

could till was clearly evident from the aspect of the valley. The eye could travel along it right down to the barrier raised by the mountains across the Indus. At the mouth of the numerous side valleys extensive alluvial fans, now largely abandoned to tree-growth, suggested abundant space for increased cultivation. The day's short march brought us to a high breezy plateau by the side of one of these fans, overlooking southwards the luxuriant fields of the compact group of villages collectively known as Mankiāl (Fig. 18). There, near the orchards and scattered holdings of Dalōt village, well above the broad sun-bathed trough of the main valley, I was able to allow my surveyors and followers a few hours' rest in full daylight, the first they had enjoyed since leaving Kashmīr.

Cultivation  
below  
Dalōt.

A list of 'old places' had at my request been kindly furnished to me there by Rāja Pakhtūn Wāli's orders, and the provision of competent guides in the persons of intelligent greybeards from Mankiāl allowed me to start their inspection early on the following morning. The number of the ruined sites reported, all known by the term of *kōt*, 'fort', was relatively large, and the time available for my visit to Darēl very limited. So my survey of these sites had to be rapid. Yet it sufficed to show the typical features common to almost all of them and to convince me that most, if not all, were remains of fortified settlements dating back to pre-Muhammadan times. Instead of recording such details as I was able to observe successively at each of these small sites, it will be more useful to indicate at once what characterizes them in general.

Remains  
of fortified  
settlements.

As regards position, all the ruins occupy rocky ridges naturally strong for defence; these either jut out, as in the case of Ramal-kōt close to the south-east of Dalōt, above the alluvial slopes of the valley, or else form the last precipitous offshoots of spurs descending to the latter. Whether large or small, these ridges were found to bear elaborate terraces covered with the much-decayed remains of closely packed dwelling-places. On the larger sites there were also walls of more massive construction enclosing the whole occupied area. Rough stones were the material used throughout; but these were set with a care and skill far superior to those seen in the present dwellings of Darēl and were often of considerable size, especially in the outer enclosing walls. The latter still stood in places to a clear height of eight feet or more, and the terrace walls rose often much higher. The thickness of the walls of dwellings seemed to vary as a rule from three to four feet; that of the enclosing walls was much greater, attaining sixteen feet at the base of the wall fragments of quite cyclopean appearance found at the site of Rajī-kōt.

Ruined  
walls and  
terraces.

Both by their position and constructive features these ruined *kōts* of Darēl recalled to my mind the extensive ruined settlements of the Buddhist period with which I had become familiar during my explorations in the lower Swāt valley and in the hills on the northern border of the Peshawar District.<sup>9</sup> I found nowhere, it is true, that peculiar masonry associated with these ruins of Gandhāra and Udyāna in which the interstices between the rough stones are filled up by columns of small flat stones.<sup>10</sup> But if allowance was made for the much greater decay which these Darēl ruins had suffered, evidently under the influence of a climate far moister than that of the North-West Frontier, there was in other respects a striking resemblance.

Resem-  
blance to  
ruins in  
Swāt.

As an interesting point of similarity I may mention that, as in the Swāt valley, in Bunēr and elsewhere on the confines of Gandhāra, so here the peculiar position occupied by the smaller fortified settlements suggested that it had been chosen not merely for the sake of greater facility of defence but also with a view to saving every available piece of arable ground for cultivation. Elaborate cultivation terraces were everywhere traceable over the adjoining slopes. Abandoned

Abandoned  
cultivation  
terraces.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Stein, *Archaeological tour with the Bunēr Field Force*, pp. 5 sq.; *Archaeological Survey Report, N.W. Frontier*, 1912, pp. 4 sq.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Foucher, *L'art du Gandhāra*, i. pp. 101 sq., with other references there quoted.