, the Kânvas of the earlier wave and the Atris of the later wave mainly resided in the Swât area. These singer families are pre-eminent in praising the Nâsatyas or Ashvins, the divine horseman twins who drive a heavenly chariot, and in offering them gharma, a drink of heated milk.

I suggest that the 'face urn' characteristic of the Gandhâra Graves is related to the gharma vessel of the Ashvin cult. According to Vedic texts, the gharma pot represents the severed head (which flew off to become the sun) of a heroic deity, and thus it is not unlikely that the pot was fashioned to resemble human head. The Shatapatha-Brâhmana (14,1,2,17) in fact specifies that this clay vessel was to have a nose (nâsikâ). Several things - including their name - associate the Nâsatyas with the nose in the Veda.

If accepted, the proposed link between the Vedic religion and archaeological evidence would have important implications. However, it poses some further questions. In particular, did the Nâsatyas and the gharma vessel have a funerary function? Can other traces of the Nâsatya cult be found in the Gandhâra Grave culture?

Stone 'harvesters' of neolithic tradition from northern Indo-Pakistani valleys

Giorgio Stacul: University of Trieste

The stone industry from the northern Indo-Pakistani subcontinent, in the late prehistoric times, is characterized by the so-called 'harvesters', i.e. the notched and holed stone sickles recovered in Kashmir and in Swat and dated from the 3rd to the mid-second millennium B.C. Similar tools were also found in various sites of Inner Asia and particularly in the northern neolithic China.

According to some authors, waves of migration through the Tibetan Plateau reached the Kashmir Valley crossing the Himalaya Ranges. The westernmost point of this movement is the Swat in present-day Pakistan. Dog burials and some bone and jade decorated objects, suggest links with late neolithic traditions of China. Such cultural innovations in the Indo-Pakistani valleys, may not necessarily be connected with ethnic changes, but seem to suggest long-distance contacts and cultural interactions.

Chronology of Late Bronze and Early Iron Age Monuments in the Northern Bactria

N. Vinogradova: Russian Akademie Nauk Institut Vostokovedeniya & E. Kuzmina: Institute for Cultural Research, Russian Academy of Sciences

1. The archaeological monuments of Southeast Uzbekistan and Southwest Tadjikistan are the parts of cultural historical region of Bactria. This region became the area of migration of pastoral Andronovo culture tribes and their contacts with aboriginal farmers - the bearers of Namazga VI culture (or a BMAC variant Sapalli culture at the

late Molali and Bustan stages). The different models of cultural interconnection took place and the new steppe culture Bishkent-Vakhsh formed.

2. The comparative analysis of archaeological materials of farming and steppe sites makes it possible to arrange them according to chronological stages (table 1). The 1st stage is represented by the finds of early Andronovo Sintashta type cheek-pieces in Zardcha-Khalifa grave and Dzharkutan settlement (Bobomulloev 1997; Teufer 1999). Their calibrated C14 dates in the Urals and Central Asia are 21st - 18th centuries BC (Kuznetsov 1996; 2003; Kuzmina 1998; Epimakhov 2003; Görsdorf et al. 1993). The 2nd stage - the peak of Andronovo and Bishkent-Vakhsh cultures is the Molali period. C14 dates of the Dzharkutan temple, settlement Kangurtut and necropolis Tigrovaya Balka are between 1800 - 1300 BC (Görsdorf, Huff 2001; Vinogradova 2004). The date of the 3rd stage is based on the analogies with the Final Bronze Age steppe cultures of pottery with applied roller (13 - 11 centuries BC). The 4th stage is Yaz I period (11 - 9 centuries BC) with painted pottery and iron.

3. There is a direct line of continuity of cultures Namazga VI - Yaz I - Kuchuk I B. They are the base of the great kingdom of Bactria in the 8th - 7th centuries BC (Kuzmina 1976, Vinogradova 2004).