

ARCHÆOLOGICAL NOTES.

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 Gandhko Mountain and the village Bhawan, 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 to 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 to 7 feet, and the height is about 7 to 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 upto 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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Victoria Museum,
Karachi,
January 26, 1938

Bhutamaṅgalam of Buddhadatta.

IN the Pali work *Vinayaṃuttaraya* composed in the fifth century A D by the eminent South Indian Buddhist scholar, Buddhadatta, it is stated that this work was written by him for the benefit of the Buddhist Bikkhus in the monastery built

by Venhudāsa at a place called Bhutamangalam

A translation of the relevant portions pertaining to this place is given below

'In the tranquil village of Bhutamangalam where inhabit different classes of people, which was the naval of the famous Cola country, filled with groves of plantains, sal wood, palmyra and cocoanuts, as well as cool tanks adorned with lotuses and *utpala* flowers, and the whole soil anointed by the flowing waters of the Cauvery, and a Mangala endowed with all the elements of prosperity, in the beautiful and pleasant monastery surrounded by well built outer walls, and moat belonging to Venhudasa,

by me who lived (in Bhutamangalam) in a mansion

was composed this work on the principles of Vinaya for the good of Bikkhus who desire to learn the Vinaya text in a short time without difficulty

Attempts have been made in recent times by a few scholars in locating this historical Bhutamangalam in the Tanjore District. The editor of *Vinayaviniccaya*, Rev. A. P. Buddhadatta, remarks in his introduction "At present, there are several places in that country (Tanjore) having their names ending in Mangal. But I am still unable to identify this Bhutamangalam with one of these places." Later on, Mr. P. T. Srinivasa Iyengar at the suggestion of Mr. K. R. Subramaniam, maintained that Bhutamangalam is the same as Budalur in the Tanjore District¹. And this identification has been questioned by Professor K. A. Nilakanta Sastri².

The monastery in which Buddhadatta composed the *Vinayaviniccaya* was according to the description located in the heart of the Cola country sanctified by the river Cauvery. It is therefore necessary to look for Bhutamangalam in the Mannargudi Taluq which is centrally situated³ in the Tanjore District.

In the inscriptions⁴ of the Cola king Rajaraja (985-1014), there are references to Bhutamangalam adjoining Venni Kuram whose chief Nagara was Venni now identified with Kailvenni about 20 miles to the

east of Tanjore. According to these inscriptions Bhutamangalam comprised of a number of small villages, such as, Miduveh, Nenmeh, Tiruviramisvaram, etc., which can all be located in the Mannargudi Taluq of the Tanjore District. It is therefore quite apparent that the village of Bhutamangalam must be situated not far away from Kailvenni and Tiruviramisvaram, and must have occupied an extensive area originally. And it is also clear that the Bhutamangalam of the Cola inscriptions must be the same as the one mentioned in the *Vinayaviniccaya*.

So with a view to locating this place, I went to Mannargudi on the 29th December 1937, and by making local enquiries discovered that there were two villages of the same name at close proximity. One of the two which I immediately proceeded to was I found mainly inhabited by the Mohammedan community and contained relics of ancient Hindu temples. The other which is about 6 miles from Mannargudi and situated on the banks of the river Vennar, a branch of Cauvery appeared to me to be full of archaeological potentialities.

And this village is known in the locality as Pallivritti Bhutamangalam. Pallivritti is the name of another village which is adjacent to this Bhutamangalam. And as its name suggests, the lands within this village must have been owned by the Buddhist monastery at Bhutamangalam. (Palli stands for Buddhapalli)⁵.

In the course of my itinerary in these two villages I discovered three brick mounds in Pallivritti and an examination of these bricks revealed that they were old. Two more sand mounds which I saw at Bhutamangalam may if excavated yield ancient Buddhist relics of great value.

Report is current in these parts that some Buddha images were removed from this place to various other villages of the Tanjore District and I came across one such image in the Jain temple at Mannargudi a photograph of which is in my possession.

It seems therefore safe to conclude that the Bhutamangalam of *Vinayaviniccaya* is the same as the Pallivritti Bhutamangalam of the Mannargudi Taluq in the Tanjore District.

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¹ P. T. Srinivasa Iyengar, *History of the Tamils* page 531

² *Colas*, I page 121n

³ *Tanjore District Gazetteer*, ed. by Rutherford

⁴ *SII*, Vol. II page 65, *Ep. Report*, No. 143 of 1911

⁵ Refer Palli in the Tamil Lexicon Madras University

A Cultural Museum for India.

INDIAN cultural study now leaps the barrier of boundaries to extend half over Asia, from Irak to Central Asia, China, Japan Further India and Indonesia, so far as Bali and distant Celebes. The material available in the national collections—the Aurel Stein collections from Central Asia alone are unique as documentary evidence for the spread of Buddhist art and Indian influence—if brought together under one roof, would demonstrate Indian culture in a manner possible nowhere else among the collections of the world, even in India itself.

On the grounds of public policy, the formation of a museum of Indian life and culture cannot be too strongly urged. Now that the bonds of Empire have become tenuous indeed, we hold India by a thread. But impalpable bonds, as has been shown by the visit of the British Association

Delegation to the Jubilee Meeting of the Indian Science Congress Association this month, can be made stronger than any material force. To the degree in which our future policy towards India is rooted in an understanding of Indian aspirations on the part of the British people, the greater the strength of the bond that will hold this great country within the Empire. A great Indian cultural museum would certainly contribute the major part to such an understanding. It would show that whatever the differences between the two peoples may be, to India belongs a civilization older than our own, which in art and intellectual accomplishment has been in no way our inferior, while in Buddhism it has produced a creed which more nearly than any other in the world's history approaches the way of life inculcated by Christianity.

(From *Nature*, Jan 29, 1938, pp 178-79)

ASTRONOMICAL NOTES.

Planets during March 1938—None of the major planets will be in favourable positions for observation during the month. Mars will be still visible in the western sky in the early part of the night, it is gradually nearing the Sun and getting fainter. Its altitude at sunset will be only about 30° . On March 5 the planet will be close to the Moon, the angular distance at conjunction being less than 3° and on March 28, it will approach Uranus to a distance of 44 minutes of arc. Jupiter is in the constellation Capricornus and will continue to be a morning star rising about two hours before the Sun. Saturn can be seen low down in the western sky just after sunset for a few days early in the month and on March 29 will be in conjunction with the Sun.

Both the inferior planets, Mercury and Venus will be visible as evening stars low down in the western sky towards the end of the month.

The New Asteroid 1937 U B—The name "Hermes" has been given to this interesting

minor planet, discovered by Reinmuth of Heidelberg in October 1937. At the time of its nearest approach to the earth on October 30, the object was just bright enough to be visible with the unaided eye and was within a million kilometres distant from the earth or less than three times the Moon's mean distance.

Comet Encke—This periodic comet became a fairly bright object early in December 1937 and for a few days was visible with the naked eye, since then it has faded considerably in brightness. In January, it was moving slowly eastwards in the constellation Sagittarius.

γ Cassiopae—This star which is ordinarily of magnitude 2.2 had a sudden increase of brightness a few months ago reaching magnitude 1.2. It has gradually subsided and is now nearly as bright as the stars α and β in the same constellation.

T. P. B.