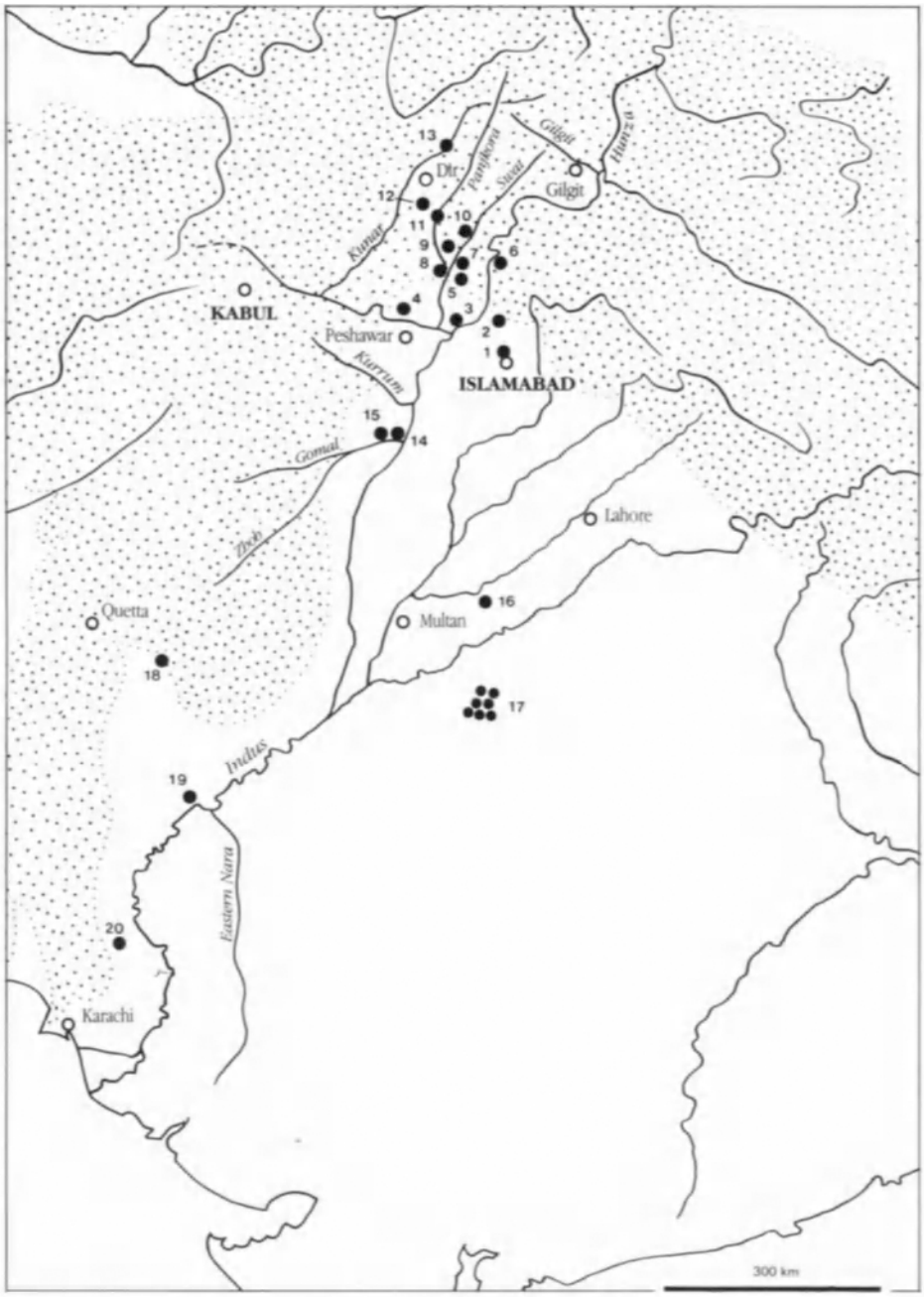
17

PASTORAL-AGRICULTURAL TRIBES OF PAKISTAN IN THE POST-INDUS PERIOD[1]

A. H. Dani

THE tribes discussed in this chapter probably had some cultural links with those described in the previous chapters, but in Pakistan they had abandoned their pastoral ways of living and fully adopted the life of agricultural settlers in small rural units at a time when the centralized urbanism of the Indus Civilization had faded away. It is these tribes who, with their tribal society and equipped with bronze and later iron tools and weapons, contributed a new element to this region's history. The evidence for these people first came from graves excavated in the region of Gandhāra, and hence their culture was termed the 'Gandhāra Grave Culture'; it has also been referred to as 'Protohistoric Culture', and others have related it to Dardic-speaking people. Today this culture is also known from the excavations of the settlement sites at Aligrama in Swat and Hathial at Taxila.[2] This is the culture of the people who became powerful in north-western Pakistan in the post-Indus period. That period continued to the beginning of the historical cities of Takshasilā (Taxila) and Pushkalāvati (Peucelaotis) – the two cities of Gandhāra that heralded a second urban phase in southern Asia, and played a definitive role in the periods of the Achaemenids and Alexander the Great.[3] They more or less fill the gap that earlier appeared to exist between the end of the urban phase of the Indus Civilization and the beginning of the historical period. The Indus region is characterized by widely differing environmental conditions and these cultures assume different forms and characters in different parts of the country. Human cultures, after all, originate from life-styles adopted in response to the traditional, material and technological problems peculiar to different parts. It is natural that the hill zones of Pakistan, mostly lying to the west and north of the Indus river, should exhibit features that may be

[1] See Map 12
[2] Dani, 1967; Allchin, 1982.
[3] Marshall, 1951; Wheeler, 1962; Dani, 1965/66.



Map 12 Distribution of prehistoric graves in the post-Indus period.

described as a hill pattern as opposed to the fertile valleys and plains where the advantage of natural river inundation and the annual refertilization of the soil by silt deposits enabled man to develop settled intensive agricultural systems. Even within the fertile plains variations are seen between the irrigated areas of Punjab and deltaic Sind, separated as they

are by the great Indus gorge at Sakkhar and connected with the neighbouring countries of the west and the east through their own particular passes and channels of communication. There is again a variety of cultural forms in the hill zone: (a) the northern areas of Pakistan drained mainly by the Indus river, showing isolated cultural growth; (b) the western frontier region, which is characterized by a number of small valleys of the Swat, Panjkora, Kabul, Kurrum and Gomal rivers, with varying cultural patterns; and (c) the Baluchistan plateau, with its inner desert, marginal hills and coastline, and its own rural system.

As a result the highly developed technical tradition of agriculture, as seen in the Indus Civilization, continued on the plains while the less developed hill zone was overridden by the new invaders who could force their systems upon comparatively small, isolated cultural pockets. When such people moved from the hills to the plains, they could not but take advantage of the available facilities in the local system and adapt themselves to the varying conditions of living obtaining in different areas. Hence the cultures of this period in the Indus valley are not uniform. Their multiple facets only emphasize the multiplicity of human groups who responded differently as the circumstances demanded. If analogous cultures are compared outside the Indus valley, the differences assume far greater proportions. It is only remote parallelism that dimly points to a common bond of uniting factors. However remote the parallels may be in the contemporary cultures of the Oxus, Indus and Ganges valleys and the intermediate regions, there is a remarkable coincidence in the historical circumstances that appear at the end of the ancient world civilization and introduce a new era, where the horse replaces the ass, the chariot the old-fashioned cart and the double-edged sword adds to the fighting capacity of a new population itself divided but distinct from others. The break-up of the older urbanization, as seen in different areas, does not lead to a discontinuity in human living, but it speaks of a change in socio-economic organization from a pattern of centralized control to a diffused rural set-up where small communities reorganize themselves and evolve their own particular patterns. It is these multiple patterns that characterize the post-Indus phase in the Indus valley as well as in other areas of Central Asia.

This kind of change was first noted by E. J. H. Mackay[4] in his excavations at Chanhudaro, in the post-Harappan, Jhukar[5] and Jhangar[6] periods. The recent French excavation at Pirak [7] at the mouth of the Bolan pass in the Kachi plain of Baluchistan has identified a ‘Pirak Culture’ with three different periods, that fills the gap between 1800 B.C. and the

[4] Mackay, 1943.
[5] Majumdar, 1934.
[6] Ibid.
[7] Jarriage and Santoni, 1979.

historical period in this region. In 1946, Sir Mortimer Wheeler[8] produced stratigraphic evidence to separate chronologically the culture represented by Cemetery-H at Harappa, and where recently M. R. Mughal[9] has traced its extent in the Bahawalpur region along the Hakra river. In 1971, in Gomal valley,[10] a new type of burial was discovered, a type also found at Taxila in the Iron Age graves of Sarai Kala,[11] and thus added a new variant on either side of the Indus river. But even greater in significance and wider was the discovery of further different types of graves in the north-western parts of Pakistan, extending from the Pakistan-Afghan border in Bajaur to beyond the Indus at Taxila on the Hathial site. This new material has been termed the 'Gandhāra Grave Culture' by A. H. Dani[12] and is attributed to the Dardic people by G. Tucci.[13]

This material has been found not only in graves but also in settlement sites. Typologically the graves have been classified into three main groups, and on the basis of stratigraphy they have been referred to three periods, ranging respectively from 1700 to 1400 B.C., from 1400 to 1000 B.C., and from 1000 to 500 B.C. These are hereafter referred to as Periods I, II, and III. To these main periods three earlier phases have been added by G. Stacul on the basis of his excavations in the the Ghaligai cave.[14] And, finally, Stacul also recognizes the last phase, ranging from 500 to 300 B.C., referred to here as Period IV. Thus, according to the periodization proposed by Stacul for the Swat valley there are seven periods in all. This sequence covers a time-span to which has been ascribed the emergence of the Indo-Iranians (see Chapter 15). The geographical distribution of such cultural material lies within the region where the Aryans, as reconstructed from the earliest Vedic literature, are considered to have lived. But actually the Vedic geography is much wider and embraces not only the whole of the Indus valley but also those parts that verge on the Jamuna-Ganges system where the 'painted grey ware' culture (see Chapter 18) has been identified. Westward, the cultural material shows still greater variety. Such a multiplicity of cultures speaks of the past inheritance of this period, in which new people, who could harness horses and ride on chariots, dominated the scene and dictated the future trends of events. Archaeology does not provide their names but they used the horse as a great source of energy and power.

The Cemetery-H culture is no longer an isolated phenomenon in the Indus valley. Until 1968,[15] it was known mainly from the type site at Harappa and further recognized at two

[8] Wheeler, 1947, pp. 84–6.
[9] Mughal, 1981.
[10] Dani, 1970/71.
[11] Halim, 1972.
[12] Dani, 1967.
[13] Tucci, 1977.
[14] Stacul, 1967*b*, 1969*b*.
[15] Wheeler, 1968, pp. 69–70; Piggott, 1950, pp. 229–35.

sites, Lurewata and Ratta Theri in Bahawalpur region but today ‘ Bahawalpur has revealed an impressive number of seventy-two sites containing Cemetery-H related materials’.[16] The culture thus appears to have extended to the central Indus valley, with one of the important centres being Harappa, generally identified with Hariyupiya,[17] mentioned in the *Rigveda*, which speaks of Indra’s destruction of the Dasa tribe, called Varchin (actually Vrichivants and their children), at this place. Two periods of graves have been noted at Harappa. A lower and earlier, with burials, about 2 m below the present ground-level, has revealed two dozen extended inhumations, normally lying north-east and south-west, with the legs slightly flexed. They were accompanied with food offerings in pots peculiar to this period. In one grave an entire dismembered goat was laid with the corpse. Another grave yielded a gold bangle on the wrist of a woman, and a third grave had gold wire looped round three loose teeth. The upper and latter period had fractional burials, the skull and a few large bones being deposited in large urns along with pieces of burnt bones. Only infants were placed in the urns complete, in the embryonic position. These urns were covered by lids or fragments of pots. The pottery from both types of graves is distinctive. Although it is red ware and has red slip applied to it, the painted designs, black-on-red, make for a new cultural departure and the technique of firing speaks of the use of an advanced kiln. Characteristic motifs are stars of various kinds, stylized plant forms, ring-and-dot designs, groups of lines, and frequent representations of cattle, goats, peacocks and fishes. But the most expressive are the continuous scenes (Fig. 1) which encircle the vase, sometimes in panels or in roundels, placed at the lower side of the circular pot covers. It is from these symbolic representations that we can infer the ideas that must have moved the makers of the pots at least with respect to burial rites. Here we get a series of peacocks between motifs, the belly showing a roundel with a standing human figure. Another panel depicts a complicated scene – a double peacock followed by a standing man holding a horned bull on either side, with a barking dog behind, separated by a mythological bull supporting on his horns a series of three-pronged symbols and again a man with bulls. It seems that the peacock, along with other birds, bulls and deer, played a special role in burial customs – a subject of unusual interest, which was attributed to the Aryans, as illustrating their practices, by the excavator M. S. Vats. Whether they can really be attributed to any particular linguistic group or not, they do show a type of cultural milieu, the meaning of

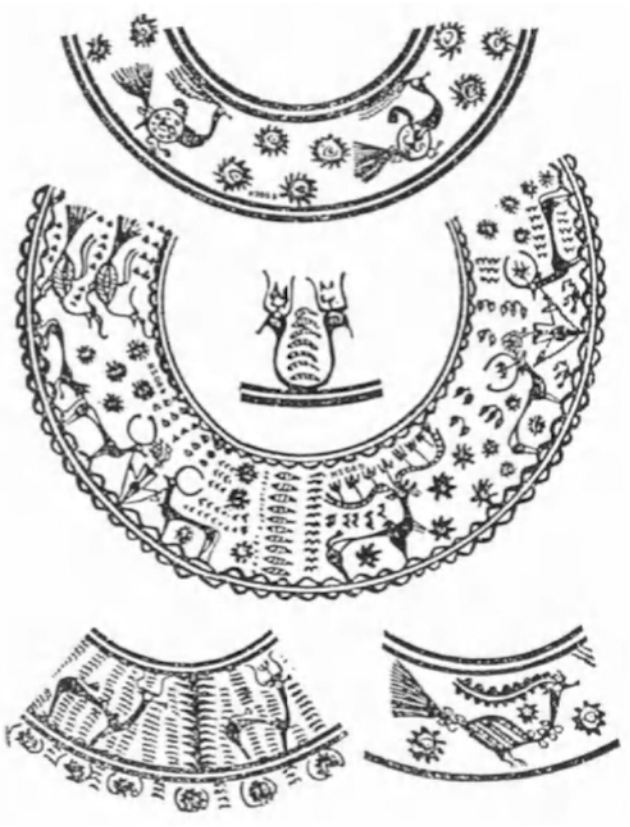


FIG. 1. Painted motifs on Cemetery-H pottery from Harappa.

which was not clear at the time of excavation, but when seen today in a wider perspective of numerous graves of the period, builds up a picture consistent with other material.

Further different types of graves have been found in the excavations in the Gomal valley,[18] which may be assigned to a ‘ Gomal Grave Culture’, as it was first recognized from the graves of this region. They have been noted at Hathala, Gumla and Marha Sharif in the Gomal plain and across the Indus river, graves of Period III of Sarai Kala bearing a close resemblance. Gumla and Hathala have produced stratigraphic evidence for placing the graves into two periods. The lower and earlier graves show burnt material. The ritual, as disclosed in the excavations, presents a unique practice. Originally a circular grave pit was dug to a depth of about 1.5 m from the original ground-level. At the bottom, on the virgin soil and over a scatter of what was probably a pile of wood, the animals, supposedly killed or sacrificed, were placed in the middle of the pit. They were again covered by a pile of wood and loose earth, leaving a fire chute at one end. The whole was then filled with

[16] Mughal, 1981, p. 37.
[17] Dani, 1950.
[18] Dani, 1970/71, pp. 50–3, 56–9.

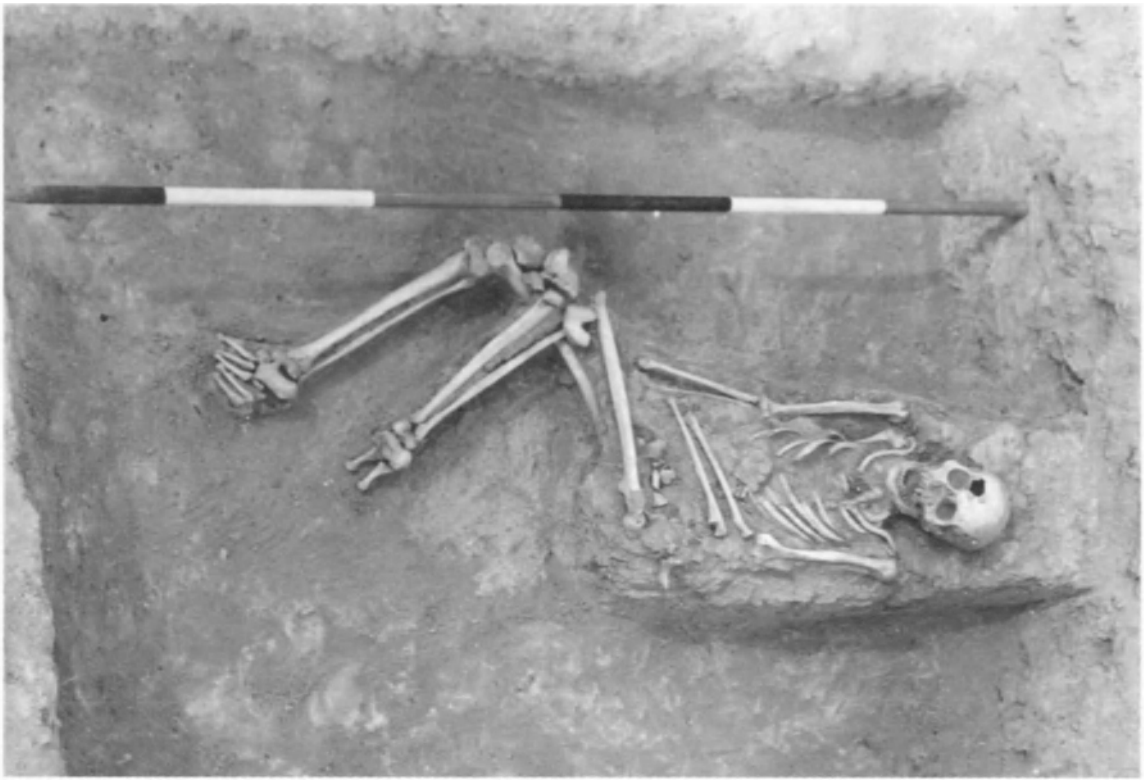


FIG. 2. Iron Age grave from Hathala, Gomal valley. (Courtesy, Peshawar University, Department of Archaeology.)

clay. On the top of this clay filling and, again over a pile of wood, the body was placed along with a scatter of other objects. It is very difficult to say whether the antiquities were part and parcel of the ritual or not. The whole was sealed by clay. It seems that a fire was lit later, after the grave was sealed, and it was not opened again. As such we may take the grave as a burial as well as a funeral pyre.[19] Inside the grave the funerary material consists of terracotta bangles, female figurines and horses, and tiny saucers, flesh rubbers of stone, hubbed wheels, clay bulls and microlithic flakes. The upper and later burial includes the whole skeleton (Fig. 2). The body was aligned north-south with the head towards the north. The upper part of the body, from shoulder to hip, lay flat down on the ground but the head was slightly tilted to the left and the legs were flexed, the left leg being crossed over the right leg. The right hand lay straight by the side of the body while the left hand went across the body towards the right palm. The mouth was wide open. A single terracotta bull was found below the hip. Generally such burials are not accompanied by any funerary material.

[19] Dani, 1970/71, pp. 51–2.

Far away at Sarai Kala, on the bank of Kala rivulet, near Taxila, two types of graves have been excavated on the top of a mound which bears Early Bronze Age (Kot Diji) material. Both these types of graves belong to the Iron Age and are not accompanied by any funerary material, except for the discovery of two iron finger rings and some fragments of paste bracelets. The method of burial with wide-open mouth puts them in close similarity with the later graves of the Gomal plain, which also belong to the Iron Age. They bear no similarity at all to those seen in the Gandhāra Grave Culture, as is surmised by the excavator. The distinction between the two types at Sarai Kala rests purely on the two methods of grave construction. The first type, which had its top flush with the ground, was marked by two stones, one at the head and another at the foot. The second type was secured and sealed with large and medium-sized river pebbles. The grave floor was generally hardened. Fifty-seven graves of the first type were excavated and, of the second type, sixty-five were exposed. M. A. Halim describes the burial custom thus:

> All the skeletons exposed so far were found laid on the back. The heads, with gaping mouths, rest either on the right or the left cheek facing north or south and sometimes on the occiput facing skyward. The arms of the dead are placed in different positions according to sex and age. It should be pointed out that sex played an important role in the nature of burial customs of the age. We have already stated that the men and women were buried in separate rows, and in different postures, so that male and female burials can be distinguished with some certainty. Women of different age-groups were buried in different postures and great care was taken in their disposal, perhaps, because woman was regarded as the member of society most to be respected. From the postures of the female burials and the insufficient depth of grave pits, it appears that the dead were buried naked and for observing the sanctity of womanhood, the hands were placed in the pelvic region and on the breasts to cover the sources of fertility. People of different sex and age were buried in the following postures. Adult males in an east-west direction lay on their backs with arms stretched parallel to the body. Young boys of different age-groups were buried with arms stretched parallel to the body. One leg, right or left, was slightly bent so that the foot touched the ankle. Adult females were also buried in the same direction as their male counterparts but their hands were placed in the pelvic region. In most of the cases the left or right hand was placed in the pelvic region while the other arm was stretched parallel to the body. Young girls, perhaps unmarried, were buried with one hand in the pelvic region and other crossed over the navel and holding the first hand on the opposite side. In the other cases one hand was placed in the usual manner in the pelvic region and the other lay on the opposite shoulder covering the breast. Teenage girls were buried in the same position as boys but with the above variation of hand positions. In all cases of girls one hand

was invariably placed in the pelvic region. Children were buried with one leg slightly bent so that one foot touched the other leg.[20]

The link of the Sarai Kala grave material with the Gomal Grave Culture is established entirely on the mode of burial practice. The way in which the head is placed so as to leave the mouth gaping or wide open is the common feature of Iron Age graves. They are not accompanied by any domestic furniture. The recognition of this Gomal Grave Culture presents a new cultural complex that had hitherto remained unnoticed.

The last group consists of graves belonging to the Gandhāra Grave Culture, so named because it was first recognized in many localities in Gandhāra. The culture spreads from the Pakistan-Afghan border in the west through Bajaur, Dir, Chitral, Swat, Buner, Peshawar valleys, Indus Kohistan and beyond the Indus river at Basham and Taxila on the Hathial ridge. G. Tucci[21] makes a geographic distinction between Gandhāra and Dard country, seeking to identify the latter with Dadicae of the Greek historian, embracing, according to him, the hill region north of the Peshawar valley. As the Grave Culture has been found, to a large extent, in this hilly part, he attributes this culture to the Dards. However, the modern burial practice among the Kalash Kāfirs, known to belong to the Dardic group, is different from that found in the 'Protohistoric cemeteries in the Chitral valley'.[22] Similarly the old graves, as seen by the author, in Punyal valley, Cakuch and Ishkomen – the area where another Dardic language, Shina, is spoken – are also different. In fact Gandhāra, in Sanskrit literature, is a wide geographic territory which embraces both the valleys and the hilly areas, and its twin capitals of Pushkalāvati (Peucelaotis), on the confluence of the Swat and Kabul rivers, and Takshasilā (Taxila) are well documented. The hilly part north of the Peshawar valley has been the hinterland of Pushkalāvati, and the hilly region in Hazara and beyond has a direct link with Taxila. It is therefore natural to expect the culture to have spread all over this region.

This culture, which was originally identified as consisting of different types of graves, has now been traced in several settlement sites at Loebanr III,[23] Aligrama[24] and Birkot-ghundai (Barikot)[25] in Swat district; at Balambat[26] near Timargarha in Dir district; and at Hathial, Taxila.[27] Some cultural material related to graves has also been found in the

[20] Halim, 1972, pp. 61–3
[21] Tucci, 1977.
[22] Stacul, 1969*a*.
[23] Stacul, 1976, 1977*a*.
[24] Stacul 1977*b*; Stacul and Tusa, 1975, 1977
[25] Stacul, 1978.
[26] Dani, 1967, pp. 235–88.
[27] Allchin, 1982; the site is under excavation by Gulzar Mohammed Khan – see Khan, 1983.

Ghaligai cave[28] in Swat. Unfortunately, in the absence of an extensive horizontal excavation of the settlement sites, information about the culture is still limited. We know more about the dead than about the living people who built this culture.

As its geographical extent is well attested, so is its chronology well defined by C14 dating, comparative study of the material with other cultures and by internal stratigraphic excavations. On the whole the settlements have revealed a stone masonry, consisting of rough stone blocks or river pebbles, sometimes held together by small chips, seen in all periods from beginning to end. But no important building has so far been excavated. It is only at Loebanr III that pit dwellings have been identified. The same type of stone masonry is also seen in the construction of stone-built graves. From the architectural point of view at least it is legitimate to infer that the whole material refers to one cultural continuum. On the other hand, the pottery tradition shows three distinct trends: the first is the black-on-red painted ware, seen in the lowest levels at the Ghaligai cave and at Loebanr III and Birkot-ghundai; the second is the black-grey ware and brown gritty ware, sometimes with mat impressions at the base of the pots, seen in almost all the settlement sites, and perhaps continuing in the plain black-grey ware seen in many graves; the third is the plain, sometimes burnished, red ware, which has many forms, and is later characterized by incised decorations, sometimes paint, handles and pedestalled stands. The continuity of red ware throughout is uncontested. It is only the meagre painted sherds that are almost certainly intrusive. Similarly, the large quantity of black-grey pottery appears to belong to new arrivals. The painted tradition has been viewed by Stacul in the background of the Early Bronze Age cultures of Turkmenistan, Mundigak and the Indus valley, where painting of pots had a long history. At what particular time and from what source the local hill people could have derived a few such pots is difficult to say. But the black-grey ware is a trait that imposes itself on the older red-ware tradition and the two then continued side by side, black-grey ware dominating in some places and red ware in others. There is a technical difference also, some pottery being hand-made and the other wheel-made, but the two techniques are so intermixed that it is difficult to be positive about their chronology. Under these circumstances the only possible inference can be of two main cultural traditions: the first and earlier of hand-made pottery, red or black, sometimes burnished or gritty, with black-on-red painted intrusions, and the second and later sturdy black-grey and red-ware pots, which are almost all plain, and invariably associated with graves and a characteristic type of architecture. It is the second category that belongs to the Gandhāra Grave Culture. The first must be taken to be an earlier cultural tradition of this backward hilly region, contemporary with a later phase of the Indus Civilization, and may have some remote connection

[28] Stacul, 1967*b*, 1969*b*.

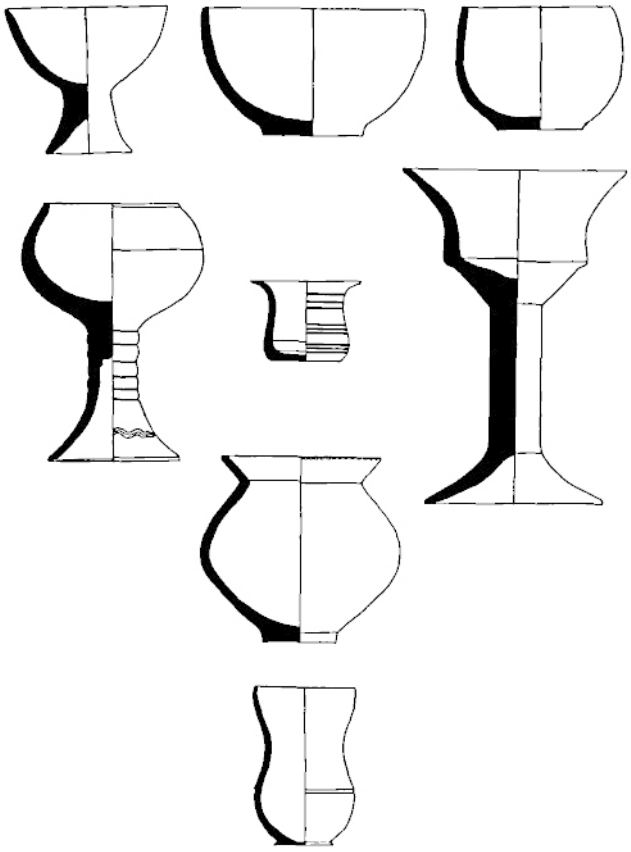


FIG. 3. Pottery forms of Period I of the Gandhāra Grave Culture.

with the material culture of Burzahom in Kashmir. But the main character of that tradition needs to be defined in the context of the local geography by explaining the integral parts of the various elements.

As far as the internal chronology of the Gandhāra Grave Culture is concerned, it is divisible into two main technical periods – the first belonging to the Late Bronze Age (Fig. 3) and the second to the Iron Age. Underneath these two technically distinct phases there are cultural trends of different kinds which need to be categorized as a whole so that the main cultural group may be reconstructed from a combination of traits. Three traits may be viewed together: burial rites, pottery tradition and small finds. Stacul has placed the extended burial graves of Kherai in the Gorband valley in the earliest group, mainly because of the pot forms and potting technique. The same type of extended burial has been placed in the earliest category by Dani from his evidence of Timargarha. And Khan has now produced stratigraphic evidence at Zarif Karuna[29] to show that the extended burial type was the earliest in the sequence. Thus, what has been described at Kherai as graves

[29] Khan, 1979, p. 12.

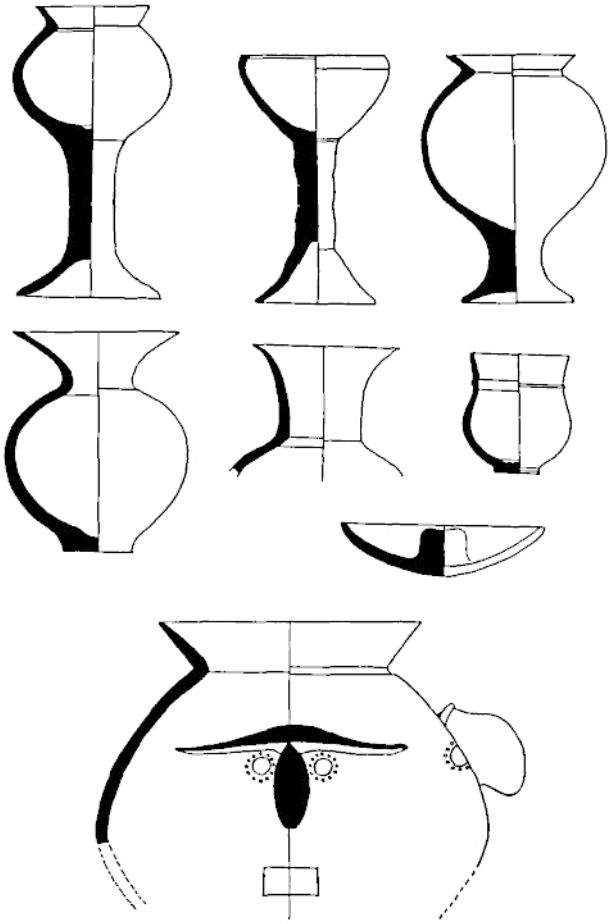


FIG. 4. Pottery forms of Period II of the Gandhāra Grave Culture.

containing fragmentary bones are actually fractional burials but, because of the limited excavation and the nature of the site, this was not at first recognized. On the other hand, at Timargarha and Zarif Karuna, fractional burials are associated only with iron. The same is true in Swat. A study of the associated pottery and small finds also suggests fundamental cultural differences. However, the commonest ritual practised was cremation, which did not entirely replace extended burial but which increasingly became more common. It is in this type of cremated grave that varieties of pot forms (Fig. 4) are found that were part of the ritual of burning and disposing of the burnt bones and ashes. When we find the practice of burning continuing into the historical period, obviously fractional burial must be understood as an intrusive phenomenon by a people who introduced iron. The cremated burials are seen to belong mainly with bronze technology in this context. Along with the fractional type we also get multiple burials. Thus three cultural divisions are made on the basis of the totality of cultural traits and they are assigned to three different periods on a stratigraphic basis. It is only in Swat and Balambat that two subdivisions are made in the

Iron Age, the second subdivision being assigned to Period IV. C14 dating has extended the time-span for the earliest graves from the eighteenth to the seventeenth century B.C. and for the latest graves from the fourth to the third century B.C. As has been noted earlier, these burials continue into the historical period. But the end of the earliest period should be determined by the time when the diffusion of black-grey ware started at such type sites as Tepe Hissar in north-eastern Iran, somewhere towards the close of the third or the beginning of the second millennium B.C. It is to this part of Central Asia, to the east of the Caspian Sea, that comparative material points to a possible link. It is to the same region that the source of iron technology should be referred because, *inter alia*, the characteristic channel-spouted vase, found in some graves, is also common there. Outside such groups it is difficult to rely on any one pot form or material object.

The anthropological analysis has led W. Bernhard to say that the skeletal remains do not belong to a homogeneous anthropological group. Although there were only twenty-five skulls at our disposal for morphological and metrical analysis, we could at least distinguish five different main morphological types, which could also be metrically differentiated. The most common type is the *Leptodolicbomorph* (Mediterranean type), including its subtypes, such as the Transcaspian type or the Khorasan type.[30]

Burial rites played a significant part in the life of these people. Although the rites are uniformly observed all over the area, yet there is a variation in the construction of the graves, as noted in different places. The variation is seen probably because of the local conditions and more probably because the graves are badly preserved, and hence the descriptions vary from one excavator to another. It is only at Timargarha that a complete constructional principle is noted. All the graves of Period I have a larger, upper pit, circular or oval at Timargarha and rectangular at Zarif Karuna. This upper pit is filled with either rammed earth or stones. At Timargarha the ground surface is marked by a circle of stone boulders (Fig. 5). Underneath this upper pit, there is a smaller rectangular grave chamber, which, in the case of Timargarha and Zarif Karuna, is sometimes lined with dry-stone masonry, but at Thana no such masonry is seen. This lower chamber is sealed by flat stones on the top. At Kherai there is no upper pit and the lower grave chamber is lined on each side with orthostatic stones placed at right angles, thus making a box-like grave – a type also noted in some examples at Timargarha in the third period. On the floor, which is generally of beaten earth or, as at Thana, a flat schist slab, the skeleton lies on its back (Fig. 6), the head generally placed on the north-east, the face turned to the west, and the legs flexed, the hands bent and placed on one side, generally a drinking vessel near the hand, and the remaining funerary pots either at the feet or on one side. Usually three pots are seen in the

[30] Dani, 1967, pp. 371 –5.

graves of this period; a hand-made rippled-rim cooking pot, a drinking vessel and a bowl-on-stand, probably used as an offering stand. At Kherai the pot varieties are very limited, being a bowl-on-stand, or only a bowl and a small water vessel (*lotā*).

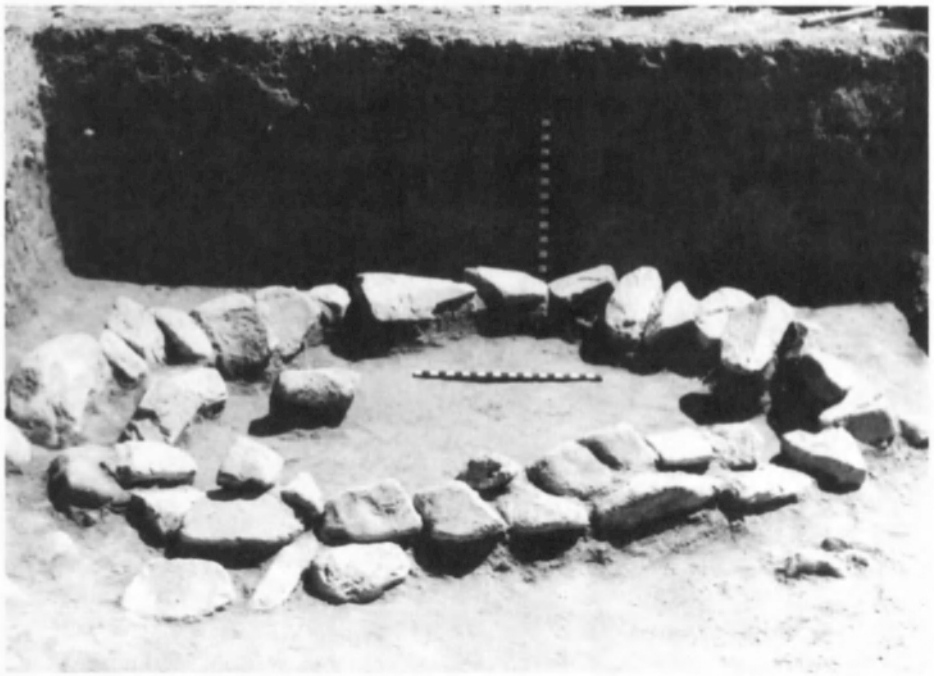


FIG. 5. Timargarha: circle of stones bounding the upper pit. (Courtesy, Peshawar University, Department of Archaeology.)

The second type of cremated burial is more widespread (Fig. 7). In this case, too, the same kind of grave pit is dug. In some cases it is circular, sometimes enclosing a big jar. In these graves burnt bones and ashes are placed mostly in jars of different kinds: a tub-shaped urn, which is open at the top and later covered by another pot, with either three or six holes in the sides; a visage urn, which imitates a human face by representing the nose, two eyes and a mouth on the body of the jar, covered by a handled lid, placed upside down; a similar globular jar with everted rim, again having holes to indicate a human face, and covered by a simple saucer-like lid; in other cases the jars have no holes at all. All these jars were placed inside the burial pit along with other pots, copper pins, beads and gold ornaments. In one grave (No. 122) at Timargarha twenty-four funerary pots, one broken copper pin, one copper antimony rod, one gold ring, one bead of semi-precious stone, and one copper hooked rod with a blade at one end, were found.

The third period (Fig. 8) makes a definite change in the cultural tradition but no change in grave construction. Timargarha has produced evidence that in several cases the older graves were reopened, bones disturbed, and new bones deposited along with ritual pots

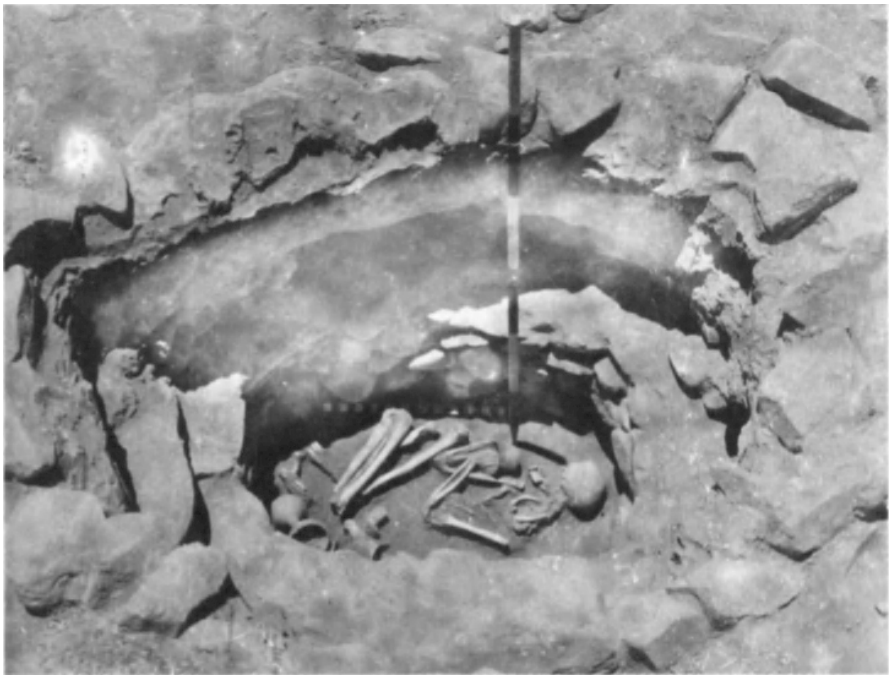


FIG. 6. Timargarha: The upper circular pit and the lower structurally made rectangular pit with extended burial of Period I. (Courtesy, Peshawar University, Department of Archaeology.)

FIG. 7. Timargarha: cremated bones along with funerary vessels inside a structural grave. (Courtesy, Peshawar University, Department of Archaeology.)

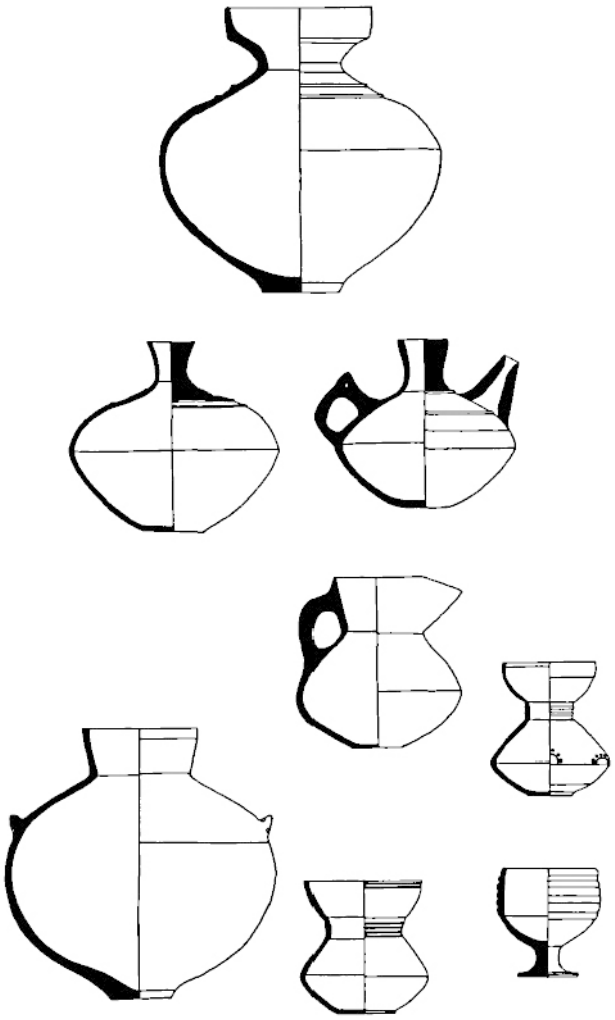


FIG. 8. Pottery forms of Period III of the Gandhāra Grave Culture.

and other materials. On the other hand, in the graves of Swat complete burials are reported in this period.[31] Similarly at Chitral[32] the one properly excavated grave showed only a fractional burial. A tanged and barbed arrowhead was found, with a flat-topped copper pin along with etched carnelian beads, barrel-shaped, dumbell-shaped and globular beads. The long bottle-necked jars belong to this grave period. In Buner again, except for one cremated burial found in a jar, others are all fractional. A spearhead and a javelin-head were found there, both made of iron. The position in Timargarha may thus be summed up:

> The people who practised this type of burial, sometimes reopened the earlier graves and after moving the earlier bones to a corner, put in their own dead according to their own ritual. As no complete skeleton has been found in this type of burial, the term 'fractional' is applied

[31] Antonini and Stacul, 1972.
[32] Stacul, 1969*a*.

> to it. However, the term need not imply that only some or particular parts of the bones were picked up and buried. In some cases only a small portion of the bones is missing while in others very little is preserved. In some graves multiple burial is also seen, in which the bones of one skeleton are properly disposed of, while the others are collected and jumbled up. This practice suggests the re-use of the grave by the same people for subsequent burials. It is possible that such a practice among these people led to the re-opening of the different types of graves, in which cremation or complete burial was observed. The partial collection of the bones in these graves suggests that the dead body was probably earlier exposed and then the bones were later collected and placed in the graves. Only such a supposition can account for the variation in the proportion of bones. However, within the graves, whatever bones were available, they were placed in the same fashion as in the case of complete burial. Here also we have graves of adults lying deeper in the earth and those of children which are at a higher level. These are described separately . . . [as] some mixed burials showing an earlier complete burial with a later fractional burial.[33]

In Swat the story is somewhat different and the chronology is built on the basis of the typology of pots and other materials. The differences may also be due to various groups of people practising different burial rites. The chart,[34] published by S. Salvatori, about his analysis of Swat material, shows that inhumation persists all through the periods, but cremation peters out in the late periods. Only two examples are shown in the later periods. However, as Stacul states,

> On the basis of the typology of the vases and the other furnishings, the chronological and cultural classification of the graves under examination show that those without or almost without bones mainly belong to the most ancient period of utilization of the aforementioned graveyards [i.e. Period II in the chronological terminology adopted here], with only a few examples in the following period [Period III] and in the late one [Period IV]. Graves containing only one fractional burial are found dating from both period V [Period II in the present terminology] (4.4 percent in comparison with the graves ascribed to this period) and even more frequently, from the subsequent period VI [Period III] (6.3 per cent) while there is no evidence of them in period VII [Period IV][35]

In Zarif Karuna the excavator observes:

> In the graves of Period III, unburnt fractional bones of one or more persons were found placed in the anatomical order in inflexed position. Sometimes fractional bones have also been found heaped in the middle of a grave along with the grave furniture. In one grave two fractional skeletons were found in reconstructed position facing each other. Here it may be suggested that, in case of multiple fractional burials, the graves were reopened for the subsequent burials or two dead persons perhaps belonging to one family were buried together in one grave.[36]

[33] Dani, 1967, p. 81.
[34] Salvatori, 1975, pp. 335–6.
[35] Stacul, 1975, pp. 325–6.
[36] Khan, 1979, p. 16.

These fractional burials, in which skeletal remains of more than one person are sometimes found are the richest in so far as grave furniture is concerned. In one grave (No. 149) at Timargarha twenty-six funerary vessels were found. One pot had an iron spoon. The pot varieties also increase in number. The important feature to note is the disc-based pots of the earlier periods. Here in Period III we get a preponderance of flat-bottomed vases, with painting and incised decorations on some of them. Long bottle-necked jars and several varieties of bottles, some on pedestals, are seen mainly in this period. One important type is the hour-glass vase, which is so extremely thin and light that it was probably moulded. Two new varieties are the channel-spouted vase and triple bowls-on-stand, both found in Swat. There is also an increase in the number of small jars, miniature vases, saucers and lids of all kinds. One lid found in Swat has a horse-handle on top. Spouted and pinched-mouthed vases, and large water jars with straight-collared rims are seen. However, it should be noted that not all varieties of pots are found in all graves everywhere. What should be noted is the new technique of manufacturing pots: first, the new method of using moulds; second, the increased frequency of flat-bottomed vases; third, the increase of red ware; and, lastly, the increase of several varieties of bottles and miniature vases.

Whatever little material has so far been excavated on the Hathial range at Taxila is also instructive, mainly through the study of the pottery. On this site three main periods have been detected. The earliest belongs to what is called the 'Later Kot Kiji Culture' of the Early Bronze Age, almost similar to the cultural material of this period found at Sarai Kala and later dated at both sites by C14 to 2100 B.C. (calibrated). The second cultural phase is introduced by the typical material of the Gandhāra Grave Culture. The predominance of flat-bottomed, red burnished pottery so far observed over other materials suggests that this cultural phase probably belongs to Period III when iron had already come into use. The last phase belongs to the historical period. In this connection the evidence from Balambat is very significant, where two structural periods of stone masonry wall, along with storage or rubbish pits above earlier graves, have also been found. The pits are of the same type as those found at Loebanr III and Aligrama. The stone walls of the first period at Balambat are in one alignment, the longer arms being from north-west to south-east. They make up large rectangular halls probably used for residence. Contemporary with them are two circular stone rooms. As the materials include iron and copper objects, ground-stone celts, ring stones and terracotta human figurines, this is dated to Period III of the graves. The end of this structural period was abrupt. The newcomers ignored the alignment of the older houses. The new structures, which cut through the walls of the earlier period, have their walls running north-south and east-west and thus provide firm evidence of their later dating. It is in these new structures that we get the most advanced pottery along with improved iron

objects, and fireplaces in every room. For the first time diaper stone masonry is seen in the walls. Hence this second structural phase is dated to the sixth to the fourth century B.C. and the first structural phase to the first half of the first millennium B.C.

At Loebanr III, Stacul recognized a very significant single-period settlement below the superficial upper layers, which showed some river-pebble constructions. Human figurines and bulls of terracotta were found on the surface, obviously of a later date. The human figurines have pinched noses and flat bases while the bulls are of the same type as those found in Zarif Karuna III. The main settlement revealed two large-sized pit dwellings, oval in plan, and several small pits of different shapes. One large pit showed a step or a bench. Some hearths and fireplaces were also found. Similar but much deeper pit dwellings have been noted at Burzahom in Kashmir and shallower dwelling pits occur at Sarai Kala at the opening of Period II. It is natural to find them in this colder region of the north. Here metal objects were rare. Only one piece of twisted copper was found. An iron arrowhead has been recently recognized as intrusive from the upper surface. Other small finds from the main settlement include two green jade beads, two polished stone axes, a ring stone, a schist pendant, bone tools and hairpins, including two double-headed pins. However, the most instructive are the pottery forms and ware, among which, after the first season of excavation in 1968, it is recorded that 60 per cent was black-grey burnished ware and less than 2 per cent red ware. The first ware has been rightly recognized as an intrusion from the west. The pot forms include large and medium-sized jars, flat-based or mat-impressed bowls, *lotās* (water vessels) and *thalis* (eating vessels). Stacul has compared these pots, particularly the mat-impressed ones, with those found at Burzahom and at Sarai Kala in Period I, but the Sarai Kala material is very early, as it is found in the pre-Kot Diji period.

Birkot-ghundai, as published in 1978, has been stratigraphically divided into four periods.[37] The last is relegated to Period IV of the scheme adopted here. It has yielded miniature vases and an iron spearhead. Although the excavator does not make a gap, the penultimate occupation, associated with a wall built of large and middle-sized stones, is referred to Period II of the scheme adopted here. It is in this period that a human and an animal figurine, both of terracotta, have been found along with seventeen spindle whorls and two copper pins. This is preceded by a phase that is said to be ‘almost barren’ but has produced ‘disconnected bones of two human skeletons (scattered bones consisting of the skulls and parts of the upper and lower limbs)’. The lowest occupation is associated with the earliest wall built of river pebbles. It is here that a faience spacer-bead bone hair pin, bone and faience beads and a terracotta bull of the same type, as has been noted in other places, have been discovered. This is the first time that a terracotta bull has been reported

[37] Stacul, 1978, p. 139.

from such a great depth. The pottery is very instructive. Besides grey-burnished and gritty ware, the most important are the painted black-on-red sherds. The painted designs show, among others, a peacock, a bull, a star, a four-petalled flower and chequer – some of the motifs known in the Indus Civilization pottery. Although the motifs are obviously derived, yet it is not clear whether the pottery is of the Indus type or not. In the Ghaligai cave the painted pottery is found in Period II. It appears that in this backward region the painting tradition survived longer, as noted here in the earliest occupation, just as the horned deity painted on a grooved pot of the Kot Diji type is seen much later in Burzahom Period II.[38]

At Aligrama several trenches were laid to understand the settlement pattern.[39] In Trench A two circular pits and several walls built of irregularly shaped blocks of stone, set in pebbles, were found. Some of them made up rectangular rooms and were associated with floors. The pits were lined with dry-stone masonry. In Trench B the superimposed structures belonged to three phases. They were covered by alluvial deposits of the upper levels. Five pits 'for the storage of food-stuffs or other things' were also found, four of them also lined with stones. The settlement is supposed to have been ended by fire. Five inhumation burials, with legs flexed, were also found here. One of them in Phase II is associated with miniature pedestalled vases and four are placed in Phase III 'at the end of the life of the settlement'. Here spherical bowls and one iron pin were found. Phase II was the high point of occupation. Two main periods have been distinguished on the basis of finds associated with different strata, the earliest containing a funnel-shaped vase, a mat-impressed jar and tall drinking vases. It is the first time that mat-impressed pottery has been found in so late a layer. The second, which was the main occupation, has produced pedestalled bowls and cups, a bowl-on-stand, miniature vases and a four-legged theriomorphic vessel along with copper and iron pins, an iron arrowhead, beads and terracotta bulls. This second Phase is relegated to Period III of the scheme adopted here. Subsequent excavations at Aligrama provided more detail. Out of the new trenches laid, Trench F was limited to a small area available for excavation. Although five floor levels have been recognized by the excavator, he places all of them in the main period, equivalent to Period III of the scheme adopted here, though no iron material has been found here. The pottery types are all later, except a few survivals from the earlier period. Significant small finds are a bull, a toy wheel and a human figurine with pinched nose – all in terracotta. Trench K belongs to the historical period, dating from the fourth century B.C. to the fourth century A.D. The main evidence comes from Trench E, where the excavator divides his material into eight phases, later classified into three periods, in the last of which is a recent construction. It is only Phase

[38] Sankalia, 1974
[39] Stacul and Tusa, 1975 p. 298.

I that is relegated to the first building period and is almost depleted of cultural material in the succeeding phase. This is followed by a long-lasting cultural Period II, to which Phases II–VI are relegated. Six C14 dates were obtained from Pennsylvania University laboratory. Four of them give the following results: Period I (of our scheme) 1400 ± 40 B.C. and 1500 ± 50 B.C. (1600 and 1690 with MASCA calibration); Period II (of our scheme) 1460 ± 60 B.C. and 1140 ± 40 B.C. (1680 and 1300 with MASCA calibration).

Whatever the tests may be worth, it is difficult to rely on their basis for the exact dating of the different periods. As the main long occupation is referred to Period II, its cultural data are solid and hence relevant. The material published shows that here we have two sub-periods, upper and lower. No metal object is reported in this trench. One significant terracotta figurine has been found in upper layer 4. This has rows of pricked decorations on the chest, representing a necklace. Such terracotta figurines have been found at Balambat in the first structural period. This pricking technique is also known in the case of Iron Age pottery. Ringstones and saddle-querns have also been found here. If the material is divided into upper and lower sub-periods, the lower will give an early date. The lowest occupation phase has produced beads or spindle-whorls and a broken ringstone or macehead. The pottery is divided into black-grey ware, showing jars with everted rims, and brown-grey gritty ware, showing jars with outturned rims and bowls, either carinated or having a bulging belly.

Still more important than chronology is the extension of the knowledge of the cultural area. So far only three aspects have been noted. The first is the settlement pattern which, leaving aside a single cave at Ghaligai which is marginal to the main context, shows settlements on hill-tops or slopes, generally not far from the river bank. The settlements are in the form of either pit dwellings, as at Loe-banr III, or stone-built rectangular rooms, again characterized by several storage pits. The second aspect is the three types of burial rites, which, as is natural, vary in different places in the sequence. The third feature is the large number of pot forms, varying from hand-made pottery to grey and red wheel-made pots, sometimes burnished and mat-impressed, and very occasionally painted. The pot forms show many variations, like cooking vessels, *thalis* (eating plates), bowls, drinking vessels, bowls-on-stands, pedestalled bowls and cups, bottles, water pitchers, globular jars, handled vessels, jars with pinched mouths as well as ritual pots like visage urns and burial tubs. These pot forms show a pattern of life materially differing from that of the Indus Civilization and more related to a rural setting than to what follows in the second period of urbanization in the early historical context.

The next important item is the presence of terracotta human and animal figurines. As noted in the case of Timargarha graves and the settlement at Balam-bat, they played a

significant part in life. The figurines in the graves appear to have played a ritual part. Both at Timargarha and Zarif Karuna they have been found in the context of Iron Age graves or settlement sites. It is only at Katalai and Loebanr in Swat that human figurines are said to have been found in all types of graves, inhumation, cremation, double inhumation and burial with no traces of bones. However, a typological study is very instructive. The human figurines are all hand-modelled, with the face pinched, eyes and ornaments shown by pricking, the back of the head pressed by the thumb, the hands being only extended stumps. They are both male and female, the female breast being shown by a ball-like swelling. No appliqué technique is used as in the terracotta figurines of the Indus Civilization. One major type has the two legs apart, as in the examples from Timargarha and Swat. A Timargarha example has a crossband (*Chhannavīra*) across the body and the female figurines from Swat have necklaces shown by the pricking technique. This type is also shown from Balambat settlement site. The second major type has the legs joined. One example from Zarif Karuna and others from Swat. The Zarif Karuna specimen has a curved head-dress, described as 'fan-shaped', but it does not bear any similarity to the female figurines with fan-shaped head-dress from the Indus Civilization. On the other hand, the Swat examples have broad hips and are exactly of the same type as figurines from Taxila.[40] There is a third variety from Swat, which has a flat base, also found from settlement sites.

The only animal terracotta type is the four-legged bull found in Zarif Karuna and Swat. It has a prominent hump, its horns point straight forward and it has a short tail between its legs. This hand-modelled example is robust but it shows no detail of the muscles or the folds of the skin at the neck, as we find in the bulls of the Indus Civilization. The Zarif Karuna examples, all found in the graves of Period III (Iron Age), vary in size and present remarkably excellent specimens. In Swat the bulls, as for example at Birkot-ghundai, have also been found in the earlier period. As these bulls were found in the graves, they were probably cult objects.

An important ritual object discovered from a Period III grave at Zarif Karuna[41] is an alabaster figure of an Eye goddess with a flat base, showing a circle for the navel, the sideways swelling for breast distinguished by two circles, the mouth shown again by two circles and nose by one, but the two eyes are represented by two large holes on a broad head, which is slightly depressed on the middle top. The goddess has been compared by the excavator to similar examples from Mesopotamia.[42] This type of goddess never became popular in this part, appearing to be an import from the west.

[40] Marshall, 1951, Plate 132, n. 1.
[41] Khan, 1979, Plate XIXA, p. 85.
[42] Mallowan, 1947, Plate XXVI, nn. 3 and 4.

Other objects found are in bronze, iron, bone, ivory, stone, jade, faience and gold and relate to household goods, tools and weapons. Two jade beads from Loebanr III have already been referred to. The most numerous are the long pins with varying tops in bronze, ivory and bone. From Zarif Karuna only bronze pins have been reported. As they are quite long and in some cases associated with female skeletons, they are thought to be hairpins. From the point of view of varieties they have been classified on the basis of their heads: (a) globular showing a globule below flat top; (b) globular showing a globule below convex or umbrella-shaped top; (c) pins having a conical top with no globule below; (d) pins having a looped head; and (e) pins having a pyramidal shape. Zarif Karuna examples, being in bone, do not show the globule but have a flattened base below the top of the head. The two bone pins from Loebanr III have a double-headed top on a stem which, in one case, tapers and, in the other, is concave. The second form has led the excavator to recognize in it an anthropomorphic shape and hence made him compare it to an example from a Shang layer at Cheng-Chom.[43] But when we remember that almost all types of pins are derived from those known in Hissar, it is reasonable to look for these examples to the same source. What has been described as a copper wand,[44] which shows double figures on the top, could as well inspire the present type. Copper needles, antimony rods of copper and ivory, pendants of bone and copper, ear-rings and finger-rings of both copper and gold have been found. In one example an ear-ring has bead-like attachments, and the finger-rings are all made in coils.

Several types of beads of different kinds of stones have been reported, and a spacer-bead in faience has been found at Birkot-ghundai. The most common bead is barrel-shaped in quartz, agate or carnelian. There are also cylindrical and dumb-bell-shaped beads. From Chitral come carnelian beads with white etching on the surface, as well as large-holed, biconical bead-shaped objects, described as net-sinkers or spindle-whorls. Copper and shell bangles with twisted bands have been reported from settlement sites. Two green jade beads of biconical shape from Loebanr III and a curved jade pendant from the Ghaligai cave are important comparable material. The Ghaligai specimen is ascribed to Period I of our chronology by Stacul. He compares the pendant to Japanese *magatama* of the last centuries B.C. and connects it with an earlier Chinese prototype. But such curved pendants are also known in Hissar, though no jade has been found there.

The most important of the tools is the copper hoe from the Ghaligai cave, where a copper spearhead with long blade was also found. A number of stone tools, including stone celts, saddle-querns and ring-stones are known in this culture. A copper chisel was

[43] Cheng, 1960, p. 36, Fig. 9.
[44] Schmidt, 1937, p. 196, Fig. 117; also Plate XLVIII, H. 4885.

found at Aligrama in Trench F. There are two types of bone arrowhead reported from the Ghaligai cave – one with two barbs and another with a hollow base. The same cave also yielded several bone awls or points and spatula. These bone tools have been compared to those found at Sarai Kala and Burzahom. But these types are also known in Hissar, from where so much cultural material is known to have been derived.

There are several types of iron objects, the most common being flat-topped nails. No iron has been found at Zarif Karuna. Timargarha graves have produced a leaf-shaped spear-head and a ladle with a scooped cup at one end and, at the other, a double loop, as well as an iron cheek-piece from a bridle. From Balambat settlement site several objects have been recovered, all hailing from the last occupational period. They include thick loop-headed needles, a nail, a three-flanged arrowhead, a finger-ring of one coil, a hollow fire-blower, a chisel with a tang and socket at one end and flat working edges at the other, a hooked carpenter's tool, a knife-blade, and sheep shears made of a flat iron bar hammered into two broad blades. It is natural that we should expect more material from the settlement site than from the graves. From a Chitral grave a tanged and barbed arrowhead is reported. From Buner came a leaf-shaped arrowhead having a tang at one end, a quadrangular javelin-head and an iron pin. From the top layer of Loebanr III comes an iron arrowhead.

The iron cheek-piece from a Timargarha grave of Period III has three holes in the middle. K. Jettmar writes:

> It is clear that it belongs typologically to those groups which played a great role in the Steppe belt between the tenth and sixth centuries B.C. Its shape is rather similar to late pieces in Eastern Europe (sixth century B.C.), also in iron, but this could be due to a parallel evolution, i.e. a simplification caused by the use of the new metal. So a more exact dating depends still upon the question when iron arrived in the Indian subcontinent. Today the trend is to assume that it came earlier than in the steppes.[45]

In this connection it is pertinent to quote the evidence of horse burials found along with graves in Swat and also of a series of rock carvings found at Gogdara I in Swat.[46] The study made by Brentjes places the carvings 'within a period of time going from the second millennium B.C. to the beginning of the first millennium B.C.'. The excavator adds:

> Some stylistic details, such as the representation of carts drawn by animals, suggest the hypothesis that, at least for a certain period of time, the authors of the petroglyphs belonged to a group stably installed in this area. In such a perspective it might be possible to assume a connection with the population who left the graveyard of Butkara, Loebanr, and the site of Aligrama (second millennium B.C.).

Brentjes further comments:

[45] Jettmar, 1967, p. 207.
[46] Brentjes, 1977, pp. 92–

> We can also get to this datation through analogies with similar images, since we are dealing with the repeatedly documented reproduction of two-wheeled battle-carts or race-carts with a driver, in the same way as they are represented in the late Bronze Age in a large area going from China up to Sweden, and to North Africa. . . . From the historical background, the general view of the images coming from Gogdara I must be placed in the period of the 'war-chariots' that lasted up to the beginning of the first millennium B.C. and in this way the datation resulting from the tombs would be confirmed.

If this dating is accepted, the attribution of the 'battle-cart' to the grave people may be plausible, and such an attribution will throw light on another aspect of the pattern of life of these people. However, such chariots were also used by the Achaemenian emperors for hunting.[47] In any case the presence of war chariots in a context of the early centuries B.C. itself is important in so far as it represents a type of war machine so well attested in Sanskrit literature.

To sum up, the whole material presents a new cultural horizon that marks a new stage of socio-ethnological change in the entire zone of Central Asia, that must be distinguished from the Early Bronze Age Civilizations ending with the collapse of the old urban setting. The social change is fundamental and should be understood in the new framework of a widespread cultural movement affecting the life of the people at large who were isolated in hill pockets and survived with their traditional pattern of food-production. Although the new change did not accelerate the process of production, it did bring about a change in the general set-up of the rural population and brought them closer together in a way of living that was economically not much better but socially and culturally far different from their earlier experience. This new life, in which the horse and chariot played a definitive role, had more leaning towards the hilly north and west than towards the distant plains of China or India. The hills of the west hold the key to unlocking the secrets of these people. A few stray materials, like jade, which appear to have come from China, cannot disturb the concept of this cultural zone. Similarly, some painting, which may have borrowed some motifs from the Indus Civilization, should be understood in the wider setting of the material from the west. Thus the cultures, which were originally found in the graves but are now traced in several settlement sites, provide the material base from which the literary evidence of the period should be understood.

[47] Frye, 1963, Plate 89.