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-4-

Petroglyphs as Evidence for Religious Configurations?

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In 1979, with Prof. Dr. A.H. Dani as my counterpart, I began to carry out systematic documentation and interpretation of the historically important petroglyphs in northern Pakistan. I had engaged in this difficult and time-consuming venture because I had hopes of obtaining neglected source material for the political and cultural changes that had taken place in these remote mountain valleys. In an archaeological respect, northern Pakistan, between the westernmost extensions of the Great Himalaya in the south with the Hindukush and Karakoram in the north, was almost a 'black box'. However, rock art and rock inscriptions might offer definite and detailed insight to those trained in reading signs of the past.

I was lucky enough to have found excellent collaborators, and in the decisive phase I also had full support from the authorities in Pakistan. That was especially welcome in view of the quantity and the importance of the material which had gradually become known in a long chain of discoveries beginning in 1979. More than 2,000 Brahmi and approximately 100 Kharosthi inscriptions (in "Buddhist" Sanskrit and Gandhari) are known to this day. Very few have an official character and many of them should rather be classified as "*graffiti*". More than 500 Sogdian *graffiti* were also recorded and few in other Iranian scripts, and languages such as the Chinese characters were also found. Tibetan and even Jewish travellers have documented their presence in the Indus valley (JETTMAR 1987).

The readings, still incomplete because there has been a considerable increase from each campaign, were done by Prof. Dr. GÉRARD FUSSMAN (*Collège de France*, Paris), Prof. Dr. OSKAR V. HINÜBER (University of Freiburg), Dr. NICOLAS SIMS-WILLIAMS (British Academy, London), by Dr. L. SANDER (Museum of Indian Art, Berlin), as well as several Sinologists, among them the late MA YONG (Beijing), and by Dr. KWASMAN (Heidelberg) for the Hebrew lines.

As for the rock art, only a few isolated images of palms, footprints and animals would allow a very early (Mesolithic or Neolithic?) dating mainly on the base of stylistic comparisons and heavy repatination. Similarities to the range of motifs in distant rock art provinces (e.g. southern Siberia) and the strong repatination of the images, other images and engravings can be assigned to the Chalcolithic Period and the Bronze Age. They render wild and domestic animals (mainly large cattle - including the zebu), humans (often hunting, dancing or transformed into fantastic beings), as well as fantastic masks¹⁰ and identifiable objects like altars, huts and standards. One chariot was depicted, solar discs are frequent and the stylistic diversity is surprising, especially, when we compare with roughly contemporary ceramic assemblages studied in the catchment area of the Swat River. But even there, between the consecutive strata representing the locals' slow progress we have a sudden insertion, namely, that of a culture brought by immigrants who had previously been influenced by the traditions of the Far East.

For the early period I did most of the classifying work myself. This approach was possible because of my long-term involvement in Central Asian archaeology. Therefore, I had built up a large private library of books written by Soviet authors. And so, in this way, I was able to discern several waves of mounted warriors as well. They left engravings and bruisings in different variations (Scythian, Sarmatian) of the Animal Style of the Northern Nomads indicating dates between the seventh century B.C. and the third century A.D. Some of them settled down while travelling from Central Asia to South Asia dominating and organizing the local population. Their descendants used motifs of the Animal Style as heraldic signs. Statelets in the mountains were created by such immigrants. Animal Style art is known by stray finds as well. I handed over one piece, a bronze plaque, to the National Museum at Karachi, while another was found by the police (already badly mutilated by its discoverers) but still complete. It is a decorated gold ring which weighs 16 kilos (JETTMAR 1991).

During the time when the Northern Nomads made their inroads, Chinese envoys had reached Gandhara and returned. They described the toughest paths through the mountains as "Hanging Passages". The Chinese leaders needed well-balanced cooperation; the locals had to provide guides and provisions. That was certainly a stimulus to a higher political organization. The statelets that resulted soon became a part of the realm of the Great Kushans. Their rulers, especially Kanishka, used the route through the Karakoram as a strategic link to the oases on the southern fringe of the Tarim

basin. For a while, they were under Kushana rule. The preachers of Buddhism used the same tracks on the way to the Far East. Finally, the shortcut through the mountains crossing the Indus valley became a regular line in the system of the Silk Roads used by merchants and artists as well as by pilgrims and adventurers. (JETTMAR 1987a).

The integration in the Buddhist world is clearly reflected by the library of a Buddhist monastery that was found in a hollow *stupa* near Gilgit. I have presented several arguments to prove that the Gilgit Manuscripts were not written in Gilgit, but somewhere in Baltistan, most probably near Skardu. It was there that the Patola Shahis, who are mentioned in the colophons of the manuscripts, had their capital which may have been the main scene of Buddhist activity in the state of Great Palur.

The rock carvings and inscriptions found in the Indus valley around Chilas clearly show the tradition of another centre of Buddhist activity, with close connections to Kashmir as well. Perhaps this is an area which had been ruled by the Daradas, who had their capital in the Kishanganga valley.

Analysis of the rock carvings by an art historian with training in Buddhist studies is needed. Some *stupa*-images show a decorated rosette instead of the *anda* - perhaps alluding to a solar disc. In other cases we see tower-like structures covered by pyramid shaped roofs, topped by a pole with flags or by a fork. Often elementary requirements of statics are neglected. Thus, I proposed to explain such figures as "vertical *mandalas*" or *yantras* rendering the world-view suitable for people living between mountains where the horizontal dimension is of minor importance. In cosmological concepts the world is divided in superimposed spheres of increasing ritual purity. Often the vertical *mandalas* have no basis to stand on. They simply hover in the sky. Such figures are frequent in Baltistan and Ladakh.

Sogdian merchants reached the Indus valley from the northwest, presumably, via Chitral. Their caravans were protected by escorts of Chionitic (= Hunnish) warriors. They could freely express their devotion to their own non-Buddhist deities. However, the military protection organized by the Hephthalites ended at the borders of their own territory. Beyond that the traders were confined to certain enclaves. The main emporium and a bridge over the Indus were near the modern village of Shatial. Here their presence has been attested by no less than 500 inscriptions almost exclusively names and patronyms in Sogdian, additional remarks are rare. Since the Sogdians were not allowed to proceed further, they exchanged their goods against those brought by Buddhist traders from the south and returned home. The situation changed after the invasion of Tibetan armies during the eighth century A.D.

Chinese attempts to maintain supremacy in the Gilgit valley only succeeded through a daring campaign in 747 A.D. A few years later, the whole area including the former state of Palur came under Tibetan rule.

The next step in the religious development is an "anti-Buddhist atavistic movement, integrating neo-Hindu elements". As early as 1975 I had postulated such a tendency when I wrote the *Religionen des Hindukush* (1975, pp. 312ff.). Later on (1982, p. 294), I identified the partisans of this movement with those men who in the surroundings of Chilas had decorated the rocks with "aggressive" bruisings, often with no consideration for the earlier and more artistic petroglyphs. The efforts of many generations had transformed the banks of the Indus River near Chilas into a sacred sphere. In the following period we are under the impression that some people were bringing in the crude art of political propaganda into a religious setting.

In my following contribution (1984) I clearly defined the spectrum of pertinent elements. There are images of axes, round discs, men standing on horseback with arms stretched to the sides and exaggerated palms. Moreover, we find wild goats, and a late and schematic variety of the "vertical *mandala*". The derivation from the *stupa* is hard to recognize. So I concluded that strong local traditions and the influence intruding from Multan, the centre of the sunworshippers, had resulted in this religious configuration. Well attested in Sindh at the time of the Islamic conquest is the "*Saura*", a Hindu sect exclusively "devoted to the worship of the sun-god Surya" and primarily centred "at the sun-temple of Multan". They were the organizing force, though many local beliefs and customs were incorporated (MACLEAN 1989, pp. 18ff.).

We do not know how long Buddhism preserved its formerly dominant position; it is only sparsely attested near Chilas. Possibly, the believers of the *Saura* sided with the *Bon-po*.

The Persian geography *Hudud al-'alam*, written at the close of the tenth century A.D., explains that the king of Bolor, the *Bulur-inshah*, declared himself to be the "Son of the Sun". He, therefore, does "not rise from his sleep until the sun has risen". (JETTMAR 1975, p. 301).

Such an idea is near to concepts of Tantric Buddhism. The decorated wheels are not out of place in such a context. However, the militant anti-Buddhist character is confirmed by two petroglyphs observed not far from Chilas. One of them I found to the west of the bridge leading from the Karakoram Highway towards the mouth of the Hodar valley. The scene depicts a frantic battle between attacking warriors led by a tall "solar hero" with a round disc replacing his head - and another armed man defending a *stupa* which shows the transition or the influence of the *mChod-rten* with

Special Tribute Edition Vol.XXXI, Nos.1 - 2, July and December 2008

"inverted dome" known in several variants, well represented in Ladakh (TUCCI 1932/1988).

At the mouth of the Thak valley another petroglyph includes two men engaged in a "duel", one under an emblem featuring a *stupa*, the other one under a solar disc. This kind of solar worship did not disappear without lasting consequences. The special affinity between the ruler and the sun was integrated in the concept of sacral kingship which formed part of the ideology maintained by the state of Gilgit. It was especially well preserved in Hunza. There the king, belonging to a collateral line of the Gilgit dynasty, had the title *Ayasho* explained as the "Heavenly One". In public meetings the *Ayasho* had to appear after sunrise.

It is perhaps not by chance that the ritual use of the axe was maintained within the marriage ceremonies of the Hunza people. The bridegroom had to present himself with his axe: After burial the axe was placed on the grave for several days. As a confirmation we might regard the fact that such axes (with their blades curved upwards) are surprisingly similar to those depicted on the rocks of the Indus valley. Between the last use of historical petroglyphs and the earliest reports of foreign observers, there is a lacuna of 600 years. The appearance of this stylistic and semantic group of carvings with round shields and axes must be seen in the context of a still unsolved problem, namely the origin of a later stratum of the population, the Shins who were already mentioned.

It is only in some of the valleys north of the Gilgit River that the Shin are densely represented. They are, however, dominant on both sides of the Indus, between the gorges north of the Nanga Parbat and those below Shatial. Moreover, they are the principal inhabitants in most of the republics in the eastern part of Indus-Kohistan (JETTMAR 1983, p. 506). In the areas where they are integrated into a caste system, they hold the top-position. They were formerly almost exclusively goat breeders, delegating agricultural activities to the women. The domestic goat occupies a similar position to that held among the Indo-Aryan tribes by the holy cow. Linguistic arguments indicate that the Shins are relatively late newcomers in the mountains. Their proper homeland is said to be in Pakli in the Hazara District. This is not improbable because Pakli has paths which lead (and ancient migration routes) northwards through the eastern part of Indus-Kohistan and up the Kishanganga valley. In these side-valleys, archaic Shina-dialects are spoken. Certainly, these areas were under the influence of centres in the plains, we could in theory speak of a "perverted Hinduism".

69

A.H. DANI (1983, pp. 228–231) saw this possibility. He assumed that the men who had engraved the axes on the rocks (he called them "Battle Axe People") could have been the ancestors of the "Shina-people". Wisely, he conceded that local roots should also be taken into consideration.

Accepting this proposal, we would have to date the appearance of the Shin into the tenth century at the latest because the solar cult was already mentioned as typical for Bolor by the *Hudud-al'alam*.

We could say that there is no solution to this problem because, except for a few Buddhist rock-carvings made by people arriving from Ladakh, the production of rock-art was found to end in most of the sites around Chilas shortly after the beginning of the second millennium A.D. But we can close this gap, used as an argument for the massive intrusion of Shins into the Indus valley around Chilas, by conceding that the common conviction - a homeland in Pakli - is correct. Would that be in accordance with the economic background of the Shins, i.e. goat breeding? Should we, therefore, not look for the best breeding grounds for domestic goats in the highest mountains of the wild goats region?

I am indebted to Prof. MICHAEL CASIMIR for providing me with an important insight on goat breeding. In fact it does not endanger the mountain vegetation. On the contrary, the goat is the one domestic animal perfectly adapted to areas with damaged or partly destroyed forests through exaggerated clearing. Even in such reduced zones a rather large population can make a decent living by goat breeding.

One of the Far Eastern pilgrims, *Huishao*, a man of Korean ancestry, had an astonishing interest in ecological observations. In his description of Bolor we learn that only burnt tree stumps are visible on the mountains. Moreover, we are told that in the mountains north of Gandhara under the rule of the Turks the vegetation was lost after the mountains had been "burnt down". In the state of Kapila the mountains are now treeless and lack shrubs as though a forest fire had ravaged it.

This area is so well adapted for the rearing of domestic goats that a comparable expansion of goat breeders took place not long ago. From a centre in the Alai valley the *Bakrwal* expanded into the Pir Punjal Range, using previously unoccupied meadows.

These goat breeders, however, migrate to the forelands in wintertime in order to avoid the snow-covered mountains. However, for centuries there had been a barrier stopping any northward expansion. Behind the westernmost part of the Himalayan Range and its prolongation between the Indus and the Kunar, goat breeders cannot move their herds southward in winter. Passes are

blocked by snowfall and avalanches. So the goats must remain in the centre of the mountain valleys during winter. That can either be done by keeping them in pens or by using the leaves of the holly oaks as fodder. Their leaves are evergreen like the twigs of the juniper (*juniperus semiglobosa*), the wild goats winter diet.

However, a similar feeding of domestic goats needs the intervention of the herdsmen. The lower branches of the holly oak are dry and thorny, only the fresh leaves above are digestible for goats. Rearing up on their hind feet - often depicted in New Eastern art – the goat cannot reach high enough. The herdsmen must cut the branches with iron axes fixed to long handles in order to collect the fodder for their herds.

It has always been taken for granted that areas with great stands of *quercus balont* are "naturally" suitable for the keeping of goats. P. SNOY (1993, pp. 67-69) proved that human intervention is needed - which explains why goat breeding replaced cattle breeding at a relatively late date. But migrations from the border zone of the mountains were favoured by political and religious circumstances in the forelands.

Hindu influence was brought to these border areas by refugees from the plains where Muslim armies had been victorious. After the retreat from Kabul, the Hindushahi Kingdom had its capital at Waihand. For a time the Darada kings in the north considered the new political power near their border as a potential danger. In the early eleventh century A.D. the Ghaznavid campaigns brought on the final collapse of the Hindu Shahi Kingdom. Waihand was lost and again hosts of refugees turned to distant mountain valleys. Not much later, Swat was conquered and the first mosque was under construction.

Among the fugitives were the scions of the Hindushahi family. They were well received in Kashmir and at the court of the Daradas in Gilgit. They were appreciated as noble and valiant knights. It is possible that they brought bodyguards recruited from the local tribes in the forelands with them and installed them in privileged positions. These trained fighters were welcomed in Gilgit. According to MORGENSTIERNE, "Shin" may be explained as a term for "troops", "military body". This could explain the surprising parallels between the shamanistic practice everywhere propagated by the Shins, and the general shamanistic tradition of the Turkish peoples. Turkish mercenaries had formed the backbone of Iranian and northwest Indian defence against the Arabs, before they themselves entered the service of the Islamic powers.

During violent combats against the attacks of Arab armies, perpetuated since the end of the eighth century, the Kabul Shahis had based their defence

Special Tribute Edition Vol.XXXI, Nos.1 – 2, July and December 2008

on strongholds erected on inaccessible cliffs. Maybe this strategy was taken over by the local tribes in the foothills north of Gandhara and spread further to the east. Even along the upper Indus we find the ruins of mountain lairs built by villagers whose irrigated fields where at the bottom of lateral valleys.

There are many cultural elements pertaining to this apparently Hindu wave, especially cremation. The ashes of the dead were preserved in boxes made of wood, stone, or clay (BIDDULPH 1880, pp. 113f.). That *sati* (burning of the widow on the pyre of the husband) was practised is another, even more typical feature in addition to the appearance of a caste system. Apparently, the families who were situated in the lower castes - *Kamin (Kramin)* and *Dom* – were of foreign origin. The language of the *Dom*, preserved in an area where Burushaski was the language of the peasants, is the best proof. The descendants of the former administration are called *Rono*, almost certainly related to "*Rana*", a term for administrators in Nepal.

The general impression, which can hardly be avoided, is that there were different but interacting infiltrations from the southern flank - the migration of the goat breeders and the incorporation of the menial castes as well as the personnel for the administrators. If my interpretation of the sequence of political events is accepted we may submit a simple explanation. Namely, that the Darada Shahis supplied their own economic and administrative system in those parts of the Tibetan realm that had been entrusted to them by the Ruler of the Tibetan Empire. This policy persisted even under the next dynasty of Gilgit, the *Trakhane* (we do not know whether this dynasty came from the borderlands of Kashmir or from the north via the Mustagh Pass to the Shigar valley).

This was an attempt to trace the political situation: A migration or perhaps several interrelated movements could exploit the situation created by depopulation in the main valleys of the north as a result of the fighting between Chinese and Tibetan armies. The newcomers from the southern border of the mountains were partially integrated into a state that preserved many traditions going back to the earlier arrangement. The Kafirs were found in the west in an all-around defence-position whereas in the east there were Tibetans, who were not only reached by the first but also by the second Buddhist wave.

It is now certain that religious life in the pivotal position of the mountains, blocking the way to nomads, must be seen in the above context. The southern mountain zone, however, is in many respects enigmatic. For a long time it had not been converted. However, through Pakhtun determination even the Dardic tribes that maintained their ethnic identity became fervent

Sunnis. Perhaps some evidence could be recovered by intense and wellprotected fieldwork. That has not been done so far. In any case, we come across a stratum comparable to the mountain-Hindus in the western Himalayan region.

In the north at least the kings at Gilgit and those in their dependent states were interested in preserving the festival and their rituals, exhibiting their exalted religious position.

But there are possibilities to reconstruct the religions of the invading Shins and of their predecessors. The earlier settlers, who had been the inhabitants in the borderlands between Burusho and Dardic tribes escaped into areas that were not under the control of the Shins. It is possible that they maintained their ancient traditions.

Similar investigations have been undertaken among Dardic settlers in Ladakh. Here we meet a population who descended from waves of immigrants. My observations were confirmed by ROHIT VOHRA, who has now become a specialist in this field. The earlier settlers called themselves *Minaro*. Apparently, they did not concentrate as much on goat breeding with strong religious overtones as did those who arrived at a later period. Thus, it is possible that in the intervening period the invasion of the Shins had reached the areas from where the immigrants to the east had come.

A similar chronological stratification can be assumed for the emigrants now living in the Kunar and its lateral valleys. The stories told about the origin of this group, who spoke a language closely related to Shina, would accordingly refer to the leading families of the second wave. On the other hand, the self-designations Paloto and Dangarik would refer to the first lower, earlier immigrants.

For a systematic comparison between the Phalura-speakers and the eastern Dards in Ladakh the material is very restricted. But it seems that the Kalash - before they had been integrated into the periphery of the Kafirs -, like the Pashai-tribes, had many common features with the easternmost Dardic settlers in Ladakh, and so it can be concluded that they had been integrated into the belt of the Hindu mountain tribes.

There are some other ways to reconstruct the ethnographical specialities of the Shina-speaking invaders. Some spearheads of the advancing Shins entered so far that they remained isolated until an attentive visitor encountered and described them. This may help discover the social structure of the remote past. It will be shown how we may connect modern and ancient reports for such an attempt.

Using concrete observations and the general concept presented here, I was able to rearrange the material contained in the book. I have avoided a radical change of my previous report. In many cases the origin of spiritual concepts and their expressions through their behaviour in rituals and in festivals will remain enigmatic. Even the struggle to understand the petroglyphs has shown that the inhabitants of the valleys around Chilas had no coherent system of beliefs. They may have arrived during different periods from different regions. It is only after long periods of alignment that we can expect an increasing similarity among the local cultures. The small population of the still pagan Kalash (1,500 people in three valleys) has no homogeneous system, and rapid changes have been observed there.

When I began writing this book I secretly hoped that a coherent system could be presented for the main Shina-speaking Dardic group that would be as impressive as that of the "Kafirs" in the Bashgal valley where ROBERTSON had found the material for his visionary view. Now I know that even Kafiristan was not as homogeneous, much less the Dardic populations. But they may nonetheless contain elements such as the heritage of nameless tribes which are rooted in a remote past. This was possibly neither the first nor the last wave of Hindu influence. A subsequent wave might have brought a type of caste system to the Gilgit region. In the same context BIDDULPH (1880, p. 114) mentioned cremation and "that suttee was formerly practiced". BIDDULPH considered "taboos against the cow and domestic fowls" as a further confirmation of Hindu preponderance. The main beneficiary of these regulations was the "top-caste", the Shins. They are goat breeders who delegate agricultural work to their womenfolk. Therefore, it seems quite reasonable that they replaced the cow, the holy animal of the plains, by the goat, their own cherished domestic animal. Goats were considered pure and sacred while cows and their products were considered dirty and soiling. So we might speak of a "perverted Hinduism".

Linguistic arguments indicate that the Shins are relatively late newcomers in the mountains. According to their own tradition they immigrated from Pakli into the Hazara District. Ecological studies reveal that intense goat-breeding is optimal at the fringe of mountains where virgin forest has already been destroyed by irresponsible clearing. Near the site in Chilas high quality carvings of hunting and battle scenes can be found, possibly revealing the culture of the Hindushahi war-lords and their liegemen. But that is no more than a rash assumption. For this later period, the study of rock-art is no longer a decisive historical source. Instead of wishfully expecting a solid approach through systematic excavations, we should base our inferences on

74

the close examination of the ethnographic material. I would not consider it fully exhausted. In fact, there has been astonishing progress since the publication of the German version of my book.

A starting point for new conclusions was provided during the course of my first and only trip to Ladakh (JETTMAR 1979, p. 342). It was at this point that I discovered that Dardic settlers, the so-called Buddhist Dards from the Da and Hanu area, had come in two waves in different periods and with divergent cultural traditions.

The first wave of people known for burying their dead, were called *Minaro*. ROHIT VOHRA confirmed the observations I had made. He was a citizen of India and was able to travel more freely and visit villages not accessible to foreigners. VOHRA (1989) used his chance with great enthusiasm. His studies have become very useful contributions, and would earn the approval of trained linguists in many respects. He tried to distinguish between the "*Minaro*"-Pantheon of the first wave - still preserved in the ritual songs of the *Bononah*-festival, confirming ethnic identity and the "Live Pantheon" invoked on all other occasions. In addition to the "Live Pantheon" there is a female deity, *Sringmo Lha-mo*. The taboo of the cow is associated to this deity. There is no such taboo mentioned in the *Bononah* traditions and we might therefore conclude that the taboo was only introduced by the second wave of immigrants. There is unanimity that both waves came from the same area: Gilgit and "*Brushal*" (most probably the area centred in Yasin).

We should next consider the assumption that in the meantime the Shins had conquered or infiltrated the points of departure. I do not know why VOHRA did not discuss this possibility, but it cannot be excluded. After all, the Shins were immigrants from Pakli. They had possibly fused their inherited cult of the domestic goat with the local veneration for the holy game, the "*Mayaro*", namely, the wild goat and the ibex. For this line of argumentation it is essential to refer to the language called "*Phalura/Palula/Palola*" or "*Dangarik/Dangarikwar*" which is spoken in some villages of southern Chitral. In MORGENSTIERNE's excellent study (1941), this language is presented as a dialect of Shina brought by late settlers arriving from Tangir.

Other traditions point to Chilas as the original home. Information that I received during my fieldwork suggests that there were several immigrations. The first one possibly entered Chitral while the Gilgit valley was still a part of the kingdom of the *Patola* or *Palolo Shahis*. This would explain the first group of names. In Ashiret, a village of the *Dangariks* in southern Chitral, I was told that their ancestors did not consider the cow a taboo. The "*Minaro* caste" may have indicated that the aversion against the cow was a peculiarity of the Shins

Special Tribute Edition Vol.XXXI, Nos.1 – 2, July and December 2008

but not of their predecessors. Thus, we could explain the second group of names. The term "*Dangariké*" was translated as "cow people" for foreign visitors. (cf. BIDDULPH 1880, p. 113).

The third area in which this abhorrence was conspicuously absent is Hunza. At first glance this may come as a surprise. The study by IRMTRAUD MUELLER-STELLRECHT confirmed the position taken up by LT. COL. DAVID LOCKHART ROBERTSON LORIMER, in his article "The Supernatural in the Popular Beliefs of the Gilgit Region". LORIMER used notes from Hunza and Gilgit without differentiating, and turned out to be correct. The people of Hunza had fully internalized the main spiritual concepts of the Shina-speakers. They even succeeded in bringing these concepts into a closed system in which religious actors, including shamans, witches, and their partners find their proper places. The values decisive in an attempt to rank persons and functions are more clearly expressed than by the Shins themselves.

However, what I had been told by my friends RHABAR HASSAN and ZAFARULLAH BAIG in 1982 indicates that until the recent Islamic "purge", a previous autochthonous religious system had persisted. The cosmos was believed to be divided into the realms of mighty protectors, such as the "owners" of nature, as in Siberian religions. It seems that a female deity with the spectacular (semi-Islamic?) name "*Khoda-mo*" (cf. the *Lha-mo* of the Buddhist Dards) had a central position in the goat-complex of the Shina-speakers. The Hunza people believe that the clashing of horns when *Khoda-mo*'s bulls are fighting causes thunder. Does this mean that *Sringmo Lha-mo*, who definitely belongs to the "cow-abasing Live Pantheon", was raised to the present dominant position because the mixture with local ideas had already taken place in Gilgit? Or, should we consider the rise of a female deity to the central position as a negative reaction to the Islamic influence? Certainly, the first impact of Islam did not mean immediate and perfect conversion.

When I wrote my overview in 1974/75, the Shina-speakers of Indus Kohistan on the left (eastern) bank of the river were still living in a forbidden tribal area. Thus, it was impossible to study them. In the meantime, however, the construction of the Karakoram Highway had made it possible for me to do my fieldwork in these areas. Moreover, RUTH LAILA SCHMIDT (Oslo) has published an excellent study.¹ Therefore, we know that the inhabitants of this area were forced to withstand the impact of the Pakhtun tribes that had been set in motion by the Yusufzai invasion of Swat.

¹ [Editor's note: see Ruth Laila Schmidt's article in this volume.].

As a "Holy War" the attacks against the Dardic infidels were legitimate. This shock was firstly absorbed by well-timed conversion, as well as the adoption of the socio-political system of the Pakhtun aggressors. The periodical exchange of land (*wesh*) in the interest of extreme solidarity caused changes in the spiritual sphere as well. The religious heritage was nearly reduced to hunting customs and beliefs. The valleys farther to the southeast also adapted the *wesh*-system. However, in some respects they have preserved their ancient traditions better. Thus, in Gor and in Chilas, the memory of male deities who protect the community is still alive as is the veneration of holly oaks in Gor.

The "progressive" abolition of the divinely imposed restrictions for their exploitation proved to be an ecological mistake. The Dardic settlers on the banks of the Kishanganga (also called Nilum) and in the lateral valleys, possibly descendants of those who were known to the Kashmiri under the ethnic name Darada, are not yet well studied with regard to linguistics or cultural traditions. The Shina dialects found there are likely to be more interesting than believed thus far. It is accepted that they belong to the frame of one and the same language. But a man from this area whom I met in Muzaffarabad told me of a village near to his home in Folowai, with a quite incomprehensible dialect. However, the ceasefire-line, the rather casual position of Pakistani and Indian forces on January 1, 1949, has made access difficult from both sides and completely "off limits" to foreigners. To find informants in Muzaffarabad or Srinagar, respectively, would be pure chance. The best solution would be to incite interest among those who are "on duty" (a boring experience in any case) on both sides of the ceasefire line. Inquiries should be supplemented by similar research among speakers of the southern Dardic languages in Swat and western Indus-Kohistan. In these areas, the tribes had been exposed to contact with more orthodox Islamic neighbours who brought a rigid value system. Prior to that, lively interactions with Buddhists and Hindu sects can be assumed. The preservation of cosmogonic myths and the remembrance of deities cannot be expected here.

In this state of religious development the pantheon and its mythical background is replaced by a narrative concept, that of heroic tales in a semihistorical context. The religion of the Kalash belongs to this late type. PETER PARKES (1991, p. 90) has discussed the post-mythic alternative, stressing that one reason for the transition had been "repeated Islamic domination." The scanty information on this southern belt, discussed in the final chapter of the *Religionen des Hindukusch*, can be amplified by sagas interwoven in the *Political History of Kalam Swat* by ABD AL HAQ MANKIRALAY and translated

> Special Tribute Edition Vol.XXXI, Nos.1 – 2, July and December 2008

by A. R. PALWAL. It is possible, that one strain in the ethnic texture of the Kalash, and the main element among the forefathers of the Shins had once been neighbours in this contact zone. This would not only explain the common concern for goats, but also similarly sophisticated ceremonies, restoring primordial communion of all beings during the main festival.

For an effective improvement of the work I called *Die Religionen des Hindukusch*, so many aspects must be studied and restudied. I am convinced that I would have achieved at least part of this complementary work myself had I not become the victim of my new interests. During the years in which I took part in the investigation of rock-art in the Indus valley, I was only able to make two ethnographic inquiries in Indus-Kohistan which focused on sociohistorical questions. Some of the gaps will be filled through the ongoing fieldwork of European scholars.^{*}

We may expect even more useful contributions by the members of the new educated class, the "intelligentsia", now emerging in the cultural centres of northern Pakistan. Earlier initiatives were favoured by the nobility and, thus, Chitral, which had preserved its political identity up to 1969, was in the lead. Other princely families offered manuscripts, postponing the publication of my findings. Today, there is a much broader involvement including people in different social positions. The programme of the *Second International Hindukush Cultural Conference* (Chitral, September 1990) contains the abstracts of 18 papers written by authors from Pakistan, the majority born in or living in the mountainous regions. The domain of foreigners is restricted to Kalash studies. This programme makes another tendency perfectly clear.

As BIDDULPH wrote his *Tribes of the Hindoo Koosh*, the geographical term was a cipher for a much larger area centred in Gilgit, including several minor Dardic peoples. Now the term is used in a narrower sense. (The Afghan Hindukush was sparsely treated for obvious reasons).*

Those who wanted to speak of Swat or the Northern Areas were almost out of place. This reflects the situation: other centres of scientific discussion and the promotion of regional studies are growing within the Northern Areas, in Gilgit, Skardu, and Hunza. Perhaps Chilas and Dassu (in Indus-Kohistan) will soon be on the list.

The centres could even enter into competition with one another, only adding healthy debate. There are attempts everywhere to write the local languages in Arabic characters. Thus far, there is not much readiness to

^{* [}Editor's note: Cf. the paper of Jürgen Frembgen in this volume.].

^{* [}Editor's note: Cf. Georg Buddruss' paper in this volume.].

integrate diacritical marks as proposed for Shina by GEORG BUDDRUSS on the basis of his intimate awareness of the phonetic necessities. A part of the new production is devoted to local history which includes information on ancient beliefs and customs. BUDDRUSS gave a very positive report on this type of work written by SAIYID MOHAMMAD YAHYA SHAH printed in Gilgit in 1989.

I felt it necessary to stimulate and support these most sympathetic activities. But we should also be self-critical and re-discoveries of known facts should be avoided. At the end of such deliberations the same result was apparent: The materials I had collected in more than 30 years should be published as soon as possible in the language understood by practically all participants, English. Thus, the English version now goes to press.

At the end of this introduction I want to express my gratitude to those who have helped me on the long and difficult process which led to this book. I collected much of my material in the valleys of Dardistan. In many cases I was assisted during fieldwork. Even the fruitful discussions with colleagues and friends often took place there.

ADOLF FRIEDRICH, who held the chair of *Völkerkunde* at the University of Mainz, had turned my interest to the mountain peoples of Pakistan. He gave me the opportunity to join his expedition in 1955/56. A number of our local counterparts took him for a saintly person; he was an extremely conscientious and altruistic character (quite an exception among the sceptical and self-centred scholars of the post-war German academic establishment). He perished that winter before the end of his first expedition after an exhausting stay in the Kalash valleys. He was a great loss.

Other participants in this team were GEORG BUDDRUSS, now emeritus professor of Indology at Mainz University, and PETER SNOY, recently retired from the South Asia Institute, University of Heidelberg. We collaborated for many years. What I received from them was always much more than what I offered in return, which were, for the most part, only hypothetical concepts. During the second expedition (1958) I learnt to understand the importance of an ecological approach through the exchange of ideas with my partner KONRAD WICHE from Vienna, Professor of Geography at Mainz University. He, too, died young.

Before we returned from Pakistan I worked in Swat supported on a grant from the *American Philosophical Society*. It was there that I met GIUSEPPE TUCCI. He was a genius in his large fields of interest. Thus, I was glad to see that in one of his last studies "On Swat. The Dards and Connected Problems" (1977) he came to results similar to the ones I had proposed in a parallel but independent reconstruction (JETTMAR 1979). His "Preliminary

Report on two Scientific Expeditions in Nepal" (1956) is even more important. In western Nepal and the sub-Himalayan valleys he had found an archaic culture which had reacted to the impact of Buddhist ideas. The resulting religious configuration was integrated in a "secondary form" of the *Bon* religion. That syncretistic form was greatly reduced but survived when Hindu intruders from the plains became dominant.

This sequence may be compared with the religious stratification in the Dardic areas, which I slowly disentangled using all of the sources I had available. I had seen the parallels between Dardistan and western Nepal and mentioned them in the German version of my book. Perhaps I shall proceed in this direction in a final contribution by trying to include the ideas of GIUSEPPE TUCCI.

I became friends with our Scandinavian colleagues, HARALD SIIGER, KLAUS FERDINAND, and LENNART EDELBERG during the *First Hindukush Cultural Conference* (held at Moesgård, Denmark, in 1970). GEORG MORGENSTIERNE presided over the conference which was well deserved, as his linguistic studies offer the guidelines for discerning the different threads in the cultural patterns of the mountain peoples. The *Atlas linguistique* by GÉRARD FUSSMAN (CNRS, Paris) has a comparable function today.

From HERMANN BERGER, my colleague at Heidelberg University, I learned much about the religious traditions of the Burusho.² A study on the festivals in Dardistan written by IRMTRAUD MÜLLER-STELLRECHT, professor of ethnology at Tübingen University, was only the first in a long list of useful contributions. In those days international cooperation in the field of Dardic studies had not been established yet. Most of those who participated in the *First Hindukush Cultural Conference* were mainly interested in the traditional culture of the Afghan "Kafirs", i.e. the Nuristanis. I mentioned these scholars in the German version of my book and in the relevant part of the English translation. Among the popular books on Dardistan written since 1975, I want to mention JOHN STALEY's *Words for my Brother* (1982) as the most sympathetic and substantial effort.

With one exception, the Austrian Haramosh Expedition of 1958, supported by the Österreichische Himalaya-Gesellschaft (with a contribution from the American Philosophical Society of Philadelphia, already mentioned) my work was funded by the German Research Society. Their administration was extremely fair to my family as well, as they did not receive any

 $^{^2}$ [Editor's note: Cf. Heinrich von Stietencron's obituary on Hermann Berger in this volume.].

maintenance allowance from my employer, the *Museum für Völkerkunde* in Vienna. Except for financial assistance to bring back a sort of documentation of the Dardic past, the most I was graciously given in order to take part in the expedition was unpaid leave. In the last stage of my ethnographic period after the appearance of the German version of my book, the *Volkswagen Stiftung* was most helpful. Their generous grant allowed me to make the transition to my rock-art studies, while I was replaced at the *Felsbildstelle* of the *Heidelberg Akademie der Wissenschaften* by KURT TAUCHMANN from whom I received unfailing, selfless support.

Without the noble friends I found in Pakistan my work would indeed have come to naught. And so, I learned to appreciate Pakistan and its people. Even in difficult times this feeling of solidarity strengthened me in my work. Sadly, some of my most important spiritual partners have already passed away. Thus, I will speak of them as representatives for so many others.

In 1955, arriving with ADOLF FRIEDRICH's expedition at Tangir, we were given a hearty welcome by ISMAEL KHAN, the P.O. (Political Officer), who was responsible for two valleys recently and voluntarily integrated into the State of Pakistan called Darel. Ismael was born in a village of the Astor valley. His mother-tongue was Shina. Using the rules of the game taken over from the British administration in a wise way he was supported by the local jirgas. And so, we experienced many happy days in a time before the valleys slowly returned to their former selves, famous for being "dark and bloody grounds" (to use an old "colonial" term). I met ISMAEL KHAN again several years later; he was disappointed in the failure of his intentions for well adapted reforms. He had retired and was ready to become my partner in an expedition which turned out to be full of discoveries. Clusters of rock-carvings were shown to us in many places of the Indus valley, more than my colleagues could find in all the subsequent years. These discoveries were a result of the sympathy ISMAEL KHAN had gained as top administrator in Chilas. His sudden death in the following winter put an untimely end to our promising collaboration.

SHAHZADA HUSSAM-UL-MULK of the *Katore* family, formerly governor at Orosh, Chitral, still had a way of life similar to that of his ancestors. When he felt that he had been deprived of the crown which he had expected after the death of his brother he revolted in the last days of British rule. He then became aware that his reaction was inappropriate in a fast changing society and concentrated his energy on preserving and documenting the "Culture of Chitral". In this respect he understood the tasks and the

Special Tribute Edition Vol.XXXI, Nos.1 – 2, July and December 2008

chances provided by history and ethnology much better than many of my distinguished colleagues. "For every people", he wrote to me in 1968:

...there are times when the achievements of the past are no longer understood and therefore neglected. Foolish persons believe that the future will be much better and quite different. In such times, the foreigner is more to be trusted than the old generation, especially, when this foreigner can boast of scientific erudition. The older generation should then hand over their knowledge to the trusted foreigner. He should present it in a language widely known, in this case English. In such a roundabout way, the locals would be informed by an authority which they accept more readily than their own leaders. Perhaps in future there would be schoolbooks in Chitral telling the story of their own land.

Regrettably, he was not able to see more than the beginning of my work with his own eyes. Regarded as a holy man and mourned by his compatriots, he died after a protracted illness in 1977. I hope that my book on Chitral will fulfil part of the task as he had expected.

Born as son of one of the favourite courtiers of SHUJA-UL-MULK, my friend WAZIR ALI SHAH was promoted to crucial positions in the administration of Chitral. Due to his intelligence and erudition he was given the task of cooperating with visiting European scholars. Thus, he became a most effective counterpart of Professor GEORG MORGENSTIERNE. I prepared the edition of an English version of the *New History of Chitral* with him, which he had already translated and published in Urdu. Supported by a grant from the *German Research Society* we collaborated in the attempt to understand and evaluate the notes of HUSSAM-UL-MULK. Wazir ALI SHAH knew the practices very well and, in addition, the ideology of the State of Chitral as conceived by a progressive lobby among the administrators. That was more than FREDRIK BARTH was able to gain during his short visit. However, he would have needed historical information not available at Chitral.

The chapter in this book, covering religion in Chitral, was discussed with WAZIR ALI SHAH always beginning from some remarks in the "*History*". He still remembered the contributions made to the manuscript by NASIR-UL-MULK, the former ruler. What we practiced was in fact a sort of hermeneutic anthropology, a way to recognize the spiritual importance of indigenous interpretations. I had intended to tell him more about my conclusions because

I felt that the "model" had been misunderstood by all of the previous European visitors. But when I arrived at Chitral for the *Second Hindukush Cultural Conference* I learnt that he had died on September 15, 1990.

With other personalities of the social elite I had short but effective contacts, for example with the late Mir HUSSEIN SHAH, known as "Raja Gupis", and with Raja Ali AHMAD JAN of the House of Nager, who had been helpful to GÉRARD FUSSMAN as well. The first authentic information on the beliefs of the hunters I received from Shah KHAN, uncle of the Mir of Hunza, a dashing officer in the army and an excellent wing-commander in the Pakistan Air Force. On my early expeditions, RHABAR HASSAN, the head constable in Gilgit, was attached as guide and interpreter to our group. His merits are praised in the books of RAINER MARIA HERRLIGKOFFER. He had been an efficient organizer for many expeditions such as the one that conquered Nanga Parbat. He was very effective during our travels together. Mr A. SAMAD helped in the same capacity. Mr GHULAM NABI, who is now making his way in civil administration had been the first college student from Baltistan in 1955. He was chosen by the administration to act as my guide on my first expedition.

It was then that I met ABDUL HAMEED KHAWAR for the first time. He was preparing the publication of his historical studies. During my later visits to Skardu I met Mr. ABBAS KAZMI who was well informed and highly motivated. The book I published in 1975 was translated into English by ADAM NAYYAR. He later did fieldwork in Astor and condensed his findings into a thesis, thus far only available in German (1986). We then travelled in Indus-Kohistan together. I still expect him to begin the linguistic studies which could be his lasting contribution to Dardic studies.

Some technical remarks are necessary here. The simplest problem we faced was the transcription of the names of places. LENNART EDELBERG had placed a map of the languages in Nuristan and the bordering regions at my disposal for the volume *Cultures of the Hindukush*. This has been printed with minor corrections. The transcriptions used by the English and American military aviation maps have been retained. It was also convenient to retain the English transcriptions of the languages if these translations already existed. I followed the principles used by GÉRARD FUSSMAN. In a linguistic atlas written in French he writes the names of the languages according to the English tradition. The question still remained as to how the specific ethnological word material should be recorded, i.e. the indigenous expressions used for divine, demonic, and human personalities, institutions, objects, and activities. In this respect I decided on a summary solution following the advice of GEORG

> Special Tribute Edition Vol.XXXI, Nos.1 – 2, July and December 2008

83

BUDDRUSS. In the text I used one of the simplest systems of rendering. This system had been used by MORGENSTIERNE in his translations. Such a simplification had previously been used by PETER SNOY in his work on the Kafirs.

Professor FATEH MOHAMMAD MALIK (*National Institute of Pakistan Studies*), who had held the "Iqbal Chair" at the University of Heidelberg, sponsored by the Government of Pakistan, was the first colleague to whom I conveyed my intention to publish a shorter and handier edition of those parts of my work on the mountain religions which deal with the traditions of Pakistan. FATEH MOHAMMAD MALIK is not only an expert on the spiritual and poetic heritage of Pakistan, as he proved in numerous lectures at the South Asia Institute; he is also a prolific writer and has published several books. Naturally, I asked him for his advice.

In the meantime I was offered a convincing solution. The Lok Virsa (National Institute of Cultural Heritage) had already made a reprint combining two of my earlier studies under the title Bolor and Dardistan. It had also quickly published an original text, a booklet which summarized the results of my early rock-art studies in the Indus valley. Both books were well received. There were several editions and especially in the Northern Areas I met many people who had acquired and studied them. Naturally, they proposed corrections and additions! This was the very reaction I wanted for my contributions.

Now I must express my gratitude to UXI MUFTI, who built up the *Lok Virsa* of which he was the director for many years. He had agreed to publish the present volume as well. He was my friend, and I am sure that he will take care of a fitting presentation and rapid distribution of the present volume.

I considered some parts of my book, especially the chapter called $Schlu\beta bemerkungen$ (final remarks) at the end of the part devoted to the religion of the Shina-speakers and Burushos as fantasy, too sweeping to be true. I was never happy with this bold attempt to trace a continuous line of development from the time of the hunters to that of the early Aryan peasants and pastoralists. Later, Iranian tribes appeared in the mountain valleys and enriched the heritage. They became Buddhists and ruled the state called Bolor. The Buddhists who followed were under neo-Hinduistic influence. Finally, Islam got the upper hand without destroying the traditions that were deeply rooted in the past.

In order to make this chapter more realistic, I included all vestiges of the past: rock-carvings, stray-finds and historic sources. Buddhist legends contained in the Tibetan texts studied by F.W. THOMAS (THOMAS 1935, 1951,

84

1963) were taken into consideration as well, but the results remained inconclusive.

I felt the need to use additional sources for my investigations and I became aware of the fact that the inscriptions and the rock-art which I had seen since 1971 when I returned to my fieldwork after a break, had been completely ignored. The first attempt (made by Sir AUREL STEIN) was forgotten. So I tried to convince my colleagues that the rock-carvings should be studied without further ado. GÉRARD FUSSMAN reacted quickly and successfully. However, no one else was interested. So I presented a programme under the title "Archaeology before Excavations" during a meeting of the South Asian Archaeologists in Western Europe in Naples, 1977. The project was actually realized with Prof. Dr. A.H. DANI as my counterpart. In 1979, we visited Chilas and Hunza. During the next years, Professor DANI joined the German team. His work in translating the graffiti was quick and effective. I produced a long series of articles myself; the inscriptions were deciphered and checked by linguists from many countries -Germany, France, Britain, and China. I tried to offer interpretations based on my familiarity with the local conditions and the religious complexes which I had described in my book written in 1975. Comparisons with petroglyphs in southern Siberia were often illuminating. The research continues today. Instead of the three clusters already published in my German book in 1974 we now know of an enormous number of sites combining rock-art (starting not later than in the third millennium B.C) with inscriptions, mostly dating back to the first millennium A.D. Evidently, we made a major discovery in the field of Central Asian archaeology.

But in spite of many attempts to see similarities or even continuities, I must conclude my efforts and state that the religious concepts revealed by the petroglyphs are considerably different from the last pagan religion of the area, that of the Kalash. They are called Kafirs, which simply means "unbelievers".

Even in territories which turned to Islam during the last centuries, we find unexpected patterns. The chronological hiatus is simply too big. In areas where artistic carvings would allow the assumption of a religious and, in most cases, a Buddhist content, the production was stopped approximately in the eleventh to twelfth centuries A.D. Apparently, the earlier population disappeared and the next settlers were intimidated by the expressiveness and the artistic perfection of the enigmatic images. In the valleys north of the Gilgit River the carvings are perpetuated as they were, rather poor and monotonous.

In any case, between the heyday of rock-art and the time of the earliest ethnographic records there is a black period of 600 years and every attempt to fill it by more or less probable suggestions, will remain guesswork.

In the central areas of the state with Gilgit as its capital, the king held a dominant position; there was a time where the "*Ra*" was needed for all of the rituals performed during the local festivals. Until the first half of the nineteenth century the rulers of the dynasty were considered *dewaakos*, offspring of deities. They were responsible for the fertility of the land, animals and humans. The mythical ancestor *Shiri Bagertham* was venerated like a god. Another figure, *Shiri Badat*, had a demonic character. When the Europeans arrived, many things were already obsolete, but they were able to get relevant information, and in Hunza the tradition was perpetuated.

Evidently, cultic kingship was a dominant and structuring factor of the religious heritage. When and through which influences did this concentration become typical for the State of Gilgit? In this respect a short notice in the Hudud al'Alam (1937, p. 121) may provide us with the deciding hint: the ruler of the country called Bolor prides himself on being the "Son of the Sun". He is not allowed to rise from his bed before the sun has appeared. Shammáses, i.e. sun-worshippers survived in Kashmir as a despised sect until the sixteenth century A.D. However, a solar king would fit quite well into the religious traditions of the Iranians in Central Asia. In this context it is important to know that for a longer period, the rulers of Gilgit were Buddhists, but in their realm the followers of Bon had a strong position. The Bon-po, however, maintained the ancient Tibetan beliefs which attributed essential functions to the king for the welfare of the state. His life and funeral were exactly regulated. He held a position in the centre of the world (TUCCI 1970, pp. 246-275). Hindu influences reaching Gilgit, perhaps through refugees from the state of the Hindu Shahis, may have confirmed such concepts. The charisma procured in this way was essential for the stability of the state as long as the queen had a similar position. Only her sons could be heirs to the throne. Thus, it was only in the very last moment that the ruler of Hunza formally accepted Nizari Ismaili Shiism as state religion, early in the nineteenth century A.D. But even at this point the ruler was not ready to accept foreign preachers who could disturb the conversion that he himself had arranged. No foreign saiyids were tolerated.

The other current of beliefs and rituals is interwoven intimately in a tide of ethnic movements. They had a joint area of departure, the southern border-zone of the mountains from Bajour/Mohmand to the Pir Punjal. During the Buddhist period this fringe of the high ranges lived in peace and kept a

permanent and dense population. But this was not auspicious for the ecological equilibrium. In the travelogue of HUEI-CH'AO, translated by FUCHS (1938, p. 444) it is mentioned twice that there were neither trees nor other vegetation in the adjoining mountains, but only burnt tree stumps. This description was stressed for the area between Kashmir and Little Bolor and repeated for the hills along the way between Kashmir and Gandhara.

Until recently the Shins were the dominant caste in Gilgit and its environs. In Indus-Kohistan they occupied most of the valleys on the left bank of the river. The area in between, with Chilas as the main township, was called "Shinaki", i.e. the proper land of the Shins.

The intricate economic system of the Kalash, which maintained a similar lifestyle, was splendidly analyzed by PARKES (1987, pp. 637–660). In this system wild goat, ibex, and markhor were even more appreciated than domestic goats. Hunting was considered a religious activity. Wild goats, so it was assumed, are herded by pure female spirits; goat breeding is an imitation of that which exists on a higher level as well.

It is generally accepted that the Shins are not the aboriginal inhabitants of the areas they settled in. The area from which they originated is known: Pakli on the left bank of the Indus, near to its descent from the mountains (BIDDULPH 1880, pp. 38, 161). But the tendency to develop goat-breeding into a coherent and spiritually accepted system was not restricted to Pakli. It is possible that the system existed along the southern forelands of the Pir Punjal Range in the east, and very far to the west, in areas formerly occupied by Dardic tribes. The "livestock symbolism" and the "pastoral ideology" (PARKES 1987) of the Kalash goes back to this ecologic zone.

Here the rock-carvings allow us to define the period when axes came into general use as weapons or implements and became a religious symbol as well: they are depicted in some sites of Chilas and in Hodar West. The dating is no earlier than the eighth century A.D. Presumably, most of these carvings were made later, early in the second millennium A.D. Until recently the same type of axe was used in Nuristan. In most cases, the Kalash used the axe in rituals. Thus, we can conclude that somewhere on the northern border of the lowlands there was a metallurgical production centre which distributed a superior implement which allowed the migration of the goat breeders deeper into the mountains.

We can make the assumption that the mythology of the fairies = *peris* (*rachi, baraai*) evolved in these same border areas, and, subsequently, was spread into the mountains. It finally reached the Burushaski-speakers and was

developed to extreme sophistication by them. But that is not the only theory; an earlier one has not been quite forgotten.

So we have to integrate historical information about the lowlands north of the Punjab into this model. The Hindu Shahis, who had retreated from Kabul to Ohind (near the confluence of the Swat River and the Indus), were finally killed by Mahmud of Ghazni. Bhimapala (1021–1026 A.D.) was the last king. Previously, they had certainly integrated mountaineers in the ranks of their army and those who did not want to surrender took flight into the hills. This event might explain the Hindu ideas and institutions accepted in Gilgit during this time.

The Hindu Shahis built hill forts as strongholds of resistance. Perhaps the typical settlement pattern of the Shina speakers lies in a multitude of small fortified hamlets on the mountain tops with roots in this martial tradition. It was still prevalent when Mirza Haidar invaded a valley deep in the mountains in the winter of 1528/29. The local population was described as Kafirs, i.e. pagans. I am inclined to believe that he had crossed the Karambar Pass in order to plunder all villages in the Ishkoman valley. With rich booty and many slaves he returned home in spring. The incredible tales relating to the habits of the locals can be corrected and confirmed by what I was told by the former administrator of Hindi, a village of Shins integrated into the state of Hunza. During spring, when the wells containing the wine of the last harvest were opened, there was a period of mock fighting. All hamlets situated on the heights participated in this game. This may explain the assessment that men fought until their meal was ready. They then separated and returned to their homes for lunch. After lunch the fights continued throughout the afternoon. These contests must have been strictly regulated, because the gardens of the valley, rich in fruits, were not destroyed. This complex did not survive to the present, but some of its traditions are still extant in certain remote places.

After the conquest of Swat by the Yusufzai, the Dardic tribes came under heavy pressure and lost many of their former villages on the southern border. The Dards, however, stopped the raids of the Pakhtuns, undertaken in the name of Islam, by accepting Islam themselves, including the political system of the aggressors. The villages were restructured as communities joined through land sharing; each male member had a claim to an equal share. Land and people were organized according to congruent systems only allowing a re-distribution after a number of years (*wesh*). Such redistributions were still performed in some remote areas only a few years ago. In the valleys of Shinaki the tensions caused by this system were increased by the fact that

88

people belonging to previous hierarchically arranged "castes" now had the same rights. Craftsmen, however, received separate rewards.

The system stopped loss of land to the Pakhtuns, but political involvement reduced cultural activities. Of the rich spectrum of previous activities only hunting customs and beliefs remained. Thus, not much of the pre-Islamic tradition is preserved. What survived became part of a private mythology which was condensed in the upper parts of the Swat valley into an imaginative historical concept which became known only after my book had already been published (in 1975).

In conclusion, we discern a northern zone where an old kernel of beliefs centred on the institution of the sacred king. Then we see a wave of spiritual concepts which originated in the south with the development of a new lifestyle with many chances for periphery poetic elaboration. A further impact from the South brought the acceptance of a political system which allowed the preservation of ethnic identity - but not more.

There is one more factor I have tried to reconstruct which is, geographically speaking, at the periphery of the scene in which the spiritual developments and ethnic movements took place. However, it is certainly of great importance. I am speaking of the religious heritage of the tribes still living in the headwaters of the rivers Alingar (Majegal), Pech Bashgal, and perhaps even east of the Kunar. They were able to defend their pagan religions until the last decade of the nineteenth century A.D. and were therefore called Kafirs, heathens, by their Muslim neighbours, a term perhaps accepted by them, because it was near to the designation they used themselves. As we mentioned above, subsequent to their enforced conversion, their territory was called Nuristan = Land of Light and we now speak of them as the "Nuristani".

Their religious heritage was apparently never replaced by the influence of one of the world religions. The character of their pantheon composed of deities with highly individual characters, has preserved peculiarities from the Indo-Iranian period - that was confirmed by a glossary added to my book by PETER PARKES. I observed that the description of the Village of the Souls in the mythological tales of the Kafirs is ruled by the great goddess and divine priestess *Disani/Disni*. That is similar to that of the *Vara*, the refuge of the faultless people in the early Indo-Iranian transitions. Buildings which may represent the proto-type of such fantasies were actually found in Northern Afghanistan, Turkmenia and Uzbekistan, on both sides of the Oxus. They were excavated by SARIANIDI, who spoke of a Margiano-Bactrian Complex. There were ceremonial centres used during the yearly feasts of tribal

federations. The culture to which these monuments belong preceded that of the Iranians, who began their migrations to the eastern steppes from here.

It is evident the proto-Indo-Aryans, relatives of the tribes who invaded the Punjab in this period, where they had been present as well. It is possible that during the contest between the Iranian worshippers of the *asuras* and the *Daévayasnas*, a local federation (with its priestly tribe) had to quit the field. They crossed the Hindukush range southwards and got to (modern) Nuristan. There they could not only preserve their language - intermediate between Aryan and Iranian - but also their social and religious tradition: They developed a highly individual kind of warfare which protected them against major inroads for almost three millennia. The young hero would sneak into the neighbours territory and kill any man, female or child. After a safe return he was entitled to hold a feast of merit with the support of his clan. He was allowed to marry and have descendants. Often, there was no return from the raid. But that was accepted as demographic regulation. Craftsmen were integrated in these communities of free peasants but in a submissive position.

The Dardic, i.e. Indian, tribes appearing on the southern flank, had to adopt this system of self-defence. The Pashai were very successful and for centuries they formed the outer line of defence. Only when this barrier was destroyed - a process which started in the sixteenth century was a direct attack on the Kafirs possible. With modern guns and the guidance of the experienced generals of Abdur Rahman, the founder of the modern state of Afghanistan (now radically destroyed), the "Kafir fortresses" lay in ruins after a few years. Neither the high passes nor the dangerous approaches along the raging torrents rendered protection any longer. But the few extent documents (SCARCIA 1965) allow us to recognize that the local pantheon was not of the archaic type.

Only a small pagan minority, of a formerly substantial people, have preserved their ancient religion in Chitral in the valleys Rumbur, Bumboret and Birir. For a long time it had been exposed to "Kafir" influence and perhaps the people were ruled by invaders from the Waigal valley. *Kalashum* is known as a collective term for the nine villages, who share the same language in the Waigal valley. Possibly, they brought this designation to the Kunar and its lateral valleys where several kingdoms were founded. After their dominant period they lost more and more of their former territory. But during this process they transformed their earlier - Dardic - religion which had certainly been influenced by the transition to intense goat breeding by an extraordinary act of acculturation.

90

Prasun was the religious centre of Kafiristan as the main temple was situated there.* Chitrali-Kalash spiritual leaders visited Prasun, and returned with a message that the deities of Prasun were looking for asylum in the valleys of the Kalash. This resulted in a type of religious recovery but did not lead to any martial action because the Prasun would have never stood a chance. The state of Chitral with its elite of mounted warriors was a superior adversary that had resisted several waves of invaders albeit facing heavy losses. Instead, through peaceful customs and inter-human relationships the European visitors were inclined to find an Asian Elysium in the three valleys, a place of eternal peace and smiling bliss. Some archaic concepts, lost or incomprehensible in Nuristan, were noted there. The Mithraic religion, which had become very popular among the legionnaires of Rome, evidently had one source in the ceremonial centres of eastern Iran. The mythical background of the images depicting crouching animals (snake and scorpion) in the most holy scene as well as the slaughter of a bull can be reconstructed on the basis of Kalash beliefs. However, a chance has now been offered by the Kalash to reconstruct the ancient religions of the Dardic people.

Another peripheral population left unmentioned in my text but studied later on by myself and one of my students, ROHIT VOHRA, is perhaps more interesting in this respect. We now know that there were two Dardic emigrations which reached Ladakh. The first was undertaken by the *Minaro*, the second by the *Machnopa*. The first began in the Gilgit region when Burushos and Dardic immigrants from the south were still under the rule of a dynasty which maintained the traditions of Tibetan rule. The second indicates the influence of the Shins who offered a new, extraordinary position to goatherding. This made me realize that a part of the so-called Dangarik speaking Phalura could be descendants of the nameless Dards who had settled in the valleys around Gilgit before the arrival of the Shins.

But the main enigmatic factor, not represented in this scheme, is the intrusion of Islamic ideas and institutions. The mechanics promoted acceptance but, apparently, with many delays and relapses which are unclear.

The date of conversion within the different regions is difficult to come by. Hashmatullah Khan who was very well informed was inclined to date the first preaching of Islam in Gilgit around the twelfth century A.D., in the period when the *Tarakhani* dynasty ascended the throne. But these rulers were not interested in the efforts of the first preachers of Islam: six holy men, all of

[Editor's note: Cf. Georg Buddruss' article in this volume.].

Special Tribute Edition Vol.XXXI, Nos.1 – 2, July and December 2008

them *Saiyids*. They are still venerated in the ancient shrine at Danyor which is held sacred by the Shia community.

A foreign ruler known as Taj Moghul reached Gilgit from Chitral and introduced Nizari Ismaili Shiism as the dominant Islamic faith. But the locals soon returned to their former beliefs. However, in Chitral and in upper Gilgit Ismaili influence persisted.

The rulers of Skardu, the Maqpons, dominated the region and sent their armies as far as Chitral; the Shia domination in Gilgit and Nager was thus strengthened. Then Shinkari and Indus-Kohistan were converted by Sunni preachers. They introduced a very strict, hidebound construction of Islam and recognized the organization of property rights based on a model known from areas conquered by Pakhtuns. The land was divided into communal ownership and then re-divided in regular intervals (*wesh*). The introduction must have taken place around the seventeenth century A.D.

The most solid dates for the proof of conversion are chronograms found in the decorative carvings of a mosque. The earliest mosque was found in Altit: 955 A.H. (1548 A.D.).

This would prove that in the non-Ismaili areas an enlightened minority accepted Islam in the sixteenth century, while the villagers remained pagans. Their acceptance of the new faith was still incomplete when the earliest British explorers arrived. BIDDULPH writes about old-fashioned people who had asked to be burnt with all their belongings. The women arrayed in their jewellery leapt into the flames of the pyre. That had been demanded last by a man who died in Darel in 1877 (BIDDULPH 1880, p. 114).

From this, HOLZWARTH concluded that paganism persisted much longer than actually presumed. He considers the report of Mirza Haidar on his successful "Holy War" against the Kafirs of Baluristan in 1528 as a full confirmation.

This explanation is perhaps not appropriate when accessing the difficulty of the problem. If Mirza Haidar had found Muslims as well he did not mention it. "Holy War" is the simplest justification for a raid, which was often hardly more than slave-hunting.

What we must insert into this picture is that the mountains served not only as refuge for pagans, but for Muslims as well, namely, those who were endangered elsewhere because of heretic concepts. As they could read and write in Farsi they were well accepted and used as administrators and for diplomatic activities. Mirza Haidar wrote an extremely interesting chapter on the religious sects of Kashmir, including the Nurbakhshi sect who became victims of their religious zeal. Mirza Haidar proudly declares that none of

them would escape the death penalty in the case of their affiliation being discovered. We know that they escaped to Baltistan where a strong community remains to the present day. But Mirza Haidar had previously seen "many of the Nurbakhshi elders in Badakhshan and elsewhere". If there had been contact between these elders and those in Kashmir, then it certainly took place across the mountains.

In Badakhshan, the strongest political and military forces during the time of Mirza Haidar's early visit in 1588/09 A.D. were the cursed Mula'hida of Kohistan, i.e. Ismailis under the leadership of Zobir Rághi, and later under Shah Razi-ud-Din, who was finally killed by a rebel among his own supporters (ELIAS and ROSS 1972, pp. 217-277). Even after defeat in the open field their secret teachings went on; the tradition was preserved by the educated members in the community. As an example, we may quote the rediscovery of numerous copies of a Gnostic compilation called "Umm al-kitáb" in Chitral and, finally, Hunza! The Gnostic concepts contained in these pamphlets have recently been studied by several scholars. The results are presented in a larger context by HALM (1982, pp. 113-198). The text is a splendid part of the Islamic gnosis; essential parts were conceived no later than the eighth century A.D. They were certainly not meant to be spread among the villagers in the mountain valleys, in Chitral or Gilgit. They were induced to obey their elders and to get the scraps of their wisdom. But such scraps were gladly accepted, especially, when they were considered to be of great poetic perfection - or after the accepted tendencies had been confirmed. Women belong to the realm of forces which hinder men in remembering their spiritual origin - the eternal light. This is a justification of local beliefs that women have a deficit in purity and are, therefore, condemned to be subordinate in social structure.

Even in the beliefs of the Nuristanis and the Kalash we find such philosophical concepts fascinating and convincing. Ideas with a similar background appear in the books forming part of the *Bon-po* traditions. They are certainly extended into the spiritual world of the Kalash: HELMUT HOFFMANN described what he saw as elements in the north-western mountains "a Hellenism in the broadest, sense influences from Greek esoteric religion along with national Iranian religions in their orthodox and heretic Zurvanistic form and, naturally, Islam as well".

I accepted this formulation with enthusiasm, but could not say how that had been possible if most villagers were illiterate. There had possibly been a stratum of educated persons, who had preserved their sacred texts with great care, exchanging ideas over large distances. Perhaps this had been the medium

to diffuse these ideas across Central Asia. But the Islamic period of transmission was very long (a millennium!) and more important than previously assumed. "The Sufis have legitimated so many heresies. They know nothing of what is lawful or unlawful" (ELIAS-ROSS 1972, p. 436).

If we include the period when Islam was represented by a sparse but educated minority, then its period began much earlier. But the reconstruction of that period is not my task. It is the task of those who would like to write a final chapter for the *Religions of the Hindukush*.

(Translated from the German by Hugh van Skyhawk)

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Inst. Sml. Kult.	– Instituttet for sammenlignende
Consistent and the state of the state	kulturforskning, Oslo
IsMEO	- Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo
	Oriente
JAS	- Journal of the Asiatic Society, London
JASB	– Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal,
	Calcutta
JRAS	- Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society,
	London
MAGW	– Mitteilungen der Anthropologischen
	Gesellschaft, Wien
Mem. ASB	- Memoirs of the Asiatic Society of Bengal
N.F., N.S.	- New Succession, New Series
NTS	– Norsk tidsskrift for sprogvidenskap
PGR	– Pakistan Geographical Review
SA	– Sovetskaja arkheologija, Moscow
SAI	– Südasien-Institut der Universität Heidelberg
Sb.	- Sbornik (collected works)
SE	– Sovetskaja Etnografija, Moscow
V.A.Skrifter	– Det Norske Videnskaps-Akademi i Oslo.
	Skrifter
VDI	– Vestnik drevnej istorii, Moscow
ZDMG	- Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen
	Gesellschaft
ZfE	– Zeitschrift für Etnologie, Braunschweig
ZS	– Zentralasiatische Studien (des Seminars für
	Sprach- und Kulturwissenschaft Zentralasiens
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