

discovered the remains, unfortunately much damaged, of a large mural painting hidden behind a later wall. Its lower frieze represents a scene of homage and offerings presented to a youthful male of martial bearing, seated in a dignified pose. The upraised right arm carried a curving mace surmounted by an ox-head. This shape of the mace corresponds exactly to the famous ox-headed *gurz* carried by Rustam, the great hero of Persian epic legend, and his recognized attribute throughout Persian iconography of Muhammadan times.

There can be no possible doubt that the chief figure in this mural painting of Koh-i-Khwaja represents Rustam, whom the Persian national epos as preserved in Firdausi's *Shah-nama* distinctly associates with Sistan. A comparison of his figure with that of the 'Persian Bodhisattva' of the Dandan-oilik panel enables us now to recognize the head of Rustam's mace in the object, for the most part effaced, which crowns the top of the curving handle held in the upper right arm of that strange Bodhisattva.

But the comparison with the Koh-i-Khwaja fresco helps us also to understand the significance of the three-headed demonic figure shown on the opposite side of the Dandan-oilik panel. For in the fresco we see Rustam faced by a closely corresponding three-headed personage offering homage with raised hands. In all probability it is meant for one of those demonic adversaries whom Rustam in popular legends of Persian epic tradition is represented as having overcome in hard struggles and triumphantly forced into loyal submission to his king. Thus the connexion between the two figures of the Dandan-oilik panel is accounted for.

The wall painting of Koh-i-Khwaja belongs to the late