

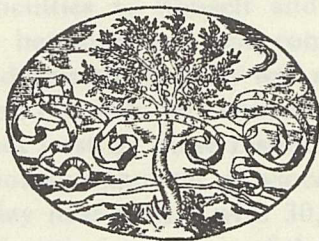
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THE DARDS AND CONNECTED PROBLEMS: GIUSEPPE TUCCI'S LAST CONTRIBUTION

The last extensive and conclusive article by G. Tucci was called 'On Swat. The Dards and Connected Problems'. It appeared in *East and West* (1977: 9-103) together with two appendices, one by K. Enoki, and the other by B. Brentjes, respectively. The same volume contains his review of my book, summing up the study of several Dardic religions (Jettmar 1975: 187-459). My article on Bolor, dealing with the political history of the area in question appeared in the same year (Jettmar 1977).

It can now be said that Tucci's article which had posed considerable difficulties to himself and his co-editors, because so many heterogeneous and controversial topics were quoted and discussed was very well aimed. Solutions which he expected can now be confirmed by new arguments, last but not least by those resulting from the discovery of a previously unknown province of petroglyphs in the Indus valley near Chilas with 30,000 images and more than 4,000 inscriptions. Most of them are short, we should call them graffiti, mentioning the name of the visitor plus religious formulas and personal additions, e.g. the destination of his journey (Jettmar 1989; 1991; 1992; 1993).

In this meeting, devoted to the memory of this great scholar, I can demonstrate the importance of Tucci's views and observations only in a few selected points.

1. When Tucci made his evaluation of the excavations which he had initiated in Swat, he saw the possibility of a connection between the name of a township in Swat 'Massaga' and the 'Massagetae' – the name of an important tribal confederation in the steppes (Tucci 1963: 28; 1977: 51). That became the starting point of a blown-up criticism, stressing that the Dardic tribes settling in Swat were Indians, and the Massagetae most probably Iranians, so they should be clearly distinguished.

These reproaches are not well founded. Several dynasties in the lands of the Dardic tribes were of Iranian origin (Fussman 1980; 1982), they came from the north by the trails already familiar to their ancestors. Their art, the Animal Style, appears quite early in the Indus valley (Jettmar 1991: pl. 5) interwoven with more rigid patterns, spread in the time when the Achaemenids not only occupied Bactria and Sogdiana but also the westernmost part of India. Evidently they employed mercenaries from the fringes of their empire. So we cannot exclude the presence of Massagetae in Swat.

What we should demand now, is more information on the ecologic conditions in this period. For the understanding on the economy of the Assacenians (who were the strongest local tribe, with Massaga as capital) it is essential that Alexander on his way to their country captured not less than 230,000 heads of cattle (Arrian, translation by Chinnock 1942: 526-31-IV 25). They were of such a superb quality that he ordered to bring a selection back to Macedonia, for ploughing. Evidently the dominant tribes of the region were experienced cattlebreeders. As a precondition for the maintenance of large herds of superior quality, we may assume a system of transhumance. In winter, the cattle was grazing on the pastures in the lowlands, but in summer they were brought by the herdsmen to the mountain sides near to the strongholds on inaccessible tops. Understandably such seasonal migrations were appreciated for climatic reasons by the tribesmen themselves.

This shifting between the plains of Gandhāra and the highlands would better explain Alexander's seemingly 'sporting' adventures, up to Swat. For controlling the tribes, Alexander had to smoke out their refuges. Fighting the Sogdians (cf. Arrian IV 18, 19, Chinnock 1942: 518) he had seen that such hillstations would remain potential pockets of resistance.

Such systems of transhumance – with strongholds in the zone of the summer meadows – would explain the appearance of the same ethnic name in different valleys. The Daradas founded their state (frequently mentioned in the *Rājataranginī* [Stein 1900, II: 505]) in the Kishanganga valley, but they lived near the Indus as well. That is attested by the term 'Dāradī Sindhuḥ' (Agrawala 1953: 43, in a commentary to Pāṇini).

Now, due to the reading of rock-inscriptions, discovered by our expedition, it is possible to confirm that the Indus valley near Chilas was in fact land of the Dāradas, may be a frontier district of their state. A royal inscription, near to the village Chilas, is a definite proof. Prof. O. von Hinüber, certainly the best specialist in this field, translated: 'The subduer of enemies [...] the glorious great king of the Dards Vaiśravaṇasena the subduer of enemies, the king who is the subduer of enemies' (Brāhmī inscription 59, lines *a* and *b*, cf. v. Hinüber 1989: 58-59).

The end of this inscription, lines *c* and *d*, may be translated as: 'The teacher of the glorious Vaiśravaṇasena, great king of the Dards, Rudraśarma is firmly established in the district Avardī', maybe identic with the enigmatic country 'Ravere', mentioned in the report of the Arab commander Al-Faḍl (Jettmar 1993: 100).

Vaiśravaṇasena appears in several minor inscriptions, but only once more (Inscription 59a, v. Hinüber 1989: 59) he is called 'Great King of the Dards'.

At least for a while the rule of the Dāradas was restricted to the southern bank. Darel however is on the northern side in the territory which previously was domin-

ated by the Bruža-people who came under the control of the kings of Palūr, who had their headquarters in Baltistan (Jettmar 1993: 83).

A Kharoṣṭhī inscription discovered in the site Alam Bridge on the way from Baltistan to the Tarim basin via the Hunza valley, was read by Fussman as: 'Daradaraya merekhisu dhadasu urmu ragasampiioja bhajru satradu'. It mentions the Dārada-rāja, but the rest is incomprehensible, maybe written in proto-Burushaski. The Dāradarāja was perhaps a foreigner in Alam Bridge, and the inscription was made by his local subjects (cf. Fussman 1978: 18, 19, 54).

Darel was interesting for Tucci, because Xuanzang says in his famous travelogue that the Ta-li-lo valley (normally identified with Darel. A. Stein 1907: 9) had been the 'old seat of the government of Udyāna' = Swat (Watters 1905, I: 239). The way from Ta-li-lo (Legge 1886: 24-28 'T'o-leih') to Udyana had been already described by Faxian, it took 15 days along the Indus. Just before reaching the destination (Swat) the traveller had to cross the 'river', i.e. the Indus.

Today, when we can see the supposed way from the car using the Karakorum Highway, the problematic character of this identification is obvious. Before the construction of the Highway every sensible man travelling from Darel to Swat would have avoided the Indus-gorge, and gone directly over the passes, reaching Tangir via Satil, than Kandia and finally Kalam. There is no path on the right bank between Kandia and Tangir. Even the way on the left bank was extremely difficult (Jettmar 1987: 100) before the blastings during the construction of the Highway. Near the mouth of the Darel river more than 500 Sogdian graffiti were found. In this place there was an emporium protected by a non-Buddhist garrison, most probably Hephthalites (Jettmar 1991). On the other hand, an Italian team which hoped to confirm Tucci's expectations, reported that they had seen a sacred area at Sonikot

in Darel with a *stūpa* on a square base and rectangular rooms on two sides. The locals reported about another *stūpa*, completely destroyed (Faccenna 1980). The figure of an adorant, fragment of a Buddhist cult-bronze, which I delivered to the Departement of Archaeology, Karachi, is still unpublished.

2. As for the kings of Palūr (Po-lü, Bolor), Tucci (1977: 78) correctly observed that there exist 'quite different types of names'. Following this hint, I found out that according to the new translation of Tibetan texts by Beckwith (1987: 123) two types of titles were used. According to its name, Su-shih-li-chi belonged to the line formerly ruling in Great Palūr (Tucci: Surendaicca), he was called Bruža rje (= Bruža lord), his contenders, descendants of the former governors in Little Palur, were called Bruža'i rgyalpo (King of Bruža). They had names of a different type: Ma-lai-hsi, Mo-chin-mang and Nan-ni.

This – and the fact that the Saka Itinerary mentioned no monasteries near Chilas, also seen by Tucci (1977: 73 fn.) – gave the chance for my reconstruction of the history of the Paṭola-Shāhis (Jettmar 1993: 77, 122).

3. Tucci's contributions to the history of Chitral are of lasting interest, recent studies allow to confirm them. He was startled by the fact, already discussed by Stein (1907: 11-17), that Chitral appears under two not compatible designations (Tucci 1977: 82) – as 'Chieh-shih' and as 'She-mi'.

Tucci (1977: 82) assumed that the Chinese designation, rendered by the western scholars as well in other variants: Chieh-shi, Chieh-shuai, Chieh-shu, Ch'ieh-shuai (Beckwith 1989: 123, 135-38) means a tribe which was an annoying and even dangerous neighbour to Palūr and Tūkhārīstān, identical with a people appearing in different regions of the Himalayan belt, esp. in the mountains bordering Kashmir, namely the Khasas, one of the Hu-tribes (Iranians?).

An area, settled (or only ruled) by this people is in fact attested by the study of rock inscriptions. On a rock near

Shatial bridge, v. Hinüber identified an inscription (No. 31) mentioning this name (v. Hinüber 1989: 47-49) 'in the year 50 *rumēṣa pekako* went to the Khāśa kingdom'. The inscription is located at a place where the Indus was crossed by rafts (or even by a bridge). One of the routes leading northwards reaches Mastuch (in Chitral) via the Shandur pass. A journey in this direction is certainly meant and not the long way to the Khāśa kingdom in western Kashmir (Stein 1900, II: 430).

Without much wishful thinking we may assume that the earliest name of Chitral 'Kashkar' goes back to the time when the Khāśas were the dominant population. Chitral, originally a township settled by the Kalashas became later on the capital, its name replaced the earlier designation (cf. Biddulph 1880: 59-61).

If the Khāśa-tribe ruled the area today called Chitral, then the extension of their power into the Indus valley must be taken into consideration – and the inclusion of this area into the territory called Chieh-shi. Exposed to such an extension was the area between Shatial and the confluence of the river Indus and Astor. Only by this assumption the situation in the middle of the 8th century A.D., as described by Beckwith (1989: 135-36), makes sense:

It had been necessary to import supplies from Kashmir because the T'ang garrison of two thousand men in Little Balur could not be supported by the limited local agriculture resources. But this importation was possible only by passing through the little country of Chieh-shih, which bordered Tukhāristān. The yabghu's [that was the title of the ruler of Tukhāristān] envoy reported that the king of Chieh-shih had received Tibetan bribes and had requested the Tibetans to build a fortress or fortresses inside his country. Their king of Chieh-shih and the Tibetans had been taking advantage of the situation by raiding Tukhāristān.

The place where fortresses could interrupt the stream of supplies needed in Little Balūr was certainly either at the entrance of the Buner valley, or near the mouth of the

Astor river (Jettmar 1993: 103). To reach these points the control of the Indus valley including Chilas was necessary (such conquests from the Chitral side happened repeatedly in later centuries).

On the other hand, Tukhāristān, the other aim of the raids, had its capital near Kundus (Enoki in Tucci 1977a: 88). Kundus can be reached from Chitral via the Dorah-pass, which is accessible from Central Chitral = Kashkar. This in turn has connections via the Shandur to the Indus valley. So the 'Khasalands' were not a small territory, but a large zone.

There is, however, still another country identified with Chitral, namely She-mi. For a while, it was a dependency of the Hephthalites (cf. Chavannes 1903a: 406, here called Chō-mi).

So Tucci gladly accepted the proposal made by Morgenstierne (1973: 110-15,) namely to identify this land with *Upper Chitral*: Sam. Similar is the name used by the Prasun-people: sim gol, Simaigul. Syama could have been the ancient form.

But that is difficult to tune into the other sources. Chemi was already mentioned by Son Yun and the Wei Annals (Chavannes 1903: 159, 160, 225; 1903a: 406 f.; Stein 1907: 14). According to the descriptions, this area was situated near to the southern border of the mountains. From here on difficult paths, Udyāna was reached.

It seems that this information is correct and not an identification with Northern ('Upper') Chitral. Biruni says that the traveller entering Kashmir (via the Baramula gorge) has the mountains of Bolor and Shamilan on his left side. Moreover he tells that the rivers Kusnari (= Kunhar) and Mahwi (= Kishanganga) come from the mountains of Shamilan (Sachau 1888: 277-78). These must be the ridges to both sides of the Nanga Parbat. Biruni's Mineralogy mentions that the Indus bypasses the 'idol of Shamil' – before its exit from the mountains (Belenickij 1963: 221). So Shamil is the area including Chilas.

That evidently means that the people called Ch'ieh-shih were not the aborigines there. They had conquered this tract for a while and used this dominance for raiding the caravans which brought supplies from Kashmir to Little Palur.

Nothing precludes the conjecture that the Ch'ieh-shih people (identical with the Khasas) were Iranians who had entered from the north. Maybe they brought the many Middle-Iranian loanwords into Khowar, the language of the aboriginal Dardic tribe in northern Chitral (Morgenstierne 1973: 243-49). In case that they were Iranians, warlike nomads, the appearance of the name Khasa (Khāśa, Kakha) in so many places (Stein 1900, II: 519) would show the areas occupied by them. Then we could understand the appearance of a similar name, namely *Kashgar* much further to the north. The Chinese used the terms Ch'ia-sha or Sha-le, also Ch'i-sha. Faxian wrote Chieh-ch'a (Stein 1907: 47-51).

4. One problem more, raised by Tucci in the same article under the heading 'Diffusion of Vajrayāna, and revival of aboriginal cults' (68 f.) should be discussed here.

Tucci refers to one of his early discoveries: the travelogue of the Tibetan Sadhu Orgyan-pa, who had visited Swat in the 13th century. There, the pilgrim was confronted with Buddhism in its 'popular and Tantric shape', quite active and impressing: witchcraft was still in full swing. Mahāyāna deities were venerated, the fear of flesh-eating Dākinīs was great. Tucci considers that as one of the 'Buddhist or Hindu islands' it was continuing to exist in a time when Islam was already intruding deep into the mountain valleys (cf. Tucci 1940: 40).

This persistence of local traditions is confirmed by the experience of another Tibetan pilgrim, sTag tsan ras pa, the energetic and influential founder of the famous monastery at Hemis in Ladakh. He travelled in the first half of the 17th century (Tucci 1940: 29).

Shortly thereafter Swat was conquered by the Yusufzai Pakhtuns, who expelled all former inhabitants excepting only those who were ready to work as serfs. One of the distributions of the conquered lands took place in 1533 (Rejsner 1954: 120).

Even before, Islam was the dominant religion, but without destroying the last traces of Buddhism and Hinduism. Small Hindu principalities still existed, even in the forelands, the Salt Range. The King of Swat was a Muslim, but very liberal and well disposed to the Tibetan pilgrim. Buddhism had totally disappeared, the *sādhus* belonged to the *Nāthapanthīyas* sect (Tucci 1940: 40):

Both believers and unbelievers (= Moslems) carry their corpses (to the graveyards) the believers to burn them, and the unbelievers to bury them. They go there for secret practices, and in the night one can see corpses rising from the soil: there are also many *Ḍākinīs*, black, naked, carrying in their hands human hearts and intestines and emanating fire from their secret parts.

But in Odiyan (= Swat) even the festivals had preserved their heathen atmosphere: 'All people were assembled and singing and dancing, they drank all kinds of liquors without restriction' (Tucci 1940: 81).

Only recently it became evident that such persistence was not the effect of an esoteric underground cult. Islam had already been victorious when in 1048/49 A.D. the first mosque was constructed near Mt. Raja Gira, not far from Udegram among ruins that go back to the earlier *Shāhi* period. Using a block of marble from such an earlier building, an inscription was made mentioning a general of the Ghaznavids as the founder (Scerrato 1985). Thus the information about the early enforced conversion is proven, but afterwards there had been a relapse. The Swatis did not remain under strict control, the decline of the Ghaznavids gave them space – so Hinduism, which had been introduced during the *Shāhi* period flowered again. The Tantric tendency to use sexual rituals for obtaining spiritual enlightenment was perpetuated.

Tucci noted this continuity with extreme interest. He was convinced that Swat even after the immigration of the Pakhtuns – a people proclaiming Sunnitic Islam as the only way to religious and moral perfection – remained the homeland of witches and female cannibalistic spirits. Therefore, he arranged the publication of a book on the folk tales of Swat – not quite matching his expectations (Inayat-ur-Rahman 1968). Perhaps we should add that the menial castes of Swat – those who had lost their lands and their freedom to the conquering Pakhtuns – had a notorious reputation for sexual liberty. Many of their girls went down country as prostitutes – the macabre end of an age-old tradition.

Tucci (1977: 69) concluded:

Our knowledge of the folk religion of the Kāfirs and some of their neighbours untouched by Buddhism or having had sacred contacts with Buddhism makes one me believe that the fairies, the Peri and the Daiyāl, are not a survival of the Dākinīs or of the Dākas; they are rather the same primeval religious entities, the ambiguous powers chiefly, but not only, female whom Buddhism accepted in its Tantric esoterism as dākinīs; Vajrayāna codified them within the frame of the Buddhist gnosis, and when it disappeared, their resurrection took place.

This statement was indeed an honouring appreciation of ethnology especially of my work in this field. Tucci referred here to a complex of customs and beliefs that I had described in an early article (1965: 109 ff.) and later on in my book (1975: 230-76).

In the article above mentioned I referred to a fertility cult previously known from the (still pagan) Kalasha-tribe. From each village, a strong and healthy boy was selected (Staley 1964). These youngsters called 'Budalak' were confined to the high-meadows for a while. There, far from the females, they lived in a lonely paradise 'drinking much milk'. Then in the frame of the Pul-festival held at the time of the grape and walnut harvest they were allowed to return to the village. In the Pul-night they were

received by the whole population. The women danced, until the Budalaks appeared and made their choice. No husband could interfere when his wife was honoured by such a suitor full of divine blessing. Healthy and strong children were expected, also from those ladies who were not involved, because even the neighbours entered in a state of sexual frenzy.

Similar rituals bringing sexual fulfilment and children to those women who had problems in this respect are recorded in many places of Dardistan. I got an even more concise description from Bubur in Punyal (Jettmar 1975: 266).

In other areas, the religious context in the Pul-festival is openly expressed.

In the Haramosh valley, the women venerated a female deity, called Murkum. Allegedly she protected them in childbirth, but like Artemis she also inspired the shamans and directed the hunters to the game. In olden days when these women came together around a crude altar erected from rough stones only one man was permitted to participate. He slaughtered the sacrifice sent by the goddess herself and divided the meat among the worshippers. Then he joined the dancing crowd and was provoked and molested by the ladies. He was called the 'billy-goat of the women's flock' – and that may indicate that he had rights and duties similar to the Budalak of the Kalash.

Such customs, however, should not necessarily be seen as part of a Tantric complex. John Staley spoke of an 'eugenic' practice. It was based on experiences gained in sophisticated goat breeding. A similar privilege was conceded to the strongest billy-goat of the herd (Nayyar 1986: 40). The meaning is an optimal exploitation of female fertility. Communities with numerous and strong offsprings increase their political power. To have many descendants is a good card in the game for arable land and meadows. The adepts of biosocial anthropology now fashionable in the USA would find excellent illustrations for their concepts here.

There are, however, other customs which are really surrounded by a 'Tantric atmosphere'. In the villages of Puncyal some women were known as practising witches. When they came together in their black messes, they had in turn to present a human victim which had been overpowered by them. The victim was brought in the shape of a goat and slaughtered by a male assistant during the meeting. Only when the head was divided from the trunk and fell down, it got its human traits – and it was clear, who would die in the next days, his substance eaten up (Jettmar 1975: 272-76).

It is evident that the model for this secret cult of female cannibals was the gathering of women venerating their protecting goddess likewise assisted by a priest.

In earlier studies I explained this as being the repression of a previously respectable institution in the demonic underground, which happened when Islam became the official religion (Jettmar 1975: 209-11).

But the association of female deities with the chthonian sphere or at least their vesting with ambivalent characteristics must have an ancient background. It is reflected not only in tales about the dynasty of Gilgit who had an ancestress, who used to kill her lovers and male offsprings (Müller-Stellrecht 1979: 290) but also in the texts from the hidden library discovered by Sir Aurel Stein near Tunhuang.

There we hear of Hu-ša who was of Deva race (Thomas 1935: 221-24). Due to an offence committed against a Devī, she became a man-devouring Rākṣasī, ruling on the 'mountain of the Gold race' over 500 other Rākṣasīs who 'indulged in the pleasures of desire' with merchants who were attracted by the gold found there. When the next merchants arrived, the earlier lovers were devoured. (The connection with the genealogy of the Gilgit princes is evident, but should not be discussed here).

Only when a Bodhisattva appeared who recognized her 'animal double', namely a 'cat' with small ears – appar-

ently an otter which is still feared as a demonic animal in some Dardic valleys – she was released from the curse, got a legal husband and a male successor.

In order to explain such dangerous aspects of female sexuality, we might assume that during the *late* Buddhist period, 'in the very geographical situation open to all sorts of trade and cultural influences' the clean world of the hunters was transformed into the complicated cosmos ready to include Tantric ideas. In this time concepts borrowed from Hindu neighbours became more and more important.

There are definite hints that this supposition might be correct. Tucci himself was surprised by the 'almost complete absence of Vajrayāna deities' among the earlier reliefs of Swat (Tucci 1958: 322). Even in the Gilgit region, the rock carvings, ending before the close of the 1st millennium A.D., show almost the same 'absence of Vajrayāna deities'. There is an exception in Bubur, Punyal. It is a stone with three main reliefs, with two smaller ones below, under one of the standing Buddhas. The smaller figures are brandishing swords like Mañjuśrī. The third large figure, sitting, has a three-pointed crown (like on images of Vajrapāṇi) (Figs. 1-4). This monolith, today completely disfigured, belongs to the very last phase of the Buddhist monuments in this area (Jettmar 1984: 214-16, pls. III, IVa, b). As related to the complex I would consider the 'image of a *devī*', discovered near Guligram during one of the early campaigns of Prof. Tucci's team in Swat (Tucci 1963a: 146-51, figs. 1-2). It is visible on a large boulder, broken into two pieces and badly damaged. The posture resembles reliefs showing Durgā Maḥiṣāsuramardīnī. The beheaded animal being trampled under the feet of the dancing *devī* is apparently a domestic goat.

The iconography was discussed by Tucci, when he quoted my observations in the Haramosh valley (Tucci 1963b: 153).

So, a possible interpretation would be to assume in the early period a parallel existence of fertility rituals,



Fig. 1 – Front view of a boulder, decorated with three large and several smaller Buddhist reliefs. It was discovered in 1979 in a field near the village Bubur in Punyal. The village was mentioned in the Saka-itinerary as the site of Buddhist monasteries. I was the first to take the photographs and paid the owner of the field who had excavated the boulder for the promise that the monument should be protected. However the chief of the police ordered to transport the boulder to Gilgit where it was split and used for the decoration of his house. That happened before 1983, when the participants of the Gilgit conference saw and wondered at the results.



Fig. 2 – To the right side here is another Buddha figure in higher relief, with a round face like in the Baba figures of the steppes. On both sides of the feet, smaller figures are visible brandishing swords.

Fig. 3 – On the left side a sitting figure with a three-pointed headdress is visible.

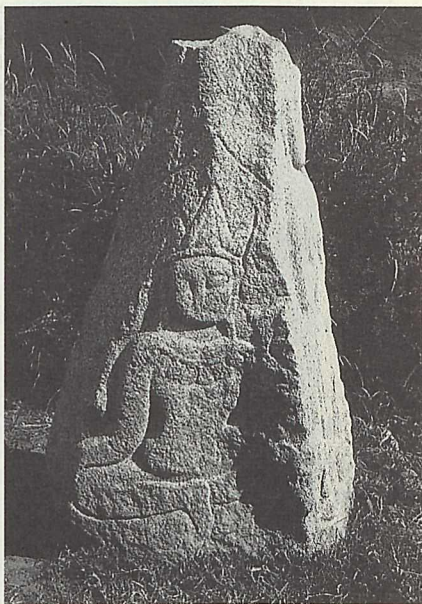


Fig. 4 – Between the high relief and the sitting figure there is a cleft without decorations. So the boulder could not be used in the present state. Maybe it is from the workshop where the training of the craftsmen took place.



Fig. 5 – Photographs taken in the centre of the site Shatial I by the members of the team headed by V. Thewalt (1987). Apart of inscriptions in Brāhmī and in the Sogdian script we see near to the left lower corner the image of a monkey (without hairs). Head and breast are replaced by a phallus. A smaller drawing is seen further to the right. In the middle zone a portable altar table as in Sogdian paintings is depicted. Over this altar a cup is hardly visible, apparently held by a female (?)

The curve of the thigh, a belt and the left arm are visible.

practised by the common people, on the one hand, and Buddhist teachings, on the other hand, being accepted and proclaimed by the rulers of the small states and their courts, which included foreigners. Among them were Chinese, perhaps they brought the ideas of the 'Chinese schools' with them, accepted and propagated by Padmasambhava.

Only in a later period under strong Hindu influence, the integration of local cults and the official religion into the Tantric system took place. In this period the Gilgit Manuscripts were hidden as concealed treasures.

But it would not be wise to consider the arguments for a later rise of Tantric ideas in the western mountains as definitely indicating the final solution. One of the most important observations made during the study of rock carvings in the Indus valley was the discovery of 'deviant images' which we cannot insert in one of the known traditions. We are very far from a comprehensive iconology, only some aspects of the spiritual life are known.

The complex concentrated at Shatial is full of sexual allusions. That was explained by 'dirty jokes', made by the staff of the foreign caravans, headed by a mixed Sogdian/Hephthalite nobility. But such drawings – certainly made near the centre of the sanctuary – could also indicate the appearance of Tantric ideas (Jettmar 1993a; 1992) (Fig. 5).

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