
CURRENT SCIENCE — 50 YEARS AGO

A NEW ARCHAEOLOGICAL DISCOVERY*

An unexplored site containing more than fifty tombs of a very remarkable and unique type, so far India is concerned, has been discovered by the writer in the Las Bella State, Baluchistan, and a few tombs of similar type have also been discovered in the Karachi District. The place is situated between the Gandh-ko Mountain and the village Bhawani, about 27 miles away from Karachi. The tombs are lying in a waste land surrounded by thick bushes of cactus.

These tombs are not very big in dimension but of unusual type as this kind of tombs are not found anywhere in India. They are formed in steps or tiers 5-9 in number. These step-like tombs are made by slabs of carved stone placed horizontally on the ground and around them other beautifully carved slabs are placed vertically forming a box-like rectangular chamber, upon which five or six similar chambers of smaller dimensions, diminishing towards the top are made to complete the tombs. These chambers are generally closed on all sides but in some tombs the lowest chambers are open on all sides by forming arches in the slabs. On the front side of some of the tombs one or two short stumpy pillarette with vase-like projections are placed on the top. The length of each tomb is about 6-7 feet, and the height is about 7-9 feet. The width is about 3 feet at the base of the tomb and about 6 inches at the top.

Geometrical designs are carved in the slabs showing neat and fine figures in relief. The important designs common to most of the tombs are lotus and half-lotus which are the characteristic designs of the Hindus.

Locally, these tombs are called by old people, "Rum-Ka-Kabbar", but they are unable to say about their history. From the name "Rum" or Rome (Roman), from the existence of the Roman vase-like projections, from the unusual type of tombs and also from the fact that this site lies on the ancient route of Alexander the Great, it may appear that there might be some Greco-Roman connection but these tombs are not in any way connected with

them. These are purely Muhammadan tombs.

From the analysis of the workmanship and designs of various remains of ancient tombs in Sind, I have come to the conclusion that these tombs were probably built during the period of Samma Dynasty of Sind dating back to, not earlier than fifteenth century A. D. and not later than seventeenth century A. D.

We find a gradual development of this kind of workmanship in Sind from the earliest time up to 1450 A. D. and a gradual decline from 1550 A. D.

The type of workmanship and design of these tombs are strikingly similar to that of the tomb of Jam Nizamuddin, the fourteenth prince of the Samma Dynasty at Tatta, though the construction of the tombs is quite different which indicates that these tombs do not belong to the Samma people.

During this period, there lived in some part of Sind and Baluchistan three powerful Muhammadan tribes other than Samma people. They were Karmatis, Jokias and Numrias. It is very probable that these tombs belonged to the Numrias. The word "Rum" in "Rum-Ka-Kabbar" is very significant. The word "Num" has probably changed to "Rum" in course of time.

Though these are Muhammadan tombs, we find a marked Hindu influence on the workmanship and designs. This is probably due to the Hindu origin of the Numria tribe. The Numrias as well as Jokias and also Sammas were originally Rajput Hindus who were converted to Muhammadanism in later dates.

The idea of the step-like construction of these tombs was probably carried by Karmatis who came from Persia and who inter-married with the Numrias while they settled on the valley of Pabb Hills.

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