

Title?
NOTES ON THE KULU VALLEY.

The early bronzes found in the Kangra Valley are usually cast in a very pale bronze which was characteristic of other bronzes of the Gupta period. They were cast in the round ~~and probably~~ by the Cire Perdu method. The back was usually just as carefully finished as the front portions. A characteristic feature of these figures is the way the nimbus was attached to the figures. In all the cases there is definite similarity which points to the same tradition. The nimbus is usually attached to the back of the figure by means of a metal projection and loop which are fixed ~~to the upper back~~ **BETWEEN THE SHOULDERBLADES** of the figure. This method I ~~have~~ **ALSO** found in the early Ganhara bronzes and it must have originated in those earlier periods. The hand of the Buddha is usually shown as webbed which is characteristic of certain earlier schools. In one Indo-Greek figure which was found near Peshawar the Buddha is made to wear a sort of ~~collar~~ **Cherulle** falling from his shoulders, the same detail I have found in other figures of later periods.

SOME BRONZES
In ~~the~~ Kulu Valley ~~as well as~~ in Tibetan bronzes of a ~~more~~ later date ~~and~~ in an early Kushan Suriya in my collection the same ~~collar~~ **Cherulle** appears and shows ~~the~~ **That** same tradition prevail~~ing~~ **ed**. This I only mentioned as ~~an~~ **an** isolated detail which prove ^s a continu~~ance~~ **ation** and common source of tradition.

The Gupta figures are all of **SUPERIOR** workmanship and they definitely bespeak a very developed school of craftsmen.

As I have mentioned already they often make profuse use of other metals as a sort of inlay work to heighten the general effect. For instance, one will find the eyes almost invariably inlaid with silver. This tradition was later carried on in the Pala ~~bronzes~~ **and JAIN** bronzes. One finds that copper, and a gold copper alloy used in parts of the dress for ornamentation and in some figures I have found the mouth, the breasts and the navel inlaid with a red copper gold alloy. In other figures iron was ~~beaten~~ **in** instead of silver and even a lead silver alloy was used in parts of the decoration, not to speak of several types of bronze or brass from very pale to the more common variety. All this bespeaks of accomplished craftsmen in a well developed tradition. I have found the same technique in later bronzes of Western Tibet. I have found the same silver ~~alloy~~ **the** inlay for ~~eyes~~ **eyes** or for the third eye but the pupil was ~~an~~ **sometimes** inlay of rubies, to heighten the effect. I have ~~not~~ **also** found very often the use of precious or semi precious stones as inlay in these early figures. ~~To be sure,~~ **In**

the Bimaran casket we have a number of stones set in the ornament^{ed}~~ed~~ gold work and in the early Buddha ^straces of turquoise can be found inlaid in the ornaments ~~of the breasts~~.

If we remember the later Egyptian periods, the so called Roman periods, we find inlays of gold and silver in ~~metal figures~~^{The} copper and bronze figures, and it may have been, for all we know, one continuous tradition which has been brought over by the Greeks.

I am certain that future excavations in Kulu or Kangra Valley will furnish a great many interesting, at present missing links, and let us hope many important works of art will be discovered.

There can be no doubt that alongside with the earlier craftsmen and artisans who worked in bronze there ~~may~~^{must} have been local indigenous workers producing crude types of figures, a type which is not peculiar to Kulu alone but can be found practically all over India and has survived and is known as Jungly Art. It is a primitive art which is still found with the ~~undeveloped~~^{original} tribes in India and which ~~must~~^{must} have survived in that mode of expression for many, ~~or~~^{many} centuries, if not thousands of years. The process is the process of half-casting a figure by adding details and decorations by means of a thin decorative bars of metal. In Kulu a number of these figures have survived in temples and in private homes and the only possible dating may be on the basis of the metal used. The Ashtadhatu metal being the older one and according to tradition being the metal which should be used for sacred images according to the scriptures. The earlier cults of Kulu being the Nag^a cults, some of the figures definitely belong to the Nag^a cult. The Kulu masks ^{of these} (which have never been a systematic study may furnish us with a great many important dates as many of them are inscribed and some of the remote temples have never been as yet surveyed. I have seen bronze masks not only inlaid in silver but inlaid ^{with} precious stones ^{SACHAS} turquoise, garnets and lavishly decorated. ~~with~~ ~~belonging~~ ~~to~~ ~~an~~ ~~earlier~~ ~~tradition~~ ^{They BELONG TO AN} and I believe that we may be able to find some more interesting data in the more remote and inaccessible valleys like the ^{MALANA} ~~Meitan~~ valley and the valley of Manikaran^N.

I have been told that the Parbati valley where Manikaran^N is situated can still furnish many interesting figures of the earlier periods. In Lahoul, at the Gandola monastery, is a beautiful marble head of ~~the god~~ ^{A BOODHISATVA} of the 8th or 9th century which was apparently found in the sands of the river below and which definitely bespeaks ^{an} of Indian origin.

There are other figures at Triloknath and probably many more in places not yet explored.

The Buddhist relic ^S in the Kangra Fort ^{BELONG TO} ~~bespeaks~~ the same tradition and I have been told that in the Buddhist scriptures it has been mentioned that special merit accrues to the monks and hermits who meditated in the Western Himalayas. The country itself with its innumerable valleys, rich vegetation, beautiful scenery, temperate in climate would lend itself admirably to contemplative life away from ~~the~~ invasions and warfare.

Some of the temples in Kulu have elaborate carved details on the window frames, doors and cornices. The ~~Devi~~ ^{DUNGRI} temple ^{AT} in Manali has very interesting animal freezes with elaborate carving ^{THE WORK} ~~which bespeaks~~ of accomplished craftsmen. The village of Sharan has many ~~of~~ doorways and cornices carved in floral designs while at Puling a few miles up the Chakki ^Nullah from the Sharan village we find carved panels of Rajputs on horseback, peacocks and other details common to Rajput Art and ^{THIS} ~~much~~ ~~perhaps~~ goes to substantiate the claim of the local settlers that they are the Rajputs who have taken refuge in these hills from the Muslim invasions of lower India. The valley of Kulu was apparently known already in the Vedic times and we have many names of great spiritual leaders associated with it. ^{SHI VYAS AND} ~~Rishi, Vasisht,~~ the Pandavas are supposed to have taken refuge in these hills and built their palaces on the hill tops, practically every hill top had its own ancient fort and there is a tradition that the great treasures of the Kulu Kings were buried in time of invasions in the Manali Fort. Manali Fort was of great strategic importance as it blocked the penetration into the upper Kulu valley from the West, from Chamba and many legends have been woven about this ancient citadel. I have always wanted to excavate this fort as numerous objects have been found round its foundations and walls that have crumbled down in the 1905 earthquake. There are a few beautiful carved stones which remain in the courtyards of this fort as well as a beautiful carved stone Trimurti

The old custom of making offerings of precious ornaments and other valuable objects to the Gods by throwing them into the tanks ^{AND} ~~or~~ lakes attached to the temples ^{IS STILL PREVALENT} ~~was and is a habit very prevalent~~ in all these hill tracts. Thus, near Mandi, there is a temple in ^{TO} the adjoining tank ^{OF WHICH} ~~in which~~ enormous quantities of valuable objects have been thrown over a period of centuries ^{and} no one knows what this wealth may be

but the Brahmins in charge of the temple have refused repeated offers of the Mandi Durbar to drag ^{AND EMPTY OUT} the tank. There is another small lake on the Rotang Pass where once a year pilgrims go to throw in their offerings. At Ma^lana effigies of silver horses are yearly offered to the temple. These horses are believed to be the messengers which were sent by Akbar to find the ~~king~~ ^{an SADHU} from whom the tax was wrongfully levied. These and other silver offerings which have been accumulated in the temple over innumerable years have been depleted from time to time through thefts and other losses, but the temple is still believed to contain large stores of these offerings.

Not far from Manikaraⁿ, one of the temples contained a mirror made of polished sapphire, ^{which} ~~but~~ was stolen some years ago and has never been traced.

5

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In some Kulu Valley Bronzes as well as in Tibetan bronzes of a later date and in an early Kushan Suriya in my collection the same ^{cheruble} collar appears and shows that the same tradition prevailed. This I only mentioned as an isolated detail which proves a continuation and common source of tradition.

The Gupta figures are all of superior workmanship and they definitely ^{vocal} bespeak a very developed school of craftsmen.

As I have mentioned already they often make profuse use of other metals as a sort of inlay work to heighten the general effect. For instance, one will find the eyes almost invariably inlaid with silver. This tradition was later carried on in the Pala and Jain bronzes. One finds that copper, and a gold copper alloy used in parts of the dress for ornamentation and in some figures I have found the mouth, the breasts and the navel inlaid with a red copper gold alloy. In other figures iron was beaten in instead of silver and even a lead silver alloy was used in parts of the decoration, not to speak of several types of bronze or brass from very pale to the more common variety. ^{to} All this bespeaks of accomplished

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If we remember the later Egyptian periods, the so called Roman periods, we find inlays of gold and silver in the copper and bronze figures, and it may have been, for all we know, one continuous tradition which has been brought over by the Greeks.

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7

yet surveyed. I have seen bronze masks not only inlaid in silver but inlaid with ^{semi}precious stones such as turquoise ^{corals} and garnets and lavishly decorated. They belong to an earlier tradition and I believe that we may be able to find some more interesting data in the more remote and inaccessible valleys like the Malana valley and the valley of Manikaran.

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