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PAKISTAN HERITAGE



Editors

Shakirullah and Ruth Young



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Editorial Note

Pakistan Heritage is a double-blind peer-reviewed journal, published annually. This volume included the papers on different aspects of archaeology and history of Pakistan and adjacent regions with subject matter ranging from the Prehistoric to the British Period.

We acknowledge the efforts of the members of the Board of Editorial Advisors, the contributors, the review and colleagues of the Department of Archaeology, Hazara University Mansehra. On the other hand, we are grateful to the worthy Vice Chancellor and management of Hazara University Mansehra for support and encouragement.

Editors

Et in Uddiyana ego. Tucci's first two expeditions to Swat in the Archives of the Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan (1955-1956)

LUCA M. OLIVIERI

Abstract

Drawing on a recently rediscovered folder from Domenico Faccenna's archive, this paper reconstructs the early formation of Giuseppe Tucci's Italian Archaeological Mission in Swat during 1955–1956. The photostatic documents trace the convoluted diplomatic and legal path leading to the first reconnaissance and excavation campaigns, foregrounding the persistent problem of Swat's autonomy as a princely state outside Pakistan's Ancient Monument Preservation Act and the consequent deadlock over Article 12, which governed the partition of finds. Through dense correspondence with Pakistan's Director-General of Archaeology Raul Curiel, commercial attaché Edmondo Anderlini, embassy officials, and the Wali of Swat, the study illuminates Tucci's reliance on "book diplomacy," patient legal manoeuvring, and carefully cultivated local relationships to secure a five-year excavation licence and establish a permanent mission house. The article also incorporates Tucci's unpublished 1956 political report, revealing his strategic vision of archaeology as an instrument of cultural prestige and his keen awareness of the need for press engagement and international visibility, thereby laying the organisational and ideological foundations for four decades of Italian fieldwork in Swat.

1. Introduction

In January 2023, during my reconnaissance of the archives of Domenico Faccenna, the first director, after Giuseppe Tucci and until 1996, of the Italian Archaeological Mission of IsMEO, I found a folder of documents marked "Swat 1955-1956. Spedizione archeologica valle dello Swat Pakistan. Arch[ivio] Gen[erale] Pratiche Varie. Sp./6" Fig. 1).¹ The documents in this folder are photostatic or carbon copies of originals kept in the archives of IsIAO, the organisation that continued the work and aims of Giuseppe Tucci's IsMEO from 1996 to 2011.² Today, the folder is in the archive of the Italian Archaeological Mission in Saidu Sharif, Swat, together with the entire Faccenna archive.

The folder covers a period from late 1954 to late 1956, and includes documents from Italy, Pakistan and the State of Swat, all concerning the events that led to the establishment of the Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan in the late summer of 1955.

The folder contains several sub-folders, which collect documents related to logistics, legal issues, the excavation licence, etc., and closes with a folder with the press review updated to the end of 1956. The organisation of the folder and its sub-folders is due to Domenico Faccenna, who is the author of the titles of the individual folders, reproduced here as the title of each paragraph. The order of the documents almost never follows chronological order: sometimes the documents are collected in reverse chronological order. However, this is a

¹ Copy of "Archivio Generale. Sped.ne archeolog. Valle dello Swat; Corrispondenza col prof. Tucci. SP/6, 1956" = Zini 2023, nn. 39.21-A, 40.21-B. The additions to this folder come from other envelopes in the IsMEO archive (*ibid.*).

² Today, the original archive is in the possession of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, which is editing it. The part relating to the years considered in this folder (see previous footnote) came out in 2023 (Zini 2023).

collection of documents made in a personal capacity, methodically collecting copies and photocopies of originals kept elsewhere. Generally one has the impression that the folder has been opened and reworked several times.

Among the materials are 29 documents that have been already published in Olivieri 2023. These were originally kept in the folders ‘Anderlini’ and ‘Pratiche varie’, relating to correspondence exchanged between April and September 1956 between the commercial attaché of the Italian Embassy in Pakistan, Edmondo Anderlini, and Giuseppe Tucci. The letters concern the delicate issue of IsMEO's purchase of three manuscripts found in Gilgit and already in the possession of a senior Pakistani army officer. The manuscripts were purchased in agreement with the Pakistani authorities, then handed over to the Department of Archaeology, which deposited them at the museum in Karachi. The study of the three manuscripts was mainly published in three volumes of the *Serie Orientale Roma* (see bibliography in *ibid.*).

This folder and the complex issue related to the acquisition of the Gilgit manuscripts, as already mentioned, were discussed in another paper of mine published in 2023 in *East and West* (*ibid.*). This note will deal with the other documents, particularly those that are most useful in delineating Giuseppe Tucci's work in establishing his first archaeological mission in the Swat valley. This is not a complete archival study (others will do so), but rather a reconnaissance with insights into the issues that in my view best illustrate the question presented in the title of this contribution. That is, how the project of Giuseppe Tucci's archaeological mission to the Swat valley was created, or the conditions under which it was formed.

2. A brief summary on the legal issue

In my work on the Gilgit manuscripts (but also on other occasions; see Olivieri 2019), I have dealt with the question of the legal aspects of early archaeological activities in the part of British India that is now Pakistan, with particular attention to the special status of Swat, an Indian state (or Native State) autonomous from both British India and Pakistan (until 1969), although historically placed under the territorial umbrella of one and the other.

When he began to plan in detail his archaeological programme in Swat in 1955, Giuseppe Tucci became increasingly aware of these legal problems. British law was still in force in Pakistan, namely the Ancient Monument Preservation Act, VIII, 1904 (later replaced by the Federal Antiquity Act, 1977).

In 1955, as we shall see, Tucci had managed to obtain a licence to excavate in Swat from the Pakistani Department of Archaeology, which had inherited the functions of the Archaeological Survey of India. Nevertheless, Swat was still an autonomous state and Pakistani archaeological law did not apply there, just as, at the time of Marc Aurel Stein and the other British archaeologists (Evert Barger and Philip Wright), British law did not (see Olivieri 2015a, 2019, 2023; Rafiullah Khan 2023).³

In my 2023 paper, I had already described how, thanks to Anderlini, Tucci was able to gather all available information to verify the legal framework of his Pakistani projects. First of all, the possibility of creating an Italian-Pakistani centre (Casa Italo-Pakistana), which would then indirectly materialise in the establishment of the Mission as a stable research unit in Swat. Then the collection of information regarding the legal framework for excavations and the export of archaeological materials, the difficulties of which Tucci had experienced first-hand. In fact, despite having negotiated and signed the framework agreement with the Pakistani authorities

³ British India no longer existed, but the Ancient Monuments Preservation Act was still in force in Pakistan. Swat was still an autonomous state, and would remain so until 1969. It depended on Pakistan for foreign policy, currency and the postal system.

before starting the first field reconnaissance in Swat in 1955, Tucci only received the actual licence document upon his return from Swat in December of that year. The reason, as I see it, lay in the need on the Pakistani side to solve the problem of authorising excavations in a territory, which although controlled, was outside its borders. This led to the problem on the Pakistani side of authorising the division of archaeological goods from the excavations, and even allowing their export, when the title of ownership of these goods, as technically excavated 'outside' Pakistan, was unclear. We are here dealing with Article 12 (later Article 13) of the agreement for the conduct of excavations signed between the Department of Archaeology and IsMEO, which, according to the Ancient Monument Preservation Act, could provide for the partition of archaeological assets between the two signatories (see Olivieri 2015a: 40, 179-182).

It was only in October 1958, as documents from the Pakistani National Archives attest (Tanweer 2011), that Tucci was able to convince the new Wali to agree to the Ancient Monument Preservation Act being extended to Swat, resolving *de jure* any issues.

3. "Pratiche relative scavi nello Swat. 1955"

In this section, almost hidden at the back (the folders are sometimes organised in reverse sequence) is a group of letters that even date back to 1954 and concern the correspondence between Giuseppe Tucci and Raul Curiel, which we can perhaps place at the basis of the creation of the Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan. I have already briefly mentioned Raul Curiel, a French numismatist from a Cairo family and a refined scholar, in my previous work (Olivieri 2006).⁴ Curiel was the first director-general of Pakistan's Department of Archaeology and Museums, established after independence on the ashes of the British Archaeological Survey of India.

The first letter sent by Tucci to Curiel is dated 18 August 1954 and follows the brief meeting the two had in Karachi a few weeks earlier. Of that meeting, there is a short report by Tucci dated 27 September 1954 (two pages) sent to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Dir. Gen. Political Affairs and Dir. Gen. Foreign Cultural Relations). In the report Tucci recounts the meeting he had in Karachi en route to Delhi during the stopover of the liner Asia with "the Director General of Archaeology [Curiel], the Deputy Secretary of Education and the Minister of Education". The meeting was organised in agreement with the Pakistani ambassador in Rome. "They discussed the cooperation that should be established between Italy and the Department of Archaeology. [...] I was pleased to learn that my request to undertake an archaeological exploration in the Swat valley in the coming year⁵ was favourably received in contrast to similar requests made by the Americans.⁶ The exploratory research will be done with the participation of young Pakistani archaeologists who should be educated in our method

4 See the obituary on *Le Monde* del 25 febbraio 2000. https://www.lemonde.fr/archives/article/2000/02/25/raoul-curriel_3683101_1819218.html

5 When this request came about we do not know, nor do these papers reveal it to us. I imagine that it came as early as 1954 through the Pakistani ambassador in Rome, Akhtar Husain, who, as Tucci says, co-organised the September meeting in Karachi. Previously, the Swat issue was discussed with reference to the project of an expedition, as far back as 1949: see in Zini 2023 the envelope "Spedizione Valle dello Swat" dated 1949-1951, n. 8.26.1.

6 As for the American request to open archaeological excavations in Swat, we know nothing about it. We can only guess (we are talking about a pre-1954 request) that this might have been made by one of the three American research groups active in Pakistan at that time. The first is that of the scholars of the American Museum of Natural History in New York, namely Walter A. Fairervis, who had been working in Balochistan since 1950, and whose study objectives followed closely in the footsteps of Marc Aurel Stein, a pioneer of research in both Balochistan and Swat. The second research group could be that of the Peabody Museum at Harvard University headed by Henry Field who worked in Lower Balochistan in 1955. The third group is that of the University Museum of Pennsylvania directed by George F. Dales who worked in Makran in 1959-1960.

by our school. The Swat Valley is one of the most important archaeological sites in the whole of Asia. Dr. Curiel would also like to know the name of any architect who would like to take on the position of his assistant as restorer of the monuments that need to be repaired. What is needed is not only a technician but a person of good taste. The architect should spend a certain number of years in the service of the Government of Pakistan. Since there has been a large-scale reconstruction of war-damaged monuments in Italy and this restoration work is now decreasing, it will not be difficult to find a suitable person.”

Tucci was fond of ‘book diplomacy’: the correspondence between September and December 1954 largely concerns books sent as gifts to Pakistan’s Ministry of National Education and to Curiel. These were a volume by Ugo Monneret de Villard on the Palatine Chapel (*Le pitture musulmane al soffitto della Cappella Palatina di Palermo*, Libreria dello Stato, Rome 1950), a translation of *Il Poema Celeste* di M. Iqbal by Alessandro Bausani (IsMEO, Rome 1952), *Tibetan Painted Scrolls* (Libreria dello Stato, Rome 1949), and volumes 1-6 of the *Serie Orientale Roma*. Later (22 October 1954) Curiel was also sent the then already extremely rare volume by Monneret de Villard, *La cassetta incrostata della Palatina di Palermo* (Collezione meridionale editrice, Rome 1938). A first delivery of the books to the Pakistani authorities took place at the University of Karachi on the occasion of a lecture given there by Alessandro Bausani in the presence of H.E. Benedetto d’Acunzo, the Italian Ambassador to Pakistan in January 1955.⁷ A second delivery (Curiel was not present at the first one because he was out of the country) was made on the occasion of d’Acunzo’s ‘farewell ceremony’ in the presence of Pakistan’s Prime Minister Mohammad Ali Bogra and Curiel on 8 April 1955.

Tucci wrote to Raul Curiel as “Directeur Général pour l’Archéologie” of Pakistan on 29 December 1954. Tucci, after regretting that he had not been able to meet Curiel the same month when he was back in Karachi, inquires whether he had received the books sent by IsMEO via the Embassy. After this long preamble, the letter gets to the point: “Je désire aussi confirmer nos accords de principe relativement aux fouilles archéologiques à entamer dans la vallée du Swat, dont nous avons parlé et examiné plusieurs points”. The same day, Tucci also wrote to d’Acunzo, briefly updating him on the status of the archaeological project to be carried out in Swat.

This is followed by a second letter from Tucci to Curiel dated 19 January 1955, in which Tucci asks Curiel for some practical information on which seasons are best for excavating in Swat, etc. One gets the impression that the letter served mainly to keep the correspondence warm, and to reiterate how much Tucci cared about the project: “Comme vous le savez, ce projet relatif aux fouilles, par son importance et la résonance qu’il ne peut manquer d’avoir dans le monde de l’art et de la science, me tient beaucoup à cœur, et je crois qu’il faut faire tout notre possible pour en assurer le succès le meilleur”.

Curiel’s reply, handwritten on plain paper with the annotation ‘Sind Club Karachi, 4 Pakistan’ is dated 26 January 1955. The letter confirms the receipt of the books, confirms the Pakistani interest in the Italian proposal, and in the margins discusses the question of the architect, whom Curiel was seeking for the documentation and restoration of monuments in Pakistan. Tucci’s reply was sent the same day the letter was received from Karachi, 14 February 1955.

We do not know when exactly the official request for the excavation licence in Swat was submitted: certainly between December 1954 and February 1955.

On 19 April, IsMEO finally received a letter from H.E. Akhtar Husain, confirming the Pakistani side’s acceptance of the agreement concerning the archaeological excavations (Fig.

⁷ Times of Karachi, “Italian Works on Islamic Culture. Books presented by Minister”, 20 gennaio 1955. Bausani at that time was professor of Persian Language and Literature at the University of Rome.

2). Here I believe a series of misunderstandings begin. Tucci replied to H.E. on 4 May, giving the bureaucratic process as concluded: "The kind concession of the Pakistani Government is very flattering for the Italian mission". The letter was registered with the annotation "We thank you for informing us that permission for the excavations has been granted and for sending the regulations" (Fig. 3). However, there was one worrying detail. However, in his letter of 19 April, H.E. Akhtar Husain points out an incorrect wording in Article 12, for which he has since requested clarification from Karachi. Tucci was very concerned about this, because that article provides for the possibility of exporting a portion of the excavated materials, and he informed Ambassador d'Acunzo, who reassured him on 25 May: "[Curiel] informed one of my collaborators that the correct text of Art. 12 has been transmitted by him by plane to the Embassy of Pakistan in Rome".⁸ The first news that Tucci received from Curiel was on 11 May, when Curiel wrote to Tucci asking for an official letter in English to be sent to him as "Director of Archaeology Pakistan Secretariat Karachi, 1", with a copy to the Embassy in Rome, as acceptance of the 'Special Agreement' to be attached to the 'General Rules', with the exact determination of the sites to be excavated, the period of work, details regarding the publication of the results, etc. From the correspondence between the IsMEO and the Pakistani embassy between 4 June and 5 July 1955, it is clear that Tucci was anxious to obtain the licence with 'official permission' before arriving in Pakistan, while the Pakistani authorities were interested in delaying it, also in view of the consequences of Article 12 (see above), which provided for the 'partition' of findings between Pakistan and the IsMEO. In fact, the whole dispute lay in the correct wording of Article 12 of the licence issued under the Ancient Monument Preservation Act, VIII, 1904 (embassy letter to Tucci of 4 June). Thus, in view of the approaching visit of Tucci to Karachi, on 2 September Tucci signed the acceptance of the 'General Rules' of the excavation licence that had been reformulated in the meantime (27 August). On the same day, Tucci sent a copy of the acceptance of the 'Rules' to the Pakistani cultural attaché in Rome, Dr. M.A. Rahman.

Tucci, taking for certain the positive progress of the matter, already discussed with Curiel on 7 July the questions concerning the logistics of the first mission the following November (use of tents, means of transport, etc.). The official IsMEO request in English will finally go out on 19 July. It should be noted that, contrary to what the Pakistani side apparently intended, the IsMEO does not give the year 1956 as the starting date of the request, but is told that the plan envisages a "recognition [that] would take place about the month of November 1955", while the excavation campaign is planned "in the course of Spring 1956" (Fig. 4). Curiel, in letters on Department of Archaeology letterhead, acknowledged receipt on 9 August (Fig. 5), and acceptance on 16 August 1955 (with subsequent amendments dated 27 August and sent to Tucci on 2 September 1955). The misunderstandings continued, however, and played out at the tip of the pen. In fact, again on 16 August 1955 (prot. 19A/2/55-2934) Curiel wrote to Tucci on Department of Archaeology letterhead: "Dear Prof. Tucci, Please refer to my letter No. 19A/2/55-2868, dated 9th August, 1955. We have learnt that acceptance of the Government "to entertain the ISMEO Mission has already been communicated." Here the term "entertain" only implies official readiness to co-organise the November mission in Swat. The licence situation, on the other hand, is still suspended. Although given for certain, it is always alluded to in vague terms, promised and given as already granted, but postponed (without ever saying

⁸ On 3 May, Tucci wrote to Curiel informing and thanking him, and informing him of his planned trip to Karachi with Secretary Gen. Imperiali returning from Japan in November. As part of the trip to Karachi Tucci informed Curiel of his intention to go up to Swat and make initial contacts in person. On 4 May, Tucci replied to Ambassador Husain, while on 5 May, Tucci also wrote to the Italian authorities (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Dir. Gen. Cultural Relations - H.E. Mario Conti, copied Dir. Gen. Political Affairs) to inform them of progress and plans. Meanwhile, also in May, Tucci informs the Italian Embassy in Karachi of the progress.

so) several times for formal details. As we shall see, it will only be issued after Tucci's return from 'recognition' in Swat.

With regard to the starting date of the actual excavation licence, a clarification was finally produced on 6 October 1955, when the Pakistani Embassy in Rome wrote to Francesco Giordani (“Vice-President ISMEO”, *sic*) unequivocally communicating “the agreement of the Government of Pakistan to allow ISMEO to send an archaeological expedition to Pakistan” concerned the year 1956, and that the specific “official permission” would be needed once the excavation plan had been agreed upon (Fig. 6).

Finally, upon his return from Swat on 8 December 1955 Tucci received a letter stating “The Government of Pakistan in [*sic*] pleased to grant a [five-year] licence for archaeological excavation to the Istituto per il medio ed Estremo Oriente, Roma (Italy)” (Fig. 7). The letter is also important because it informs us that the chief of the Mission is obviously Tucci, that Gullini as a member of it in Tucci’s absence is its field-director and that Faccenna, for the time being, is only its member. The area chosen for the reconnaissance is from Barikot (excluded) to Manglawar (included); the excavation areas are mainly Udegram and Manglawar, surveys if authorised may be conducted at other sites. The request is accompanied by an annex, a copy of which is in the binder that repeats work objectives and presents a brief curriculum vitae of Tucci himself. The absence of Giorgio Gullini in the 1955 mission stands out at this point. As we know, from 1956 to 1963 Gullini actively participated in the work, directing the excavation in Udegram. The explanation can be found in a letter from the Ministry of Education, Dir. Gen. Antiquities and Fine Arts, in which the Director General of Cultural Exchanges and Border Areas, Aleardo Sacchetto, in the absence of Guglielmo De Angelis D’Ossat (on leave), replied on 6 September, pointing out “the inappropriateness of considering the proposal of a mission, for travel expenses alone, which would be very expensive, given the scarcity of funds available for missions abroad”.

On 28 December, Tucci returned to Italy and thanked H.E. Akhtar Husain: “Your Excellency’s work on behalf of this plan has been so instrumental, that I find it far from easy to adequately express my feelings of sincere gratitude”.

A preparatory work whose scientific roots go back to Tucci’s expeditions to western Tibet, to the study of Tibetan travel narratives published in Calcutta by Tucci in 1940 (Tucci 1940), but whose organisational foundations date back to the immediate post-war period, as can be deduced from the existence of an envelope entitled “Spedizione Valle dello Swat” dated 1949-1951, no. 8.26.1 in Zini 2023 (see above no. 7).

4. The first reconnaissance in Swat

I have already discussed the organisation and logistics of the reconnaissance in Swat in 1955 in another work of mine (Olivieri 2006). In addition to Tucci and Faccenna, Raoul Curiel and the then First Secretary of the Italian Embassy Felice Benuzzi also participated in the reconnaissance (Olivieri 2006: fig. 1). The reconnaissance took place from 28 November to 2 December and was facilitated by the support of officials and logistics provided by the Wali of the Yusufzai State of Swat through its Chief Secretary Mr. Ataullah Khan.⁹ The reconnaissance included the territories between Top-dara near the State border with the Malakand tribal area, and Kalam at the upper end of the Swat valley, on both sides of the river.

Of the 1955 Swat reconnaissance we have two reports: Faccenna’s scientific report (six pages), and the scientific report published in *East and West* in 1958 (Tucci 1958). Faccenna’s report now appears both enthusiastic and naive: in spite of the naivety associated with his lack of knowledge of the context at the time, Faccenna foresaw the promising field of work and study

⁹ On Ataullah Khan see Olivieri 2006 (with previous references) and Jalal Uddin and Abdul Basit M. 2024.

that would open up, but above all he outlined the work plan from reconnaissance to excavation and restoration, which he would systematically implement in the forty years of his direction of the mission, laying the foundations for everything that came after him (as highlighted in Olivieri 2006). Missing from the file is the report that Tucci must certainly have sent to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to update the 1954 report.¹⁰ That that one should exist, we know from the 1956 Tucci report: “Now it is just a year, on my return from Asia, I sent a report on my impressions to this Ministry.”

Tucci's activities in Asia in 1955 are warmly celebrated by IsMEO and reported in the press. Admiral Ferdinando Farina, as a member of IsMEO's Board of Directors, sent a message on 17 December to the commander of the liner *Victoria* in which Tucci and Faccenna were embarked on their return to Italy, a message of “unanimous admiration council IsMEO scientific results achieved by his recent missions in Asia and affectionate friendship”. The Italian-Pakistani agreements had already been reported on 14 February 1955 in *Il Popolo di Roma* (“An archaeological expedition by Prof. Tucci to Pakistan”), and in Genoa's *Gazzetta del Lunedì* (“Pakistani approval for Tucci's expedition”). The results of the mission in Swat were reported on 23 December in *Il Giornale d'Italia* (“Archaeological research in Nepal and Pakistan”).

There is no trace of Felice Benuzzi, who had accompanied Tucci to Swat, in this folder: we find him instead in the folder “Scavi nello Swat. 1956” (see below): there are four letters which, for chronological consistency, I consider it appropriate to anticipate here. One is from Tucci to Benuzzi dated 27 December, and informs of the former's return to Italy and begs the latter to follow up on the the agreements with Curriel. Benuzzi's reply was dated 3rd January 1956, as soon as he had returned from India and had been busy with the Italian Foreign Minister Martino's visit to India, Pakistan and Ceylon. In it, Benuzzi reassures Tucci that he will follow things up. A letter from Benuzzi dated 28 January follows one from Tucci to him dated 26 January, where Benuzzi informs Tucci that he would be leaving Pakistan at the end of February to take up service in Canberra.

5. Article 12

The final wording of the former Article 12 of the ‘General Rules’ then Article 13 (see licence document of 9 August 1956) reads as follows: “Assignment of finds: – All monuments and antiquities found during exploration or excavations are the property of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. However, the Licencee will be presented with some of the finds, consisting of objects or group of objects which the Department of Archaeology, Government of Pakistan, agrees to spare because of their similarity to other objects discovered in the same site. Unique finds will remain in the custody of the Department of Archaeology, Government of Pakistan, The share of the Licencee will, as far as possible, be representative of the archaeological site concerned. The finds thus presented shall be placed by the Licencee in public collections where they are available for examination and study. When the presented objects form an ensemble, the Licencee or the authorities of the public collections shall respect their unity. If these two conditions are not observed the objects shall be returned to the Department of Archaeology, Government of Pakistan.”¹¹

10 Missing also in Zini 2023, nn. 39.21-A.

11 The original wording, which had raised the doubts of H.E. Akhtar Husain, read as follows: “Assignment of finds: – All the monuments and antiquities found during excavation are the property of the State of Pakistan. However the excavator will be presented with some of his finds. His share will consist of objects or group of objects which the Department of Archaeology is able to relinquish because of heir similarity to other objects produced by the same excavation. This share will be, as far as possible, representative of the archaeological site involved. The finds thus presented to the excavator will be placed by him in public collections where they will be available for examination and study. When the presented objects form an ensemble, the excavator or the

This part of the “Rules” posed administrative difficulties since the Ancient Monument Preservation Act did not apply *de jure* to Swat State. This would have had a major impact on the transfer of any materials to Italy as early as 1955. The legal situation was not clear to the Pakistani authorities themselves, just as it had not previously been clear to the British authorities (Olivieri 2019, Rafiullah Khan 2023). I believe the reason for the late issuance of the licence was the need to postpone the possible criticality for at least a year, considering 1955 premature for the resolution of this legal impasse. It seems to me that this necessity is stated, albeit in a nuanced manner, in the letter in which the embassy of Pakistan informed Giordani, f.f. vice-president of IsMEO on 6 October 1955 that “[The authorities in Pakistan] do not, therefore, consider it necessary at this stage to communicate afresh to IsMEO the ‘official permission’ to carry out a preliminary exploration this year to select a site for excavations. The question of according formal permission [i.e. the actual excavation licence] to conduct the actual excavation will be considered by the Government when an agreement is reached with Prof. Tucci about the personnel of the expedition, the site to be excavated, etc.”

The first ‘partition’ was carried out in 1956. As we know from Tucci’s 1956 report (see below), the selected pieces were left in Swat (in the Mission House?) and placed in the custody of local staff awaiting export for the future Museum of Oriental Art.

In 1958, as attested by documents in other archives (Tanweer 2011), Tucci, in order to implement former Article 12 (now Article 13) of the ‘Rules’ had to convince the Wali to agree that the Ancient Monuments Preservation Act could be extended to Swat. As a result, the first nucleus of the Swat Museum (a Pakistani public building with staff employed in Pakistan) was set up in Saidu Sharif in 1958. It was only then that Tucci was able to export the first group of sculptures from the excavations in Butkara on loan to the National Museum in Rome.¹² The exports, characterised by loans of sculptures, continued until 1976, when they were unilaterally stopped by the Italians. This fact is also interesting: certainly Tucci was aware that in the new framework law, the Antiquity Act of 1977, Article 12 had been abolished and therefore the ‘partition’ of finds allowed in the previous piece of legislation was no longer provided for. Tucci therefore took the very wise decision to move ahead of the times, unilaterally renouncing Article 12 a year before the new law (debated in the National Assembly in 1976) came into force.

I believe, therefore, that these were the Pakistani concerns, which to some extent postponed the effect of the licence agreements until 1956. In fact, as we have seen, it was only at the conclusion of the 1955 reconnaissance that Tucci received the ‘official permission’ in Karachi on 8 December, i.e. the licence document including Article 12, which was valid for five years.

6. “Anderlini 1956”

As we have already seen, the commercial attaché Edmondo Anderlini, about whom we have dealt with in another work (Olivieri 2023) will become, with the approval of Ambassador Calisse, a sort of IsMEO agent and will take care of many matters relating to the organisation of the Mission on site. He will, as we know, see to the conclusion of the purchase of the Gilgit manuscripts, select the Mission house in Saidu Sharif, the same one where the Mission still has its headquarters today, organise logistics to the point of booking well in advance on 23 May 1956 “two rooms six weeks Saidu from 18 August”. On 18 June, Anderlini received a letter from Chief Secretary of Swat State Ataulah Khan stating that “the house near the play grounds

authorities of the public collections are obliged to respect that unity. If these two conditions are not observed the objects shall be returned to the Department of Archaeology, in Pakistan.”

¹² On the practice of the ‘partition’ of archaeological assets and its genesis in the legislative framework of British India, see Olivieri 2015b.

is not available as it cannot be made ready. About the other quarter you saw, we would be able to give you a second quarter as well, on rent, on very reasonable terms” (see Figs 8 and 9).¹³ The other building that Anderlini had seen as the first option with Atallah Khan (consisting of two adjoining bungalows) was part of the teachers’ quarter of the local Jahanzeb College (Anderlini's letters to Tucci from Saidu on 26 May, and from Karachi on 19 July). In a letter dated 10 July, the Chief Secretary confirms that the building (consisting of two bungalows at 31-32 College Colony) will be available: “I am asking the contractors concerned to finish these up before the arrival of Prof. Tucci. The mission would have all the possible help from our side.” In the letter of 19 July, Anderlini also informs Tucci of the materials needed (crochery, bed linen, blankets, etc.) to be sent by diplomatic courier, clothing, coffee, medicines, photographic film, the question of insurance for the workers, the question of the bank (“There is a Habib Bank Limited agency in Mingora”),¹⁴ as well as the customs clearance of the Fiat Campagnola bought by IsMEO (and now on display at the Swat Museum in Saidu Sharif).¹⁵

The “Anderlini 1956” sub-folder contains dozens of letters from early 1956 to 15 February 1957, exchanged with Tucci, Gargano, Imperiali, Lanciotti, on various issues, from the arrival of materials, including the Olivetti typewriter (which is still in the Mission in Saidu), and food crates, as well as topographical maps (letter from Imperiali to Anderlini dated 24 July). He took care of everything, in concert with all the IsMEO officials: from the customs clearance of the Campagnola, to the publications received from the “dear and most learned Bausani”, without forgetting the “affectionate greetings to Lanciotti, Gargano and Bussagli. Prof. Petech I had the opportunity to greet him on the ship [...]” (Anderlini’s letter to Imperiali of 14 November).¹⁶ We see from a letter of 13 December that Tucci would arrive in Karachi from India on 8 December and then leave with the other members of the “expedition” on 18 December by plane (Imperiali’s letter to Anderlini of 21 November).

7. “Archeologi, Assistenti, Disegnatori”

The folder generally contains material of relative or minute interest. It contains various telegrams regarding the departure of Gullini, Faccenna, Vincenzo Caroli and Gabriele Graziani's luggage, the list of exported instruments with a letter from the Ministry of Foreign Trade (10 September), the commitment of possible expenses for extra luggage at SAS, the engagement letter and per diem for Caroli as draftsman and Graziani as excavation assistant (first 30 days: USD 19. 5, subsequent days USD 15), the letters of mission authorised by the Ministry of Education, Dir. Gen. Delle Antichità e Belle Arti, for Graziani and Caroli, who were employees at that administration, following Tucci’s request to De Angelis D’Ossat (letter of 23 March 1956). The mission letters of the archaeologists include a per diem of USD 26 and 20 for Faccenna and USD 28.60 and 22 for Gullini. Gullini received a driving licence and international permit to drive vehicles from the Italian Embassy. Tucci, who had already been

13 From the Chief Secretary's letter of 10 July, we know that the rent would be 200 rupees per month, for both bungalows.

14 Where the Mission had an account at least until the late 1990s.

15 Tucci’s letter to Anderlini dated 16 July. All of Anderlini's work was facilitated by the architect Emanuele Lizoli who, together with Franco Ferri, travelled with Anderlini to Swat in May to close the issue of the Mission house. Of the two, particularly the former, who was to be of great importance in the history of the Mission in later years, except for a few grateful mentions of Anderlini there is no trace in the correspondence in this folder. There is also no mention of Mr Gay a wine merchant, travel agent (and collector of ancient art) of the Parsi faith from Peshawar, who was to be the Mission's travel agent between Karachi and Swat for some years (see Olivieri 2006).

16 Luciano Petech at the time, besides being Tucci’s close collaborator at IsMEO, was Professor of East Asian History at the University of Rome. The famous Italian sinologist Lionello Lanciotti was IsMEO’s Librarian at the time. The indologist Antonio Gargano was the vice-Secretary General of IsMEO. The famous art historian Mario Bussagli was Professor of Art History of India and Central Asia and Art History of the Far East Oriente at the University of Rome.

in Swat since 18 August, will be joined by the two archaeologists on 25 September (and also by Graziani and Caroli), as requested in letters dated 23 August from Lionello Lanciotti to the two archaeologists.

8. “Scavi nello Swat. 1956”

The folder opens with the “housing file” we have already mentioned (the Mission house), and then deals (Tucci’s letter to Anderlini dated 19 July) with the permit to enter Swat to be issued in Malakand. On 2 and 7 July, Tucci had already informed Anderlini that he would be leaving on the Lloyd Triestino liner Asia with five crates and two bales of materials together with Miss Bonardi “in charge of the photographic surveys of the expedition” (we know this from an earlier letter from Tucci to Calisse dated 29 May).

There are many issues dealt with in the documents, from minute things (the exchange between Tucci and Mr. Soso of the Hotel Metropole in Karachi to reserve two single rooms with bathroom on 10 August; the booking of two rooms for October at the Hotel Imperial in New Delhi agreed with the director Italo Sibilia), to exchanges between Tucci, Curiel, the Pakistani Embassy for more important matters, such as the study of the inscriptions in Bactrian of Tochi at the Peshawar Museum, which was facilitated by Curiel (letter of 15 February 1956).¹⁷

The folder closes with an exchange between Tucci and Johnatan Gell, a young Danish archaeologist who knew Curiel and asked to participate in the excavations in Swat (letter of 8 March).¹⁸ Tucci replied negatively on 10 April 1956: “This archaeological campaign in Pakistan has been planned, as all such plans, many months ahead, and persons taking part in it, in whatsoever capacity have been engaged, after careful selection, since a long time now”. On the same day, Tucci wrote to Kaare Groenbech (a well-known Mongolian and Danish Turkologist), who had introduced Gell to Tucci in a letter dated 6 March. On 6 May Gell replied to Tucci thanking him.¹⁹

11. “Pratiche varie”

This folder contains a lot of scattered information all from 1956. Perhaps the most interesting is found at the opening: a letter dated 29 December 1956 from Tucci to Ambassador Calisse. “Dear Ambassador, Thank you so much for your letter with the photograph of the statue found in Sweden. Tell the [Swedish] Ambassador that it is indeed a very important piece about whose provenance I hope to be precise in a few days. If no one else publishes it, I would be delighted to publish it myself.” This is, of course, the small bronze statue (now famous, but then completely unknown) from the 7th-8th centuries, possibly from Swat and found at Helgö in Sweden in 1954.²⁰

We pause for a moment on the folder dedicated to platex, the plastic material for casts requested by Gullini. Ms. Anna Maria De Angelis (future Director General of IsMEO), contacted the Latex Lab in Chicago, the Sculpture House in New York, the University Museum at Penn, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and began a long summer correspondence with Sheldon Keck,

17 These latter (called “Mongolian inscriptions” by Curiel) were later published by Ahmad H. Dani, Robert Göbl and Helmut Humbach in 1964.

18 Gell spent most of his career in the USA (he taught at Temple University), where he married fellow student Elizabeth Ann ‘Liz’ Morris (Colorado State University).

19 There is also an interesting letter of 9 April addressed to “Akhtar Husain” [sic] Secretary of the Wali in which Tucci makes a gift of David Santillana’s *Istituzioni di diritto musulmano (Istituto per l’Oriente, Rome, 1938)*. In another letter, the addressee, whose name was in fact Ataulah Khan as we now know, wrote to Anderlini to note down his correct name, which Anderlini then took care to pass on to Tucci.

20 For a bibliography on Helgö see most recently H. Clarke and K. Lamm, *Helgö Revisited: A New Look at the Excavated Evidence for Helgö, Central Sweden* (Schleswig: Stiftung Schleswig-Holsteinische Landesmuseen Schloss Gottorf, 2017). Interesting this post: <https://brentnongbri.com/2023/05/05/the-helgo-buddha/> See also: <https://naratonorwich.org/>. Tucci will never deal with the Helgö bronze.

curator at the Brooklyn Museum, to follow up the file. In another field, Tucci contacted the then director of the American Academy in Rome to introduce Paolo Daffinà who wanted to know the latest techniques for making casts of inscriptions.

Another folder is dedicated to photographs of Gandharan pieces from the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. Here, too, the main protagonist was Ms Anna Maria De Angelis who between October and December kept up a dense correspondence with the London museum, from which she obtained a large number of photographic positives (with attached list). The materials were those exported by Barger and Wright and then studied by Tucci (Ackermann 1976). Photographs of the pieces exported by the two scholars were also requested by Imperiali from the Indian Institute in Oxford.

There follows a folder on the vicissitudes connected with the export of the Fiat Campagnola (now at the Swat Museum) and the problems with Lloyd Triestino, which did not seem to be able to find room for the car on the liner Victoria, etc. (in the end the car will find room on the liner Asia leaving Naples on 1 October). There follows a brief correspondence on the payment of the first caretaker of the Mission house Mr Habibur Rahman, to whom the Italian Embassy on behalf of IsMEO sent a money order for 50 rupees every month, in addition to paying the advance rent for the two bungalows. This was followed by two (unanswered?) letters received from The Museum Association of Pakistan (27 August, 5 September) requesting a conference at the Islamia College in Peshawar, the theme of which was the celebration of the 2500th anniversary of Buddha Jayanti.

In addition to letters sent to Italian ministries, of little interest to this note, the folder closes with a telegram sent to our representations in New Delhi, Karachi, Kabul and Colombo on 7 August with Tucci's travel programme:

Pakistan: 10 August - end of September

Afghanistan: 1 October - 10 October

India: October - November

Ceylon: late October - early December [then Pakistan again].

There followed a series of brief exchanges for the export of films and other materials at the end of the excavation campaign, etc.

12. Tucci's Report 1956

At the end of the campaign Tucci wrote a 'political' report to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Tucci's 'political' report (a good 20 pages) is entitled "Report on the mission in Swat, Afghanistan and India". It is surprising that Tucci speaks at the beginning (as in his letter to Conti, see above) of the signing of "an agreement valid for five years but renewable, under which Ismeo is authorised to carry out archaeological exploration." This is surprising because this agreement had already been signed and subscribed to: perhaps this new one contained amendments to the 1955 text. We can only assume this.

The first part of the report is devoted to Swat, its political and administrative structure, its relationship with the Wali, future plans (including the establishment of a museum, as was later to happen),²¹ and promising conditions for future work. It is not necessary to quote this part in full, as we will find it used extensively in the little book *La via dello Svat* (Tucci 1963). Interesting is the part concerning the partitioning of the objects following Article 12 [13], which, according to the report, were already chosen that year but not exported and left in the custody of the Mission House (I think I understand) while waiting for "authorisation to be

21 For the history of the establishment of the Swat Museum see Olivieri 2019, for the vicissitudes of the museum, reconstructed by the Mission in 2011-2013 see Olivieri 2017.

exported to Rome for the Museum of Oriental Art, which, following agreements between the Fine Arts Directorate and Ismeo [*sic*], will soon open in Ismeo [*sic*].” The scientific issues are mentioned; however, it should be noted that Tucci believed that the excavations could shed light on the problems of Buddhist art in Gandhara, “the most difficult problems of Indo-Roman art history and shed full light on the vicissitudes of these quarters, which by straddling two worlds are of interest to both classical culture and the Far East.” Tucci continues, noting “with great satisfaction that the excavations were also followed with great interest in India, where newspapers reproduced what was published in the newspapers of Pakistan. This is the first time that Italy has found itself alongside the major European nations in enterprises that bring great prestige to science and arouse a vast echo of consensus and interest.” Tucci pointed out the large number of American, French, British and German tourists who visited the excavations, almost as if to signal the public’s interest: he then launched the idea of an exhibition of Gandhara art to be held in Pakistan and then in Italy, which would then take place.²²

In his final considerations, Tucci inserts some fundamental points: firstly, the importance of the study of Asian civilisations and cultures as a privileged means of political relations, and secondly, the fundamental importance of dissemination and the press, of which other nations are masters, which “maintain an excellent connection with the local press: for which every event or initiative, award of scholarships, or visit of important figures is immediately given the widest circulation. We almost completely lack this connection. [...] Ismeo has tried to make up for this deficiency by liaising with the journalistic world [...]”.

Tucci’s report deserves to be published in its entirety for the depth of its analysis and the richness of its themes, which cannot be summarised in this contribution of mine.

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22 The famous exhibition was to be organised first in Rome at Palazzo Venezia in 1962 and then abroad and was to cover the archaeological materials attributed to IsMEO under Article 12: Mostra del materiale rinvenuto a Mingora (Swat) dalla Missione Archeologica Italiana in Pakistan ed assegnato all’Italia.

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Figures

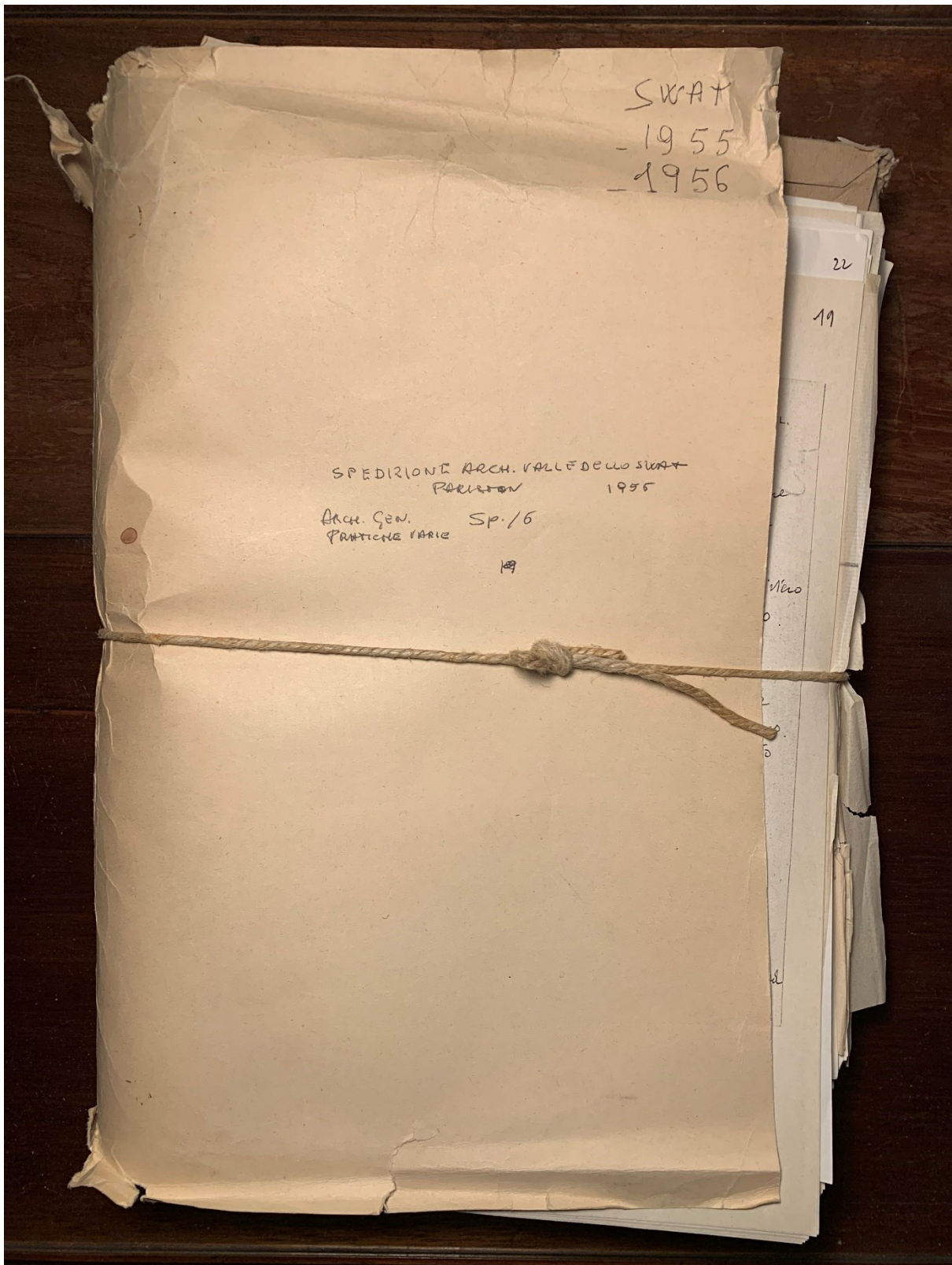


Figure 1.



No.4(6)EXB/53.

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EMBASSY OF PAKISTAN
ROME

April 19, 1955.

*invia copia
del regolamento
per la concessione
degli scavi
arch.*

My dear Prof. Tucci,

Will you kindly refer to correspondence which has passed between us in regard to your project for an Italian archaeological expedition to Swat.

2. I am glad to inform you that the Government of Pakistan has agreed to the project subject to acceptance by you of the General Rules (a copy of which is attached) and to executing a Special Agreement to be entered into between your Expedition and the Director of Archaeology, Pakistan. Upon completion of such an Agreement a formal licence will be issued. Enclosed you will also find a proforma which gives an indication of the Heads under which the Special Agreement would be made.

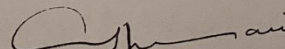
3. In this connection I would like to draw your attention to the fact that Rule 15 of the General Rules is still tentative as it has not yet received the approval of the relative Ministries of the Government of Pakistan.

4. I regret that the copy of the General Rules I have received from Karachi seems to be suffering from a typing defect in respect of the concluding part of Rule 12. As it stands, this part does not make sense. I am, therefore, seeking clarification from Karachi. Meanwhile, I expect you would understand, in a general sense, what is desired to be conveyed.

5. As far as I can see, the next step seems to be for you to communicate your acceptance of these rules and conditions to me upon which I would suggest your getting directly into touch with the Director of Archaeology, Pakistan, with a view to finalising the Special Agreement. I would appreciate if copies of your communications to the Director of Archaeology are sent to me for my record.

With kind regards,

Yours very sincerely,


(Akhtar Husain)

Prof. G. Tucci,
President,
Istituto Italiano per il
Medio Ed Estremo Oriente,
R O M A.

Figure 2.

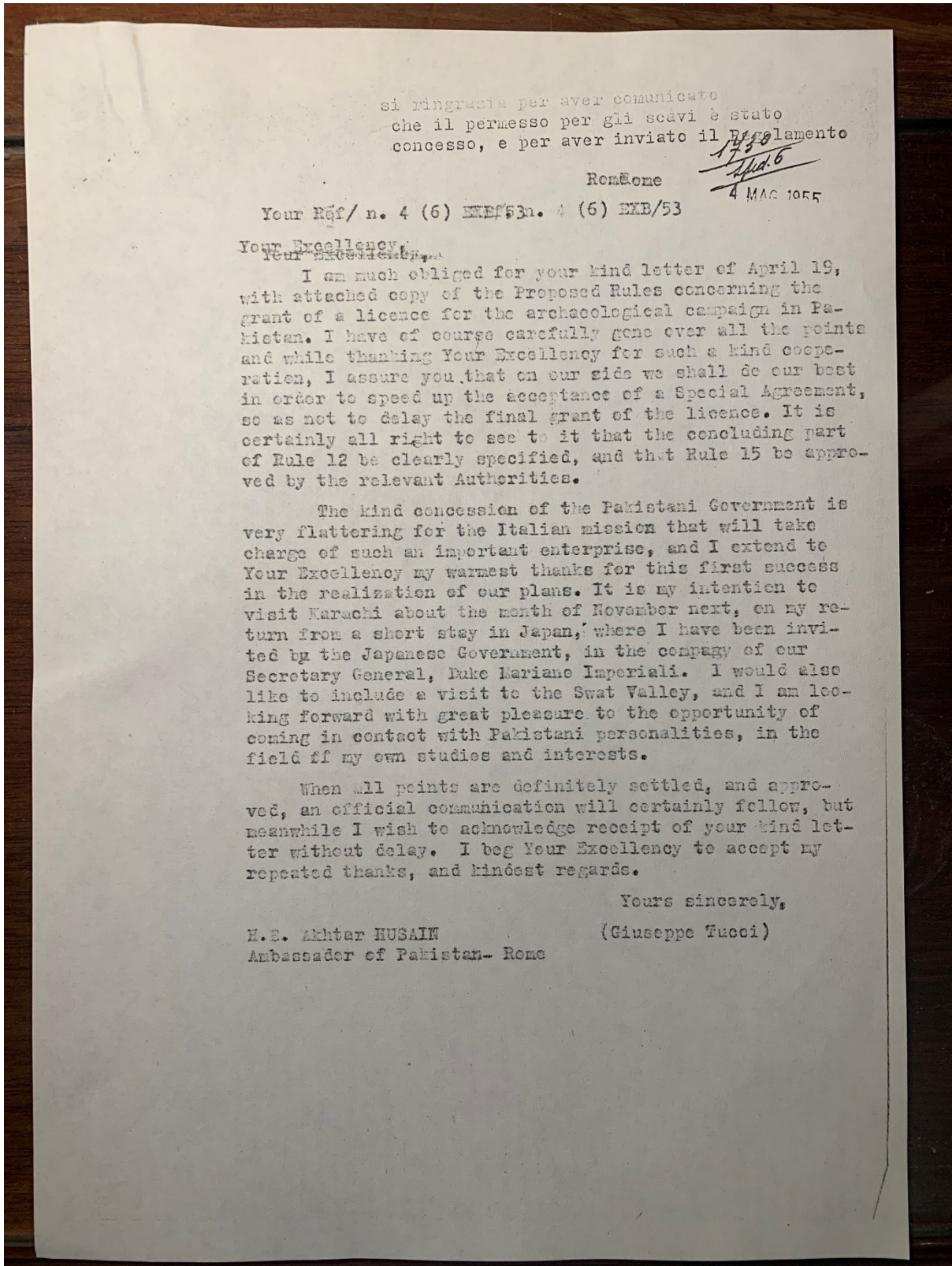
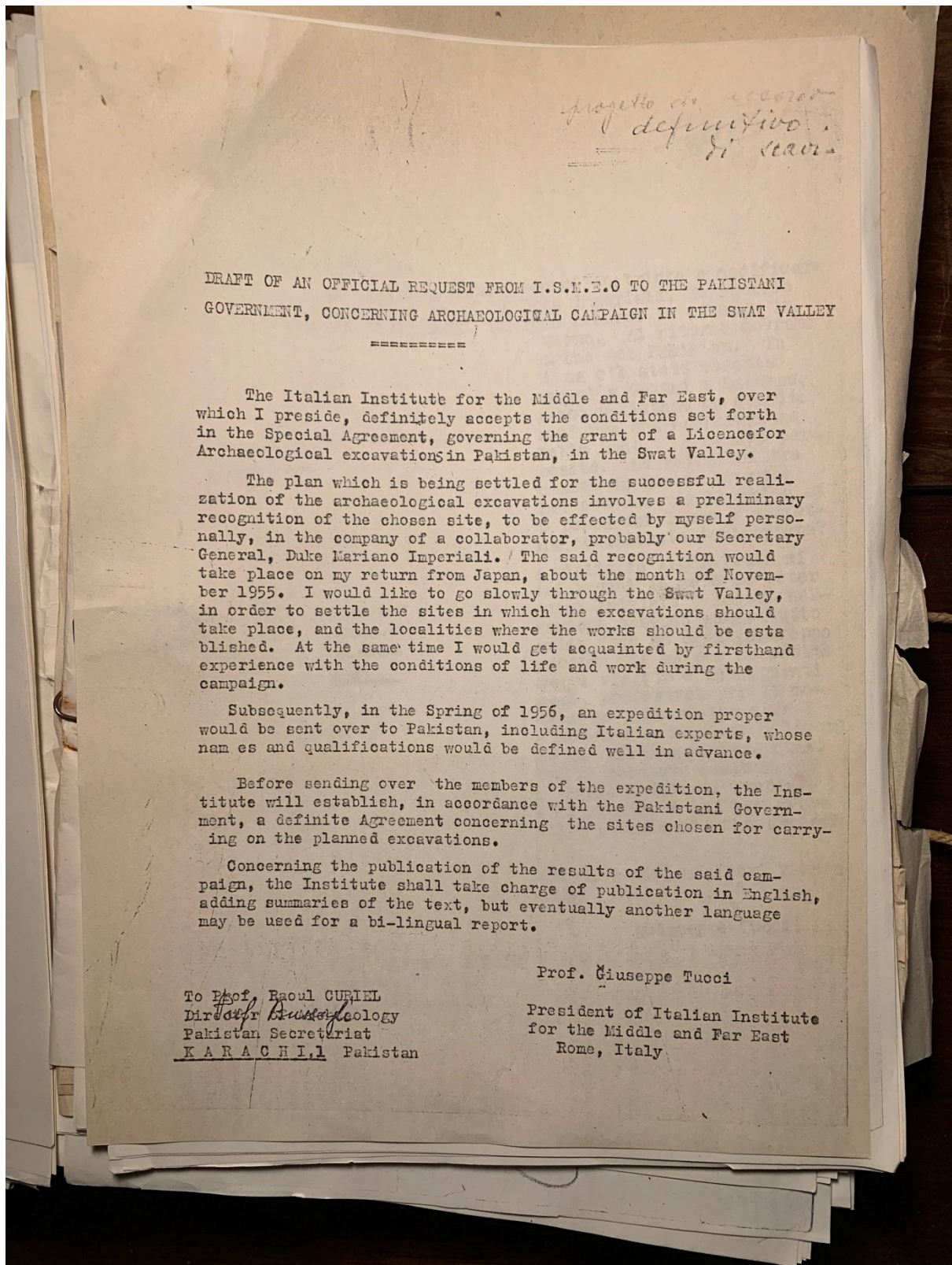


Figure 3.



*progetto di accordo
definitivo
di lavoro*

DRAFT OF AN OFFICIAL REQUEST FROM I.S.M.E.O TO THE PAKISTANI
GOVERNMENT, CONCERNING ARCHAEOLOGICAL CAMPAIGN IN THE SWAT VALLEY

=====

The Italian Institute for the Middle and Far East, over which I preside, definitely accepts the conditions set forth in the Special Agreement, governing the grant of a Licence for Archaeological excavations in Pakistan, in the Swat Valley.

The plan which is being settled for the successful realization of the archaeological excavations involves a preliminary recognition of the chosen site, to be effected by myself personally, in the company of a collaborator, probably our Secretary General, Duke Mariano Imperiali. The said recognition would take place on my return from Japan, about the month of November 1955. I would like to go slowly through the Swat Valley, in order to settle the sites in which the excavations should take place, and the localities where the works should be established. At the same time I would get acquainted by firsthand experience with the conditions of life and work during the campaign.

Subsequently, in the Spring of 1956, an expedition proper would be sent over to Pakistan, including Italian experts, whose names and qualifications would be defined well in advance.

Before sending over the members of the expedition, the Institute will establish, in accordance with the Pakistani Government, a definite Agreement concerning the sites chosen for carrying on the planned excavations.

Concerning the publication of the results of the said campaign, the Institute shall take charge of publication in English, adding summaries of the text, but eventually another language may be used for a bi-lingual report.

Prof. Giuseppe Tucci

President of Italian Institute
for the Middle and Far East
Rome, Italy

To Prof. Raoul CURIEL
Director of Archaeology
Pakistan Secretariat
KARACHI, Pakistan

Figure 4.

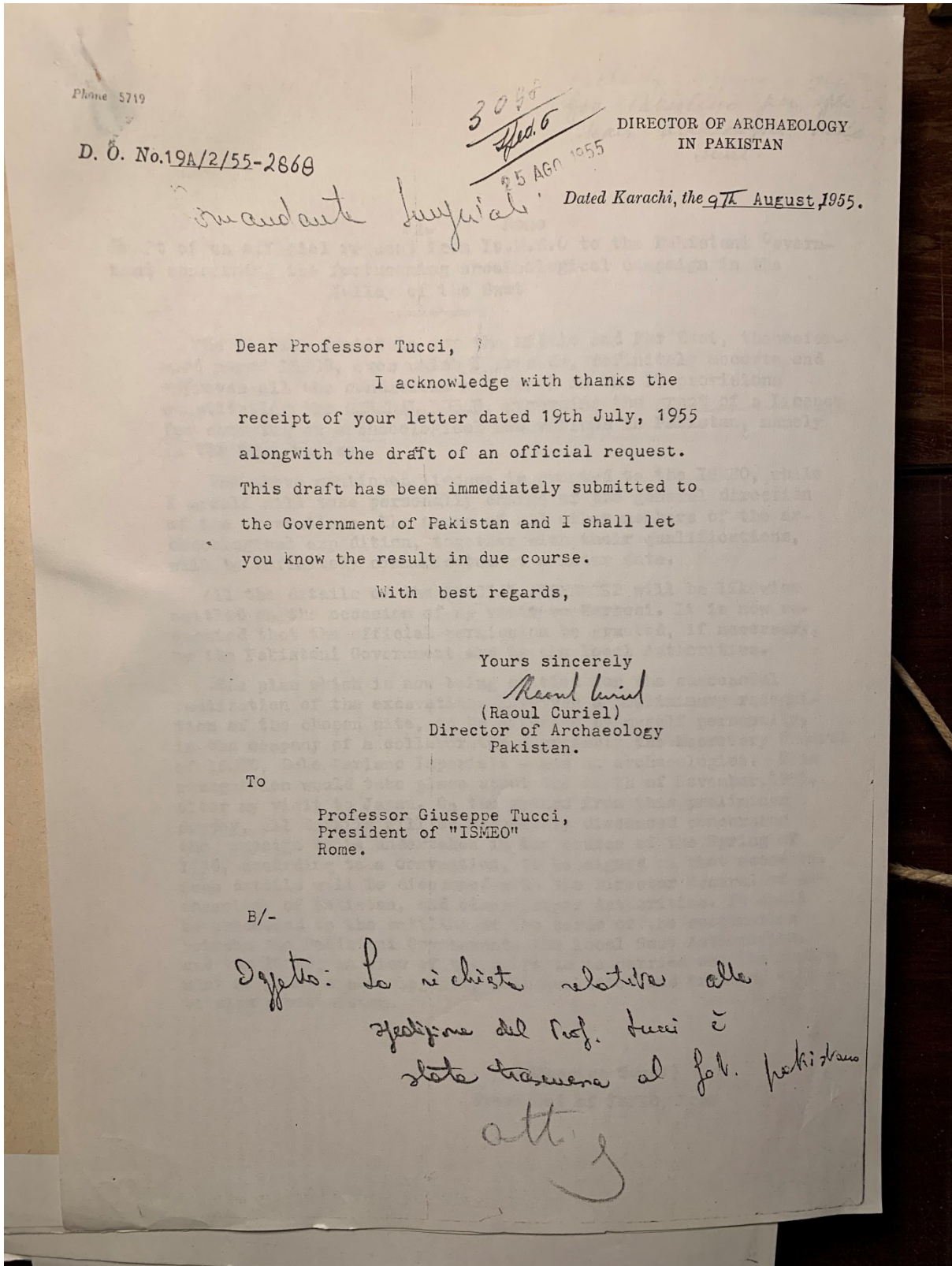


Figure 5.

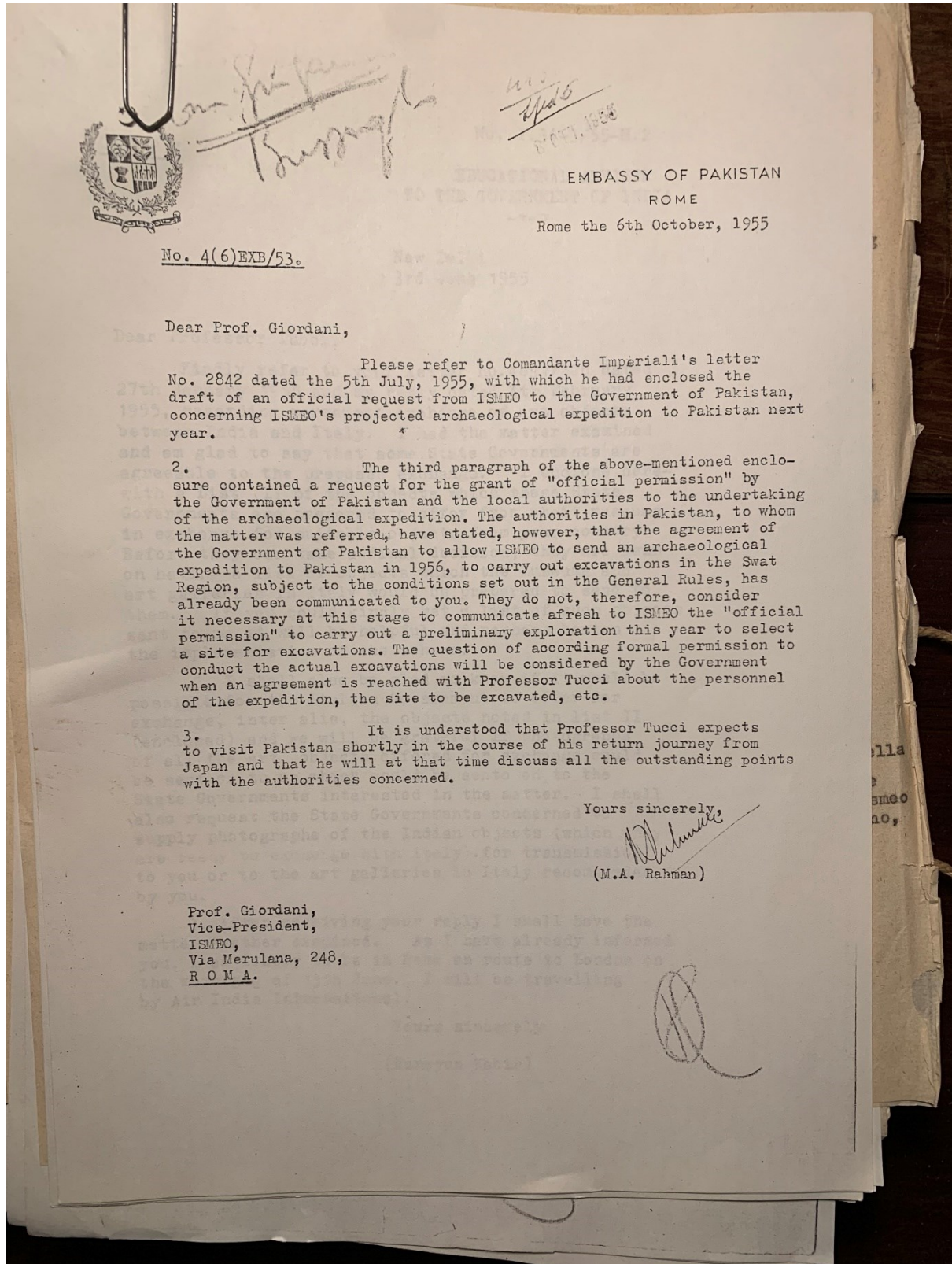
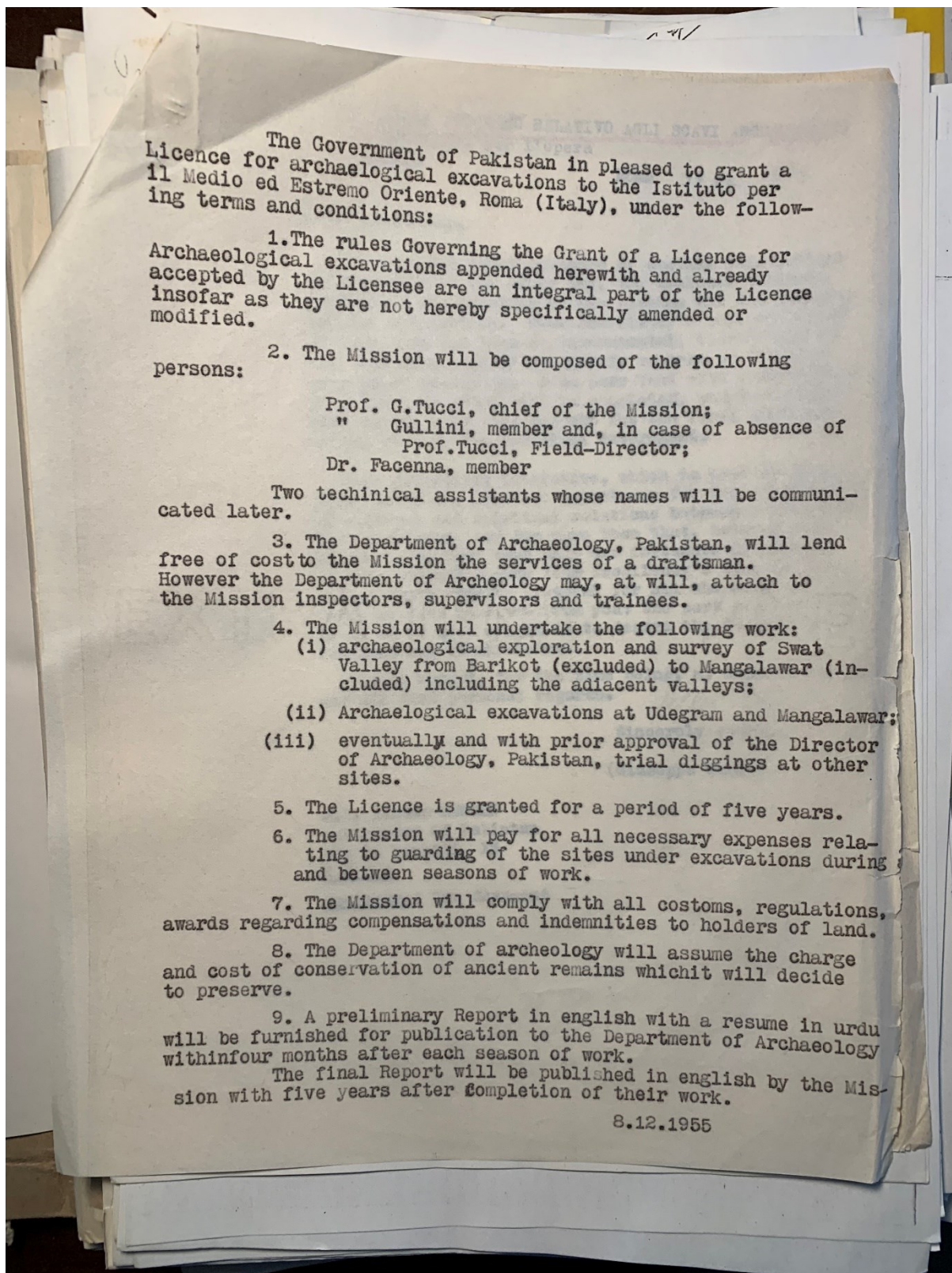


Figure 6.



The Government of Pakistan is pleased to grant a Licence for archaeological excavations to the Istituto per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente, Roma (Italy), under the following terms and conditions:

1. The rules Governing the Grant of a Licence for Archaeological excavations appended herewith and already accepted by the Licensee are an integral part of the Licence insofar as they are not hereby specifically amended or modified.

2. The Mission will be composed of the following persons:

- Prof. G. Tucci, chief of the Mission;
- " Gullini, member and, in case of absence of Prof. Tucci, Field-Director;
- Dr. Facenna, member

Two technical assistants whose names will be communicated later.

3. The Department of Archaeology, Pakistan, will lend free of cost to the Mission the services of a draftsman. However the Department of Archeology may, at will, attach to the Mission inspectors, supervisors and trainees.

4. The Mission will undertake the following work:

- (i) archaeological exploration and survey of Swat Valley from Barikot (excluded) to Mangalawar (included) including the adjacent valleys;
- (ii) Archaeological excavations at Udegram and Mangalawar;
- (iii) eventually and with prior approval of the Director of Archaeology, Pakistan, trial diggings at other sites.

5. The Licence is granted for a period of five years.

6. The Mission will pay for all necessary expenses relating to guarding of the sites under excavations during and between seasons of work.

7. The Mission will comply with all customs, regulations, awards regarding compensations and indemnities to holders of land.

8. The Department of archeology will assume the charge and cost of conservation of ancient remains which it will decide to preserve.

9. A preliminary Report in english with a resume in urdu will be furnished for publication to the Department of Archaeology within four months after each season of work.

The final Report will be published in english by the Mission with five years after completion of their work.

8.12.1955

Figure 7.



Figure 8. 1956: At the Mission House (front *verandah*), from left: R. Graziani, G. Gullini, D. Faccenna, G. Tucci, H.A. Miangul Aurangzeb the Walia Ahad, F.A. Khan (D.G. Archaeology), F. Bonardi (Courtesy Miangul Archives).



Figure 9. The Mission House: the same *verandah* of Fig. 8 in 2021.