

# Journal of Asian Civilizations



Vol. 38, No. 2, December 2015

# **Journal of Asian Civilizations**

**(Founded by Late Prof. Dr. Ahmad Hassan Dani in 1978  
as  
Journal of Central Asia)**

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**Vol. 38, No. 2  
December 2015**

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Details of *Stūpa*-like pattern on north-western column in *Śoro-e Thāng*, Altit Fort, Hunza, Pakistan (photo by Mueezuddin Hakal)

Rs. 400.00 in Pakistan  
U.S. \$ 40.00 outside Pakistan

**ISSN 1993-4696**

**HEC recognized “X” category journal, since May 2015**

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### **Published by:**

Taxila Institute of Asian Civilizations  
Quaid-i-Azam University Islamabad, Pakistan.  
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**Printed at:** Sohail Altaf Printers, Rawalpindi – Pakistan  
Ph: 051-5770388/ E-Mail: sohailaltaf1958@gmail.com

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## **Paralogism of Romantic Expression and War, Iskander or Alexander**

**Mamoona Khan**

### **Abstract**

*Mongol art of the Muslim miniature painting is appreciated for its originality, though emerged out of the native and the foreign influences, the former of Baghdad school and the latter of China, brought to the land by Mongols. But eventually it developed a novel character that can be rightly labelled as Ilkhanid Mongol Art. The paper reflects their stylistic originality through analysing a miniature of the last phase of the era, illustrating an anecdote of Shāhnāma. The miniature is unique of its kind, though represents a war scene of Alexander and Puras but adopts unusual stance for its delineation that made even intangible elements perceptible. In order to understand it thoroughly, it is scrutinised besides history through science as well, to explore both; its physical and metaphysical phenomena. Because the artist seems to have knocked at all the doors possible to be consulted; taking help from symbols, exploring natural phenomenon through the spectacles of a scientist. Thus, besides history, it is viewed and analysed by scrutinising medical, engineering and space-science' point of views. Contradiction between Alexander and Iskander, for being Macedonian or Persian prince is also sorted out through the annals of history. Thus, finding paralogism in the use of phenomenon and noumenon, myth and reality, here conception is turned into perception.*

Horror and war are interlinked whether one turns back to the ancient times or views it in the modern atomic age. It is embodied with abhorrence and repugnance, keeping no element of attraction or beauty, for its association with massacres, especially of human, though keeps an element of thrill as well. But an artist may perceive the heinous act through the spectacles of aesthetics, delineating it with comely expressions. The research focuses on a painting of the last phase of Ilkhanid<sup>1</sup> Mongol dynasty, titled *Indian*

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<sup>1</sup> Mongols were basically Shamanists by religion but Il Khan was the first Muslim convert, and was named Il Khan Ahmad (ruled 1282-1284) after accepting Islam, and the dynasty that sprang from him was named Ilkhanid Mongol dynasty (1335).

*Army fleeing before the iron warriors of Iskander (1330-1335), fig.1, from Demotte's Shāhnāma<sup>2</sup>, a novel expression of a chronicle.*



Fig.1: *Indian Army Fleeing before the Iron Warriors of Iskander*, from *Demotte's Shāhnāma*, Tabriz, 1335, Harvard University Art Museum. Opaque water colours, ink, gold and silver on paper. Folio: 50.2 x 39.5 cm

*Demotte's Shāhnāma* illustrates either heroic subjects or lamentable and pathetic, those tug at the heartstrings. The narrative represented here is linked with the former, celebrating heroism of Alexander, a conqueror of the world, and his army. Even their sight pushes Indian army away, to run from the battlefield, for they were being chased at the speed of light. The painting is unique of its kind, though a military confrontation but sets forth with romantic expression of an epic drama, where even the intangible element of speed is portrayed along with the scientific phenomenon of

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<sup>2</sup> This is the large Mongol Shāhnāma that is named Demotte's Shāhnāma after its former owner.

friction. Hence, the painting needs extrinsic and intrinsic analysis for an amalgamated interpretation of history, metaphysics, physics and the truth behind Iskander or Alexander.

The Macedonian prince Alexander or Iskander and the Indian monarch Rāja Purus encountered in the early summer of 326 BC, at the bank of the river Hydaspes<sup>3</sup>. Arrian<sup>4</sup> defines its location, as he says that a rock at the bank of Hydaspes “where a channel makes a mighty sweep”. It is said that the rock was covered with trees, and at a small distance was an island, full of woods but without denizens, ideal to conceal the cavalry and infantry of Alexander. The island was only at a distance of twenty seven kilometers from the encampment of Raja Purus’ army (McCarty 112). Thus, the encounter occurred in the rugged terrain of Puṭhūhār<sup>5</sup>.

The painting under discussion is portrayal of the first attack when Iskander tactically hiding his army in the natural ditches brought them to the river bank for crossing. It was a huge number with five thousand cavalry and ten-thousand infantry in thirty oared galleys and boats that safely managed to move in the night of thunder storm. But instead of reaching the eastern shore of the Hydaspes that they were aiming for, they landed on another island, about which they were unaware. It was apart from the farther bank with a very deep- wide channel replete with flood water. Afraid to get exposed to Purus, they managed in groups, to land at the farthest shore. Alexander regrouped all, and they swiftly moved to ten kilometers to meet the enemy. It was a sudden rush and Purus could not make a quick rightful decision, and sent one of his sons with three thousand cavalry along with hundred and twenty chariots to halt the attack

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<sup>3</sup>Hydaspes was 724 Km long river in the North-Western India, flowing from Kashmir into the Chenab. It is the ancient name of the present day river Jhelum.

<sup>4</sup> A Greek historian

<sup>5</sup> The nomenclature Puṭhūhār, according to Azīz Malik is a combination of two words of the native language: *puṭh* and *ār*. The former means *back* and the latter stands for *like*, so it connotes *back like*. It defines the undulating surface of earth of this region, which is neither plain nor fully mountainous; rather there are plains and ridges or rugged terrains combined (Malik 11). Some associate it with *Bhattiwār* or *Pupe hār* twisted to Puṭhūhār. The perimeters of Puṭhūhār are also variously given. Some people limit it to the taḥṣīl Gujar *Khān*, while others restrict it to the region between the river Sawān and Nāla Kānsi. But Minhās in *Tārīkh-i Puṭhūhār* allocates a vast land to the region: from Mardān to Jhelum River, and on the other side, from mountains of Kutli Pūnchh in Āzād Kashmīr district, including Murree to the Indus Kaiser Mountains in Sargudha district<sup>5</sup> (Minhās *Tārīkh* 40).



(McCarty 113). While, Lamb describes the number of halters as two thousand infantry, apart from chariots (Mahar 341). But the son of Purus was slain to death and army devastated. This attack seems to be the moment of artist's choice because Purus encountered Alexander afterwards with elephants forming a front line, followed by their infantry before Alexander's cavalry, but the elephants smashed their own people in a stampede. The confrontation delineated in the miniature has no elephants but mounted horsemen on both sides. It defines time as well as place, both of war of Hydaspes, but at its initial phase, which appears decisive as well.

It is an incident of ancient past but all the nuances of the narrative are fulfilled, mounted warriors of Alexander are chasing down, from a rounded hillock of uneven ground of Puthūhār with natural vegetation of shrubs. It is indicative of the bank of river Jhelum or Hydaspes as it was called so in the ancient times. History defines that Alexander was mounted on Bucephalus, a magnificent horse, bought for him by Philip of Macedonia for a considerable amount of gold that is thirteen talents<sup>6</sup> when Alexander was only fourteen years old. Since then, Bucephalus<sup>7</sup> remained a dearest companion of Alexander, through battle fields or in pleasure pursuits, for it never allowed any other to mount on it except Alexander. They lived together for seventeen years but Bucephalus, Lamb describes, died in the battle field (Mahar 342) or just after the battle of Hydaspes (McCarty 115), where it is still remembered for the monument erected in its memory along with a city in the vicinity, named Bucephala.

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<sup>6</sup> Value of thirteen talents of gold was defined by Philip of Macedonia as an amount through which one thousand soldiers could be bought for one year.

<sup>7</sup> Bucephalus means Ox-head, named after the mark of the brand burned on its shoulders by the Thessalian breeders.



Fig.2: Bucephalus from fig.1

Historians describe Bucephalus as strong and beautiful in body, black in colour with a white mark on its forehead, arched neck, pricked ears, and eyes that looked everywhere (McCarty 17). Looking at the painting one can recognise Bucephalus in the middle of the second row of hastened mounted warriors of Alexander. Its black colour with a white patch on the forehead, *fig.2*, and all traits described above, discriminate it from all the rest. The fully clad armoured commander, having entire head and neck concealed is Alexander, while others have their heads and necks under armour with bare faces. His central position with two warriors on each side, also distinguishes him from others. The terrified Indians, timidly looking backwards at the attackers, chasing them at the speed of lightening are rendered dark in complexion while the Macedonians are markedly fair with refined features, *fig.3*. It is not a generalised representation of some particular moments but particular representation of a specific instance of history. Artist has made use of the narrative details, taking into consideration geography, history, ethnography, utilising them as backbone to represent crux of the matter in most truthful manner, even concentrating the undercurrents of reality.



Fig.3: Indians and Macedonians from fig.1

The style is restricted not only to representational elements but taken auxiliary help from symbols too. The frontline of Alexander's forces serve as guards of the monarch, having no particular colour, specific shape or individual features. They look like steel warriors, holding large spheres with golden plumed hats and sashes around their waists, mounted on horse backs, and aiming at the fleeing Indians. Another amazing symbolism is of wheels that are golden too, are symbolic of speed. Wheels, the icon of motion are attached with frontline horses in place of their legs. They are enigmatic in their representation; though do not appear strange at first glance, because they are part of the thrilling drama, *fig.4*.



Fig.4: Wheeled Horses of Alexander, Symbolic of Speed

Colour of the enigmatic horses and their riders is all over grey, with no features of their faces defined. But horses have their reigns marked with black outlines and minor indication of their features. Objects in motion are less marked because speed conceals details, for, human perception has certain limitations. It can view particular limits of speed, neither less nor more, and beyond that things get imperceptible. So, the symbols of speed at the frontline of cavalry of Alexander are almost featureless.

A contradictory account given by Bloom and Blair is associated with the grey frontline warriors of Alexander. They hold that in order to threaten elephant cavalry of Rāja Purus, Macedonians devised iron cavalry with wheeled horses and their riders, filled with naphtha. When pushed,

their nostrils and mouths emitted fire; he used them as weapons to frighten the elephants of Puras (Bloom and Blair 403). The account appears debateable while consulting history. Alexander won the battle with his astute war tactics, bravery and intelligent decisions. Various accounts of battles in which Alexander entangled his enemies, do not define any such device invented by his people. Moreover, it is 326 BC, long way back when gunpowder was invented or naphtha brought into use. So the strange iron coloured warriors of the frontline of Macedonian army need to be investigated.

Furthermore, if one assumes that naphtha filled toys were pushed forward as a threat for the elephants of Puras, how could they continue their motion in rugged terrain of Puṭhūhār. It is easy to come downwards with a push but hard to move upwards because a body, then, has to move against gravitational force that requires excessive energy to move forward. Its momentum cannot be continued with a single push. In this context, representation of wheeled grey horses are nothing but symbols of speed, with which Alexander attacked, without letting Puras think to evolve some defensive tactics. History also records that after encampment at the western shores of Hydespes before attack, Alexander engaged his army to move rapidly from one side to another, as if they were searching for an appropriate path to cross the river. This act was repeated several times a day in different directions by various groups of his army. It was continuously followed by the elephants of Puras, who made similar moves in the farther banks of Hydaspes, to remain alert to halt attack from any side of Alexander's army. In this way Alexander made them tired, and falsely exposed his weakness as unacquainted with geography of the region. He also deceived Puras by collecting huge amounts of corns, indicating that the siege could be prolonged up till finding some rightful time to attack that might be after the monsoon, when river would be less ferocious (McCarty 113). If naphtha or gun powdered weapons were in use by his army, he would not have adopted such strategies, because horror of fire would be enough to create stampede of elephants, horses and men. Thus, the grey warriors with wheeled horses were not invented by Alexander or his men as naphtha filled engines of war, rather used as icons of speed in the representational painting by the artist, where, the intangible realities too are delineated as credibly tangible.

Speed and friction are two realities but to imagine them without their link with a subject or to depict them in an immobile frame, needs some astute vocabulary on the side of the artists. Otherwise motion will be frozen and its speed will get incomprehensible. The vocabulary to represent indiscernible, led the creators to knock at the doors of the unusual domains, through which the intangible reality could be made perceptible. Thus, auxiliary help of symbols were sorted out, and horses of the mounted warriors acquired wheels instead of legs. Because wheels in the corporeal world, best symbolise speed, for their link with vehicles or chariots, etc. Furthermore, shape of a wheel, which is round, also plays a significant role.

Circular motion is lasting, as it has no beginning and no end defined. So, velocity of the galloping steeds of Alexander, especially placed in the frontline attackers, is rendered so fast that their legs look like wheels. In other words, fastening pace of the steeds could not be physically defined in the diminutive space of a miniature, the very cause of using symbol of wheels in place of legs. Wars of pre-modern times required physical strength, energy and swift action, may be defensive or assaultive because, it used to be direct encounter of two hostile groups. So here, circular motion of wheels proved to be the best symbol of the expression of excessive speed. The title of *The Great* is attached with the name of Alexander because of his bravery, untiring and quickening pace based on wise decisions, very successfully delineated here, by the artists.

Thunder of the two forceful armies can be felt in the rendering of the battle-field, though a few numbers of men are visible on both sides. An effective device used by the artists is of window-setting, a compositional stratagem introduced in the Muslim miniature painting during Ilkhanid Mongol dynasty and continued for long. Here, a few individuals of Alexander's army and yet very few of the mounted Indians are successful representatives of the two mighty forces. The whole scene seems to be viewed from a crevice or a window that reveals a bit and conceals the rest, to be assumed by observers, as away from sight for being beyond the frame of a window. Only four half-cut mounted Indian warriors and four full-length, while five half-cut Macedonians are enough, but successful representatives of powerful opponent forces. They do not appear four or nine but two fully-forceful adversaries; one group leaving the battle-field with excessive speed, because of the fiercely approaching menace about to

engulf the panic-stricken. Not even a minor deficiency about the number of warriors on both sides can be felt because the figures represented are very powerful and their arrangement in the composition is strongly successful. It is because of the device of window-setting that the battle of Puras and Alexander are portrayed with all possible nuances within the frame of a miniature painting. Horror enhanced with excessive speed of Macedonians galloping down from the uphill, chasing horrified defectors, who timidly look back at the swiftly approaching peril. It is further amplified with swirling flames.

Mouths and nostrils of the horses along with spear-heads are emitting fire and aiming ghastly towards fleeing Indians. It too, enhances speed along with ferocity of war, and imposes another question about the advent of flames when the battle is being fought with swords and spears. The phenomenon of flames can be sorted out on medical, engineering, and space-scientists' point of view. Medical science says that a person when comes in aggression, he encounters a state known as *fight and flight*. In the flight state he retreats from the situation either by weeping or by going in depression. But as soon as a person gets ready to fight his skin behaviour changes', feeling of pain lessens, breathing gets heavier, pupils dilate, and one becomes focused on a goal one wants to achieve (Jain 108-109).

The behaviour is based on change in the inner mechanism of human body which is known as *Adrenal Rush*. Adrenal fluid is released in the body in this state that accelerates pumping of heart and rapidly increasing pulse rate. In the process, blood circulation in muscles increases and breathing gets heavier (Tiwari 200-203). The horses and their riders, in the miniature painting are delineated as passing through analogous state. Their emotionality is so extensive that heavy breathing has caused to emit fire from their nostrils and mouths, which is symbolic delineation of aggressive behaviour. In other words, it is an expressive representation of the state of fight and flight. But flames along spear-heads have nothing to do with adrenal rush, and can be searched out on the bases of some other phenomenon, may be a scientific one.

On engineering grounds, occurrence of flames can be related to frictional forces. When a body rushes forward, frictional or drag forces put their impact, and resist its motion. Resistance of relative motion between two bodies produces energy that further generates heat. For instance, knife sharpener releases sparks when knife is rubbed in between two moving

bodies. Feet of speedily running horses too emit fire because their metal shoes are rubbed against the rough surface of a road. Furthermore, breaks at once put up on speedily running vehicles produce flames and noise along their tyres, due to resistance of relative motion between two bodies (Hassan 63-67, 135). Thus, speedy rush of the Alexander's cavalry is encountering frictional resistance of the substance around them, causing huge flames at spear-heads as well as all around. Because the bodies of men and animals are swiftly rubbed against the sphere of air and gasses along with dust particles within them.

On the other hand, space scientists' view it in the phenomenon of terminal velocity that occurs in free falling bodies in their maximum speed. It is commonly known that the planet earth is encapsulated with the sphere of gasses, and if a rushing object makes a gash in the enclosed sphere, it catches fire. Flames enclosing the battle field, too, point out the same fact, but while taking auxiliary help from physics, it interprets supernatural speed of Alexander and his cavalry in implied manner. Spear-heads along with horses and their riders are heated up due to terminal velocity, and are generating flames, because coefficient of friction on rough surface is higher than its reaction on smooth bodies (Hassan 67-68). To understand the entire issue, one should have a proper understanding of its reality.

Friction is a contact interaction between solids, caused by rubbing of one body against another. When surface of a body slides over another, both exert a frictional force on each other, in a direction opposite to its motion, and relative to the other body. Thus, frictional force always creates resistance to motion never aids it. Even when there is no relative motion, frictional force may exist between two surfaces. But friction is not always negative; it also gives stability to motion. We cannot walk, hold a pencil, or move it on paper for writing or drawing, and even wheeled transport can be impossible without frictional force. On the other hand, in an automobile about 20% of the engine power is spent to reduce friction because it is hazardous in speedy motion (Hassan 58, 90-91).

Though friction occurs between two solid bodies but an object gets resistance in motion even while active in liquids or gasses, both are called fluid friction. It does not function like the friction of sliding bodies; rather works like colliding surfaces, as if a body pushes its way through crowded spaces. It is air resistance that works like colliding not sliding. When a body moves in the air, it compresses air, and is heated up, because it has



collided with air molecules along with dust particles present in it. Frictional resistance in air or gasses is almost proportionate to velocity of the moving body. Intensity of air drag is equivalent to speed of its motion along with mass of the body. For larger and high-speed bodies, air drag is square of their velocity. Thus, air resistance gets higher with increase in speed and mass of the moving body. With increase in temperature of fluids their viscosity decreases and frictional resistance decreases too, but air friction increases with rising of its temperature<sup>8</sup>.

Flames licking the nostrils and mouths of the horses of Alexander, along with their spear-heads are symbols of extreme speed, conveyed through the phenomenon of fluid friction or by defining rush of the adrenal fluid. The massive mounted warriors, moving at super-sonic level are successfully portrayed through the scientific realities. Otherwise effective rendering of such a speed in an immobile frame of a small space of a miniature painting was impossible. But the entire drama of war does not appear repulsive to spectators rather eye catching and involving their cerebral powers, because the chronicle is aesthetically perceived and romantically represented.

The painting is romantic expressions of the epic-drama, and massacre of war is neither focused by the artists, nor its ferocity. Though everything is dramatically conceived but romantically rendered, making the war enticing. It is full of action and movement which is exuberant but does not appear exaggerated anywhere. Though, enhanced with auxiliary resources of scientific phenomena but rendered so feelingly that makes it expressionist to its core. Despite abstracted from visual truth, it is neither distorted nor beautified rather adoringly expressive in its perception and representation. The arresting cornucopian composition brings to mind Delacroix's painting *Death of Sardanapalus* (1827); the dying monarch desires to accompany his loved ones in the next world, *fig.5*. As a result, the executioners are stabbing his concubines, horses, elephants, along with collection of precious materials like gems and jewels. It is not rendered like a cold blooded massacre but an eager desire on the part of both; those being executed and the one desirous to have so. There is excitement not morbidity, along with richness, spontaneity and fantasy but the action is held together with immobile and detached figure of the desirous one.

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<sup>8</sup> <http://hyperphysics.phy-astr.gsu.edu/hbase/frict.html> (3-40 pm. 6.9.14)



Fig.5: *Death of Sardanapalus* by Eugene Delacroix, 1827. Louvre, Paris. Oil on canvas, 392cm x 496cm.

On the other hand, in the war scene, desire of the leader is to conquer, a fierce attack is stimulated with all possible nuances to arouse emotions, having war-steeds, weapons, armour, spears' fire and flames etc. But the leader mounted on Bucephalus is anonymous, only his armoured back towards spectators. Furthermore, over exuberant speed is halted by the Indians, departing swiftly from the picture frame but looking backward timidly towards the chasing menace; it turns eye inward and suspends its jumping out. The pursuit is captured with horror, speed, and excitement but no carnage. One does not find dismantled parts of body, just a romantic game of chase and escape.

War can be extremely ferocious and analogous can be a scene where living beings are slaughtered at the desire of a being stationed on his death pyre. Although, favourite women are being butchered by horrifying executioners, but no resistance on any side is visible, all willing to lay down their lives at the will of the potentate. Both the artefacts are romantic expressions of exciting dramas. Baudelaire commenting the

painting declared that “Delacroix was passionately in love with passion, but coldly determined to express passion as clearly as possible” (Lynton 766). Synthesis between passion and control determines great compositions, and both the paintings are truthful specimens of the statement. The one represents passion to win and the other renders passion to possess, and both keep some affinity with massacre. Phenomenon of death brings morbidity. In the war scene it can be felt in the throbbing heart beat of the fleeing Indians about to be engulfed by the claws of Macedonians and macabre in Delacroix’s painting can be seen in the action of the executioners. But morbid or gruesome is not focal point of both the paintings, it is enwrapped within their romantic expressions. The latter, though obviously delineating death is more placid, while the former more forceful but not macabre, a balance is achieved, although both are releasing exciting energy.



Fig.6: Rain, Steam and Speed by Turner, 1844, National Gallery, London. Oil on canvas, 91 cm × 121.8 cm

When one concentrates on the force exciting two opponents into action, it further brings to mind exuberant energy in J. M. W. Turner's focus on the vigour of natural forces. Whether he viewed it in the *Rain, Steam and Speed, fig.6, (1844)*, *The Storm, fig.7, (1842)* or *The Slave Ship (1840)*, Turner penetrated into its very soul. Force being intangible is delineated by him as formless but expressed through colours and strokes. To experience sensation of nature's power he thrust his head out from the window of Exeter Express, for nine minutes, during a rain storm (Janson 679), and at another time flung with the mast of a boat in a storm (Lynton 786). Energy is not something just visually perceived but intangibly felt that he did by keeping himself aloof from forms or shapes. He perfectly comprehended it through experiencing from nature, realizing its intangible physical appearance. So, inner force of colours and strokes were found enough to represent its power. Rothenstein calls Turner a genius, ahead of his time, who broke away with the traditional that his followers did many a century later (Rothenstein 3). Though, The Muslim artists were far ahead from the westerners in their comprehension and delineation of phenomenon and noumenon but never rendered them formless.



Fig. 7: Snow Storm by M.W. Turner, 1842. National Gallery, London. Oil on canvas, 91.5 x 122 cm

Similarly, in the Shāhnāma painting, force consumed for the energetic attack is portrayed through symbols, such as, flames, licking at nostrils, mouths and spearheads, along with wheels at place of legs, etc., vibrating heat all around. The whole scene is pulsating with energy. Thunder of running steeds is transformed into flames that are stylised into convolutes but pushing eye forward. Energy of natural forces in Turner's paintings and man-made energy generated by human actions in the war or wishful desire for massacre of the potent, though independent in their representations but equivalent in their romantic expressions. Turner did not try to create a visual equivalent of his experiences of storms rather through technical freedom; he enriched his canvases with power of natural energy. Similar force is throbbing in the other two but linked with physical human actions of the executioners of Sardanapalus and of Alexander's or Iskander's warriors, *figs. 8-9*.



Fig.8: Deails from fig.5

Another paradox is related to Alexander or Iskander, since proper nouns are not translated, so what is linked between Alexander and Iskander. Many invaders entered the subcontinent, especially from the northern-mountain passes, invaded, ruled and many became part of the soil but no one acquired such a kinship with the natives as happened with Alexander. The Persian poet Firdausi calls him Persian prince not Macedonian. Dāni,

while concentrating on motives of Alexander's invasion of Asia, quotes a letter that Alexander wrote to Darius threateningly that he would take revenge of devastation his ancestors had made in their invasion of Macedonia and Greece. In return Darius proposed terms, to which Alexander answered "he would receive neither money nor provinces in lieu of the whole empire of Darius, for all the lands and possessions of Darius were his" (Dāni 91). The statement of Alexander is thought provoking that makes a link with the account of Firdausi.



Fig.9: Details from fig.6

In the great Persian epic *Shāhnāma*, Firdausi traces Alexander's descent from Achaemenians and calls him Iskandar. He holds that Dārāb, the

Persian king married the daughter of Philip of Macedonia but then broke away matrimonial ties with her, sending her back to her father. Philip took it as insult and concealed the birth of his daughter's child Alexander, announcing this as birth of his own son, and Alexander became famous as the son of Philip, not his grandson. Alexander, in this context, by defeating Dāra: that is Darius-III in 331 BC, the son of Dārāb, defeated his step brother and regained the inheritance of his own Achaemenian ancestors through capturing Persian Empire (Godard 133). This is the very reason of large scale Persio-Greek marriages, also celebrated elaborately, Alexander married two Persian ladies, and one among them was the daughter of Dariud-III (Grousset 70).

Alexander, if Achaemenid prince, the painting unfolds his passionate love for the land of his ancestors, if Macedonian prince, still an intelligent and brave man. The painting unfolds many facts, actually related to history but in its representational devices the crux of the anecdote is represented with all possible nuances. Within a static frame of miniature space the highly emotional drama is represented most effectively, so much so that fleeting effects of motion are astutely conveyed. Keen observation and penetration let spectators hear thunder of the running steeds on both sides but nowhere allowed encounter of the two mighty forces look gruesome. The whole lovingly represented, that appears decorative at a glance but factual after keen observation. Thus Muslim artists of Demotte's Shāhnāma celebrated maturity of the Ilkhanid Mongol style with astute vocabulary of artistic devices combined with facts of science but delineated through romantic eye, making the macabre gleeful.

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## **Buddha Life Events as Depicted in the Nimogram Buddhist Artifacts of District Swat, Pakistan**

**Badshah Sardar  
Sadeed Arif**

### **Abstract**

*The focus of this research paper is a very rare and important collection of artefacts excavated from the Nimogram Buddhist complex Swat. Apart from a few art pieces, most of the antiquities are stored in the Swat Museum. The antiquities discovered from salvage excavations conducted during 1967 & 1968, at Nimogram Buddhist complex were neither studied scientifically nor documented properly. Apart from a preliminary report published by the Department of Archaeology & Museums Government of Pakistan in 1968 (Pakistan Archaeology; Vol. 5, 1968: 116), no extensive study of these artefacts has been conducted. This paper will address this issue and will trace history of the collection.*

*Narrative stone friezes, panels and reliefs, depict the Buddha life events, fall within the scope of this paper. The remaining artefacts of Nimogram are beyond the scope of the paper and have been catalogued and documented in a monograph that will be published shortly.*

### **Swat valley**

Swat valley is named after its river Su-p'o-fa-su-tu of Subha-vastu (Sastri 1924:93-94). The *Rig-Veda* mentions it as *Suvastu* meaning fair dwelling (Stein 1921: 2). River Swat, the Sanskrit *Suvastu* and Greek *Souastos* or *Souastene*, is a tributary of the rivers Gabral and Ushu and flows through the length of the valley from the northeast to the southwest (Imperial Gazetteer of India 1979: 116). Udyana of ancient Buddhist literature is identified with the Swat valley, and Buddhism prevailed here for over a millennium (Tucci 1958: 279). Udyana, Uddiyana, Oddiyana and Uddyana, meaning garden, first became familiar to modern scholars through the accounts of the Chinese pilgrims called Wu-Changna, Wu-Chang, or Wu-Chan (Beal 1906:119). According to the Chinese records, Udyana extended from the Hindu-Kush and Chitral in the North, to the Indus in the South (Stein 1921: 12). Udyana, thus was comprised of the

modern districts of Swat, Dir, Chitral and Bajaur Agency. It has also included district Buner and Kana-Ghurband valleys in the past (Law 1954: 132).

Swat valley remained an attractive place for foreign invaders and a sacred place for religious activities. The interest taken by the Chinese pilgrims in the social, cultural and religious life of this area is prominent in the history of the region, they crossed the snowy mountains (Pamir & Hindukush) to reach the valley, accounts and written records of these pilgrims describe Udyana's landscape, public and traditional life (Beal 1906:119). Numerous Chinese, Korean and Tibetans Buddhist pilgrims visited Udyana.

In ancient Tibetan literature Swat is mentioned as Orgyan or Urgyan, and has always been sacred to the Tibetans due to its status as the birthplace of Padmasambhava, the guru who introduced Tantric mysticism to Tibet and is often regarded as a second Buddha (Tucci 1958: 279). The advent of Buddhism towards Gandhara in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC and the renaissance of Hinduism at the end of the 8<sup>th</sup> century AD., Swat remained an important center of Buddhist culture. During the 8<sup>th</sup> century AD., the Turki Shahis were reported as patrons and the valley was regarded as an important intellectual center (Zwalf 1979: 31).

Due to its geographical position, Swat valley was intimately connected with the ancient caravan routes that linked China and the West commercially and culturally. It is significant that for a long time the valley enjoyed unparalleled prosperity as part of greater Gandhara due to its position in controlling some of the principal trade routes. An important 'Silk Route' connecting South Asia with China, Central Asia, and Europe ran through the valley which played a vital role in the trade between Pakistan and China (Zwalf, 1979: 2). Due to its unique location, settlers from Central Asia, Iran and Afghanistan, came down and occupied the valley at different times. The valley became a center for the amalgamation and assimilation of different ethnic, religious and cultural groups like the Aryans, Acheameinians or Persians, Greeks, Mauryans, Bactrian, Sakan/Parthians, Kushans, the Sasanians who were in partial control during the post Kushan period as well as the White Huns, Turks/Hindu Shahis, and Muslims, who passed through this valley on their way into the India sub-continent and further toward Tibet and China.

### **Buddhism in Swat**

The Mauryan dynasty, which ruled Gandhara and Udyana following Alexander's invasion, introduced Buddhism to both the regions (Nagar 1981: vi). Buddhism reached the Swat valley in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC. and flourished for approximately a millennium until it was replaced by Hinduism at the end of the 8<sup>th</sup> century AD., (Tucci 1958: 281-82). During the patronage of Asoka Buddhism appears to have spread in Udyana, attested by a Mauryan coin found at site of Butkara-I, which may link the foundation of the great stupa (Zwalf 1996:16). Buddhism prevailed for over a millennium, archaeological evidence supports a 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC., date for the establishment of a Buddhist shrine in the valley (Dani 1968: 5; Zwalf 1979:1). Numerous Buddhist monasteries and deserted *stupas* in the Swat valley attest to the widespread influence of Buddhism, one among them is Nimogram Buddhist complex.

### **Nimogram Buddhist Complex**

The Buddhist remains of Nimogram lie about 45km west of Mingora, on the right bank of the river Swat, close to the tributary valley of Shamoza. The location of the site is known as 'Sabunkhpa' situated towards the South of the village of Nimogram on a raised piece of ground that is almost terraced which overlooks the narrow valley to the East. The two seasons of excavations in 1967 and 1968, brought to light three main stupas in a North-South oriented line, a courtyard of 56 votive *stupas* and a monastery adjoining the stupa's courtyard to the west. The site is significant not just for the number of monuments and finds recorded there, but also because of the discovery of three stupas in one row. This is the first time such a composition of stupas has been discovered at an excavated Buddhist site in this region. After Butkara-I, this is the first time that such a huge collection of sculptures have been recovered from a single site. The discovery of a five coins that date from the Kushano-Sasanian period has enabled scholars to date foundation between second and third centuries AD., (Antiquity Register of Nimogram Excavation (ARNE) NG. 260, 377, 378, 483 & 486).

The artefacts that were discovered include; figures of Buddha & Bodhisattva, narrative reliefs, decorative and architectural elements, reliefs depicting Buddha's life stories, his miracles, secular scenes, reliquaries, relic caskets and utilitarian objects. The most common statues depict

muscular Atlas, which usually support pillars and brackets. Other figures include naked cupids carrying wreaths, the *Gandharvi* with musical instruments, winged creatures in triangular brackets, tritons, Amorini and numerous scenes depicting musicians. There are many other domestic scenes of marriage, lovemaking, hunting, wrestling, archery, groups of ascetics, warriors, several processions of men, kings riding on chariots and other depictions of enjoyment. Large-scale artefacts depict narrative scenes, decorative friezes, images of Buddha and minor deities. However, the frequent use of the full body halo for the Buddha, bracket figures including one with a Herakles image (NG. 416), a series of relief panels carved by the same hand, and images of the goddess with various iconographic features represented in the collection.

### **Earlier Accounts about Nimogram**

In Pakistan, there is a universal consensus among the scholars that Nimogram has never been reported by the pioneer explorers. A brief preliminary report on the Nimogram excavation was published by Mr. Inayat-ur-Rahman in the journal, 'Pakistan Archaeology', Vol. 05, in 1968. In addition to a general description of the site, he has provided measurements of the major monuments, some important information regarding burnt wood and a human skeleton found in the monastic area, the latter suggesting that fire may have destroyed the complex. Further, he elaborates;

It is to be noted that amongst the series of Buddhist monuments scattered all over the valley of Swat, a site of such importance as Nimogram had never been mentioned by the early historians and archaeologists in their accounts of archaeological survey of this region" (Pakistan Archaeology 1968, no. 5: 123).

Later on Ahmad Nabi Khan, the then Director General of Archaeology and Museums Govt. of Pakistan in his book entitled 'Gandhara the Enchanting Land of Buddhist Art and Culture in Pakistan' mentioned that;

It is to be noted that amongst the series of Buddhist monuments scattered all over the valley of Swat, a site of such importance as Nimogram had never been mentioned by the early historians and archaeologists in their accounts of archaeological survey of this region (Ahmad Nabi Khan 1994:76).

Similarly Prof. M. Ashraf Khan, while commenting on the history of archaeological research in Swat, highlighted Nimogram complex in his book, entitled 'Buddhist Shrines in Swat' and give credit to Inayat-ur-Rehman as a principal discoverer of the site. Later on it was excavated by M. R. Mughal and Nazir Ahmad Khan jointly in 1967-68. Prof. M. Ashraf Khan has briefly emphasized the geography of the area and the major monuments of the site (Khan 1993: 5). The foremost contribution of his work for the scholarly world is a drawing of the 'general plan of stupas court and monastery' of Nimogram in 1992 (Khan 1993: pl. XI).

Recently the antiquities of Nimogram have been documented by Joan A. Raducha, she has established a website (<http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/Arts.Nimogram>) which discussed and documented the artefacts of Nimogram. Her monumental research work has served a dictionary-like function for this paper. However a well-illustrated, comprehensive catalogue remains an urgent requirement. She states that the site was excavated by the Department of Archaeology and Museum Government of Pakistan, under the directorship of Dr. F. A. Khan. She highlights;

The site was excavated by the staff of the Pakistan Department of Archaeology and Museums (DOAM) in 1967 and 1968 (Inayat-ur-Rehman. [1968]). The majority of objects found at the site are sculptures, stone and stucco that decorated the Buddhist monuments at the site. Minor finds from the site include materials used in construction, coins, and votive objects, (<http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/Arts.Nimogram>).

Inquest of earlier account/reference to Nimogram, all available published reports, gazetteers and memoirs of the region were consulted and thoroughly scrutinized by the author. It was fortuitous that I found credible evidence and solid proof that these pioneers did mention the ruins of Nimogram. It was in 1938, that Evert Barger (University of Bristol) and Philip Wright (Victoria and Albert Museum, South Kensington), conducted the first ever scientific excavation in the Swat valley. Their report, published in 1941, cited the ruins of three stupas and their survey map provides the location of the site without giving a specific name (Barger and Wright, 1941: 27-28).

They mention;

Three miles up the river from Gumbatuna on the same bank is the large village of Parrai. A mile north of the village, at the mouth of a ravine running up into the hills, are the ruins of a large monastery spread out along a series of terraces about 200 yards long. There are the usual courtyards, and the much decayed remains of three stupas, one of them partly surrounded by cells. Clearance rounds the base of this stupa produced a few pieces of sculpture, some of them in a soft green schist of very pleasing appearance. One of these—a fragment of stupa railing ornament—is illustrated in Plate V, 3 (No. 319)” (Barger and Wright, 1941: 27).

The antiquity register of Nimogram excavation recorded 486 artifacts, including stucco, copper, iron, bronze and stone objects. Among the art pieces, foreign motifs like the vine, acanthus, cupids, garlands, hippocampus, triton, marine divinities, Dionysus (Greek god of wine), some of the local motifs like atlantes, griffons and the flora and fauna of the area are clearly visible over the panels and friezes. Arches, decorative friezes, rolling garlands, inhabited compartments, miscellaneous motifs, model stupas, brackets, panels, framing elements, parts of capitals, parts of arches, *harmika* boxes, *chattr*a (umbrella) parts, fragments and stone caskets also feature in the collection. Buddha and Bodhisattva images, deities, bracket figures, framing figures and monsters and narrative scenes, musicians and miscellaneous figures are prominent among the broken panels.

### **Buddha Life Events Depicted in the Reliefs of Nimogram**

The representation of the life events of the Buddha was highly desired at all the important Buddhist sites of the Swat valley. The abundant and varied sculptures found at Nimogram comprise panels and reliefs showing various activities in the life of the Buddha. All these panels, reliefs and friezes are documented and catalogued for ready reference of students and scholars as well;

#### *1. Bodhisattva Maitreya in Tushita Heaven*

Tusita Heaven is the residence of divine beings or *devas*. In Mahayana Buddhist thought, the Tushita Heaven is where all Bodhisattvas who are destined to reach full enlightenment in their next life dwell for a time. Tushita is said to be reachable through meditation. It is the heaven where the Bodhisattva Siddhartha resided before being reborn on earth as

Gautama. Likewise, it represents the heaven where the Bodhisattva Nātha (protector) currently resides, who will later be born as the future Buddha Maitreya. The Tushita heaven is therefore closely associated with Maitreya, and many Buddhists vow to be reborn there. Before his birth as Siddhartha, whilst a Bodhisattva in Tushita heaven, Amitabha meditated and made four great preliminary observations about the time, continent, country and family in which he was to be born for the last time.

Here in this fragment relief of (NG.337), Bodhisattva Maitreya is shown in Tushita heaven, sitting on the cloth-covered seat of his lion throne with crossed legs. His hair is tied up horizontal, having a moustache and wears ear, neck and arm ornaments. His right hand is held in *Abhaya* while his left holds a water pot hanging in front of his knee. Sat in the *pralambapadasan*, his feet rest on a broken footstool. His robe covers his left shoulder leaving the right shoulder bare. The most remarkable feature, however, is the lion throne (now broken), which rests on two lions at the corners. Very similar to the lion-thrones of rock carvings of Swat valley, although the frontal portions of the lions are depicted there, here, complete bodies of lions are portrayed. The throne is covered by a variety of textile with two large tassels at either end of the front. The remaining figures are depicted on a much smaller scale than the Bodhisattva. Two bejeweled women appear in a balcony whilst two richly adorned male figures, who are seated with their legs in a similar pose to the Bodhisattva, devote their attention to him. For secondary source and similar composition see Ingholt, 1957: 8; Hargreaves, 1918: 6-7, pl. III; Joshi & Sharma, 1969:52, fig. II.

## *2. The Birth of Siddhartha and the Seven Steps*

The representation of the birth of Prince Siddhartha is naturally one of the most frequent of all the subjects in the Buddhist art of Gandhara. The birth of Siddhartha and the Seven Steps is the most popular theme in the Nimogram collection, his birth event reflected on three distinct panels (NG.350, NG.288 & NG.352). The Buddhist literature reveals that the mother of Buddha in journeying to her parents' home previous to the Buddha's birth, stopped at a beautiful park known as the Lumbini Grove. The trees with their prolific masses of fruits and flowers attracted her and under a monarch *Sal* tree she was filled with a desire to grasp its branches, whereupon one branch miraculously bent down within her reach. Thus



supporting herself, as shown here, she gave birth to the child, who, springing from her right side without pain to her, was received by Brahma. Immediately, this newly born child stood upon the ground, as represented in the panel by the small figure standing on the right hand side of his mother Maya.

The child was miraculously born, at his birth there was a strange light and heavenly music, and the *Devas* have given him a cradle. Music was heard, and the *Devas* brought down beautiful garments, soft as the stuff of silk. The *Gandharvas* flying overhead showered down flowers and garlands. When the child, come forth from his mother's side, said these words: 'no further births have I to endure, for this is my last body. Now shall I attain to the state of Buddhahood'. Then standing upright upon the ground, he took seven steps, while the lotus flowers sprang up beneath his feet. The king Suddhodana, hearing news of his son and name him Siddhartha (perfect fulfillment).

The Siddhartha is supposed to have walked forthwith seven steps towards each quarter of the horizon, and at every step as he walked, there sprang a lotus flower from the earth beneath his feet. In the panel's foreground the child standing on the ground is in the act of taking seven steps in the direction of each of the cardinal points. According to a Buddhist texts while taking steps toward the east he said, 'I will reach the highest nirvana', to the west, 'this will be my last birth', to the north, 'I will cross the ocean of existence', to the south, 'I will be the first of all creatures'.

For secondary source and similar accounts see Hargreaves 1930: 23; Majumdar 1937: 39; Chandra 1974: 10, pl. 21; Nehru 1989: figs. 109 & 110; Ackermann 1975:60-61 pl. IX ; Marshall 1960: fig. 99; Dani 1968: 30, fig. 14; Khan 1994: 20-21; Zwalf 1996: 151, pls.150 & 151; Ingholt 1957: 52, pl. 14 & 15; Department of Oriental Art of the Toledo Museum of Art, 1940 : pl. 3.

### *3. The First Bath of Siddhartha*

The Buddhist texts state that a newly born infant is first bathed by two *naga-rajās*, (Nanda & Upananda) who holding themselves in the air, create two streams of water, hot and cold for the purpose of bathing. It is they who we see in all three reliefs, and from whose mouths pour cleansing streams. However in Gandhara art first bath scene of Siddhartha

is conducted by god Indra and Brahma. This famous event, namely the first bath of the infant Siddhartha has been represented in the Nimogram collection on three different panels (NG.91, NG.222 & NG.226). The Bodhisattva Siddhartha is shown standing on a small stool and supported by two kneeling attendants while the gods Indra and Brahma positioned to the right and left, respectively pouring water over him from small water-pots held in their right hands, reflecting the bathing of local children of the Swat valley.

For similar composition see Hargreaves 1918: 10, pl. VI; Hargreaves 1930: 23-24; Marshall 1960, fig 58; Majumdar 1937: 39; Chandra 1974: 10, pl. 22; Ingholt 1957: 53, pl. 16; Ackermann 1975:56, 57, 58 & 63-64, pls. VI c, VII b & XI b; Zwalf 1996: 152-153, pls.152 & 153.

#### *4. Interpretation of Siddhartha's Horoscope*

After the miraculous birth of the child, the king Suddhodana ordered that all astrologers and soothsayers should go at once to the palace, to see the child and cast his horoscope. He attempted them when they arrived there to mark every sign, whether good or bad, and to make a true forecast of the child's destiny. The Brahmans carefully examined the appearance of the child and reported to the king, that the child's body is marked with the thirty two dependable signs of greatness, and that persons so marked are of two kinds; if they be laymen, they are great emperors of Chakravartis; but if they be religious persons, they are perfect Tathagatas. First among the thirty two signs are the thousand rayed circles, beautiful, and plainly visible on the undersides of both feet, the white circle of soft silky hair between the eyebrows, and the swelling on the top of the head.

According to Asita's prophecy the physical characteristics of Siddhartha such as the soles of his feet are being marked with a wheel and a circle of hair growing between his eyebrows, are those of a mighty emperor. Asita declared that this child would become a Buddha, but the forecast was unacceptable to the royal father, who did his utmost to prevent this prediction. His hope was that, despite the prophecy of Asita, the child would grow up to be a mighty monarch. This prediction did not please the father and must have caused Asita himself grief, as he recognized, with sorrow, that his own death would occur before the Buddha's perfection was attained.

This fragment relief (NG.19) of Nimogram is composed of two registers. The lower register represents the 'interpretation of Siddhartha's horoscope' where the seated astrologer 'Asita' holds a child in his lap and explains his horoscope while, Maya is shown seated nearby. Behind Maya lies a broken figure of king Suddhodana. This event takes place in the palace of King Suddhodana during the period that immediately follows his return from the Lumbini garden. The aged Asita nurses an infant received from the hands of his mother, who predicts future Buddha hood for the royal couple.

For similar composition see Hargreaves 1918: 11-12, pl. VIII; Hargreaves 1930: 24; Majumdar 1937: 40; Dani, 1968: fig 15; Taddei 1969: 364-390, fig. 10.; Ackermann 1975: 62, pl. X b; Ingholt 1957: 54, pls.20,21 & 22; Hargreaves, 1930: 24; Zwalf 1996: 155, pl.158; Khan 1994:21-23.

#### *5. Siddhartha at School*

This broken panel (NG.154) consists primarily of two carved tiers. In the upper register, there are three seated full body circular haloed Buddhas depicted. Those on the right and left are holding their right hands in *Abhaya* mudra while those on the left hold the edge of a robe. The Buddha in the centre is seated under a tree and holds his hand in *Dhyanamudra*. In the bottom tier of the panel, a sculptor has portrayed Siddhartha's first day in school. This is a scene from the childhood of Siddhartha where he learns to write. Prince Siddhartha is sat under a tree with his writing tablet on his knees, suggesting that the Bodhisattva is engaged in writing sixty-four different alphabets in the presence of his fellow pupils. Having been sent to school with the other noble children of the Shakya clan, the young Siddhartha gives evidence of his miraculous powers by enumerating and demonstrating his knowledge of more even systems of writing than those known to his *guru*, the learned Vishvamitra.

According to Chinese pilgrim accounts it was a tablet of sandal wood that was used by the Bodhisattva as a writing board. There is a tree behind the attendant and, on the extreme left side a turbaned seated male figure who may be *guru* 'Vishvamitra' is busy with other standing class fellows of Siddhartha. Such scenes of prince Siddhartha's schooling have been depicted in the Gandhara art frequently.

For similar composition see Hargreaves, 1918: 12-13, pl. IX; Hargreaves 1930: 24-25; Majumdar 1937: 41; Ingholt 1957: 54-55, pls. 22, 24 & 25; Joshi & Sharma 1969:17-18, fig. 4.

#### 6. *Siddhartha Archery*

As the prince grew up, was attended by skilful servants and professionals, both male and female, and every day and every night brought him some fresh joy and new diversion. By day he was protected by a white silk umbrella, and by night he slept beneath a canopy of the fine fabrics. According to Vedantic Buddhism, Siddhartha enjoyed much world pleasures.

Fragment (NG.216) depicts one of the events that he excels in archery. Scenes of archery are usually portrayed in profile with the standing Bodhisattva aiming an arrow at a target set up in a tree. A broken panel with empanelled pillars on the left side, top and bottom borders is damaged. Siddhartha is standing, his left leg flexed forward, head raised with his back to the viewer and wearing a short *paridhana*, which hangs down between his legs. Whilst the bow appears to touch the tree, no arrow is visible. The prince stands ready to shoot his arrow towards the target. The muscular appearance of his back is enhanced by the broad shoulders above his narrow waist. The arrow points straight into the raised lotus-shaped (?) center of a target set into a tree. A companion stands behind him. In front of Siddhartha a very tiny figure stands under a tree and behind there is a barrier of sorts: the figure's extremely small size perhaps indicates that he is some distance away from the young archer. The piece is deeply cut, the feet and the extended arm of the archer completely separated from the stone behind. On the left side of the panel, framed Corinthian columns (defaced) have the usual base mouldings visible.

For secondary source and similar composition see Hargreaves 1930: 25; Zwalf 1996: 158-160, pls.163-168; Ingholt 1957: 56, pl.30; Ackermann 1975: 65, 66-67, pls. XII a & b.

#### 7. *The First Meditation of Siddhartha*

The Buddhist literature tell us that one day the prince was taken by his father to see a ploughing match where, the half exposed men and the pulling oxen were laboring before the assembled crowd. When the sun increased in strength, the sweat ran down both men and oxen and for a few

moments they ceased their labours. In the meantime, various insects came forth from the ground and flocks of birds descended in multitudes to consume them. Seeing the tired oxen with necks bleeding from the yoke, the men toiling beneath the noontime sun and the birds consuming the helpless insects, the heart of the Bodhisattva was filled with grief and, retiring from the enclosure and to find a secluded place near a Jambu tree, he dismissed his attendants and sat down beneath its shady branches. Later, when the king who was missing his son sent men to search for him, the prince was found still lost in meditation, the shadow of a tree still shading him. The king was summoned to spot and, beholding this sight, was filled with fear and bowed down at the feet of his son.

A narrative curvilinear frieze (293) had broken at the bottom reveals different life scenes of prince Siddhartha. The relief is deeply cut with some components, including the reins and the legs of the horse completely released from the stone behind. Siddhartha, haloed and in princely dress, sits on a raised decorated seat meditating with his groom 'Chandaka' and caparisoned horse 'Kanthaka' waiting nearby. On the left of the panel is the subject of his meditation, the suffering caused to those engaged in agriculture, the farmer and his oxen, as well as to the insects etc. disturbed by the ploughing. Three figures in the background watch as the scene unfolds, one with his hand held in the blessing pose.

For similar composition see Hargreaves 1930: 26-27; Hargreaves 1918:13-15; Ingholt 1957: 57-58, pl. 36; Khan 1994:23-25

### *8. The Great Departure*

The sculptors of Gandhara and Udyana have depicted this episode of Bodhisattva very faithfully. In spite of all the luxuries at his disposal, the Bodhisattva, one night, made up his mind to quit the palace, family and all worldly pleasures in order to proceed in search of the Eternal Truth. Leaving his wife to sleep, he called for his horse Kanthaka and the royal groom Chandaka.

In these panels (NG.279 & NG.411) the prince sits on his couch in a firm determined of his renunciation. The horse and the groom are ready at the entrance. All sorts of preparations were made and great cares were taken by the gods to make this departure a success. The lords of all the four directions assembled in Alakavati and issued orders to the gathering of Yakshas (semi god) that they should support the hoofs of the great horse

at the time of departure. The obvious purpose was to avoid the hooves of the horse making a noise, which could have caused the palace to awaken and hindering the outgoing prince.

Having left the city, prince Siddhartha directed Chandaka to proceed in the direction of the village of Rama, and when they entered the forest, the prince saw the places where the old hermits dwelt, and the birds and beasts and running in waters, and he knew that Chankaka and Kanthaka were tired, therefore he dismounted from his horse and said 'I will alight and rest'. He patted Kanthaka and spoke kind words, and assured Chankaka of his love, but Chankaka said why have you done this thing, and come to this mountains? Prince replied I have renounced my kingdom and leave my princely state. Now then, take my horse and return with him to the king's palace.

For similar composition see Majumdar 1937: 43; Ingholt 1957: 61, pl.45, 47 & 48; Marshall 1960, fig 119; Nehru 1989: pl. 112; Ackermann 1975: 70, 73, 84, & 112-13, pls. XIV, XV b, XXII b, XLII b; Hargreaves 1930: 27-28; Dani 1968: 30; Nagar 1981: 2 & 6, pls.2 & 4; Chandra 1974: 11, pl. 24; Joshi & Sharma 1969:18-19, fig. 6-7; Khan 1994: 26; Zwalf 1996: 166-177, pls. 176-178; Nehru 1989: pl.112.

### *9. Farewell of Chandaka & Kanthaka*

Although Siddhartha's farewell to his loyal groom, Chandaka, and his horse, Kanthaka, is one of the most touching moments in the master's life, very few representations of the subject have survived. In this defaced fragment of (NG.161) a vertical set of panels with one panel remaining bordered on the bottom by a plain fillet, and at the outside left edge with a vertical festoon of overlapping and the panel itself framed on the sides with a vertical band of disks.

This narrative panel represents the farewell of Chandaka and Kanthaka, capturing the moment when Siddhartha gave away his princely attire to Chandaka, who wore a graceful turban. Then the prince took off his jewels and precious ornaments, and uttered this vow, "never again will I adorn my body" and handed his jewels to Chandaka, and commanded him to return with them to the palace and deliver them to his kinsfolk.

The most attractive figure in the composition, however, is that of the grief stricken horse 'Kanthaka' bent his head to lick his master's feet with his tongue, watering them with his burning tears, while the upset

groom stands by, receiving the princely turban and jewels from his master. He carries these in both hands, without relaxing his hold on the royal umbrella. Vajrapani stands behind the Bodhisattva while another half figure hovers in the background.

For secondary source and similar accounts see Hargreaves 1918: 19, pl. XV; Hargreaves 1930: 29; Zwalf 1996:168, pl. 179; Ingholt 1957: 61, pl. 49; Pal 1978: 32.

#### 10. *Exchange of Clothes with the Hunter*

After travelling a certain distance from the capital, Siddhartha dismounted from his horse, and considered his costly silk clothes, which were unsuitable for an ascetic now. He realized that his garments resembled those of a Deva, rather than of a hermit. A hunter passes by, and Siddhartha handed over his princely garments to him, receiving in exchange the simple dress of the hunter, probably made of reddish yellow color cloth today associated with beggars in India.

Another description of the event suggests that as the costly silk clothes were not befitting, Siddhartha decided to change them. The gods were ready to serve Siddhartha, so one of the *Devaputras* took on the costume of a hunter and, putting on garb that was suitable for monks appeared before the Bodhisattva. Siddhartha offered his clothes to the hunter in return for his own. The hunter was of course no other than a divine being who had approached the Bodhisattva in disguise. Having secured the silken cloth he took it to heaven in order to worship it there.

This carved panel (NG. 462) of Nimogram represents the story of Siddhartha exchanging clothes with a hunter. The haloed Siddhartha has already removed his outer robe which he offers to the hunter stood in front of him. Vajrapani stands behind him and a half figure hovers between the Bodhisattva and the hunter in the background, perhaps representing a *Deva*. Two other hunters fill the remainder of the left side of the panel, one carrying his prey over his shoulder. The subject panel has already been reported from the Swat valley (Ackermann 1975: 96-97).

For similar subjects see Majumdar 1937: 44; Ingholt 1957: 61, pl.46; Hargreaves 1918: 19-20; Joshi & Sharma 1969:19, fig. 9a; Ackermann 1975: 96-97, pl. XXXI; Zwalf 1996:169, pl. 180.

### 11. *Offering of the begging Bowls*

The story of begging bowls, as told by the chronicle, states that after enlightenment, the Buddha did not touch any food for seven weeks. Now it so happened that two merchants, Trapusha and Bhallika visited the Buddha and offered him some food to break his fast. The Buddha accepted the offering, but thought that it would be appropriate to accept the gift in vessel, but found himself without a bowl in which to receive the foods. The guardians of four quarters (*Lokapalas*) appeared with golden bowls in their hands. As the bowls were unsuitable for an ascetic, the offer was not accepted. Ultimately they brought stone bowls and this time the Buddha accepted the offering. Lest any of them should feel offended, he accepted each of the four bowls and then turned them into a single bowl: using his miraculous powers, he pressed the four into one (Kuwayama: 1990:954).

According to Hargreaves the Begging Bowl of the Buddha was supposed to have been preserved in the 'Hall of the Bowl', inside the royal city, towards the north east of the city of Peshawar. In the beginning of the 5<sup>th</sup> century Fa-Hien found this religious foundation served by nearly seven hundred monks, but when Hiuan-tsang visited Gandhara in the 7<sup>th</sup> century, the sanctuary was ruined and deserted and after many variations the bowl was presumed to have been transported to Persia.

The narrative panel (NG.414) depicts a large standing image of the Buddha and 14 other figures. The Buddha looks to his right as a figure, head now missing, approaches with a bowl held out as an offering. A doorframe behind this figure is filled with two figures, one sitting on the ground while another stands behind him in a supportive posture. Above the doorframe are two figures facing each others. Above and on either side of the Buddha are two half figures, in different postures of devotion. Behind the Buddha Vajrapani stands, his right hand raised and his left holding the *vajra*. Behind him are two monks and a child sized male figure. The upper left contains three half figures, hands rose in adoration.

For similar theme see Kuwayama: 1990: 945-78; Hargreaves 1918: 27-28, pl. XXI; Chandra 1974: 12, pl. 29; Majumdar 1937: 47; Joshi & Sharma 1969:21, fig. I2; Leeuw, J. E. van L.de 1981: figs. 15, 31; Ackermann 1975: 119 & 135, pls. XLVIII b & LX; Zwalf 1996:176-178, pls. 189-192; Ingholt 1957: 67-68, pl. 68 & 69; Department of Oriental Art of the Toledo Museum of Art, 1940 : pl. 5



### 12. *Brahma and Indra Entreat the Buddha to Preach*

After enlightenment the Buddha was worshipped by the gods of different orders. According to legend, the gods Indra and Brahma repeatedly requested the Buddha to preach the truth that he had discovered in the interests of the welfare of the majority. The Buddha agreed to do so, he delivered his first sermon in the Deer Park of Sarnath. In Gandharan art panels depicting this scene are common. Here three panels of Nimogram (NG.422, NG.457 & NG.399) show the Buddha in meditation (*dhyani-mudra*) surrounded by divine beings or Hindu deities Indra and Brahma, who have approached him with folded hands to preach the Law. In the Nimogram collection, this episode of Buddha's life is depicted on three different friezes/panels, one of them (NG.399) in a seated position. This composition is generally recognized as the moment when these deities ask the newly enlightened Buddha to preach for the betterment of all beings.

For similar theme see Majumdar 1937: 48; Ingholt 1957: 68, pl. 70-73; Joshi & Sharma 1969:21, fig. 13; Leeuw, J. E.van L.de 1981:377-400, figs.32-34; Faccenna, 1962: pl. 119; Nagar, 1981: 10; Taddei, 1969: fig. 9; Zwalf 1996:178-180, pls.193-196

### 13. *The First Sermon in the Deer Park of Sarnath*

The Deer Park at Risipatana (present Sarnath) in the vicinity of Varanasi, the holiest city in India, was the place that the Buddha looked for his 'First Sermon'. Soon after his enlightenment at Bodhagaya, the Buddha met the first five disciples. They had previously deserted him when he began to follow a new path of his own that was different from theirs. As they listened respectfully, he disclosed them that he had attained supreme wisdom and that he was ready to set the Wheel of Law in motion. The Buddha gave his 'First Sermon' to various gods and human beings, in the presence of these five monks. This act has been described as 'Moving the Wheel of Law' and is commonly represented in Gandhara art. The Buddha is very often seen to actually provide the wheel with movement through the placement of his hand on the wheel set on a stand or *triratna*, and placed either by his side or in front of him.

It is interesting to note that the Sanskrit expression for this act: *Dharma-cakra*, 'wheel of law' shaped much like a halo and is placed on the torso of a crouching muscular Atlas on a high seat. The figure holds

three wheels above him, one on the head and one each on the right and left hands. The three wheels are carved like rosettes symbolizing the *triratana* (three jewels) of Buddhism—the Buddha, Dharma and the *Sangha* (order of monks). The wheel with *triratna* is usually depicted mounted on a pillar, but on other occasions it is held on the head of a *Yaksha* or Atlas. The success of the Buddha's preaching is attested to by the five monks, the converted five ascetics mentioned above.

Here an eroded panel (NG.380) defined by a broad plain fillet below and a narrow plain fillet above reveal the similar Buddhist story. The halo Buddha stands on the right, wearing monastic robe covering both his shoulders, folds of his robe reach down above his foot. A Vajrapani dressed in a Greek tunic stands behind him. Buddha reaches out his right hand literally turning a large wheel with a saw tooth pattern around the edge. The wheel of law, shaped much like a halo and backs the torso of a crouching muscular Atlas on a high seat, who holds three wheels above him, one on head, one each on right and left hands.

On the left, five monks with shaven heads and wearing monastic robes, who observe this event, are on the opposite side of the panel. Three are standing, among them one is holding a ceremonial water vessel for the welcoming ceremony, other two are kneeling, but all holding their hands in *Anjali* mudra.

For similar composition see Majumdar 1937: 48-49; Ingholt 1957: 69-70, pl.75, 76 & 77; Joshi & Sharma 1969:21, fig. 13 &14; Leeuw, J. E. van L.de 1981: figs.32-34; Faccenna, 1962: pl. 119; Nagar, 1981: 10; Taddei, 1969: fig. 9; Marshall 1960, fig 117; Chandra 1974: 12, pl. 27. Hargreaves 1930: 33-34; Ingholt 1957: pl. 79; Ackermann 1975:112-113 &143, pls. XLIII a & LXVII; Nagar 1981:12, pl. 7; Zwalf 1996:181-183, pls.199-200; Nehru 1989: pl.105.

#### 14. *Worship of Triratna or Symbolic Representation of the First Sermon*

This is a representation of the *dharmacakra* supporting the *triratna*. The bottom wheel is the *dharmacakra* which is regarded as a world-wheel, set in motion by the Buddha to enable humankind to find salvation. This symbolic representation of the Buddha delivering his First Sermon, the act which set the Wheel of Law in motion. In the *Hinayana* school of art, where the figure of the Buddha is never depicted, the incident can only be represented symbolically, with the symbol chosen naturally being the

wheel. Such symbolic representation also occurs in Gandhara but the Buddha is usually shown in the sculptures. The symbolism has not disappeared, however, for in almost all cases the sacred wheel is shown, usually on the front of the 'Teacher's Seat', and sometimes connected with the trident or *trisula* representing the three jewels, viz., the Buddha, the Dharma and the *Sangha*.

In Gandharan relief, we sometimes find only the *triratna* worshiped by devotees with folded hands. Other details like the depiction of deer were a regular feature in Gandhara yet is somehow missing here. Although there is nothing to indicate that the first sermon is depicted, Ingholt has identified the relief with the event.

This relief panel (NG.310) depicting four monks with hands held in *Anjali* mudra. The two at the front kneel while those behind stand, all reveals shaved heads and button eyes. They flank an enthroned wheel that is surmounted by a *triratna* with two small four petal rosettes. The Master wheel is seen on the pedestal, which represents the worship of the enthroned objects though this may also be taken as an iconic representation of the First Sermon.

For similar theme see Ingholt 1957: 70, pl. 78, 79; Marshall 1960, fig 70; Rahman 1990: fig. 11; Coomaraswamy 1927:30; Pandey 1978: 36; Hargreaves 1930: 33-34; Majumdar 1937:74-75; Ackermann, 1975:85-86, pls. XXIII a & XXIV a; Nagar, 1981:10, pl. 6; Joshi & Sharma, 1969: Fig. 15; Zwalf 1996:184-185, pl.202.

### 15. *Miracles of Buddha in front of Kashyapa at Uruvilva*

Gaya was the place where the Buddha practiced asceticism for seven years. Whilst he was there, he had heard about the famous Hindu ascetic Kashyapa, who lived in near-by Uruvilva with his brothers and a large number of disciples. Shortly after his first sermon the Buddha decided to go to Uruvilva in order to convert the influential Kashyapa and his followers. According to Buddhist literature, he performed five hundred miracles there. Two are depicted in one panel of the Nimogram collection (NG.184). The first is the miracle of victory over the black serpent and the second is the fire.

As depicted in the panel, the Buddha sits holding a bowl in his right hand, from which a black serpent can be seen rising. The second miracle is the fire, which first could not be lit, then could not be put out. In

this relief the flames from the ground occupy the central place between two rivals the Buddha and Kashyapa. Half sitting and half kneeling in front of Buddha is Kashyapa holding a water pot in his right hand placed on a seat. Both Buddha and Kashyapa are demonstrating weak anatomical and physical features. For similar theme see Ingholt 1957: 70 & 72, pl. 80 & 85; Chandra 1974: 14, pl. 33; Joshi & Sharma 1969:22-23, fig. 16.

*16. Miracle of Uruvilva and Conversion of Kashyapa*

The relief (NG.459) of the Nimogram collection reveals the event from life of Buddha where a story of Kashyapa's conversion to Buddhism at Uruvilva, a place near Gaya (Bihar) (Hargreaves 1924: 30 fig. 23), who was the eldest of three brothers, all famous Hindu ascetics, who lived with a multitude of disciples on the bank of a river near the place where the Buddha had practiced asceticism. For secondary source and similar subject see Majumdar 1937: 49; Marshall 1960: 55-56, figs 73 & 74; Hargreaves 1930:34-35; Ingholt 1957:72-73, pls.85, 89 & 92; Joshi & Sharma 1969:23, fig. 18-19.)

*17. Subjugation of the Elephant of Nalagiri*

Devadatta, the jealous cousin of the Buddha, was never able to bear the fame and success of the Buddha. He made a number of attempts to destroy him. On one occasion he hired some killers, but the plot was discovered and eventually the killers confessed their guilt and were converted. Another murderous attempt of Devadatta is the well-known Nalagiri incident which occurred at Rajagriha. In order to kill the Buddha an angry elephant named Nalagiri was let loose against him, but the Buddha used his miraculous powers to pacify and subdue the elephant. The elephant came out of a city gate and is shown in both reliefs of Nimogram.

Here in a broken panel (NG.302), the elephant is seen carrying a heavy, mace-like object by its trunk. The pacification of the animal is indicated by the Buddha placing his hand over its head. If we look at panel (NG.265), the Buddha stands turned to the right in near profile and slightly bent forward allowing him to touch the forehead of the enraged elephant with his right hand, and taming the elephant Nalagiri which has been sent to crush him. The elephant has rushed in from the right, but has peacefully lowered his trunk. Needless to say the attempt failed, and in both reliefs we see the Buddha calming the fury of the elephant by placing

his hand on its forehead as it enters the city gate. For secondary source see Majumdar 1937: 54; Hargraves 1918: 33, Ackermann 1975:93, pl. XXIX a; Chandra 1974: 14, pl. 34; Rahman, 1990: 700, fig. 6.)

#### *18. Taming of White Dog that Barked at the Buddha*

This relief (NG.412) in the Nimogram collection depicts the well-known story of the white dog that barked at the Buddha, when he went to visit a man named Suka. When Buddha arrived Suka was absent and his white dog was eating out of a dish on the top of a table at the front of his entrance. The sight of the Buddha enraged the dog, causing it to bark angrily. The dog had hidden a vast treasure and, the Buddha's intervention reveals this to be concealed beneath the platform on which the dog sits. The Buddha argued, and telling the dog that he had come upon the estate because he had been so rich. Consequently the dog was being deeply ashamed crept away to a far corner. Suka, returning, found the dog in this abject condition and asked what had happened. When he heard the story he hastened to the Buddha to demand an explanation. But the Buddha informed Suka that the dog was his own departed father came back to life in this form, and tried him, as a test, demand of the dog where he had buried his treasure previous to his death. The confused Suka did as he was told, and to his astonishment the dog crawled under the couch and began to dig. When the place was opened up, the treasure was disclosed the truth of the Buddha's words demonstrated. For similar subject see Majumdar 1937: 58-59; Hargreaves 1930: 38; Hargreaves 1918: 34-35; Zwalf 1996:202-203, pls. 226-227; Ingholt 1957: 84, pl. 120.

#### *19. The Offering of the Handful of Dust*

The story of the panel (NG.454) is that it was a daily custom of the Buddha, who trained the same upon his monks, to wander abroad at a certain hour in quest of food, as the whole order were dependent for their sustenance upon the voluntary offerings of the pious. Once in the city of Rajagriha, as the Buddha was going along with his begging bowl, the two little boys of good family, called 'Jaya' and 'Vijaya', were playing in the dust and saw the Buddha on his begging round. Jaya suddenly moved to make an offering but having nothing else to offer, reached up to the bowl and dropped into it a generous handful of dust. Jaya give him a handful of dust, calling it meal. The Buddha was much touched by this childish act of

piety, and some declare that he prophesied that the boy would become a mighty Buddhist monarch in future. Vijaya expressed approval by joining his hand; on Jaya's pronouncing an aspiration to universal monarchy, the Buddha predicted his rebirth one day as the emperor Ashoka. For secondary source and similar composition see Majumdar 1937: 58; Ingholt 1957:80, pl. 110 & 111; Hargreaves 1930: 37-38; Zwalf 1996:195-197, pl. 217; Nagar 1981:14, pl.9 (upper portion); Nehru 1989: pl.107.

#### *20. The visit of Indra to Indrasala Cave*

In the course of his journeys in the Magadha country the Buddha lived for some time in the Indrasala cave on Vedyaka hill near Rajagriha, where Indra, the king of gods, came to see him with a series of questions concerning the law of *Karma*. Indra was accompanied by Panchasikha, the Gandharva musician, and both of them appeared near the Buddha's cave. At that time, the hill top was dazzling with light and looked as if it was all ablaze with fire. Finding the Buddha deeply absorbed in meditation Indra asked Panchasikha to approach him first and mollify him with music. The divine musician thereupon took up his lyre and began to play on it. He sang hymns in praise of the Buddha, and finally announced the arrival of Indra. After they had met and exchanged greetings, Indra placed a few problems of philosophical import before the Buddha, the solution of which was readily furnished. He then returned in grateful satisfaction, after having duly adored the Buddha.

In Nimogram collection three panels (NG.430, NG.313 & NG.5) reveal this event and here the relief (NG. 313) shows the Buddha seated on a throne in a cave in meditative pose. Sakra whose peculiar head-dress should be noted, is seen approaching with folded hands. On the right, Sakra's arrival is being announced by his harpist Panchasikha whose defaced figure and harp can be recognized.

A broken relief (NG.430) reveals Buddha is sitting in a cave shaped enclosure. The Buddha's right hand appears to be in *Abhaya* mudra while the left is held in the *Bhumisparsha* mudra. Grass is indicated by the light etching below his seat. In the tree limbs on either side of the Buddha, two rams sit, both looking away from the Buddha. To the Buddha's right, a damaged figure, with what may have been a staff in front of him. The Buddha's figure in a restful mood is imitated even by the animals of the forest around the cave. The whole scene is composed as to suggest an

atmosphere of calm relaxation and meditation, brought about by the magic presence of the Buddha.

The extant outlines of the (NG.5) show a wooded nature of the locality is suggested by the trees, birds and animals. The animals which surround the cave indicate remoteness but also peace and tranquility of the area. For similar accounts see Majumdar 1937: 62-63; Dani 1968: 32, pl. XVII; Ingholt 1957: 87-89, pls.128-135; Buchthal 1945: 15-20, figs. 35-46; Marshall 1960: figs. 118 & 120; Ackermann 1975: 81-82, pl. XXI a; Joshi & Sharma 1969:24, fig. 17e; Zwalf 1996: 197-199, pls.219-221; Nagar 1981:8, pl. 5

### 21. *Hariti*

The legend of Hariti reveals that she was the sister of Shatagiri, the protector of Rajagriha. She became the wife of Pancika, her marriage proved very fruitful and she became the mother of 500 children. Her youngest and most favoured son was Priyankara. Hariti was, however, very fond of eating children. She began making a feast of the children of Rajagriha. Thus she earned her name 'Hariti' which meant the 'stealer of children'. The people of Rajagriha approached the Buddha and requested him to save their children from Hariti. The Buddha carried away one of her beloved son name 'Priyankara', the youngest one. She could not find her son anywhere in the house, she then began a search all over the world, but without success. Ultimately, she came to the Buddha and requested him to restore her lost child to her. The Buddha said,

"O Hariti ! Why do you mourn so much if only one of your 500 children is lost? You have no pity when you devoured the children of the people of Rajagriha." Hariti apologized her folly and agreed to follow the teachings of the Buddha. She agreed to give up eating human flesh. At this, there was great rejoicing in Rajagriha.

According to Antiquity Register of Nimogram Excavation (ARONE) a beautiful sculpture of Hariti was found during excavation on the floor of stupa-1(NG.432). Mythological Hariti was inhabitant of ancient Udyana, so she enjoyed extensive popularity in the region. One of her famous temple was at Skarah Dheri, while her images were found on large scale in Gandhara region at the sites of Sikri, Shah-ji-ki-Dheri, Shaikhan Dheri, Takht-i-Bhi and Jamal Garhi.

For secondary source see Ingholt 1957: 145-48, pls. 340, 341, 342, 344, & 347; Zwalf 1996: 119, pl. 98; Zwalf 1979: 17; Dani 1968: 32, pl. XXIV; Hargreaves 1930: 43-44; Dobbin, 1967: 268.

The entire collection of Nimogram depicts the Buddhist themes, but emphasis is given more on the life events of Buddha. It is surprising that the depiction of Jatakas is very meager. The figures are flashy and muscular, and have a dress much alien to Indian soil. Symbolic representation of the Buddha is uncommon except the scene of Symbolic Representation of the First Sermon or worship of *Triratna* (NG.310) where sometimes instead of Buddha only the wheel is seen on the pedestal. The Buddha head is covered with long, wavy hair, forming a topknot standing for *usnisa*. Along with halo and *urna* fine moustaches also appear which do not continue occur in the subsequent phases. The Buddha, Bodhisattvas and a few other deities invariably appear with a halo behind their heads. Nimogram sculptures reveal a variety of halos among them the plain halo and sometime decorated at the edge. The drapery generally covers both the shoulders. Where it only covers the right shoulder, this is suggested to be a later variation, normally associated with an attitude of preaching. In the earlier images, the Buddha's size is almost the same as that of his attendants and other persons present in the composition. In the later phases, in order to represent the superiority of the Master, he is depicted with a greater height. Beautiful hair, garments with heavy and deep folds, profuse ornaments, handsome appearance, well-built physique, jewelled headgear and a halo behind the head are some of the salient features of the artefacts from Nimogram. It is interesting to note that the presence of Vajrapani, whose figure is modelled after the Greco-Roman Hercules in most reliefs portraying incidents from the life of the Buddha, is a peculiarity of Gandharan sculptures and is not recorded in any known text.

In Nimogram, collection the representation of the Buddhist deities is limited to Siddhartha and Maitreya only. Siddhartha invariably appears in meditative pose with fluted headgear and a tender facial expression with no loose locks of hair on his shoulders. The figure normally sits in a meditative pose with a sacred thread-like amulet string and a halo behind the head (NG.293). His characteristic features are a handsome and youthful appearance rarely with moustache (NG.411 & NG. 279). Maitreya demonstrates moustaches, a crescent mark on the diadem and loose locks of hair dangling on shoulders (NG.274). A cylindrical top-knot,



made with a part of hair on the head, sometimes has two loops on the top. A water pot or vase is sometimes held in the left hand, occasionally in the preaching attitude (NG. 337).

The sculptors of Nimogram have depicted Brahmanical gods, the images of Brahma and Indra were found in different panels and friezes of Nimogram Buddhist Complex. Hindu deities of Brahma and Indra have been modelled after the general features of kings and royal personalities with distinct iconographic features can be seen on (NG. 422, NG.457, NG.399 and NG. 205). It should be noted that sometimes stone was covered with gold leaf (NG. 390), to give it luster in dark interiors or to make it appear more precious in imitation of metal.

### **Summary**

The art pieces of Nimogram tell us that the interest of the artists is by no means limited to their religious and aesthetic aspects, as important as these are to students of Buddhism and art historians. Such sculptures were used for religious purposes, especially Udyana a Graeco-Roman settlement, and a part of Greater Gandhara, it also became purely decorative and architectural ornament, rather than used in any religious way of major importance. Individual statues were carved, of course, but the mass of production was decorative, was a part of the architectural ornamentation of a stupa complex.

These art pieces throw a light on the life of people and the land of Udyana also, the costumes of all classes from princes to poor, the furnishing of houses, weapons of war, sports, armour, and ornaments, seat for riding elephant and horse, carts and carriages, horses and yoke, tools, agricultural implements, cult objects and musical instruments are all skillfully depicted and provide evidence of folk tales of the present Swat valley. People are depicted at work, play and worship, engaged in acts of devotion, marriages, donations, sports and visits of ceremony. The appearance of musicians, ascetics and wrestlers display the ethnology of the Udyana. The forms which fairies, nymphs, water spirits and demons assumed in popular imagination are all depicted, In some cases battlemented and guarded city walls and gateways are shown which defended people from their more substantial and ordinary enemies. These architectural features can be seen even today in the tribal belt of Dir and Bajour Agency.

## **Materials**

These reliefs and friezes were used to decorate the walls of the stupas of Nimogram, mostly using schist and locally available slate. The material used by the Nimogram sculptors is a soft schist (actually a phyllite), that varies in colour from light to dark grey often containing sparkling particles known as chloritoid quartz-mica phyllite, noticed at NG.287, NG.353, NG.418 and NG.456. The outcrop of chloritoid quartz-mica phyllite only originates in Swat valley (Reedy 1997: 278). It appears that the greyish schist, which represents the central Nimogram corpus of sculptures was a standardized material with only slight variations, and was quarried from the hills of the Swat valley. The outcrops and quarries of these materials have been identified by Pakistani Geologists in an area of Shah Deri in Kabal tehsil of Swat valley very close to Nimogram. They have mapped an area about 19 km northwest of Mingora, where many sculptures have also been discovered (Rehman and AlamZeb 1970: 96).

This art enjoyed an exceptionally long life, initiated in Kushana times and witnessing its zenith and artistic development in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD. This was followed by a long period of prosperity, marked by the production of countless sculptures, first in stone, stucco and bronze and later in the rock's surface.

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**Plates**



Pl. 1 Bodhisattva Maitreya in Tushitaheaven (NG. 337)



Pl. 2 the birth of the Siddhartha and the seven steps (NG. 288)

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Pl. 2(a) the birth of the Siddhartha and the seven steps (NG. 350)



Pl. 2 (b)the birth of the Siddhartha and the seven steps (NG. 352)



Pl. 3 bath of Siddhartha (NG. 91)



Pl. 3 (a) lower right defaced tier reveals bath of Siddhartha (NG. 222)





Pl. 3 (b) lower right fragmented tier reveals bath of Siddhartha (NG. 226)



Pl. 4 interpretation of Siddhartha's horoscope (NG. 19)



Pl. 5 Siddhartha at school (NG. 154)



Pl. 6 Siddhartha archery (NG. 216)

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Pakistan*



Pl. 7 the first meditation of Siddhartha (NG. 293)



Pl. 8 the great departure (NG. 279)



Pl. 8 (a) the great departure (NG. 411)



Pl. 9 exchange of clothes with the hunter (NG. 462)



Pl. 10 farewell of Chandaka and Kanthaka (NG. 161)



Pl. 11 offering of bowls (NG. 414)



Pl. 12 Brahma and Indra entreat the Buddha to preach (NG. 422)



Pl. 12(a) Brahma and Indra entreat the Buddha to preach (NG. 457)

*Buddha Life Events as Depicted in the Nimogram Buddhist Artifacts of District Swat,  
Pakistan*



Pl. 12 (b) Brahma and Indra entreat the Dhyani Buddha to preach (NG. 399)



Pl. 13 the first sermon (NG. 380)



Pl. 14 symbolic representation of the first sermon (NG. 310)



Pl. 15 two miracles of Buddha before the Kashyapa at Uruvilva (NG. 184)





Pl.16 miracle of Uruvilva and conversion of Kashyapa (NG. 459)



Pl.17 subjugation of the elephant of Nalagiri (NG. 265)



Pl.17(a)subjugation of the elephant of Nalagiri (NG. 302)



Pl. 18 taming of white dog that barked at the Buddha (NG. 412)

*Buddha Life Events as Depicted in the Nimogram Buddhist Artifacts of District Swat,  
Pakistan*



Pl. 19 Hariti (NG. 432)



Pl. 20 the offering of the handful of dust (NG. 454)



Pl. 21 the visit of Indra to Indrasala cave (NG. 430)



Pl. 21(a) the visit of Indra to Indrasala cave (NG. 313)

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Pakistan*



Pl. 21(b) the visit of Indra to Indrasala cave (NG. 05)

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## **The Traces of Gandhāra Art on the Wooden Doorframes and Columns of Altit Fort, Hunza, Pakistan**

**Mueezuddin Hakal  
Ghani-ur-Rahman**

### **Abstract**

*Ancient Gandhara has left a deep imprint on the art and architecture of the region. That influence can be seen in the older wooden architecture more prominently. Altit fort is one such example. Decorative designs on the wooden doorframes and columns at Altit Fort in Hunza include stūpa-like, pointed or ogee arch-like decorations and their composite depictions. This paper studies such works of art in comparison to similar artistic activities, mainly related to Buddhism, in Gandhāra.*

### **Introduction**

Altit Fort marks the significance of village Altit as a center for cultural and political activities during the early era of Ayaškutz and the forgotten dynasties before they ruled. This village is situated in the eastern areas of proper Hunza, located in the northern zone of Gilgit-Baltistan. Village Altit is separated from the western villages of Baltit (Karimabad), Ganish and Berishal (Mominabad) by Harchihar, a ravine where water flows down from Ultar glacier. Ultar glacier is located to the north of Altit in the inner pastures of Ultar valley (Map 1).

Hunza, presently administered as a District was previously an autonomous state that was dissolved in 1974. It is also known as Kanjūt to the northern neighbours, is separated by the River Hunza from District Nagir in the south. Altit Fort, the castle of royals in this village, is located at the top of the steep cliff of granitic bed rock. At its rear, there is a deep gorge where the river flows, and at the front there is the lower settlement of the subjects (Fig. 1).

It is told in the tradition that Altit was the seat of rule before Shabōs and Aliqan. It was the dispute between both, that led the King Shabōs to shift the capital to Baltit (Karimabad) with the support of the subjects of Baltit and Ganish. Later, the public of Altit, actually supporting Aliqan, also accepted his rule.

Before this event, Ayasho II of Hunza married Shah Khatoon, daughter of Abda (I) Khan (1632-34) of Shigar. Before this, it is said that the present area of the royal fort and the settlement was a burial ground, and the fortified settlement of villagers was at Tongochi in Altit, nearly half a kilometer north of the present location of this fort. Artisans and masons reached Hunza in the dowry of Shah Khatoon from Baltistan. They selected this old burial site for the re-construction of a citadel and fortified settlement. It is also connected to the migration of the forefathers of the clans of Sotkutz and Mushkinkutz to Hunza, who reached as the foster fathers of Shah Khatoon. A gun called Shah-Mār, bearing the date AH 946/1539 (Dani 1989 [Rept. 2007]: 199), was brought in her dowry; and a team of musicians also migrated after her. This event seems to be the turning point towards the cultural glory of Hunza.

### **Built heritage of Altit Fort**

At Altit Fort there are four major rooms in two stories interconnected by a narrow corridor. These four rooms are constructed with a traditional *azwariski* style: having elevated spaces around the fireplace in the nave; roof is hold by the four pillars with two beams; and lantern skylight in the center of the roof. There is a watch tower at the top of the building; and three rooms in colonial style with attached baths are the most recent additions.

The main entrance to the fort is on the northern side. The wooden frame of this door is highly decorated with geometrical designs. A narrow corridor from main door leads towards the first room, called *Šeim-o Thāng*. Steps at the end of the corridor leads up to the open space called *gom*, lies in the front of the room known as *Šoro-e Thāng*. In *Šoro-e Thāng*, door-frame and four columns of the room are highly adorned with attractive designs of geometric, floral and their arabesque patterns. Across the *gom*, again there is a narrow corridor; at its southern end the third room called *Baipaş* is located. However, right in the front of the *gom*, *Bo-ōsas Thāng* is surrounded by the said corridor.

The corridor leads to the roof, where the watch tower stands, that is locally called *Šikāri*. Mosque of Bibi Ghoros is connected to the northern side of the tower. To the East of this tower there are colonial styled rooms constructed in the reign of Mir Muhammad Jamal Khan (1945-1974) over the structures of granary. To the southern side of the tower a wooden room

called *marā* is located over the tip of bed rock, used for the storage of dry fruits throughout the ages.

### **Previous contributions and scope of this study**

The antiquity of this fort is discussed for the first time by Beg (1980: 68). He stresses on the date mentioned on the door-frame of the watch tower. However, he imprecisely mentions it as AH 955/1548-49. Furthermore, a preliminary descriptive study of the art and architecture is offered by Dani (1989: 156-162) includes the description of the art work on the wooden door-frames in *Śeim-o Thāng* and pillars of *Śoro-e Thāng*. Anyhow, he neglected the description of *stūpa*-like patterns on the columns in the latter room, which are mainly going to be discussed here. The date on watch tower is also mentioned by him (Dani 1989: 157) as AH 919/1513 or AH 989/1581; however, it looks AH 909/1502 -03. Initially, it was this date used by the authors to date the building. The restoration of this fort (Fig. 2) is organized by Aga Khan Cultural Service, Pakistan (AKCSP). The systematic studies and investigations connected to the restoration of the building brought new perspectives to our understandings about this monument. It includes the scientific dating based on C<sup>14</sup> analysis of the sample of the oldest standing structure of the watch tower, which pushed its antiquity back to somewhere 10<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup> century AD.

### **Art work**

A selected work of art for this study can be classified into three groups: first, *stūpa*-like decorations; second, pointed or ogee arch-like carvings; and third, their composite executions.

In the first group, there are two examples of *stūpa*-like depictions on wood in this fort. The first example is carved on the tapering column, square in section, standing to the right hand side from the entrance of *Śoro-e Thāng* (Fig. 3). The second example is on the parallel column (Figs. 4 & 5), sharing the weight of the same beam in the *Śoro-e Thāng*.

The first execution is visibly related to the portrayal of *stūpa* cult. The illustrated features include the architectural components of the base (*medhi*), transitional drum, dome (*aṇḍa*) and square structure of *hermika* at the top. The interior of outline drawing of *stūpa*-like design is decorated with an arabesque of floral designs with buds around an elongated carpal-like design. The figure in the core includes the visible features of stigma at



the top, with elongated style in the middle and ovary below. The interior of ovary shows the marks similar to the features of the ovule. Therefore, it may represent the fertility and/or the relic casket (?). However, the *chatras* are missing in this illustration.

The second example is executed on the north-eastern column of the same room with similar features (Fig. 5). It has a portrayal of *stūpa* with the base, dome and above four upward extending unusual interconnected lozenges shaped *chatra*-like depictions, adorned with the hanging ribbons on both sides. In the interior of this carved *stūpa*, two birds with joining necks are shown engraved with a flower blooms out of their necks.

In the second group, nine arch-like carvings can be seen on the door-frames and casements of *Śeim-o Thāng* and watch tower respectively. In *Śeim-o Thāng*, out of three doors two are highly decorated with geometrical and floral designs. Such decorations on the lintel of first door frame (Figs. 6 & 7) include the ornamentation with three pointed arch-like pattern with long volutes at the ends. Similar design with a series of four pointed arches can also be seen on the next door (Fig. 8) of the same room (Dani 1989: 158). It is the door attached in its western wall, now used for the emergency exit. Ground and first floors of the watch tower, at the top of the building, have highly decorated casements and door-frame with geometrical and floral designs. The window at first floor, right above the door-frame has two examples of arch-like pattern, now partly broken (Fig. 9).

In the third group, there are two interconnected specimens of a composite work on the frame of northern casement (Fig. 10) in the watch tower, towards the mosque. Here, the composite execution means the depiction of *stūpa*-like pattern in a pointed arch-like outline drawings carved out as a single figure. This work of art visibly reveals the features of *stūpa* structure including that of base, transitional drum and dome; however, the ogee shaped arch-like carving executed prominently at the top center of the dome-like depiction, makes it a composite execution.

### **Resemblance with the Buddhist art from Gandhāra and Upper Indus Valley**

The cult of *stūpa* has roots in the models of burial traditions before the event of Buddha's *nirvana*, particularly related to the earthen *tumulus* constructions (Marco 1987: 219-241). Architecturally, the *stūpa* is

developed from a hemispherical heap of mound to a towered shaped structure, along the history of Buddhism in Gandhāra (Zwalf 1996: 36-38). Depictions of such structures as a decorative motif at Hunza, visibly mark the connection of such art works to the earlier evidences came from the cultural area of Gandhāra. The towered shaped carving shows the architectural components of *stūpa* based on the model of such erections in the Peshawar basin, developed during circa 1st/2nd century BC to 3rd/4th century AD. It includes the features of the podium, transitional drum, hemispherical dome, *hermika* and *chatras*. These features are common to such erections of towered section *stūpas* in Gandhāra (Brown 1959: 33-35; Zwalf 1996: 36-38), also depicted in the relief panels from this area (Zwalf 1996: 50-54). In the succeeding periods, alongside the emergence of the Huns (Nasim *et al.* 2008: 31-41) in Gandhāra, the decline of Buddhism is noticeable in the valley of Peshawar. However, the remains alongside the River Indus in Upper Valleys help us to understand the succeeding period between circa 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century AD (Ebert 1994: 288).

The hanged ribbons or banners on both sides have extensions from *chatras*-like drawings. (Fig. 5) The executions are comparable to the description of Faxian (416-18, Ebert 1994: 273) and the *stūpa* depictions in the rock art particularly in the Upper Indus Valley. The sites of such carvings on rock surfaces in the Chilas zone include Shatial, Chilas I, Thalpan I and III (Dani 1989: 73, 81, 139, 141, 145, 153, 159, 183, 213 and 217), and in the Ghizer zone include a site at Hōl in Gahkuch (Jettmar *et al.* 1993: 123-140; Hikal 2015: 64-67).

The origin of horseshoe-like door entrances to *chaitya* halls, outline borders to niches, and their execution in the panels can be traced back in the hut constructions of the nomads of the Vedic age (Brown 1959: 3; Ebert 1994: 276). However, the developed models of structures of wood in succeeding periods are replicated in their contemporary rock-cut chambers and *chaityas* (Brown 1959: 2-4). The continuation of architectural representation is prominent in the art mainly on the panels from Gandhāra and Mathura. Such illustrations depict the *Jatakas*, the life stories of Buddha and other associated sacred and secular demonstrations (Ebert 1994: 276). Here in Gandhāra, the representation of constructed structures in panels is normally shown with the pilasters mainly topped by the arches. The pattern of arch motif in the sacred depiction continues in

Upper Indus Valley. An ogee shaped arch depicted behind the figures of Buddha at Karga (Gilgit) and Manthal (Skardu) show the continuation of the earlier model. In Hunza the development seems as the continuity to the past's similar evidences. Where the *chaitya* patterns with ogee shaped arch can be seen as a decorative motif on the door-frames.

A composite execution, unique in nature at Altit, shows the *stūpa*-like depictions topped by the pointed or ogee arch-like pattern. Similar to the trefoiled arches, this pattern has visibly three stages, same to the architectural components of the *stūpa*. Whereas, depictions generally represent this type of work on wood similar to the pointed arch-like executions.

### **Conclusion**

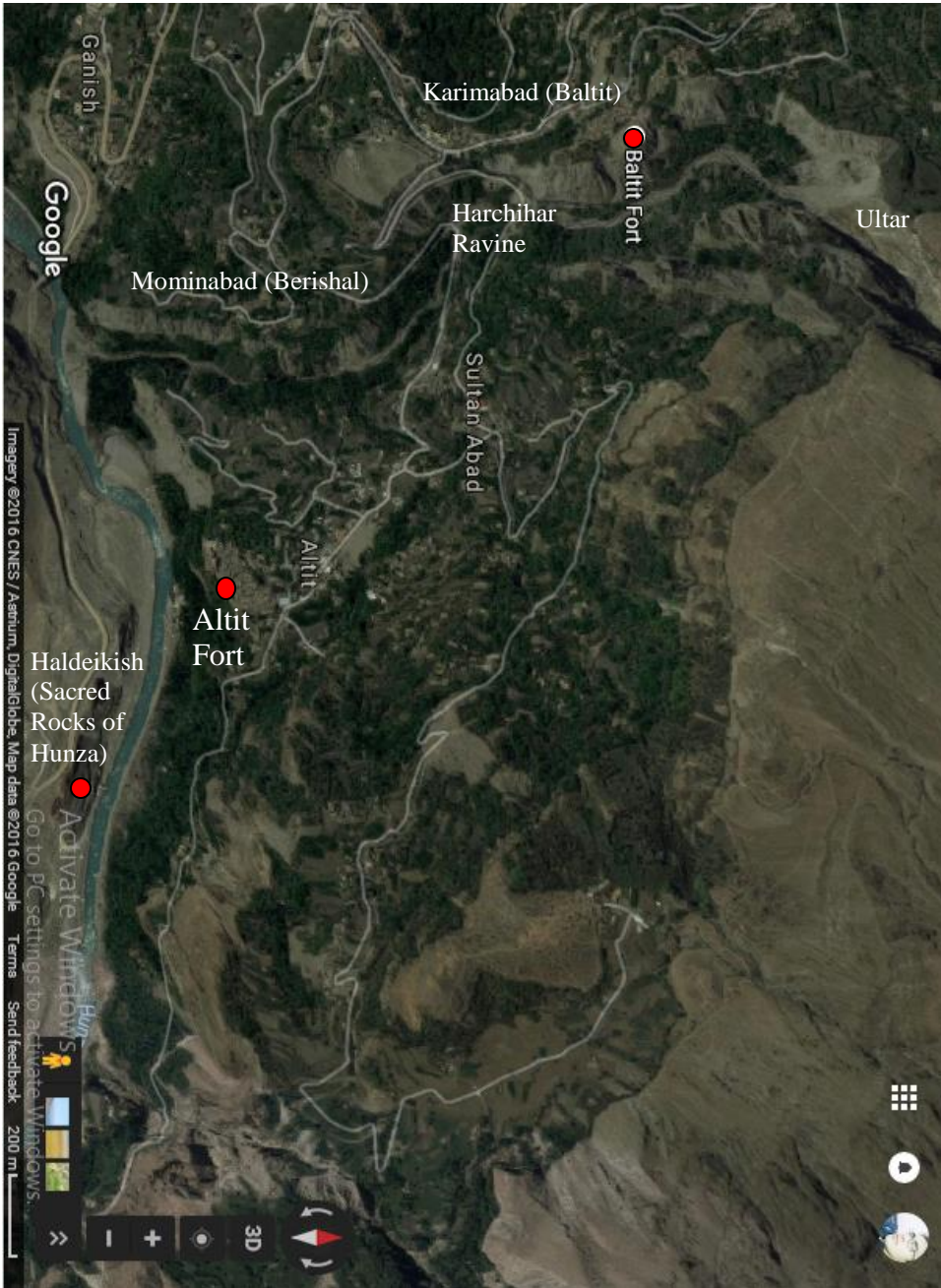
Altit Fort, dated around 10<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup> century AD, has the unique specimens of wooden art. A selected sample of art from this fort is comparable to the Buddhist art developed in the cultural center of Gandhāra, approximately dated between 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> century BC to 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> century AD. The tower shaped *stūpa* depictions on the rock surfaces throughout the Upper Indus Valley mainly in Chilas zone, dated almost around 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> century to 12<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century AD, mark the continuation of this culture in the mountain area in the North of ancient Gandhāra. Here, the continuation of depicting *stūpa* and pointed arch shaped patterns is visible as decorative motifs in the art work on the wooden columns and door-frames at Altit Fort. Thus, the data supports to understand the continuity of the features of Gandhāran art in the northern extremes of modern Pakistan until around the age of the emergence of Islam in Gandhāra and Central Asia.

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Map 1: Location map of village Altit

**Figures**



Fig. 1: Altit fort located on a cliff, a view from the eastern side (Lorimer's collection 1930s).



Fig. 2: Elevation of castle of royals above and settlements of subjects below, restoration in progress (courtesy AKCSP)



Fig. 4: Decorated north-western column in *Soro-e Thāng*.



Fig. 3: *Stūpa*-like decoration on a north-eastern column in *Soro-e Thāng*.



Fig. 5: Details of *Stūpa*-like pattern on north-western column in *Soro-e Thāng*.

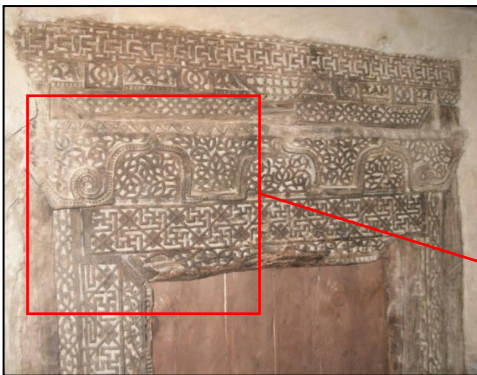


Fig. 6 (l.): Doorframe of *Saim-o Thāng* with pointed arch-like design.



Fig. 7 (r.): Details of doorframe.



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Fig. 8: Second doorframe of *Śaim-o thāng*.



Fig. 9: Western casement to the first floor of watch tower.



Fig. 10: Decorated casement to the northern wall of watch tower.

-4-

## **The Taming of Nāga Apalāla: A Buddhist Narrative Relief Panel in the SSAQ Museum, University of Peshawar**

**Zarawar Khan**

### **Abstract**

*The Sir Sahibzada Abdul Qayyum (S.S.A.Q) Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, University of Peshawar, has a rich collection of archaeological artifacts found during the scientific excavations carried out by the department of Archaeology, University of Peshawar, in the last fifty four years. Besides other valuable antiquities, the Museum is enriched with Buddhist sculptures recovered from various Buddhist establishments of Gandhara and Udyana (Swat and adjacent areas). Some of these art pieces are on display while majority are lying in the reserve collection. The present study is focused on a relief panel which is portraying the taming of the legendary nāga Apalāla, the wicked dragon of river Swat by the Buddha. It is an important piece of art and can be artistically compared with other panels now lying in different museums and private collections.*

The Department of Archaeology, University of Peshawar since its establishment in 1962, has rendered great services to the Archaeology and cultural assets of the Province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa by excavating different Pre-historic, Proto-historic sites and Buddhist establishments. One of the memorable achievements of the department is the launching of the “Gandhara Archaeological Project”, which was initiated in 1981 in collaboration with the Department of Archaeology & Museums, Govt. of Pakistan for the exploration, excavations and conservation of the Buddhist period sites and monuments, located in Malakand and Swat valleys.

The team members of the project, particularly Professor Abdur Rahman and Professor Farid Khan, under the directives of the late Dr. Farzand Ali Durrani, discovered more than fifty archaeological sites and also excavated some of them such as Maṭkaṇai, Baghrajai (in Malakand Agency), Parrai and Chargpaty (in district Dir) Butkara III, Shnaisha, Gumbatkai, Pataka, Marjanai, Kanisapr and Loe Banr etc in the Swat valley (Khan. S.N 1995: 3, Rahman 1991 & 1993). The collected antiquities from these excavations are currently housed in the SSAQ

Museum of the University of Peshawar, which have attracted the attention of both national and international scholars and researchers.

However, only preliminary excavation reports of some of the sites have been published while majority of the art pieces are still lying unstudied but their proper interpretation will surely throw a flood of light on various issues related to the Buddhist art of Gandhara. In this connection, an arched panel, showing the taming of the legendary nāga Apalāla, the notorious dragon of the Swat River by Buddha Sakyamuni is one of those unpublished art pieces. The panel was discovered in 1981, during the course of excavation at the Buddhist site of Baghrajai, (Malakand Agency) of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province and since that time lying in the store of the museum (Pl.1). It is made of black schist stone, measuring 71x63 cm, and bearing the museum inventory numbers as BRJ 45 and 1980 1-126 respectively.

But before discussing the iconographic details of the panel, it may be helpful to briefly discuss the background of the story in the light of literary evidence such as the *Mulasarvastivadavinaya* where it has been narrated in the series of the conversion of 7,700,000 being by Buddha in the locality of Gandhara (Zin 2009: 76). Similarly, the Chinese pilgrims Fa-Hien (399-414 A.D) and Hiuan-Tsang (629-644 A.D) have also recorded it in their accounts (Legge 1886: 29, Beal 1884: 121-23). The account of Hiuan-Tsang is of special importance in this regard as it informs us that the nāga was living with his family in the source of river Swat since the time of the Kashyapa Buddha (one of the former Buddhas) with the name of King-ki or Gangi, and possessed the power of bringing severe flood in the river Swat. The local population, in order to keep him calm, used to offer a portion of the grain as an annual tribute. But with the passage of time this practice was abandoned which enraged the nāga who, at the end of his life assumed the form of a poisonous dragon and bent upon the destruction of the standing crops by omitting a white stream from his fountain (Beal 1884: 121-22).

Accordingly, at the request of king Ajatasatru of Magadha, Buddha paid a miraculous visit to Gandhara in the company of Vajrapani to subdue the nāga Apalāla (Zin 2009: 76). Some Chinese literary sources such as *Wu-tao-kan* and *Wu-miao*, and Indian literature like *Sarvata vinaya* shows that Buddha came to Gandhara near the end of his career, in the company of his attendant Vajrapani (Watter 1904: 229-30) but on his arrival, the

nāga became furious and caused a severe shower of rain and hail to descend on the Buddha which miraculously turned into sandal and other fragrance. Then the nāga hurled various weapons which too changed into lotus flowers.

Feeling his failure, the nāga entered to his abode, but he was compelled to come out when Vajrapani, on the order of Buddha struck the nearby mountain with his Vajra and a vast fragment of the rocks fall into the dragon's lake. Moreover, the Buddha filled the shores of the lake with flames and the only cool place remained was beneath his own feet where the nāga kneeled in submission. Thus the whole nāga family was tamed and forbidden from injury to the crops except once in twelve years (Beal 1884: 122-23, Zin 2009: 77).

Our present panel is very accurately depicting the visual narration of the same story. It shows from right to left, the Buddha clad in a long robe, is standing frontally but slightly turning to left with the right hand probably rising in *Abhaya*, and the left holding the hem of the drapery. Vajrapani is standing to his left, in cross legged position, wearing a sleeved shirt and trousers and holding the Vajra in the left hand. In the background, there is standing male figure with folded hands and wearing a turban, neck ornament and *utariya* over the left shoulder.

The kneeling nāga in human form with snake's hood issuing from the back is shown in front of the Buddha's feet on the heap of fallen rocks with folded hands. He is following by three other standing nāga figures in a row, with folded hands and prominent snake's hoods at the back. All these figures are wearing long and tight fitting sleeved robes and trousers. A bust of another nāgini is visible in the background with erect hood, while another hood is also issuing near her right shoulder. In the upper portion of the panel, Vajrapani is standing to left in front of the rocks. He is wearing an *uttariya* and *paridana* and placing his left foot on the rock and left hand on the knee and raising his thunderbolt (*Vajra*) in the right hand for striking the accumulated pile of rocks.

The panel is partially damaged while the facial feature and costumes of almost all the figures are chipped and worn out. It is provided with rectangular tennons below the plain fillet, and traces of a volute are visible at the right spandrel. Three small holes are also provided probably for iron nails through which the panel was once fixed to a monument.

There are some other narrative relief panels in different museums of Pakistan and abroad which have some similarity with our panel as well. One of these is now owned by the British Museum, where the figure of Vajrapani is shown as a bearded and muscular man which clearly testifies that at the occasion of conversion of the nāga, not only the Buddha had grown old rather his attendant had also become aged (Zwalf 1996: Pl. 214). Thus what has been recorded in the text was accurately portrayed by the artists of the Gandhara School of art in the narrative reliefs. But on the contrary, our panel is showing Vajrapani as a young man holding the Vajra in the right hand, and striking the pile of stones. Another panel now in the Taxila Museum is showing the same story but here five additional flying figures are throwing flowers on Buddha (Khan. A et al 2005: Pl.42), whereas yet another example in the Calcutta Museum is showing the emanating flames from the shores of the nāga's abode (see Kurita 1988: Pl.456). However our panel does not show the flying figures and emanating flames on the one way but on the other hand it also differs from other arched panels which normally illustrate two or three scenes from the Buddha's life (see Grunwedel 1901: Pl.58, Spooner 1910: No. 336).

The exact location of the abode of naga and his fight with Buddha is still a controversial issue. According to Hiuen-Tsang the event took place about 250 or 260 *li* from Mungali where the lake of naga was located and from which the river Swat was also issuing (Beal 1884: 121-122). The place was identified by Sir Aurel Stein in the modern Tirat village, on the right bank of River Swat and opposite to Madyan, in the upper Swat valley since he discovered there the footprints of Buddha carved on an inscribed boulder. Moreover he also explored the remains of stupa near the foot prints in dilapidated condition (Stein 1929: 86-87, Pl. 47). The same boulder with print impression remained on its original place till the visit of G. Tucci to the Swat valley (Tucci 1957: 302, fig.9) and presently housed in the Swat Archaeological museum.

In 1991, the Department of Archaeology, university of Peshawar carried out excavation at Tirat in order to expose the structural remains of those mounds which were previously reported by Stein. During the course of excavation the team successfully unearthed some stone masonry wall in dilapidated and robbed condition but the excavation was closed after few days and except few pot shards, no other antiquity was recovered. However, one unpleasant incident took place when the excavators were informed about the blasting of the inscribed rock which according to Stein

was bearing the impression of the Buddha robe and a bilingual inscription in Sanskrit and Arabic<sup>1</sup>

However, the exploration and even excavation at Tirat village could not solve the controversy of the naga's lake since presently the river Swat is flowing there in full swing and have left no traces of any reservoir behind. Some scholars have tried to locate the abode of the nāga family somewhere else in the Swat and Dir districts. In this connection, H.A. Dean was the first to identify it with the present Saidgai Lake, located in Aushiri valley of district Dir (Dean 1896: 661, Stein 1921: 17). However, the exact place is yet to be determined if further research is carried out in this regard.



Pl. 1: Arched panel showing the taming of nāga Apalāla (S.S.A.Q.Museum)

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<sup>1</sup> Verbal discussion with the author by M. Naeem Khan, draftsman of the department of Archaeology, University of Peshawar.

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## **Shah Rukne Alam (1251-1335 AD) – A Great Sufi Saint of South Asia**

**Kishwar Sultana  
Riaz Ahmad**

### **Abstract**

*This article explains not only the contribution of Shah Rukne Alam as the great sufi saint of South Asia but with special reference to present Pakistan as its tomb is still one of the very important tombs of sufi saints highly revered by the people of Pakistan as a saint whose contribution in the spread of Islamic culture of peace and harmony in the thirteen century was of par excellence in line with the Suhrawardy order of the sufis initiated first in this area by his great grandfather Hazrat Bahauddin Zakariya. This also depicts the impact of the saint and the nature of his relationship between the people and the Muslim rulers of those times. This also explains the reverence he commanded from the Muslim rulers and respect showed to him by the people of both the present countries of India and Pakistan and the times in which he lived under the rule of Delhi Sultans. His missionary work and his contribution have also been highlighted in this paper.*

Sheikh Ruknuddin Abul Fata, popularly known as Shah Rukne Alam, is one of great Sufi saints of South Asia belonging to the period of Delhi Sultanate (1206-1526). He belonged to that early age of the Muslim Rule in South Asia when Muslim traditions were at their peak and the Muslim rulers were enjoying the maximum power (Allami 2004: 330-331). So was the case with the Muslim Sufi traditions when the Sufis were highly regarded not only by the Muslim Society, but by the Hindu Society. It was because of this regard and respect for the Muslim Sufi Saints that the Muslim Rulers benefitted to the highest extent (Ikram 1982: 263-267).





Figure 1: Tomb of Shah Rukn-e-Alam located in Multan  
(Image of the tomb taken by William Henry Baker in 1865)

The tomb was built between 1320 and 1324 AD by Ghias-ud-Din Tughlaq for his own use during his governorship of Depalpur, but he had to shift to Delhi for becoming Sultan. His successor son, Sultan Muhammad, because of his devotion to the Saint, gave this mausoleum to the descendants of Shah Rukn-e-Alam for the latter's burial in 1330. Thus the mausoleum became a site of pilgrimage. This Mausoleum became the foundation stone of Tughluq art and architecture because it was in following this architectural pattern, a great many building in Delhi and other cities of India were constructed. The tomb is on the tentative list as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.



Figure 2: Interior of the tomb with the shrine

The tomb is situated on the southwest side of the Multan Fort premises. It is one of the many mausoleums of Multan, of Sufi saints (Welch and Howard 1983).

The building is an octagon, 51 feet 9 inches in diameter internally, with walls 41 feet 4 inches high and 13 feet 3 inches thick, supported at the angles by sloping towers. Above this is a second octagon, 25 feet 8 inches high, then another at 26 feet 10 inches high. There is a narrow passage all around the top of the lower storey for the Moazzan, or public caller to prayers (Welch and Howard 1983).

This structure is surmounted by a hemispherical dome 58 feet externally in diameter. The total height of the building is 100 feet, including a plinth of 3 feet. As it stands on the high ground, the total height above the road level is 150 feet (Marshall 1928).

The mausoleum is built entirely of red brick, bounded with beams of shisham wood, which have turned black over the centuries. The exterior is elaborately ornamented with glazed tile panels, string-courses and battlements. The colours used are dark blue, azure, and white, which contrast the deep red finely polished bricks (Marshall 1928).

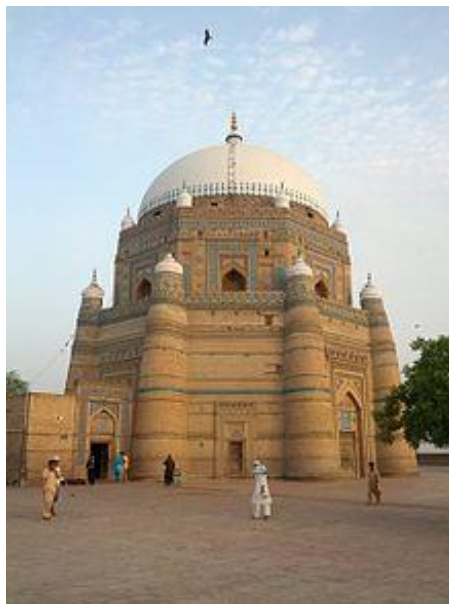


Figure 3: (Source: Welch and Howard 1983)

In the line of Suhrawardi Sufi order, in Multan a son of Pir Sadar-Al-Din Arif was born on Friday, the 9<sup>th</sup> of Ramazan 649/26 November 1251. He was named Sheikh Ruknuddin Abul Fatah by his grandfather Shaikh Baha-Al-Din Zakariya, the founder of Suhrawardi order in the Indo-Pak subcontinent. Once Hazrat Khawaja Shasuddin Tabrizi came to visit his grandfather, he saw Sheikh Rukneddin Abul Fatah in his childhood and was deeply impressed by the habits of the child and named him as Ruknuddin Alam. That is why he is popularly known as Shah Rukne Alam (Rahman 1990: 259).

Shaikh Rukn-i-Alam (Rukn-al-Din) died on 7<sup>th</sup> of Friday, 3<sup>rd</sup> Jamadial-Awwal 735/ January 1335. He was buried in the mausoleum of his grandfather, according to his own will. After sometime, however, his coffin was transferred to the present mausoleum, which was originally constructed by Sultan Ghiyas-al-Din Tughluq (1340-1350) during the days of his governorship of Depalpur because of his desire to be buried near the mausoleum of Hazrat Bahauddin Zakariya, but it was given by Sultan Mohammad bin Tughluq to the descendants' of Shah Rukn-I-Alam for the latter's burial (Ikram 1982: 265).

The mausoleum of Rukne Alam, even after passage of seven centuries of its construction, has been admired not only by the world travelers and chroniclers but also by the art-historians and archaeologists who wrote the architectural history of the subcontinent. (For instance see Welch and Howard 1983).

### **His Missionary Work**

He was taught by his father and grandfather. His spiritual training was also done by both of them. At the age of 36 he started his teaching after the death of his father Shaikh Sadaruddin Arif. Very soon he became very famous and his *Astana* was visited by different governors of Multan and surrounding areas (*Bazme Sufia*). Most of his time was spent for prayers and meditation in the way of Almighty Allah. Very less time was given to the public. However, he had great love for the people especially for the poor and the deprived people whom he and his disciples helped financially and otherwise.

Shah Rukne Alam did not author any book, but his teachings are available in *Majmaul Akhbar* (Syed Sabahuddin Abdur Rahman 1990: 259) and *Akbarul Akhbar* and some other books (Ikram 1982). In one of

his discourses, Shah Rukne Alam says:

Man is formed of two things – body and spirit. His spirit is reflected through his conduct and behavior. God sees his heart through his conduct and behavior towards others. It is through meditation that a man purifies his conduct and exhibits goodness to the people. He should always remember God for kindness and help. In this way the Sufi purifies his heart and mind, and inculcates in himself the habits of angles. And becomes very kind to the people and preaches truth and reality to his disciples. Sufi's belief is that God is known through honesty, fair play, dedication and spirit of help to the poor and deprived people to whichever faith they may belong. He always preaches peace and tolerance at all costs in the society. Instead of pointing out the errors of others, he prefers to manifest his good conduct and behavior so that the people and disciples themselves realize the folly of their actions. By deriving inspiration from the character of Hazrat Ali, the fourth Caliph of Islam, he says that whatever Sufi teaches, as a matter of fact, he is doing his own duty bestowed on him by God and His Prophet (PBUH). He also preached that man should avoid bad company and always remain in the company of good people who love peace and truth (Rahman 1990: 259).

### **Sultans' Dedication to the Great Sufi Saint**

Shah Rukne Alam passed a long life. He lived through the times of ruler-ships of great Sultans of Delhi like Sultan Alauddin Khalji (1296-1316 A.D.), Sultan Qutbuddin Mubarak Shah (1316-1320 A.D. Sultan Ghiasuddin Tughlaq (1320-1325 A.D), Sultan Mohammad bin Tughlaq (1325-1351 A.D). Each one of these Sultans was a great and efficient ruler. Before Alauddin Khalji the Muslim rule was confined to the present Pakistan, Bangladesh and the Northern India, but Alauddin extended the frontiers of Muslim ruler-ship and brought the whole of Southern India under his indirect Muslim rule because of his bravery and wise policies. He not only defended the Delhi Muslim Empire against the onslaught of the Mongol inroads, but introduced a number of reforms in the administrative, economic, and military fields. On this basis he built an efficient army always read to defend the Muslim Empire against the cruelty of the Mongols. Sultan Qutbuddin Mubarak Shah invited Rukne Alam to Multan in 1317 A.D and honoured him by according him warm reception by coming out of the city of Delhi. Sultan Ghiasuddin Tughlaq is

founder of Tughlaq dynasty through his wisdom and bravery after when Sultan Qutbuddin Mubarak Shah was treacherously killed by his noble Khausrau Khan in April 1320 and brought Hindu chiefs to power in Delhi. Ghazi Malik, the governor of Depalpur and Multan, was invited by the Muslim nobles of Delhi who conquered Delhi and Agra on 6 September 1320 and assumed the title of Sultan. The administration of Ghiasuddin was based upon the principles of justice and moderation. He also organized the land revenue. Sultan Mohammad bin Tughlaq was a revolutionary ruler. He also introduced a number of reforms in the field of justice and administration. He also forced the Ulema and the Sufi saints to shift to the South to preach Islam in the southern India, which so far had been left out of the Muslim missionary work. His policies produced far reaching effects for the consolidation of Muslim rule and culture in the whole of Southern India.

These Sultans highly respected Shah Rukne Alam. There are a number of examples for this, but for the cause of brevity I will bring to light some of them. During the rulership of Sultan Alauddin Khalji, Shah Rukne Alam visited Delhi twice. On each occasion the Sultan received the Sufi saint with great respect and dedication. He also offered lakhs of tankas (currency of Delhi Sultans), to the saint which the saint preferred to distribute amongst the poor and deprived people. Alauddin's son Qutbuddin also invited the Sheikh from Multan and showered on him a lot of favours and showed great respect like his father. Sultan Ghiasuddin, after becoming Sultan of Delhi, had already served as the Governor of Depalpur and Multan and had shown great respect for the Sheikh and his grandfather Hazrat Sheikh Bahauddin Zakariya. It was in respect of Bahaduddin Zakariya that he wanted to be buried near his Mazar. For this purpose he built a grand mausoleum so that after his death he is buried there. But, forced by the circumstances, on the invitation of Muslim nobility of Delhi, was invited to save Delhi from the cruelty of Khusrau Khan who had brought Hindu nobles to corridors of power. Ghazi Malik served the cause of Muslim ruler-ship and founded the Tughlaq Dynasty and became its first Sultan. On assuming victory in Bengal he invited Shah Rukne Alam to Delhi, but alas when he was being served meal in a building temporarily built in his honour by his son, the building fell and he died, but the saint miraculously saved himself from this onslaught because of his spiritual power (Allami 2004: 1130). Sultan Mohammad bin

Tughlaq also respected Shah Rukne Alam highly. As a result of Kishlu Khan's rebellion against the Sultan, when Mohammad bin Tughlaq rebrought Multan and surrounding areas under his control, he ordered the mass killing of the people of Multan for supporting Kishlu Khan.. It was on the request of Shah Rukne Alam that Sultan Mohammad bin Tughlaq forgave the idea. (Ikram, *Aab-i-Kausar*) Not only this when the saint died and was buried in the compound of Hazrat Bahauddin Zakaria mazar, Sultan Mohammad bin Tughluq ordered the burial of the body of the great saint in the mausoleum built for Sultan Ghiasuddin Tughlaq, who was buried in Delhi. In this way the Sultan honoured the saint more than his father (Ikram, *Aab-i-Kausar*).

The policy of Delhi Sultans' showing respect to the great Sufi saints was, as a matter of fact, continuation of the old policy of the Muslim rulers and Sultans started by great Sultan Mahmud Ghaznavi (997 – 1030 A.D) (Ikram 1982: 96-106). Mahmud highly respected Hazrat Sheikh Abul Hasan Kharqani, a great sufi want of Central Asia of the Naqshbandi order and visited his *Astana* for a number of times and showered a lot of favours on him (Misbahi 2013: 221-224). His policies were continued by his successors both in Ghazni and Lahore. When in Lahore Hazrat Ali bin Usman Data Ganj Bakhsh died in 1072 A.D, Mahmud's grandson Sultan Ibrahim Ghaznavi got his mazar constructed (Syed Sabahuddin Abdur Rahman 1990). Later when Sultan Shahbuddin Ghori (1175-1206 A.D) conquered Delhi, Agra and Ajmer, by defeating Raja Pathora Rai, he claimed that he had done so as a result of the prayers of Hazrat Moinuddin Chishti, great Chishti saint of Ajmer (*Bazm-e-Sufia*). Sultan Qutbuddin Aibak (1206-1210 A.D), the successor of Sultan Shahabuddin Ghori and the first Sultan of Delhi, also continued the same policy of showing respect to Hazrat Moinuddin Chishti and other Muslim Sufis of Indo-Pak subcontinent. Thus what was done by the Delhi Sultan for showing respect to Shah Ruken Alam was a continuation of the old policy of the Muslim rulers (Nizami 1990). The same policy was also continued by the later Muslim rulers. The Mughal kings and rulers had also continued this policy of showing respect of the Sufi saints of the subcontinent. Even when the British assumed control of the subcontinent, they also continued this policy of showing their respect and honour to the Muslim saints and Sufis.

### **Relationship between Shah Rukne Alam and Hazrat Nizamuddin Aulia of Delhi**

Hazrat Shah Rukne Alam's contemporary Sufi saint in Delhi was Hazrat Nizamuddin Aulia, who was also very famous for his piety and highly respected by the people of Delhi. The Khalji Sultans and Tughlaq Sultans developed a doubt that Nizamuddin Aulia has become threat to their power; perhaps he has not accepted the change of rulership in Delhi. The rulers of both these dynasties had great respect and trust in Shah Rukne Alam of Multan. As mentioned before, they invited him to Delhi to counter the influence of Nizamuddin Aulia. But when Shah Rukne Alam visited Delhi, the Sultans were estranged to see that it was Nizamuddin Aulia who first received Shah Rukne Alam, before the visit of the Sultans. The way Shah Rukne Alam and Nizamuddin Aulia respected each other was astonishing to the Sultans (Dehlvi 1989: 100).

On a number of occasions both the great saints had a dialogue on some principles of Islam and Sufism. In one such meeting between them, when his (Shah Rukne Alam's brother Sheikh Imaduddin Ismail was also with him in Delhi, Nizamuddin asked Shah Rukne Alam what was the wisdom behind the holy Prophet Muahammad (PBUH)'s migration to Madina. Replying to this Shah Rukne Alam said that the way Holy Prophet (PBUH) showed his wisdom and farsighted by coming to Madina in the company of *Ashab-i-Sufa*, would have not been possible if he had not come there. Adding to this Nizamujddin himself said that the poor companions who were highly dedicated to the Prophet would have not benefitted if the Prophet had not come there. Even when Nizamuddin Aulia died in 1324 A.D. (18 Rabiul Awwal 725 A.H) his Namaz-i-Janaza (prayer offered after death) was led by Hazrat Shah Rukne Alam, incidently had come Delhi on his visit (Dehlvi 1989: 100).

### **Shah Rukne Alam's Concern and Dedication to the People**

Shah Rukne Alam greatly cared for the needs of the common people. Each time when had to visit Delhi Sultan, his visit was announced so that the people, who had no access to the Sultan, could write their demands and needs or problems to be addressed by the Sultan. Even the complaints against the local governors and other officials could also be sent to the Sultan through the Sufi saint, who collected applications from the people in a separate box(s) which were submitted to the Sultan by a disciple of

the Saint in the darbar (*Bazme Sufia*). The Sultans heard these complaints and ordered the redress of those complaints there and then. On his return to Multan these orders of Sultans were passed to the concerned officials and governors. Thus peoples' problems were addressed. Once Sultan Alauddin Khalji gave two lakh tanks and at the other time five lakh tanks. The saint got this money distributed amongst the poor and deprived people (*Bazme Sufia*). Similarly any poor person who came to his *Astana* in Multan, he redressed his needs by providing food and other help. He also instructed the governors, officials and the Sultans to become kind on the people by exhibiting their favours and showering kindness and were not required to be cruel to the people. (*Bazme Sufia*) In the same way the saint was highly respected not only by the Muslims but by Hindus and people of other faiths.

### **Conclusion**

Despite the passage of seven centuries the great saint Shah Rukne Alam still commands respect and dedication from the people as well as the rulers of Pakistan. Hundreds and Thousands of the people from all the areas of Pakistan, particularly from the Punjab, Sindh and Baluchistan gather annually at his tomb at the time of Urs and pay regards. Apart from this hundreds of visitors daily visit his shrine and pray for the solution of their problem. In the culture of present Pakistan, his contribution is still going on, but his great tomb stands not only as the sigh of the glory of Muslim/Tughlaq architecture but a symbol of peaceful and tolerant Islam.



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## **Study of Decorative Art in the Muslim Religious Monuments with Religious Significance**

**Shakirullah  
Atta-ur-Rahman  
Abdul Basit**

### **Abstract**

*The Muslim monuments specially the religious (Mosques and Tombs) have no pictorial art designs due to the prohibition of picturing animate objects in Islam. Alternatively, the art which was highly valued by the Muslims themselves was that of calligraphy and floral decoration in polychrome and in verity of writing styles and design. The paper focuses on the nature of Islamic art with religious significance. A comprehensive study and attempt are made in this paper that as per the education of painters, calligraphers and masons, they kept themselves away from the pictorial art and designs especially in the religious monuments like mosques and tombs and what type of alternative they produced for the replace of the same. How they make it too much valuable and supportive against the other mural art.*

### **Introduction: Background:**

According to Edward, “Islamic art is the expression of a whole culture, intimately intertwined with religious theological, and legal commitments” (Edward 1975:4 23-430).

Beside the theological and legal commitments the religious aspect remained the dominant character of Islamic art because Muslim artists valued spirituality instead of materialism. In the words of Hossein, “this art is based upon a science nature of an inner which is concerned not with the outward appearance of things, but with their inner reality (Hossein 1987:8).”

Islamic art is descent from the art of other religions due to aniconism. Aniconic nature of Islamic art is due do the prohibition of picturing animate objects. Anything in any form that could promote polytheism is prohibited in Islam.

The prohibition of picturing animate objects is mentioned both in

the Qurān and Hadith. The Qurān prohibits the profession and practice of idolatry in the following verses:

Then he turned to their gods and said, "Do you not eat? What is [wrong] with you that you do not speak?" And he turned upon them a blow with [his] right hand. Then the people came toward him, hastening. He said, "Do you worship that which you [yourselves] carve, (Quran 37:91-95).

Authentic Hadiths also prohibits picturing animate objects as mentioned in the following Hadiths:

Narrated Ibn 'Abbas: When Allah's Messenger came to Makkah, he refused to enter the Ka'bah with idols in it. He ordered (idols to be taken out). So they were taken out. The people took out the pictures of Ibrāhim (Abraham) and Isma'il (Ishmael) holding Azlām in their hands. Allah's Messenger said, "May Allah Curse these people. By Allah, both Ibrahim and Ismā'il never did the game of chance with Azlam." Then he entered the Ka'bah and said Takbir at its corners but did not offer the Salat (prayer) in it (Sahih Al-Bukhari Hadith No. 1601).

Jābir narrated: Messenger of Allah prohibited having images in the house, and he prohibited making them (Jāmi' At-Tirmidhi Hadith No. 1749).

Ibn 'Abbas narrated that the Messenger of Allah said: "Whoever fashions an image, he will be punished by Allah until he breathes into it — meaning the soul - and he cannot breath (a soul) into it.... (Jāmi' At-Tirmidhi Hadith No. 1751).

The image of animate objects for the beautification of cloths that do not make a complete picture are not prohibited for example, separate body parts that do not make a complete picture.

AbU An-Nadr narrated from 'Ubaidullah bin 'Abdullāh bin 'Utbah, that he entered upon Abu Talliah Al-Anāri to pay him a visit (while he was ill), and he found Sahl bin Hunaif with him. He said: "Abu Talhah called for someone to remove a sheet that was under him. Sahl said to him: 'Why did you remove it?' He replied: 'Because it contains images on it, and the Prophet said about them what you know.' Sahl said: 'Did he not say: 'Except for markings on a garment?' he said: 'Yes, but this is better to me.'" (Jāmi' At-Tirmidhi Hadith No. 1750).

Beautification is appreciated in Islam as mentioned in the Hadith, "Allah is beautiful and loves beauty" (Sahih Muslim Chapter No. 39, Hadith No. 265, *The Book of Faith*). Aesthetics in the form of decorative art is not prohibited in Islam. Surah al-Namal shows the aesthetic nature of Islamic

art when Bilqis, the queen of Sheba, visited Solomon (A.S) and she was asked to enter the Palace. The floor of the Palace was made up of beautiful transparent tiles of glass.

She was asked to enter the lofty Palace: but when she saw it, she thought it was a lake of water, and she (tucked up her skirts), uncovering her legs. He said: "This is but a palace paved smooth with slabs of glass." She said: "O my Lord! I have indeed wronged my soul: I do (now) submit (in Islam), with Solomon, to the Lord of the Worlds." (Surah al-Namal, Quran 27:44).

Due to the prohibition of living forms in art, Muslim artists produced a new way to express their inner feelings to transmit the message of Islam in the form of decorative, calligraphic and geometrical art. It has effectively prevented the admittance of painting into any part of the religious life of the Muslim world. In no mosque nor in any other religious building are there to be found either statues or pictures of animal life.

Mandel has described the main characteristics of Islamic decorative art, as the depiction of plants, geometrical motifs, calligraphic motifs and variety of shapes.

Decoration was the main link between the various forms of Islamic Art. Decoration was closely linked to architecture, walls, floors, and curved surfaces, both internal and external (Mandel 1978:31).

He has further classified the Islamic decoration into three main types as plant life, calligraphy and geometry.

According to Mandel, plants designs were acquired from the Sasanian and Greco-Roman art by Abbasid and Turks due to the love for flowers and gardens (Mandel 1978:35). But Islamic art looks independent from the art of other dynasties. Plants designs in the form of tree depiction have been valued by Muslim artists due to the religious significance. According to Ross, four types of trees are mentioned in the Qurān as:

a) the infernal Tree, Zaqqûm, in Hell, b) the Lote Tree of the Uttermost Boundary, Sidrat al-Muntahâ, in the Seventh Heaven, c) the Tree of Knowledge, the forbidden tree in the Garden of Eden and the "olive neither of the East nor West" (Ross 1975:8).

Usually the flower motifs are associated along with calligraphy because Arabic script has been used as a source of the main decoration. The art most highly valued by the Muslims themselves was that of calligraphy. Even kings did not think it beneath their dignity to compete in this art with professional calligraphers, and sought to win religious merit by writing out copies of the *Qurān*. The long list of such pious princes includes the names of many whose busy lives could hardly have been expected to afford leisure for so toilsome an occupation. In India, Nasir ad Din Mahmud Shah (1246 – 1263), one of the *Qurān* every year. Of the Mughal imperial family, Bābur sent a copy to Mecca, transcribed in the special form of script which he is said to have himself devised (Beveridge 1973: ixiii). Prince Dara Shikoh, son of Shahjahan, is known to have made several copies, and his brother, the Emperor Aurangzeb (1659-1707) sent two sumptuously bound and illuminated copies to Mecca, valued at 5000 rupees, finely written out by his own hand (Aurangzeb 1977: 532) and other copies he made still exist in India (Shakir 2012: 8).

Keeping in view the described nature, meaning and characteristics of Islamic art, we can find that the Muslim religious monuments in Pakistan fulfill all the artistic traditions of Islamic Art. For the purpose of this study about one hundred distinguish monuments (mosques, tombs and palaces) are visited in the entire province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, where the existing painted mural decoration are adorned with tempera which is extensively used in the late period monuments in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province such as Dalazak tomb (Rahman 1984: 107-113; Shakir 2012: 165), Muhabat Khan Mosque (Ahmad 1993: 145-149), Palosi Piran tombs (Rahman 1986: 107-113), Kaka Sahib tomb (Shakir 1994: 255-261), Halim Gul Baba (Shakir 1993: 193-195) tomb and Rang Mahal palace (Shakir 1995: 127-133) etc. All these monuments are richly adorned by different painted decorative motifs, the most common among these are: floral designs (Pl. II, III, V, IVa & b), cypress trees, fruits, dishes (Pl. Ia, b & Vb), leaf designs, geometrical designs and calligraphic specimens (Pl. VI a & b).

## **Discussion**

The art and architecture as always produced by persons not by religion, the religion only provide a path through its teaching for all followers. The use of word “Islamic” for art and architecture is not proper, because Islam

as a religion did not draw a line for any type of construction or decoration in it. The construction or decoration are always adopted by the followers (Muslims) of Islam from their surroundings, in light of the environment, weather, available material, economy, wish and need. But the word Islamic Art or Architecture as introduced by the European scholars first and then followed by the rest of the world. Because the word “Islamic Art” means that the art introduced by Islam, but when it comes as “Muslim Art” it means the art introduced by Muslims. When we look critically and deeply analysis the art and architecture not only of the Muslims but the rest of the world, as the Hindu art, Christian art, but saying the Hinduism art or the Christianity art. Because the art or architecture introduced by the followers not by religion. The adoption and propagation is always explained by them. As in the case of Muslim Art, in the form building decoration, mural decoration in religious monuments (mosque or tomb) are made in light of the tradition (*Hadis*). All the under discussion above mentioned monuments are richly decorated with moral painting in polychrome with distinguish designs and writing styles.

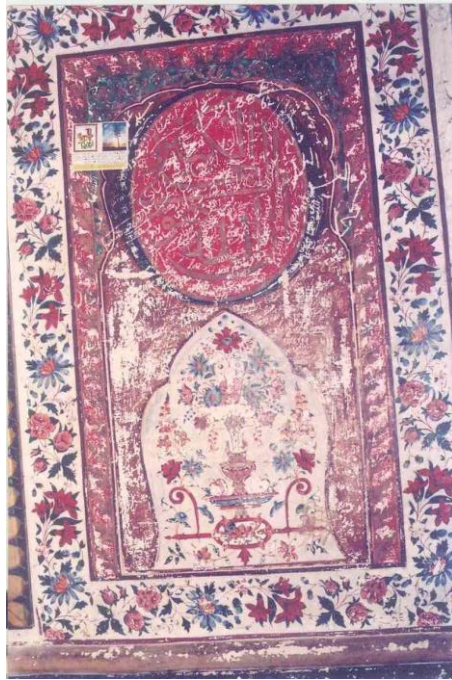
### **Conclusion**

In Islam there is no prohibition on the use of decorative art in polychrome in any monument but the only thing which is declared as prohibited is defecation of pictorial art. The tradition (*Hadis*) the on the Day of Judgement the punishment of hell will be meted out to the painter, and he will be called upon to breathe life into the forms that he fashioned, but he cannot breathe life into anything. The Muslims are strongly believe after the Holy Quran, on the Saying of the Prophet (PBUH) i.e. (*Hadis*). That is the main reason that we did not find any type of human and animal life in any monument of the Muslims. The only art that is promoted by Muslims in are floral and calligraphic designs in polychrome.

### **Acknowledgment**

We have always indebted to Dr. Abdur Rahman, former Professor and Chairman of the Department of Archaeology, University of Peshawar, for guidance and Dr. Rashid Ahmad, Professor and Chairman, Department of Chemistry, University of Malakand, Dir Lower, who helped us for writing this paper.

### **Plates**



Pl. I a: (Kohat): Shaikh Allah Dād Tomb, showing interior painted decoration, fruit and dish with flower vase

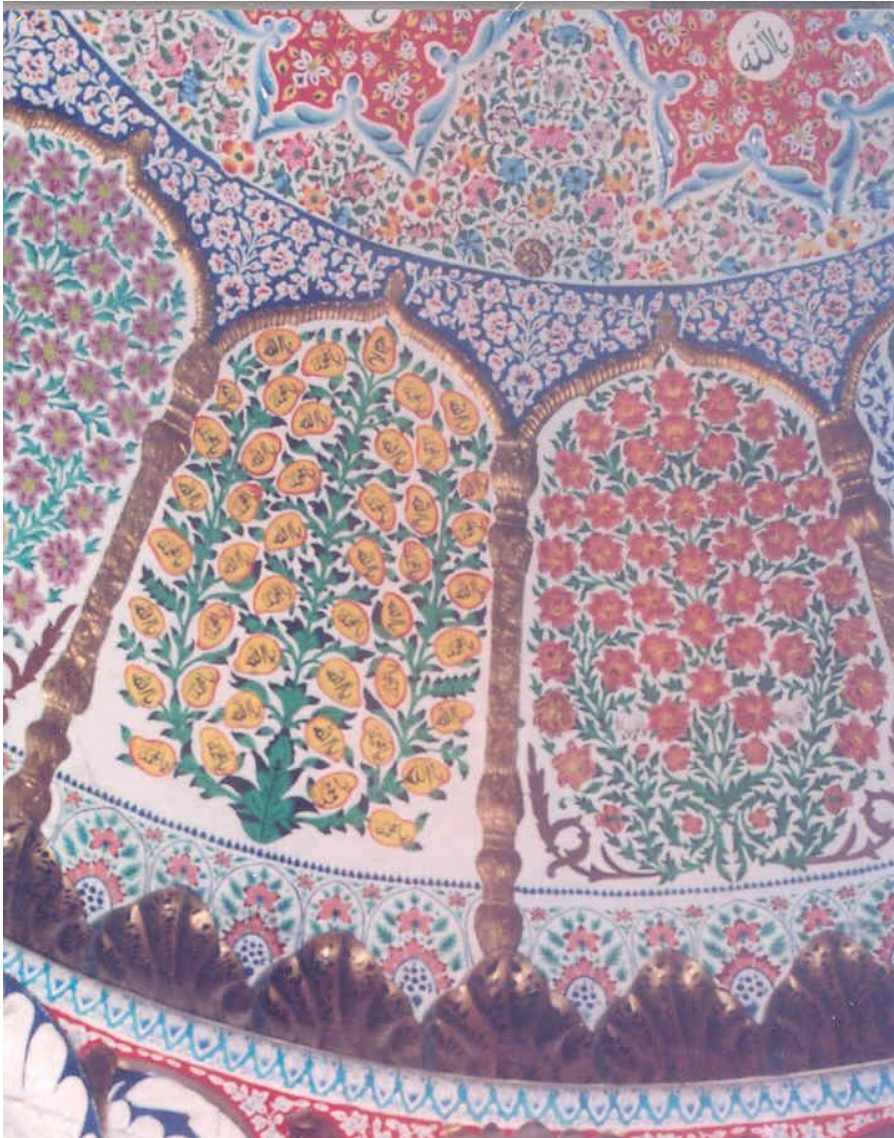


Pl.I b: (Nowshera) Kākā Šāhib Tomb: Showing a series of painted decoration fruits and dishes

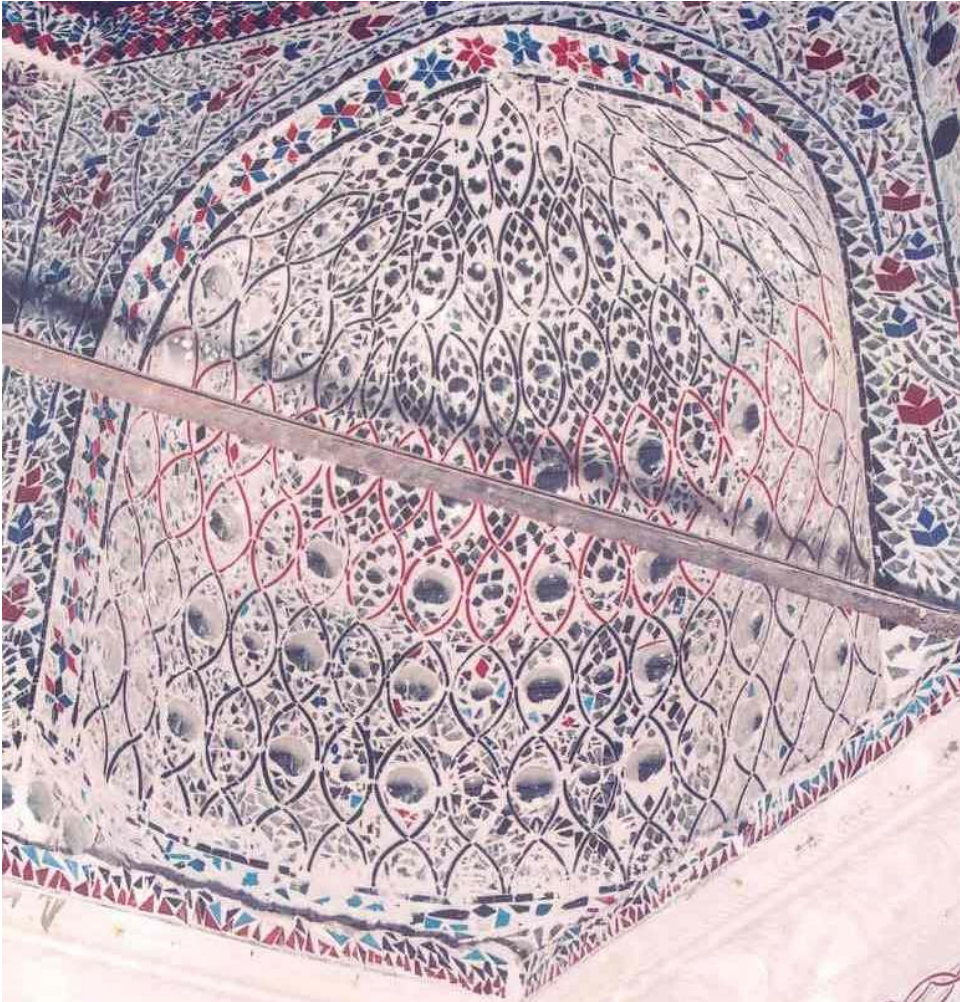


Pl. II. (Kohat): Shaikh Allah Dād Tomb, showing painted decoration in polychrome soffit of the dome





Pl. III. (Kohat): Shaikh Karīm Dād Tomb, soffit of the dome showing rich floral decoration



Pl. IVa. (Kohat): Mian Fath Shah Tomb, showing floral decoration of the phase of transition



Pl. IV b. (Kohat) Abdur Rahim Shah Bukhari Tomb, soffit of the dome showing a variety of floral painted patterns



Pl. V a. (Bajaur) Doda Bābā Tomb, soffit of the dome showing floral painted decoration



Pl. V b. (Nowshera): Ḥalīm Gul Bābā's Tomb, painted panel showing fruits in dish with flower plants in stylized vase in polychrome



Pl. VI a. (Nowshera): Ḥalīm Gul Bābā's Tomb, panel showing calligraphic specimen



Pl. VI b. (Kohat): Shaikh Allah Dād Tomb, calligraphic specimen

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-7-

## **Persian Language and Literature during the Reign of Akbar**

**Muhammad Zia-ud-Din  
Kaleemullah Barech  
Sadia Barech**

### **Abstract**

*Mughal dynasty, which ruled India from 1526 to 1857 A.D., was extension of the Timurid line. It was so thoroughly Persianized that the corpus of Persian literature produced in India vastly was more numerous than that from Persia. Indeed, Persian has been remained as the usual language of private correspondence and a symbol of culture in India. Its position has been compared to that of French in Europe until recent times. Persian poetry and prose were liberally encouraged by Muslim Kings and others prosperous lovers of learning. It has been seen as a conduit-pipe defusing the ideals of Islam and Islamic culture India across non-Muslims of the subcontinent. Although, the Persians were more famous as ahl-i-qalam (men of the pen) rather than as ahl-i-saif (men of the sword), they had managed to reserve for themselves a special status in the ranks of the nobility and the military aristocracy. This paper is an endeavor to illuminate facts about role of Persian immigrants in the language and literature of Mughal period during the specified chronological limits of the research title.*

### **Introduction**

Indeed, Persian has been remained as the common language of private correspondence and a symbol of culture in India. Its position has been compared to French in Europe until recent times; therefore, Olaf Caroe has rightly called Persian as ‘the French of the East’ (Caroe 1996: 388). “It is a fact, historically true, that the Persian language had not gained so complete a hold on the Indian courts, nor on the people of India, before the advent of Mughal Empire by Babur, which is synchronous with the Safawid persecution, as it did afterwards (Ghani 1983: 176-183).” Persians were good politicians and dominated the Mughal Court and state as much as they did in the sphere of the fine-arts. It is not strange to discover that



Persia exclusively supplied more talented immigrants to Mughal India, than all other countries combined (Blake 1991: 126). When Islam entered in Persia and the teachings of the Holy Quran began to spread common, then it was felt essential to learn Arabic language as being the language of Holy Quran. Therefore, instead of Pahlvi, Arabic language gradually overlapped the literary circles of Persia. Persian thoughts even got mastery of expressing in Arabic that during the early three or four Islamic centuries, most of the books has been written in Arabic language especially *Tafasir-e-Quran*, *Hadith*, *Fiqah*, medicine, language and literature et cetera (Ahmed 2003: 244-45). The Persian language became a rival of Arabic in beauty and richness of expression within two centuries of the Arab occupation of Persia in the seventh century A.D. According to Ibne Khaldun majority of the *hadith* scholars, who preserved traditions for the Muslims, were either Persians or had upbringing in Persian language. Furthermore, all the scholars who worked in the science of the principles of jurisprudence were Persians. The same applies to speculative theologians and to most Quran commentators. Only the Persians engaged in the task of preserving knowledge and writing systematic scholarly works. Thus, the truth of the following statement by the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) becomes apparent, ‘If scholarship hung suspended in the highest parts of heaven, the Persians would attain it (Khaldun 1970: 429-30).’ Hence, the most visible Persian heritage contributed among non-Persians is literary (Foltz 1998: 4).

Indo-Iranian languages comprised two main sub-branches, *Indo-Aryan* (Indic) and *Iranian*. Indo-Aryan languages have been spoken in what is now northern and central India and Pakistan since before 1000 B.C. “Iranian languages were spoken in the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium B.C. in present-day Iran and Afghanistan and also in the steppes to the north, from modern Hungary to east (Chinese) Turkistan. Among the modern Iranian languages are Persian (*Farsi*), Pashto (Afghan) and Kurdish (Bridget & Allchin 2003: 299).” There seem to be general agreement that the Indo-Iranian languages were one of the branches of the great Indo-European family of languages. Persian also had been as one of the primary languages in the formation of Central Asian civilization (Khilji n.d: xi). Sanskrit was the classical language of ancient India and later on, Persian remained purely as a cultural language of the Muslim period in India (Robinson 1989: 402). Consequently, “in the field of research on Indo-

Muslim history, Muslim scholars, owing to their natural acquaintance with Persian are expected to have an advantage over other scholars in general (Chowdhury 1951: 18).” The input of Sub-continent towards the promotion of the Persian language and its literature stood as a seminal contribution. (something to be proud of). Beginning with Rabia Khuzdari of Pakistani Balochistan, the Sub-continent has produced a galaxy of poets, who enriched Persian poetry with the exquisite beauty of their verses. There are great names like those of Amir Khusrau of Delhi (one of the most versatile of geniuses), Mirza Abdul Qadir Bedil of Azimababd, Nasir Ali of Sirhind, Ghani of Kashmir, Mirza Asadullah Khan Ghalib of Delhi. In addition to this, Shibli of Azamgarh, Girami of Hoshiapur, and Allama Muhammad Iqbal of Lahore are the recent contribution of this region (Hasan 1971: xxvii-viii).

One must not forget to add that not only the Mughal Emperors and their Persian wives were patrons of Persian poetry, but also composed poetry of the highest quality and recited them in profusion. From Babur and his forerunners royal family members used to compose Persian poetry. This also included queens, princes and princesses. Babur’s daughter Gulbadan Begum, Salima Sultana Begum the niece of Humayum, Nur Jahan the wife of Jahangir, and the Jahan Ara begum the daughter of Aurangzeb are some of the eminent names in this regard. Many of the Mughal princes composed poetry in Persian. Ministers and other members of the nobility similarly followed their footsteps (Mughal Emperors’) for generous patronage of the Persian poets. The Mughal Emperors Akbar, Jahangir and Shah Jahan, assembled brilliant gatherings of Persian poets at their Courts (Savory 1980: 205). The Mughal Court generously patronized the Persian scholars from Persia. The historian Badauni wrote that at the end of sixteenth century A.D., 170 Persian poets, and almost all of the great poets of Safawid Persia came to India at some point during their careers (Blake Op. cit.: 33). While, the majority of the sources in the seventeenth century A.D., about 37 scholars visited India from Persia (Dadvar 2000: 239). S.M Ikram says, “In Persian literature, Mughal India excelled contemporary Iran itself in its ornate prose and poetic fields (Ikram 2000: 625).”

***The Causes of Migration of Persian ‘Men of Pen’ towards Mughal India***

The principal causes of the Persians’ migration towards India during the Mughal regime which emerged more likely to be at the root were:

(i) “The chief reason for this (migration) seems to have been that these kings (Safawid Shahs), by reason of their political aims and strong antagonism to the Ottoman empire, devoted the greater part of their energies to the propagation of the Shi’ah doctrine and the encouragement of divine learning in its principles and laws (Dadvar, Op. cit.: 201).” Furthermore, in pursuing the same political policy during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries A.D. leading nobles and men of pen were executed and deprived of their posts, frequently. A good number among them proceeded to India in search of security (Ibid.: 137).

(ii) The attention of the Safawids towards religious reforms, which being of a drastic and fanatical nature, led to a general persecution of the literati in Persia. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries A.D., one of the important factors of the migration from Persia was the unfavorable religious atmosphere in Safawid Persia. According to Irfan Habib; “the sectarian divide could not prevent the intellectual interchange between the scholars of India and Persia; and for this the generally tolerant policy of the Mughal Empire must receive its due share of credit (Habib 2002: xxx).” A large number of scholars refused to accept the Ithna Ashariyah Faith forced upon them, had to go into exile. Some went to Turkey, and the Central Asian Provinces, but many of them came to India (Ghani Op. cit.: 174-75), to which they ever afterwards kept on emigrating, being attracted by its superior literary support (Ibid.: 175-76).

(iii) Lack of proper patronage by the Safawid Persia towards the literati was another important cause of the fortune seekers for better economic prospects in Mughal India. These Persian poets and scholars of all shades of opinion attracted to the superior literary support and great patronage provided them by the Mughal Emperors in India (Ibid.: 173). Persian poets and to a considerable cross-section of the Persian elite traveled to India for upward social mobility and better socio-economic opportunities (Dadvar Op. cit.: 204).

(iv) There were some poets and scholars in Persia who for some reason incurred time to time the personal displeasure of Safawid monarchs and then escaped to India (Ibid: 205).

(v) Mansura Haider pointed out another interesting reason of this migration, he writes; “many Persians were tempted to visit India because the seed of wandering was sown in their heart (Haider 2004: 403).”

Badauni states that Saifi Sayyids in Persia were all orthodox Sunnis and Shah Tahmasp deprived them of their estates, thus compelling most of the Persian poets and scholars of merit such as Sharif Amuli, Tashbihi Kashi, Ebadullah Kashani, Ghani Yazdi, Ada-i-Yazdi, Dakhli Esfahani and Amini Darsani towards Mughal India for fear of religious persecution (Dadvar Log. cit.). Ghurur-i-Kashi acquired the displeasure of Shah Abbas-I for having plagiarized a *qasida* of Anwari, therefore, came to India and attached himself to Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khanan. Mir Ilahi Hamadani and Tasalli Lurestani also were forced to come to India under similar conditions. Mir Ilahi, who had gained access successively to the Courts of Jahangir and Shah Jahan, chose finally to attach himself to Zafar Khan whom he accompanied to Kashmir in 1631-32 A.D. he is the author of a *divan* and a *Tazkira* of poets, the *Khazina-i-Ganj-i-Ilahi* (Ibid.: 205). It is by this process and the force of such circumstances, further strengthened by the ties of political and social inter-relations uniting the two countries that the Court of the Mughal eventually became completely Persianized, in fact, every aspect culture, such as language, custom, fashion, food and dress, was influenced from the Persianized style and taste. No clear statistics are available, but, “there is no doubt that more Persian poetry and prose was written in India under the Mughal Emperors than in Persia during the same period. It will be recalled that Persian was the literary and administrative language of Mughal India (Cambridge H/o Iran 1986: 980).” In Mughal India ‘men of pen’ were clerks, secretaries, accountants, revenue officials and superintendents. They often held low ranks in the *mansabdari* system, 20 to 200 *zat* and filled administrative positions in the towns and cities that served as revenue circle, district, and provincial headquarters. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries A.D. ‘Men of pen’ were considered as ‘mastered in Persian’ who produced works of history, poetry and literature (Blake Op. cit.: 132-33).

Shah Ismail-I declared Persian as official language of Persia although lingual franca of his court was Turkish language. “The literature of the Safawid period is usually regarded as a literature of decline (Savory Op. cit.: 205).” While it was the literary language, Persian was spoken by few educated classes in Persia and Afghanistan. From the creation of the

Empire of the grand Mughals at the beginning of the sixteenth century A.D. down to the suppression of the commercial function of the British East India Company in 1833 A.D. it was the cultured written language of India (Huart 1972: 22). Mughal regime is rightly considered as the 'golden age' of Persian literature in India. Mughal Empire developed a new court culture in which the wider use of Persian, not only as the official language of imperial administration as part of the unprecedented systematization that the Mughals attempted, but also as the main vehicle of cultural and literary discourse among the ruling elites, was an important manifestation (Alam 1998: 335). Mughals who had remained a sufficient time in Trans-oxiana and Persia, and have acquired all the civilization of these two countries, long before they attempted to perform quests in India. "The Persian language was the language they used; it was the Persian literature to which they were devoted; and they carried along with them the full benefit of the Persian arts and knowledge, when they established themselves in Hindustan (Mill 1990: 700)." Moreover, throughout the Mughal era Persian remained as the Court language of the country (Nehru 2004: 150).

#### **Persian Language and Literature during 1556-1605 A.D.**

Akbar was fond of acquiring knowledge. Abul Fazl records that "among the books of renown, there are few that are not read in His Majesty's assembly hall; and there are no historical facts of the past ages or curiosities of service; or interesting points of philosophy with which His Majesty unacquainted." Valuable Persian works like *Akhlaq-i-Nasiri*, *Kimia-i-Saadat*, *Qabus Nama*, Sharaf of Munayr, the *Gulistan*, the *Hadiqa* of Hakim Sanai, the *Masnavi* of Manawi, the *Jam-i-Jam*, the *Bustan*, the *Shah Nama*, the collection *Masnavis* by Shaikh Nizamul, Khusrau and Maulana Jami, the *Diwans* of Khaqani, Anwari, and several works on history were continually recited to Akbar. After the conquest of India by the Mughals, further developments in Indo-Persian historiography took place. A number of valuable studies have been produced on medieval Indo-Persian historiography (Haider Op. cit.: 25). Akbar's reign marks the most glorious epoch in the annals of the Mughals. Among the Indian historians, Abul Fazl, Badauni, Nizam-ud-Din Ahmed and Ferishta, were seemed to be more acceptable from the criterion of the Persian standard of the time. Of the well-known historical works written in this period are the

*Tarikh-i-Alfi* of Mulla Ahmad Daud, the *Ain-i-Akbari* and *Akbarnamah* of Abul Fazl, the *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh* of Badauni, the *Tabakhat-i-Akbari* of Nizam-ud-din Ahmad, the *Akbarnamah* of Faizi Sarhindi, and the *Ma'asir-i-Rahimi* of Abdul Baqi, compiled under the patronage of Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khanan. The most accomplished writer (in Persian) of the reign was Abul Fazl, a man of letters, a poet, an essayist, a critic, and a historian. By order of the Emperor many books in Sanskrit and other languages were translated into Persian. Different sections of *Mahabharata* were translated into the title of *Razm-Namah* (Majumdar 1992: 580).

The rapidly dwindling influence of the Turki dialect at the Mughal Court is more clearly noticeable here than in the reign of Humayun. No Turki work is included in the inventory of books given by Abul Fazl, nor is any recorded instance found of his composing any verse in Turki, or even reciting one from the works of others. Also no conversation of Akbar in Turki language is reported in any of the available histories of his reign. This was chiefly due to a more affluent language like Persian which was already come to the front in place of Turki. During Akbar's reign it was the fact that the knowledge of Persian had become quite common (Qureshi 1966: 225). Mughal Emperor Humayun allowed unbridled access to India for Persian scholars, while; Akbar gave full patronage to Persian scholars. At the Court of the Mughal Emperor Akbar alone there were fifty-one poets in exile from Persia. Of the poets of Akbar's reign, according to Abul Fazl, there were a legion; but the most important of them were Faizi, Abul Fazl's talented brother, who was also the poet-laureate at the Court. Faizi was considered even greater in certain respects than his brother. According to Balochmann; "after Amir Khusrau of Delhi, Muhammadan India has seen no greater poet than Faizi (Sayed 1958: 187-88)." The Mughal Empire has rightly been called a 'cultural state'. Its patronage of learning and education drew scholars from the neighboring Muslim countries. The patronage was not limited to religious education. Abul Fazl mentions the subjects that were taught in schools of Persian medium during Akbar's reign. They include ethics, arithmetic, accounting, agriculture, engineering, astronomy, domestic sciences, civics and politics, medicine, logic, higher mathematics, history, the physical and mechanical sciences and theology (Qureshi Op. cit.: 216).

### ***Indo-Persian and Persian Schools***

The natural result of this universal system of education was the quickening of literary activity. Persian, being the Court language, received greater encouragement, and an enormous mass of literature was produced in it. By this time two distinct schools of writers had come into existence, the '*Indo-Persian School*' and the purely '*Persian School.*' Indo-Persian School as being the first outstanding representative of the former School, who standardized the language and style, was Abul Fazl. The Indo-Persian style developed because it was excessively patronized at the Court (Saksena 1962: 249). Later on, Abul Fazl's works instinctively appealed even to Shah Jahan because its language was so ornate. Indeed, there is an indefinable charm in this Indo-Persian style which excites admiration in the heart of an Indian, but which is positively annoying to a foreigner who cannot appreciate what it stands for. The glories of the reigns of Akbar and Shah Jahan could not have been penned in a less grandiose language. The second was the purely Persian School which was favored by officers who were either of Persian origin or who traced their descent from Persian stock. In the early part of Akbar's reign Mulla Shukrullah, surnamed Afzal Khan patronized a large number of Persian scholars, among whom Aminai Qazvini and Jalaluddin Tabatabai are the most important. Their works stand in a striking contrast to those of their Indian compeers, and boldly bring out the difference between the two styles (Ibid.: 250). During this epoch many Persian philosophers and scholars migrated or traveled to India, such as Qazi Nur Allah Shushtari, Hakim Abul Fateh Gilani, Fatehullah Shirazi and Mir Murtaza Shirazi (Cambridge H/o Iran Op. cit.: 696). With the help of Persian scholars, Akbar introduced important changes in the syllabi followed in the educational institutions. Akbar took interest in the scientific educational disciplines such as geometry, astronomy, accountancy, public administration, arithmetic, medicine, history and even agriculture. Hakim Abul Fateh Gilani and Fatehullah Shirazi along with Abul Fazl and some other intellectuals became the pioneer of new educational policy during Akbar's regime. Hakim Haziq was the nephew of Hakim Abul Fateh Gilani. He was born and brought up in India, but was an excellent example of a harmonious combination of the Persian and Indian cultures. His poetic style was a mixture of old traditions with new ideas; and he recited his composition with depth and feeling. He was a profile writer but very popular (Saksena Op. cit.: 254).

Mulla Qazi Nurullah of Shustar, who was well known for his learning, clemency, quickness of understanding, singleness of heart, clearness of perception, and acumen. Badauni says; “he was distinguished for his justice, virtue, modesty, piety, and such qualities as are possessed by noble men. He wrote several good works and also a monograph on the un-dotted commentary of Shaikh Faizi which was beyond all praise. He also possessed poetic facility and wrote impressive poetry (Badauni 1976: 193).” Shaikh Hasan Ali of Mausil was a faithful disciple of Shaikh Fathullah Shirazi. He joined the service of Akbar and was given the charge of Prince Salim’s (Jahangir’s) initial education until the young prince could repeat certain lessons from Persian and other treatises on philosophy (Haider Op. cit.: 394). The Mughal period was pre-eminently an age of official histories or *namahs*. This new type of history was inspired by the Persian example and stimulated by the influence of Persian scholars and artists who had migrated from Persia for better chances of patronage by the Mughal Emperors and their nobility. Mullah Abdun Nabi, the author of *Maykhana*, who came to India in 1608 A.D., says that every *A’lim* (scholar) of Persia would come to India if he had the opportunity to do so, to take benefit from the generosity and patronage of the Indians. Abdun Nabi had heard the praise of India from merchants and other Persians who had been there. His first impression was that it was an extraordinary country where every thing was cheap and plentiful. Everyone had the freedom to live without any fear of interference or persecution (Dadvar, Op. cit.: 209-10). Similarly, Abdul Razzaq Fayyaz Lahiji expresses his eagerness to settle in India in these words: “great is India, the Mecca for all in need, particularly for those who seek safety. A journey to India is incumbent upon any man who has acquired adequate knowledge and skill (Dasti 2004: 106).” These scholars taught them new style of expressions and these practises begun by Akbar and ended in the eleventh year (1669 A.D.) of Aurangzeb’s reign (Ibid).” In this regard the contribution of Maulana Abul Barkat, whose surnamed was *Munir*, is seminal. He was also an excellent prose writer and a boon companion of Muhammad Salih, the historian. He was in versatility second only to Faizi, and some of his compositions are delightful. Unluckily the type of poetry, which was popular in both Persia and India at this time, was the subtle and involved style, made popular by Fughani of Shiraz. It lacked the simplicity and spontaneity of early poets like Hafiz, Khayyarn and Amir Khusrau, and



the poets wrote more from the head than from the heart. Later on, this school of poetry culminated in Bedil, the best known poet of Aurangzeb's reign (Ikram Op.cit.: 637).

### ***Role of Persian Scholars***

There was a continuous arrival of Persian poets throughout Akbar's reign. After all, this immigration caused a big blow to the land of Persia and the other hand it proved very fertile for the Sub-continent (Badakhshani 1971: 69). During his eon some of the important poets were Ghazali, Naziri, Urfi and Zahuri. Ghazali Mashhadi, who was a poet of very great merit and who also attained to the rank of poet-laureate. Urfi and Naziri have permanently migrated to Mughal India. Ghazali left his homeland Mashhad, during the reign of Shah Tahmasp. He was invited by the Khan-i-Zaman to Jaunpur; later on he joined the service of Akbar and received the title of *Malikush Shuara* (poet-laureate). Badauni states that the poet had compiled several *diwan* and a book of *masnavis*. It is said that he had written no fewer than 40,000 or 50,000 couplets. Nizam-ud-Din gives the number of his poems as 100,000 (Haider, Op. cit.: 395). Muhammad Husain Naziri of Nishapur wrote a large collection of *ghazals* (lyrics) of exceptional merit. Among the brilliant poets from Persia, of whom Urfi (1590 A.D.) was perhaps the most notable, adorned the Court of the great Mughals in India, and these were in many cases not settlers of the sons of emigrants, but men who came from Persia to India to make their fortunes and returned home when their fortunes were made. This obviously shows that it was not so much lack of talent as lack of patronage which makes the list of distinctively Safawi poets so meager (Savory Op. cit.: 203). Urfi was a renowned poet of Akbar's time who flourished under Mughal patronage and greatly enriched the poetical literature of this period (Jaffar 1950: 153). He was the eminent writer of the *Qasida* (odes) of his time. Maulana Jamal-ud-Din Muhammad, poetically surnamed Urfi, was from city Shiraz. His father held a high rank in government service. After acquiring a competency in Arabic grammar, logic and Persian prosody, he began his career as a poet in Shiraz. His chief adversaries with whom he held poetical contests were Muhtasham Kashi, Wahshi Yezdi, Arif Lahiji, Husain Kashi and others. On his arrival to India, he first met with Faizi at Fathpur, and then he sought the patronage of Hakim Abul Fath. After the death of Hakim Abul Fath, he attached himself to *Khan-i-Khanan* (Ghani

Op. cit.: 103, 105). He distinguished himself as a man of sound understanding and composed poetry of all kinds well. He was attached to the service of Shaikh Faizi for a brief period and then joined the services of Hakim Abul Fath Gilani at whose recommendation he got entry into the Khan-i-Khanan's court where both his poetry and the esteem in which he was held made great progress. Urfi had to his credit a collection of poems and a *masnavi* written in the meter of the *Makhzan-ul-Asrar*. His *masnavi* entitled *Majma-ul-Akbar* was often called *Majma-ul-Afkar*. Urfi and Husain Sanai had wonderful good fortune with their poetry, for there was no street or market in which the book-sellers did not stand at the road side selling copies of the *diwans* of these two poets and both Persians and Indians wished to buy them as auspicious possessions (Haider Op. cit.: 398). Urfi Shirazi was a young man of lofty disposition and precise understanding and composed all kinds of poetry eloquently, but on account of too much vanity and arrogance that he had acquired, he fell from the hearts of people. He died at the young age of 36, and was buried at Lahore but later on; his corpse was removed to Najaf and was re-buried there. Zuhuri was a prolific writer both in verse, as well as in prose. His *Gulzar-e-Ibrahim*, *Nauras*, *Nata-ij-ul Afkar* and famous *Seh Nathr* achieved for him a great name and fame (Sayed Op. cit.: 196). Zuhuri was the pen-name of Mulla Nur-ud-Din, who was also styled as Mir Muhammad Tahir Zuhuri, while Abdul Baqi Nihawandi, author of *Ma'asir-i-Rahimi*, calls him Mulla Nur-ud-Din Muhammad. He belonged to *Khujand*, a small town in Khurasan. He first settled in Ahmadnagar, Deccan, where the poet-laureate of the court, Malik Qomi became a great admirer of Zuhuri, and gave him his daughter in marriage. When Faizi went on deputation to Ahmednagar, in a special letter, he strongly commended him to Akbar's notice (Ghani Op. cit.: 186-87). M.A Ghani says: "It is said that Ghalib, a distinguished poet of the nineteenth century (A.D.), also acknowledges the immense benefit that he derived from Zuhuri's poetry. In his *masnavi Bad-i-Mukhalif*, Ghalib goes a little further in details and touches on Zuhuri's power of composition (Ibid. 190-91)."

From amongst the lesser-known talented men and poets the names of the following may be mentioned: Sarmadi of Isfahan who had some poetic genius, Mir Sharif Amani of Isfahan spent twenty years of his life in India living in religious retirement and wrote charming verses. Huzni of Isfahan was an inquiring man of a philosophical turn of mind and was well

acquainted with ancient poetry and chronology. Shu'uri of Turbat who was a student and practiced book keeping was good enough as a poet to be included in the list of Badauni. Humayun Quli of Gilan, also known as Hakim Humam was another learned man at Akbar's Court, and one of his two sons, Hakim Najati was proficient in poetry and in the composition of enigmas. Hakim Zambil, another son of Hakim Humam, was a *muqarrib* (the closer ones) of Akbar, and was distinguished for his learning (Haider Op. cit.: 388).

Amani of Herat possessed both learning and accomplishments and was a man of education. He belonged to the intimate circle of Akbar and was one of the most entertaining men of his times. Talia of Yazd was a pen-man who wrote *nastaliq* well. Ulfati of Yazd was also well skilled in the exact sciences and received one thousand rupees from the Khan-i-Zaman for composing a couplet. Mir Waiz Wuqui of Herat who originally belonged to Badakhshan was famous for his preaching and held stirring meetings for preaching. Nuvidi of Nishapur was a man of considerable attainments and was highly regarded as a poet. He died in Ujjain in 1566 A.D. Liwai of Sabzwar, Musawwir of Mashhad, Mir Muhsin Rizvi of Mashhad, Shaikh Haji Muhammad of Khabushan, Naui and others were also known poets (Ibid.: 402). Nurullah Qasim Arsalan hailed from Tus or Mashhad and was brought up in Trans-oxiana. He was a poet, and was welcome to all great and small for his beauty and graceful wit, open and cheerful disposition, sociability and social amiability. He was unique in writing chronograms, and was a renowned calligraphist of the age and possessed some talent in writing *nastaliq* script well. He was also broadminded on the matters of religion. He died in 1587 A.D. at Lahore (Ibid: 403).

Many talented poets and scholars came after Shah Tahmasp, in the reign of Shah Abbas the great. The one notable example is that of Masih Rukna-i-Kashi, who is reckoned among the best poets of Persia in his day, and was the chief poet of the Court of Shah Abbas. The Shah not only failed to extend the patronage he deserved, but on one occasion even thought the favor he was showing him was too much for a poet. Therefore, as consequence, he left the Shah's Court and came to India in the reign of Akbar, and remained successful to obtain an excellent patronage from the Emperor (Ghani Op. cit.: 150-51). This is one of the main reasons why the literary activities at the Indian Courts in the field of Persian literature

outweigh those of the Persians in Persia. This dullness of poetic market in Persia lasted for nearly three centuries, and was a contrast with India which, through its better appreciation and patronage, attracted all the topmost poets with only a few exceptions like Muhtasham Kashi and Hakim Shifa'i of Safawid Persia (Ibid.: 171). Syed Muhammad Fikri, popularly known as Mir Rubai, as he was distinguished for his quatrains, came to India in 1561-62 A.D. and spent many years at the Court of Akbar. Although he was a cloth weaver of Herat, but in the description of poetry, he was like the Umar Khayyam of the age, and his verses were well-known. His excellence in the field of *rubais* earned for him the title of 'Khayyam of the age (Haider Op. cit.: 390).'

Akbar, during his father's life time had been put successively under the six or seven scholars of varied talents to look after his training, among them two tutors Mir Abdul Latif Qazwini and Mulla Isam-ud-Din Ibrahim were Persians (Ghani Op. cit.: 6). Mir Yahya, a Saifi Syed of Qazwin, was a well-known theologian and philosopher who had acquired such extraordinary proficiency in the knowledge of history that he was acquainted with the date of every event which had occurred from the establishment of the Muhammadan religion to his own time. His son Mir Abdul Latif Qazwini joined the imperial service and was gladdened with the generosity of Emperor Akbar. His son Mirza Ghiyas-ud-Din was a personal friend of Akbar, and got the title of Naqib Khan from him. Naqib's son Abdul Latif was also distinguished for his acquirements. Badauni, a schoolfellow of Naqib claims that, "No man in Arabia or Persia was as proficient in History as Naqib (Haider Op. cit.: 396)."

Sharif Amuli, a leader of Nuqtawi sect, is also said to have migrated to India from Amul because of religious persecution in Persia. He received the office of *Sadr* of Kabul, Bihar and Bengal during Akbar's reign. He also was poet-Laureate and was granted a *mansab* with 5200 *sawar* during Jahangir's reign (Dadvar Op. cit.: 137). Mirza Qawam-ud-Din Jafar Baig left Persia for India in search of better economic prospects. He was son of Badi-uz-Zaman, who was the *wazir* of Kashan in the reign of Shah Tehmasp Safawi. Jafar Baig received the title of Asaf Khan by Akbar. He composed *Nur Nama*, which was actually dedicated to Nur-ud-Din Muhammad Jahangir (Ibid). The most important among poets-cum-administrators was Hayat-i-Gilani, who received a *jagir* and *mansab* by Akbar, and weighed in silver by Jahangir. The others in this category were;

Salih Tabrizi belonged to noble family of Tabriz. He came to India in search of employment. He joined the literary circle of Khan-i-Khanan. Prince Parviz recommended him to be granted a *mansab*; Lutfi Tabrizi came to the Court of Akbar, later Jahangir bestowed upon him the title of *Mauzun-ul-Mulk* and appointed him controller of the sea-port of Lahri Sindh; Mirza Muhammad Bazil was a poet, and he was appointed Governor of Gwalior and Bareilly (Ibid.: 138). During Akbar's reign still more prominent was Hakim Rukn-ud-Din, popularly known as Hakim Rukna-i-Kashi, who composed under the pen-name *Masih* which suggests with his profession as a physician. He was a competent poet and wrote over 100,000 of verses according to the estimate of Persian biographers. On one occasion he noticed clear inattention and disregard on the part of Shah Abbas, and consequently left his Court for Mughal India. He arrived at the Mughal Court with his famous contemporary Hakim Sadra of Shiraz who subsequently had his title of *Masih-uz-Zaman*, conferred upon him by Jahangir in the last days of Akbar. About the same time another poet Shakibi Isfahani left his native town for Agra to enter the service of the Khan-i-Khanan (Ghani Op. cit.: 164-65). Huzuri of Qum was also a known poet. The number of his poems are said to have exceeded 10,000. In Badauni's estimation, he displayed a pleasing fertility of imagination in his poetry though he was an imitator of Asafi. Sharif Farisi, the son of the renowned painter Abdus Samad *Shirin Qalam*, or the sweat-pen, was also unrivalled in the beauty of his penmanship and as well in painting. He had a pleasant disposition. He was also a good poet and left behind a valuable *diwan* (Haider Op. cit.: 405-06).

Mir Rafi-ud-Din Haider of Kashan, whose pen name was *Rafi*, was a composer of enigmas, whose excellent understanding, correct taste, and unrivalled competence in the art of composing enigmas and chronograms was well recognized (Ibid.: 393). Poetry appreciation was one of the pre-eminent cultural occupations of Mughal nobles. A large number of the nobles and higher *mansabdars* had poets in their entourage. Patronage of poets was a status symbol, and the expense incurred was well-justified in a noble's view. Since his *mansab* and estate was not hereditary, he tried to spend his wealth as lavishly and as elegantly as possible during his lifetime. Most outstanding of the patrons of poets among the Mughal nobility, was Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khanan, himself a poet in three languages. His generosity was princely, as he had Mulla Nawai weighed in

gold and gave a thousand gold coins to Shakibi; and took Hayati and Shawqi to his treasury to carry away as many gold coins as they could. His protégé Abdul Baqi Nihavandi has left in his *Maasir-i-Rahimi* accounts and specimens of verses of scores of poets, most of them of Persian origin, who enjoyed his patronage (Dadvar Op. cit.: 206). During the Akbar's regime there was another noteworthy Persian poet like Hayati of Gilan, who was said to be as 'free from the bad qualities of poets,' and was excelled in all descriptions of poetry. He was highly esteemed for his deep learning, therefore, was deeply liked by Akbar, and received a *Jagir* by him. The main reason of the migration of Persian poets in Akbar's reign was the lack of interest of Safawid Shahs towards *qasida-goyee* (encomium) and *ghazal* (verse amatory), some of the modes of poetry (Badakhshani Op. cit.: 68). Maulana Mansur Tabrizi came to India and joined the service of Bairam Khan. He composed *ghazals* and *qasidas* with equal ease and eloquence. He was very well appreciated and soon became famous by his forceful, effective, sweet, and high sounding poetry. Another poet from Tabriz was Nizami. Badauni appreciated him in the following words: "The luster of his poetry is vouched for by his trade, which is that of an appraiser of jewels. He has a mind well adapted to poetry and has composed a *diwan* which is well known (Badauni Op. cit.: 511)." Mulla Maqsud of Qazvin, a 'jovial poet of the age,' produced a *diwan* which was properly arranged in alphabetical order. Jafar Beg Qazvini was a man of profound thought and has learnt a good deal and describes very well the events and was unique. He was disciple of Akbar's *Tauhid-i-Illahi* or *Din-i-Illahi*. He always had a keen desire to surpass others and made attempts to produce better and more innovative work or at least to excel in any art (Ibid: 508).

Khwaja Shah Mansur of Shiraz was another of the several skillful and talented persons who came to India. Azduddaula Amir Fathullah of Shiraz acquired a special name and fame for himself and came to India at the invitation of Adil Shah of Bijapur. He was a disciple of Khwaja Jamal-ud-Din Mehmud, Kamal-ud-Din of Shirwan, and Mir Ghiyas-ud-Din Mansur of Shiraz. Azduddaula Amir Fathullah came to the Deccan after the death of Adil Shah; and later on, he was invited by Akbar, who elevated him to the rank of *sadr* and honored him with the titles Amin-ul-Mulk and later Azduddaula. He was so excelled in all branches of natural philosophy, especially mechanics that Abul Fazl said of him; "if the books

of antiquity should be lost, the Amir will restore them (Haider Op. cit.: 398-99).” An important Persian historian was Muhammad Sharif Waqui of Nishapur, to whom Badauni bitterly criticizes for his religious views. He wrote *Tarikh-i- Muhammad Sharif Waqui*. Hasan Nizami Nishapuri, who is also called Bistami, possessed immense knowledge of current sciences, especially literature and lexicography, and had a full command over Persian and Arabic; he was acknowledged as both a good poet and prose writer. He belonged to a distinguished family of Syeds of Nishapur. Mir Murtaza Sharifi of Shiraz was the grandson of Mir Syed Sharif who surpassed all the learned men of his age in the knowledge of the exact sciences, in various branches of philosophy, in logic, and in metaphysics. He continued his teaching of the art and sciences till his death in 1566-67 A.D. Another poet Qaydr of Shiraz distinguished himself in the acquisition of the usual sciences (Ibid: 399). Miyan Kamal-ud-Din Husain arrived in India from Shiraz. Akbar recognized his worth, and he was exceedingly desirous that the Shaikh should join the imperial service. Badauni had known him for a long time and says; “with all his excellence and perfection in religious matters, he had the highest ability and perfect eloquence, excellent penmanship; skill in orthography and a masterly style are his by inheritance (Badauni Op. cit.: 184).”

The Safawids established a department of correspondence much earlier than the Mughals. They also established a more coherent procedure in relation to the drafting of state papers. Mughal and Safawid *insha* reached their high water-marks in the spacious days of Akbar and Shah Abbas-I. The historian of Shah Abbas-I’s reign Iskandar Beg Munshi, was himself an eminent *munshi*. Similarity of diction in certain passages in *the Alam Ara-i-Abbasi* and in some of Shah Abbas-I’s letters dealing with the same subject is an indication that Iskandar Beg had a hand in drafting some of the Shah’s foreign corresponding (Islam 1979: 33). Dispatching a diplomatic mission could never be done without drafting from the envoy’s master and, in the Persian and Indo-Islamic culture; diplomatic correspondence (*tarassul*) had become a literary genre in of itself. Such letters were usually drafted by a leading *munshi* of the Court which would then be read and sealed by the ruler himself; on occasion, letters were written by the *vazir*, as Abul Fazl and Itimad al-daulat Hatim Baig both did repeatedly for Akbar and Abbas-I respectively (Mitchel 2000: 160). The reign of Akbar occupies a long roll of scholars, including poets,

historians, calligraphists, philosophers, theologians and those who combined literary merit with administrative capabilities. Abul Fazl, an Indian Muslim was a first-rated scholar of his age, who wrote *Ain-i-Akbari* and *Akbar Namah* like excellent histories. During the preparation of *Akbar Namah*, Abul Fazl collected the material from every possible source and his privilege as a high official gave him access to all the open and secret record of the state as well as Akbar's personal and domestic documents. Mir Fateh-ul-Lah Shirazi helped him in the conversion of dates in solar chronology (Rizvi 1975: 109). The Mughal Emperor Akbar made efforts to flourish Persian language and literature by introducing translation bureau. A group of wise linguists, who by virtue of their abundance of wisdom and uprightness were free from bigotry and fanaticism and were endowed with equity and justice in their outlook, were collected in order that they should translate the works in Persian. This group of historians was master of Persian language as Mulla Abdul Qadir Badauni was decidedly best of them (Dasti Op. cit.: 106). It is said that Akbar directed Abul Fazl to translate Bible into Persian, which later became a controversial issue. He also translated the Arabic *Kalila-wa-Damna* into Persian. Certain other Greek and Arabic works were also rendered into Persian. These translations, apart from widening the intellectual and moral outlook of the people, should also have certainly gone a long way in enriching Indo-Persian literature of the period (Sayed Op. cit.: 190).

Bayazid Biyat, the author of the *Tazkirah Humayun-wa-Akbar*, later on, the work came to be known also as *Tarikh-i-Humayun*, commences his memoir with the remark that Akbar had commanded that all Court servant who had the talent to write history should do so and that anyone who remembered anything of Humayun's reign should write it down. As Bayazid's work was based mainly upon memory, the sequence of events is not properly maintained and some facts are repeated. Being dictated by a man with no literary pretensions, however, it offers an interesting specimen of Persian as spoken by the new masters of India, and includes many colloquial expressions (Rizvi Op. cit.: 247-48). However, Bayazid's memoir is an important source of proof for broad based character of Akbar's rule. Bayazid's historical work has a very important significance in view of other contemporary works. Other important work regarding Akbar's period is of Alla-ud-Daula. "Both Abul Fazl and Badauni have derived much information from *Tazkirah* and *Nafais-ul-*



*Maasir* of Alla-ud-Daula which is the earliest known work on the history of Akbar (Dasti Op. cit.: 101).”The early success of the conquering Muslim armies brought Persian as a colonial language to all regions of the Sub-continent except the extreme south, and local Sultans encouraged the cultivation of many regional traditions of Persian poetry and historical writing. The determining influence of royal whim that characterizes the Mughal heyday of Indo-Persian literature was never obvious than during the long reign of Akbar (1556-1605 A.D) (Robinson Op. cit.: 415).

### **Conclusion**

Under the Mughals especially under the patronage of Akbar, Persian language and literature began to flourish and evolve to new heights. Writing of history got new dimension and received inspiration and stimulated by the influence of Persian language. Mughals adopted Persian as their official State language and probably the main reason for that as it was historically belonged to the Perso-Turkish culture of Central Asia, beforehand to which Mughals were very well accustomed. Due to scarcity of patronage and lesser resources of Safawid Shahs most of the Persian literati and scholars migrated to Mughal India. Great wealth and richer economic resources of Mughal Empire, better job opportunities in Mughal service, warm welcome of Persians in India, liberal atmosphere and invitation of nobles were the probable reasons which attracted Persian fortune seekers to arrive India. Therefore, they came full of hope and expectations.

During the Akbar’s reign, Persian language and literature reached the highest stages of development and also greatly influenced the local languages and literature. Persian literature produced in Sub-continent is important, not only for its intrinsic worth, but also on account of the influence it has exercised on the formation and shaping of regional literatures, especially those cultivated by Muslims. Apart from the influenced vocabulary and deep invisible influence on thought, Persian contributed a number of literary genres to Urdu and regional languages. It also provided models for writers and supplied themes for many major literary works. The adoption of Persian in India and its synthesis with the other dialects finally contributed to the emergence of a soldier’s and trader’s dialect ‘Urdu,’ a noteworthy example of lingual fusion. Indo-Persian literature was produced in the medium of the Persian language but

with Indian ideas and an Indian background. After the decline of the Mughal Empire, Persian language eventually became the parent of present-day Urdu.

To sum up the whole, in Mughal Court Persian was familiar but foreign, a language of culture with a status somewhat similar to the French in Europe. There was a continuous inflow of extra-territorial talents into Mughal India. Persian scholars performed a key role in the educational reforms there as teachers in Indian *madarsas*, and they also wrote Persian books for educational syllabus during the Mughal regime. Persian poets and writers produced such an augmented poetry and prose work of enormous significance. The Persian style of history writing influenced the pattern of historiography in India. The work of the secretariat and courts of law and the pronouncements of jurist-consults on legal and religious issues were all in Persian. It remained as an official and Court language of the Mughal Empire, whereas the language of Ottoman and Uzbek territories was Turkish. Therefore, the Persian people who migrated to India were simply very large in number as compared to those who left for Central Asia or the Ottoman lands. It continued to be the official language of Muslim rule down to 1857 A.D. the year in which the Mughal Empire came to an end. Even after the fall of the Mughal Empire, Persian continued to be the language of private correspondence among the educated classes, and the basis of Indo-Muslim culture.

Table: Persian Poets and Scholars who migrated India or Born there during the Reign of Akbar

Sr. No.	Name	Position in India	Period of Migration	Source
01.	Sharif Amuli	<i>Poet-Laureate/2500 sawar</i>	Akbar	<i>A.G.M. p.621</i>
02.	Mir M. Tahir Zuhuri Turshizi	<i>Poet Laureate (Deccan)</i>	Akbar	<i>A.Dad. p.226</i>
03.	Navidi	<i>Poet</i>	Akbar	<i>A.G.M. p.1492</i>
04.	Naziri	<i>Poet</i>	Akbar	<i>R.M.S. p.209</i>
05.	Urfi	<i>Poet</i>	Akbar	<i>R.M.S. p.209</i>
06.	Zahoori	<i>Poet</i>	Akbar	<i>A.L.S. p.196</i>
07.	Leqai Astarabadi	<i>Poet</i>	Akbar	<i>A.G.M. p.1209</i>
08.	Ahmad Ali Mazandarani	<i>Poet</i>	Akbar	<i>A.Dad. p.211</i>
09.	Qaili Gilani	<i>Poet</i>	Akbar	<i>A.G.M. p.1086</i>
10.	Tashbihi Kashi	<i>Poet</i>	Akbar	<i>A.G.M. p.221</i>
11.	Mir Rafi-ud-Din or Rafi Kashani	<i>Poet</i>	Akbar	<i>A.G.M. p.460</i>
12.	Wasli Razi Tehrani	<i>Poet</i>	Akbar	<i>A.G.M. p.1522</i>
13.	Sharif Tehrani	<i>Poet</i>	Akbar	<i>A.G.M. p.624</i>
14.	Khalqi Yazdi	<i>Poet</i>	Akbar	<i>A.G.M. p.383</i>
15.	Bahar-i-Qomi	<i>Poet</i>	Akbar	<i>A.G.M. p.173</i>

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16.	Fahimi Hormuzi	Poet	Akbar	A.G.M. p.1074
17.	Muhibb-i-Shirazi	Poet	Akbar	A.G.M. p.1224
18.	Hairan Qaini	Poet	Akbar	A.G.M. p.362
19.	Amini Darsani	Poet	Akbar	A.G.M. p.118
20.	Syed Jamal-ud-Din Urfi Shirazi	Poet	Akbar	A.G.M. p.872
21.	Hakim Rukna-i-Kashi or Masih	Poet	Akbar	A.G.M. p.1293
22.	Hakim Sadra Shirazi/Masihuz Zaman	Poet	Akbar	A.Dad. p.191
23.	Lutfi Tabrizi <i>Mauzun-ul-Mulk</i>	Poet	Akbar	A.G.M. p.1196
24.	Uns-i-Seyadani	Poet	Akbar	A.Dad. p.230
25.	Naziri Nishpauri	Poet	Akbar	A. Dad. P.226
26.	Mulla Qadri Shirazi	Poet	Akbar	A.G.M. p.1091
27.	Liwai Sabezwari	Poet	Akbar	A.G.M. p.1209
28.	Mir Muhsin Rizvi Mashhadi	Poet	Akbar	A.G.M. p.1230
29.	Sharif Kashi	Poet	Akbar	A. Dad. P.272
30.	Nur Jahan Gegum ( <i>Makhfi</i> )	Poetess	Akbar	A.G.M. p.1461
31.	Dakhli Esfahani	Poet/Noble's Service	Akbar	A. Dad. p.271
32.	Maulana Mansur Tabrizi	Poet/Noble's Service	Akbar	A.G.M. p.1367
33.	Muqim Astarabadi	Poet/Noble's Service	Akbar	A.G.M. p.1333
34.	Qasim Razi	Poet/Noble's Service	Akbar	A.G.M. p.1082
35.	Munsif Esfahani	Poet/Noble's Service	Akbar	A.G.M. p.1358
36.	Taqi Esfahani	Poet/Author/Librarian	Akbar	A.G.M. p.230
37.	Majlis-i-Esfahani	Poet/Noble's Service	Akbar	A.G.M. p.1219
38.	Shams Dada	Poet/Noble's Service	Akbar	A.G.M. p.653
39.	Mulla Hussain Naziri Neihshapuri	Poet/Court Noble	Akbar	A.G.M. p.1449
40.	Hayat-i-Gilani	Poet/Mansabdar	Akbar	A.G.M. p.335
41.	Sameri Tabrizi	Poet/Mir Saman	Akbar	A. Dad. P.141
42.	Wujud-i-Shirazi	Poet/Noble's Service	Akbar	A.G.M. p.1506
43.	Naui Khabushani	Poet/Noble's Service	Akbar	A.G.M. p.1471
44.	Jafar Qazwini or Asaf Khan	Poet/Author of Nur Nama	Akbar	A.G.M. p.283
45.	Asad Baig Qazwini	Poet/Author of Halat-i-Asad Baig	Akbar	A.G.M. p.45
46.	Malaki Qazwini	Poet/Soldier	Akbar	A. Dad. P.142
47.	Shakibi Esfahani	Poet/Author/Scholar	Akbar	A.G.M. p.638
48.	Mir Abdul Wahab Mamuri	Poet/Author/Diwan/Bakhshi	Akbar	A. Dad. P.142
49.	Munhi Zavarehi	Poet/Port In-charge	Akbar	A.G.M. p.1370
50.	Hashim Khan Juwaini	Poet/Faujdar	Akbar	A. Dad. P.143
51.	Qasim Khan Juwaini	Poet/Governor/5000 sawar/zaat	Akbar	A.G.M. p.1074
52.	Wajhi Heravi	Poet/Assigned Jagir	Akbar	A.G.M. p.1507
53.	Hazini or Aqidat Khan	Poet/Bakhshi	Akbar	A. Dad. p.144
54.	Jafar Baig or Asaf Khan	Poet/Scholar/Author of Nur Nama	Akbar	A.G.M. p.283
55.	Hayat-i-Gilani	Poet/Mansabdar/Weighed in Silver	Akbar	A.G.M. p.335
56.	Salih Tabrizi	Poet/Noble's Service	Akbar	A.G.M. p.683
57.	Itabi Takllu	Poet/Noble's Service	Akbar	A.G.M. p.865
58.	Jalal Neishabouri	Poet/Scholar	Akbar	A.G.M. p.302
59.	Baqai	Poet/Noble's Service	Akbar	A. Dad. p.231
60.	Arsalan Mashhadi	Poet/Scholar/Theologian/Calligraphist	Akbar	A.G.M. p.38
61.	Hasan Qazwini	Scholar	Akbar	A.G.M. p.324
62.	Mir Murtaza Sharifi Shirazi	Scholar	Akbar	A.G.M. p.633
63.	Saiyed Nurullah Shushatri	Scholar	Akbar	A.G.M. p.1467
64.	Hakim Abul Fateh Gilani	Scholar	Akbar	A.G.M. p.13
65.	Mumin Taleqani	Scholar	Akbar	A.G.M. p.1378

66.	Ahadi Khurasani	Scholar	Akbar	A. Dad. p.246
67.	Muhammad Sufi Mazandarani	Scholar/Author of Tazkirah and But-Khaneh	Akbar	A. Dad. p.242
68.	Nasira-i-Hamadani	Scholar/Personal Servant	Akbar	A. Dad. p.242
69.	Mali Shirazi	Scholar/Author of Tazkira-i-Shau'ara	Akbar	A. Dad. p.245
70.	Mir Fateh-ul-Lah Shirazi	Scholar/Prepared Akbar Nama's Solar Chronology	Akbar	S.A.R. p.264
71.	Mirza Ghias-ud-Din Naqib Khan	Scholar/Historian	Akbar	A.G.M. p.1456
72.	Fateh-i-Ardastani	Scholar	Akbar	A.G.M. p.994
73.	Amani Isfahani	Scholar/Entertainer	Akbar	A.G.M. p.105
74.	Talia Yazdi	Scholar/Calligrapher	Akbar	A.G.M. p.788
75.	Ulfati Yazdi	Scholar/Poet/Noble's Service	Akbar	A.G.M. p.86
76.	Fatehullah Shirazi	Scholar/Hakim/Astrologer/Mathematician/	Akbar	A.G.M. p.992
77.	Fakhri Haravi	Poet/Scholar/Author of Tazkira-i-Rozat-us-Salatin	Akbar	A.G.M. p.994
78.	Fidai Safawi	Poet	Akbar	A.G.M. p.999
79.	Sana-i-Mashhadi	Poet (Qasida Nigar)	Akbar	A.G.M. p.257
80.	Talib Esfahani	Qalandar/Envoy/Sadr	Akbar	A.G.M. p.783
81.	Fani Shirazi	Darvish/Poet/Scholar/Noble's Service	Akbar	A.G.M. p.985
82.	Sharif-i-Shushitari	Shaikh/Qalandar	Akbar	A.G.M. p.625
83.	Sharif-i-Kashi	Darvish/Noble's Service	Akbar	A.G.M. p.626
84.	Safi Esfahani	Qalandar/Calligraphist/Poet	Akbar	A.G.M. p.729

**Abbreviations / Source:**

**A.G.M.** Ahmad Golchin, Ma'ani, The Caravan of India: On Life and works of the Poets of Safawid era emigrated to India, Vol.I-II, Mashhad: Intisharat-i-Astaan-i-Quds-i-Rizvi (M.E.A.Q.R), 1980.

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**R.M.S.** Roger M. Savory, Iran under the Safavids, London: Cambridge University Press, 1980.

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**S.A.R.** Saiyid Athar Rizvi, Religious and Intellectual History of the Muslims in Akbar's Reign,

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-8-

## **Origin and Development of Archaeological Studies of Ghizer District, Gilgit-Baltistan (Pakistan)**

**Mueezuddin Hakal**

### **Abstract**

*The beginning of inquiries about the archaeological remains in District Ghizer is connected to the arrival of British officials in Gilgit-Baltistan. The continuity of learning in this field of study updates and adds new to our previous understanding. This paper, explaining the origin and developmental phases of archaeological research in Ghizer, is presented in nine parts. It includes the study of historical records, Biddulph's explorations of megalithic circles, Ghulam Muhammad's additions about the collective burials, details of research conducted by Mark Aural Stein, discovery of Hatun inscription, attempts of its decipherment, re-discovery of collective burials in Ghizer by Jettmar, contribution of scholars working as a part of Pak-German Archaeological Mission and other contributors, and the new archaeological explorations in the area.*

### **Historical records**

The understanding of Vedic priests about the area where the sources of River Indus (Sindhu) lie, and that about its course, can be identified from a hymn in the Rig Veda (Rig Veda: X. 75, 5). It speaks, “*First thou goest united with Tr̥ṣṭāmā on this journey, with the Susartu [can be identified with Skardu], the Rasa, and the Sveti [Swat], O Sindhu, with Kubha (Kopphen, Kabul River) to Gomati (Gomal), with Mehatnu, to Krumu (Kurum)—with whom thou proceedest together*” (Das 1920 [Ed. 1980]: 70). The classical sources, to understand the mountain area in the North of ancient Gandhāra with reference to the ethnic group of Dards, mainly include the accounts of Herodotus (4th century B.C.) and the fragments of Megasthenes quoted by Strabo (XV.1.44, during 64 B.C. to A.D. 23) and Pliny (during A.D. 23 to A.D. 79). Dards were neither depicted in earlier bas reliefs of Persepolis nor mentioned in the Achaemenid inscriptions (Tucci 1977: 11). It is Herodotus (Book VII: 66) who let us know about Gandhārians and Dadicæ, were placed in the same category by Achaemenids, and were commanded together by a single leader. Both of



them also share the same kind of equipment with Bactrian, Parthian, Khorasmian and Soghdian. Such sources let us understand that Dards (Jettmar 2002: 189-201) were paying tribute to the Achaemenids, and contribute their power into the Empire in the time of war. In more detail, as per the references from Megasthenese, the highlands near Gandhāra expand over 3000 stadia in circumference, where underneath the mines of gold locate. Herodotus (Book III: 102-105) further records about the mysterious ants of the size nearly of dogs, digging the gold in the desert area located in the inner region of this part of the world.

From such ancient sources, we also know about Sakas or Scythians, also subjugated by Achaemenids, locate themselves along the northern borderlands of the Empire. They established their own style of art, wearing peaked caps and burying their dead with grave goods, as we got this information from the Behistun Inscription. Herodotus in his book VII in 64 (Rawlinson 1862: 52-53), calls for the battle axe of Scythian “*Sakan Sagaris*”. Naqsh-e Rostam Inscription of Darius I divide this group of nomads into three: *Sakā Haumavargā* of Ferghana, *Sakā tigraxaudā* of region beyond Syr Darya and *Sakā tayaiy paradrayā* or European Sakas (Abetekov and Yusupov 1996: 26). After the end of Scythian rule in Bactria, with the invasion of Yüeh-chih—Kushanas of the succeeding period—who pushed Scythians to the South, made them to established their Kingdom at Taxila, with the raid of Moga (Maues). Several evidences in rock-art and ancient inscriptions associated to Scythians alongside the River Indus in Upper Indus Valley, help us to consider the direction of attack on Indo-Greek King Appolodotus II at Taxila from the North, i.e. the Karakoram region (Puri 1996: 185, Bivar 1984: 5-15).

The Chinese pilgrim Fa-Hsian (Remusat, *et al.* 1848: 31-36) crossed ‘Congling or Onion Mountains’ during A.D. 401 (Cunningham 1854: 2, Tsuchiya 2006: 101-103) by travelling for one month in difficult mountain terrain, where he noticed that the snow never melts, and proceed to the kingdom *Tho-ly*, which can be identified with Darel or Chilas zone. The difficult terrain for travel in this area is documented by him, besides the religion (Beals 1869: 19-25). The travelogue of Sung Yun is also describing the difficulties in travel from this mountainous region (Dani 1995: 15-18).

Xuan Zang (Tsuchiya 2006: 102) also documents the area of Darel or Diamir and the colossal gilded statue in wood of Meitreyā Buddhisattva

therein. He calls for Darel or Diamir as Ta-li-lo, and Po-lu-lo for Po-lu-lae of Fa-Hsian. Sino-Tibetan conflicts in Ghizer are recorded in the annals of T'ang dynasty describes the march of the Chinese army to the borderlands of Ghizer and fought therein with Tibetans, in order to stop them to be the allies of Muslims, the emerging power of its time (Stein 1922: 113-114).

Tibetan sources of the 8th century A.D., let us know about Buruza or Burusal, which was a centre of Bonism or Shamanism. It also describes the marriage between the royals of Tibet and Buruza, and from this place several Bon priests used to visit Tibet (Hoffmann 1950: 212, Chakravarti 1954: 230). As per the records of Azraqi, two inscriptions on the throne of Kabul Shah, Maharaj Pati Dhomi, reached to K'aba during A.D. 814-16, with the Orders of Khalifa al-Mamun of Abbasids. It mentions about the conquest of Islam over Bakhan (Wakhan) Balur (G-B), Tibet and Kashmir beside the territory of Kabul Shah (Ghafur 1965-66: 4-12).

*Raja Tarangni* of Kalhana also mentions the region as Darada Desha and Darada Puri. Alberuni in his monographs on India, mentions about the important places known as Klkt, Sheltas and Asvira. *Hudud-ul Alam*, let us know about the king of Balur, calling himself, son of the sun. Mirza Haider Dughlat's *Tarikhe Rashidi* records the infidels of Balur in 1526/27 (Jettmar 2001 [Rept. 2007]: 82).

Based on such historical sources from the classical age to *Rajatarangni*, Leitner (1893: 1-2) suggests Dardistan for the whole mountain area in the North of Gandhara. With whom Biddulph, much familiar to the local data (Biddulph 1880 [Rept. 2001]: 12), do not agree, and argues that the locals of Kohistan, the residents on the right bank of river Indus in villages of Dubair, Pattan, Seo and Kandia call Dard to the people, living on the left bank, but nowhere else it is known.

Like other parts of the Indo-Pakistan Subcontinent, archaeology of this region also attracted the attention of colonial officials and explorers. Amongst the pioneers, the most important are John Biddulph (1870s), the first British Agent at Gilgit and Ghulam Muhammad (1990s), the then Chief Clerk. They, however, mainly contributed to linguistics, ethnography and history of the region. Following them Mark Aurel Stein (1920s-1940s), Chakravarti (1950s), Friedrich (1940s) Jettmar (1950s-1980s), Dani (1970s-2000s), Hinüber (1980s onward) and Fussmann (1990s onward) continued the tradition of learning ancient history of human culture from the material remains in this mountainous area.

### **John Biddulph's archaeological discoveries**

Biddulph (1880 [Rept. 2001]: i) visited this District two times: the first time in 1876, he toured Punyāl and Yasin; and the second time in 1878 besides re-visiting the said areas, he also visited the valley beyond Gupis and further to Chitral. During his earlier visit he noticed circular graves of huge size in Yasin area, and more to his understanding was added by his later visit, and attempts to record (Biddulph 2001: 57-58) such megalithic graves, he calls 'circular stone tables':

...They are about 30 feet in diameter, and are formed of huge boulders, arranged with great precision with a flat side outwards, so placed as to form a perfect circle about 3<sub>1</sub>/<sub>2</sub> feet high. On these are placed a number of flattish

boulders of nearly equal size, projecting a few inches beyond the edge of circle all round... ..In Chashi and Yassin there are collections of several of these tables placed close together...

He further mentions that he never found or heard about similar erections in neighbouring valleys. However, the graves of such kind from Astor mentioned by Vigne are referred by him. According to him, the grave in the best condition of preservation is located on the land at the junction of rivers of Yasin and Gupis. He assumes them as the funeral mounds, based on the similarity with prehistoric circular graves, found from central India.

Biddulph (Biddulph 2001: 150-154) has also documented and interpreted the oral history of twin dynasties of Punyāl and Yasin known as Buruśe and Khuśwaqte, respectively, beside the details related to Kaṭurs<sup>1</sup> of Chitral. The topics he discusses mainly, is the common origin of said ruling houses including that of Kaṭurs. In brief, towards the ends of the sixteenth century, and at the beginning of the seventeenth century, the country of Chitral was ruled by the family of Rais. The last ruler in the line was having no heir to inherit the throne of Chitral, so he adopted a son of Baba Ayoub, a noble of Khurasan settled in Chitral. Third in succession from him was Shah Sangali, a powerful ruler, often considered as the real founder of this ruling house. To his son named Muhammad Beg, the twins had born, named Khush Ahmad and Khushwaqt. Khushwaqt succeeded him in the Northern region. Who was succeeded by Fermoze, it was he who conquered (or re-conquered (?)) the area of Yasin. Furthermore, he (1880 [Rept. 2001]: 137-140) elaborates the rivalry of

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<sup>1</sup> The oral history of Kaṭurs is in visibly in conflict with that from the historical sources, which links them back to Kushans (Khan 1991: 111-114).

Khuśwaqte of Yasin and Tarakhans of Gilgit, during the early nineteenth century. With detailed explanation he mentions about the decline of prosperity in Gilgit with the murder of grandson of *Dadī* Jawari from her son Habi Khan, named Suleiman Khan, titled Gowritham Khan by Suleiman Shah of Khuśwaqte during his refuge at Gilgit. With the invasion of Muhammad Khan, the successor of Gowritham, on Punyāl the real enmity started. This revenge swallowed the peace and prosperity of Gilgit, leads the continuous enmity for generations. This internal conflict resulted to bring the Dogra power into the region. Moreover, he established the genealogy of Khuśwaqte of Yasin, Buruśe of Punyāl and Kaṭurs of Chitral.

### **Ghulam Muhammad's contribution**

Ghulam Muhammad devoted an attempt; interpreting the various aspects of intangible cultural heritage of this mountainous area is titled *Festivals and Folklore of Gilgit*. Beside the information he mentions (Muhammad 1905: 94) about Pre-Dogra rule in Gilgit with reference to the rulers of Yasin and Punyāl, he documents (Muhammad 1905: 121) the tradition related to the grave of Thusho-ei Bumbat, located at Gulapur in Punyāl. It is for the first time to mention about such a House of the Deads which were later also entitled as the Tombs of Collective Burial. He documents the structure of this grave and related tradition. Putting his description in brief wording, it is a form of small vault in Gulapur (Punyāl) in which Wazir Thusho, a rich and influential person of this village, was killed by Badshah, the *Mehtar* of Yasin, and buried with his twelve sons together in one grave.

### **Archaeological and historical findings of Mark Aurel Stein**

Stein visited the then Gilgit Agency and its borderlands three times (Ikle 1968: 147-151), of them twice he crossed Ghizer. The first time he set out for his travel in May 1900 from Mohand Marg, his mountain camp in Kashmir, towards the regions of Kashghar and Khotan in the North of the present Gilgit-Baltistan (Stein 1902: 575-590, Ikle 1968: 147). In 1906, he started his second journey towards Central Asia over went from Peshawar to Kashghar, via Swat, Chitral, Darkut (Yasin) and Burughul (Chitral) passes (1922: 112, Ikle 1968: 148). His third visit started in 1913, travelled from Kashmir to Kashghar via Darel-Tangir and through the Taghdumbash Pamirs (Ikle 1968: 150). It seems that all of his visits to the Gilgit-

Baltistan were not due to his interest in the archaeology of this region, but to approach eastern Central Asia, his area of study from different routes of this mountain area. However, Stein focused his attention towards the archaeology of Ghizer in 1920s, when he demonstrated his interest by writing an article (1922: 112-131) on the expedition of Chinese in connection to Sino-Tibetan conflicts during A.D. 747. He (1932: 103-106) also attempted to write on ancient jewellery and a specimen of Buddhissattva in bronze found from Yasin provided by the Political Agent for analysis, beside his observations about archaeological findings in Yasin and Darel valleys. It was he (1944: 6-8, Chakravarti 1954: 226) who was informed by the Political Agent about the Hatun Inscription, and published it first time in 1944, describing the archaeology of the region focussing on the Hellenistic bronze vassal from Imit (Ishkōman) and Buddhist rock art and inscriptions from Chilas zone.

As mentioned above, he contributed on three topics related to the archaeology of this area: First, he focussed on the movement of Chinese and Tibetan Army in our study area around mid of 8<sup>th</sup> century. The Tibetans, in order to have a joint collaboration with rising Muslim power in Central Asia against the Chinese, reached the land of Baltistan “Great P'o-lii” of the Chinese Annals through Ladakh and marched further into the territories of Gilgit and Yasin, “Little P'o-lii”, which provides the direct access to Wakhan area. They reached “Great P'o-lii”, i.e. Baltistan, during A.D. 722 and attacked further to “Little P'o-lii” in succeeding decades. In order to stop this development against Chinese interest, Kao Hsien-chih marched with a force of 10,000 cavalry and infantry, in the Spring of A.D. 747. From *An-his*, the then headquarters of the Chinese administration in the Tarim basin, he marched and reached to the borderlands of Yasin, won the fight, enthroned the local chief, and returned back through Ishkōman or from the valley of Hunza. (Stein 1922: 112-131)

Third, he produced an article covering the data from Ghizer and Chilas. He presented the location map of Hatun drawn by Afrazgul, which covers different details at Hatun village. This study encompasses its interpretation from a historical perspective and archaeological importance based on the preliminary decipherment of the inscription at Hatun by Chakravarti. He also studied the inscription in relation to the depicted remains on the map produced by Afrazgul. In the same work he added the information about the cauldern and rhyton found from a site in Imit during

1940. The depicted human figure with horse legs was identified by him with a centaur of the Greek mythology, which is associated to the Hellenistic work of art.

### **Discovery of Hatun Inscription**

Captain A. W. Redpath (Chakravarti 1954: 226), the then Assistant Political Agent, while touring Ghizer Valley near Silpi in Punyāl, noticed Hatun Inscription for the first time, in 1941, and exposed photographs. These photographs were forwarded by him to Major G.C.L. Crichton, the then Political Agent, who mailed further to Sir Aural Stein, in a letter dated 8<sup>th</sup> May 1941. Stein, who identified the script as Śāradā with Sanskrit language, dispatched the photographs of the inscription for the preliminary examination of the Director General of Archaeology. Dikshit, the then Director General, passed on the photographs to N.P. Chakravarti. Chakravarti (1954: 227) felt the need of estampage of the inscription for the full decipherment. For this task of attaining the required proper paper impressions (estampage) of inscription, Stein (1944: 6) suggested the name of his survey assistant, Khan Bahadur Afrazgul Khan. Afrazgul took the impression of inscription on a piece of cloth, which was delivered to Chakravarti.

During this visit of Afrazgul Khan, to prepare impressions of Hatun Inscription, he also prepared a map (Stein 1944: 4) of archaeological remains in Hatun area. Depicting the remains in the surroundings of the inscription on the map, he identified the remains like ancient canal, graves and settlements. These findings may include the remains of city Makarapura, later known from the decipherment of Hatun inscription (Chakravarti 1954: 231).

### **Decipherment of the inscription at Hatun**

Based on pictures exposed by Redpath in 1941 and the drawing of Inscription sketched by Khan Sahib during 1942/43, Chakravarti, deciphered the inscription, and came up with its interpretation from the historical context.

This study added, amazing and new information to the history of this region. It was adding the list of Paṭola Śāhīs, earlier only a name of ruler 'Śrideva Śāhi Surendra Vikramaditya Nanda' and that of his Queen was known from Gilgit Manuscripts (Dutt 1939 [Rept. 1984]: 40). The next important information is about the clan Kañchudi, associated with the patron of inscription named Makarasimgha. The word *Kanjūt* is another name of Hunza, popular among its Northern neighbours. Based on said sources, he relates the inscription speaking about Hunza implausibly. Among the titles of Makarasimgha, he found Giligitta Saramgha. For Saramgha he interpreted as the chief of the Army at Gilgit. He found the name of "Hatun" in this inscription, where it is located.

Later, Sircar (Fussmann 1993: 7) brought some corrections, in the earlier work. He offered some changes in transliteration of lines 4 to 7, which affected the understanding of its meaning. Rehman (1979: fig 5) also investigated the inscription on palaeographic grounds in relation to the Proto-Śāradā inscriptions from Kabul, Rānīgat, Gumbatūna and Tochī Valley. Following him Fussman also offered an attempt of investigation. This attempt of transliteration (Fussman 1993: 9) brought major changes in the understanding about the wordings, which brought changes in the understanding of this inscription. Following Fussman, it is the attempt of Hinüber (2004: 48-52) which reviewed the past researches and the most improved transliteration and translation is offered.

### **Re-discovery of Houses of the Deads**

On the road from Gilgit to Chitral at upper Gahkuch, Prof. Adolf Friedrich, the leader of the first expedition, identified a grave, a kind of which from Gulapur was earlier mentioned by Ghulam Muhammad. The nomenclature he used to call this burial tradition is "Totenhaus" can be translated as "House of the Deads" in Punyāl. Friedrich was mentioning (Jettmar 1967: 69, Jettmar and Sagaster 1993: 123) the details in his record that in the subterranean chamber of the grave the bodies were laid to decay, after which the bones were separated by sexes and age groups,

pushed into niches on the sides. The skulls are placed in a row on the opposite of the access. He further demonstrates that these collective funerals were dated to the period when the Islam was already known in Ghizer as an official religion.

### **Discovery of Tibetan inscriptions in Ghizer**

Karl Jettmar (1967: 69-70) visited the region for the first time in the latter half of 1950s. Before his approach to Punyāl, he found above mentioned details in the diary of Prof. Dr. Adolf Friedrich, after his passing away. Assuming the above the information fake, Jettmar hurriedly reached Punyāl to know the facts behind. He visited an example of such graves in Bubur called 'Collective Tombs of Islamic Period' and studied in comparison with burial traditions in the surrounding countries (Jettmar, 1967: 59-82). During this academic visit to Ghizer, he discovered a site of rock art and Tibetan inscriptions at Hōl or Lower Gahkuch (Jettmar and Sagaster 1993:123-139). He also discussed the Hatun Inscription and had a brief discussion on the sculptural reliefs recovered from the site near Bubur (Jettmar 1981: 1-18).

### **Pak-German Archaeological Mission and other contributors**

Amazing archaeological explorations increased the significance of the then Northern Areas of Pakistan (now Gilgit-Baltistan), leads to form an archaeological collaboration between Pakistani and German archaeologists during 1979. It was entitled Pak-German Archaeological Mission, and was headed by eminent scholars like Jettmar and Dani. This collaborative scholarship gave a platform to the archaeological studies of this region. Beside this, the construction of Karakoram Highway (KKH) made it easy to access the data, for the systematic recording and the study.

In this connection, Jettmar and Sagaster (1993: 123-140) studied the earlier discovered outline drawings of a stupas or stupa-like structures with Tibetan inscriptions from Hōl in Gahkuch area. In this attempt, beside the descriptive study of the carvings of stupas, they put an effort on the decipherment of seven specimens of inscriptions written in Tibetan characters.

Artefacts explored during 1940s from Imit, were showing close cultural relation with similar findings from different parts of Central Asia. This adds to our understanding (Litvinskij 2002: 148-149) that Central Asian articles of Scythian-age have close assimilation to the discoveries



from this area. This close assimilation of such evidences on stylistic grounds with two miniature bronze cauldrons in a Saka or Scythian period hoard from the bank of Bezgas River, establishes the cultural links between Ghizer and Pamir regions (Litvinskij 2002: 130).

The analytical study of metallurgy of antiquities having provenance in Imit, reveals that cauldron is made in copper, whereas, rhyton is in composite bronze. The date of this cauldron falls somewhere between 4<sup>th</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> c. B.C., established by radiocarbon identification of contents (Litvinskij 2002: 129). Moreover, the rhyton with the centaur, standing on its four legs has close assimilation with those of early Greek rhytons, for them authorities agree (Stein 1944: 15, Dani 1989 [Rept. 2007]: 112, Litvinskij 2002: 129) as classic by form but not by style. Based on this view, rhyton is considered later than the former and can be dated somewhere between 4<sup>th</sup> to 1<sup>st</sup> centuries B.C.

Fussman offered the study of Hatun Inscription in relation to other its contemporary inscriptions in this mountain area. He also brought little changes in transliteration and translation in earlier attempts. It is a kind of revisiting the inscription in transliteration and translation and its interpretation from the historical and cultural point of view. Beside this work, he (Fussman 2001 [Rept. 2007]: 55-61) also attempted to understand the languages as a source for the history of this region. He studied all the languages of the region based on their Dardic and non-Dardic origin. In the same regard, Hinüber (1985, 1989, 2004, and 2010) contributed in understanding the history and culture of the ancient Gilgit-Baltistan, based on epigraphic sources, mainly contributed in understanding the history of Palola Šāhi.

Besides the colonial and post-colonial history of Ghizer area with reference to Chitral and Kashmir (Dani 1989 [Rept. 2007]: 16-17), Dani contributes to the ancient history of this area, attempting to reconstruct it from archaeological remains and historical sources. He places the megalithic graves and pit graves from Duran Sor in the same category and period (1989 [R. ed. 2001, Rept. 2007]: 118). He (Dani 1989 [Rept. 2007]: 111) further suggests that the big circles of stone from Chaši and Yasin represent the graves of chiefs or noble, whereas other graves surrounded (?) by them might belong to the common people. Here, Dani (2007: 420-429) attempts to understand the migration of Dardic hordes, a group of Indo-Aryan ethno-linguistic group, from the remains of graves found with concentration in this District. He also includes circular graves

at Bubur, at Gurungur, upper Gakuch to the list. At Hatun near the inscription, he also claims for the discovery of such graves. Of such kind of graves at Duran Sor, half a kilometre away from Dain, near Chotor Khand in Ishkōman, Nazir Khan excavated three pit graves during 1994-95 (Dani 2001 [Rept. 2007]: 422-423). Likewise, the evidences from this area are suggested by Hauptmann (n.d. 26-27) earlier than the similar evidences from Kashmir and South Asia, as marking the movement of nomads.

At Duran Sor (Dani 2001 [Rept. 2007]: 423) the graves are in two rows. Circular in plan, constructed of boulders, entrance are provided from south-west, in the middle lies human skeletons, with burial objects: trunnion axe, drop earring, antimony rod, hairpins, conch-shell, and small beads, bronze dumbles, finger rings and handmade pottery. Such grave goods are visibly different than the material available in Gandhara Grave Culture which helped Dani to imagine about the origin of Dardic people, because he feels that the conch-shells are closely associated with that used by the people of Kalash of our contemporary era.

Dani relates the burial remains of *gumbati* mausoleums to Zoroastrians, and tried to connect this style of burial with Azur known from oral tradition and mentions the name as “*Gumbad-e Raisan*” to such graves (Dani 1989 [Rept. 2007]: 164). In his another monograph on wooden architecture, Dani (1989: 154-155) also let us know about the monuments of architectural importance and their remains in Ghizer valley, including Sher Qila Fort and the mosque, and the ruins of old forts at Gahkuch, Gupis and Yasin.

Later Jettmar (2001 [Rept. 2007]: 83-84) also changed his mind about the graves of collective burials fall in the Islamic Period, and supported a new hypothesis of having associated with Raisan-e Chitral (?), a ruling family of Chitral ruled right before the Kaṭurs.

After field oriented accomplishments in Ghizer and Darel regions, Tsuchiya (1998: 47- 48, 2006: 101-103) a Japanese scholar reached to the conclusion that Fa-Hsien, travelled through the track of Ishkōman and Punyāl to approach Darel (Cunningham 1854: 2 and 1872: 82-83, Tsuchiya 2006: 101-103) or Chilas zone (Dani 1983: 3-4, 50-52 and 1995: 15), where the existence of a colossal statue of the Bodhisattva was mentioned by him. However, another view about other possible routes of his travel has been attempted to explore by authorities (Deeg 2000 and 2005) from Baltistan or Hunza Valley to reach Chilas zone.

Since 1989, the research on this area is succeeded by Harald Hauptmann (Hauptmann (?) 2006: 2-3). The team, headed by him until this time, is mainly focussing on the proper documentation of rock art in Chilas area, particularly those which are going to be affected by the construction of Diamir-Basha Dam.

### **New archaeological explorations**

Recently conducted investigation (Hakal 2014: 141, 2015: 23-26) with the main object to re-construct the cultural history of District Ghizer, from a survey of archaeological remnants located in the said zone of Upper Indus Valley, particularly that scattered in Tehsil Punyāl, has added new to our previous understanding (Hakal 2015: 107-112). As a result of this endeavour thirty new sites and monuments are added to the archaeological gazetteer of Ghizer, which increased the number of sites to more than fifty in the updated inventory (Hakal 2015: 31-42). A detailed study of such sites helped us to understand the various features of the human remains and the growth of cultures in this mountainous environment.

In this study, the explored sites and their artefacts are classified under rock art sites, megalithic graves, settlement and burial sites of Proto-historic or Early-historic periods, antiquities of Buddhist-age, structural remnants, *gumbati* mausoleums and the ruins of Buruše-Khuśwaqte period (Hakal 2015: 44-76). However, the focus of our learning is on the unique houses of the deads, known locally as *gumbati* or *bumbati* mausoleums (Hakal 2015: 78-88). Such monumental tombs, with fractional burials, are surrounded by the Islamic period graves. Interestingly, the tombs do not show any cultural connectivity to the burial practices of Islamic model. Such houses of the deads visibly mark their usage for generations in a vast area including Punyāl, Gupis and Yasin, which even extends to proper Chitral. Besides this, the impact of this burial culture is noticeable in the construction of Islamic graves of our time in Ghizer and Hunza.

Moreover, an indepth and analytical study, based on synchronic and diachronic analysis, in relation to similar archaeological discoveries in the surrounding regions, has helped us in understanding the cultural profile of this area on preliminary grounds (Hakal 2015: 90-106). The rock art sites help us in exploring the earliest evidences of human presence in Punyāl during late Holocene-age. This is followed by a period of builders of megalithic burials of late Bronze or Iron-age. The settled culture, may be contemporary or later than the megalithic builders, can also be seen in

the ruins. The people of this age have developed agriculture, pottery, metal and bead making technologies. Their burial practices are different than the builders of megaliths. The remains of Buddhist-age are marked by the evidences of architecture, art and epigraphy. Alongside this, we also found the ruins of structures, not yielding the terracotta pottery. *Gumbati* mausoleums depict the existence of a unique monumental burial culture in Ghizer zone. History and culture of Buruše-Kuśwaqte period, connected to their remains is understandable from the ruin of this era. (Fig. 1)

### **Summary**

Before the colonial era, archaeological significance this region was not completely known to the external world. Though, the landscape and few names of the prominent places were known from the age of classical literature to that produced during the mediaeval and post mediaeval periods. It was for the first time in history when British explorers and officials attempted to record the tangible and intangible heritage of this area, mainly focussing on the oral history, ethnography and languages of the region. However, in the succeeding periods, the archaeology of this area was studied in parts. Moreover, a recent exploration in Ghizer brought all the previous attempts together and added new to our previous understanding.

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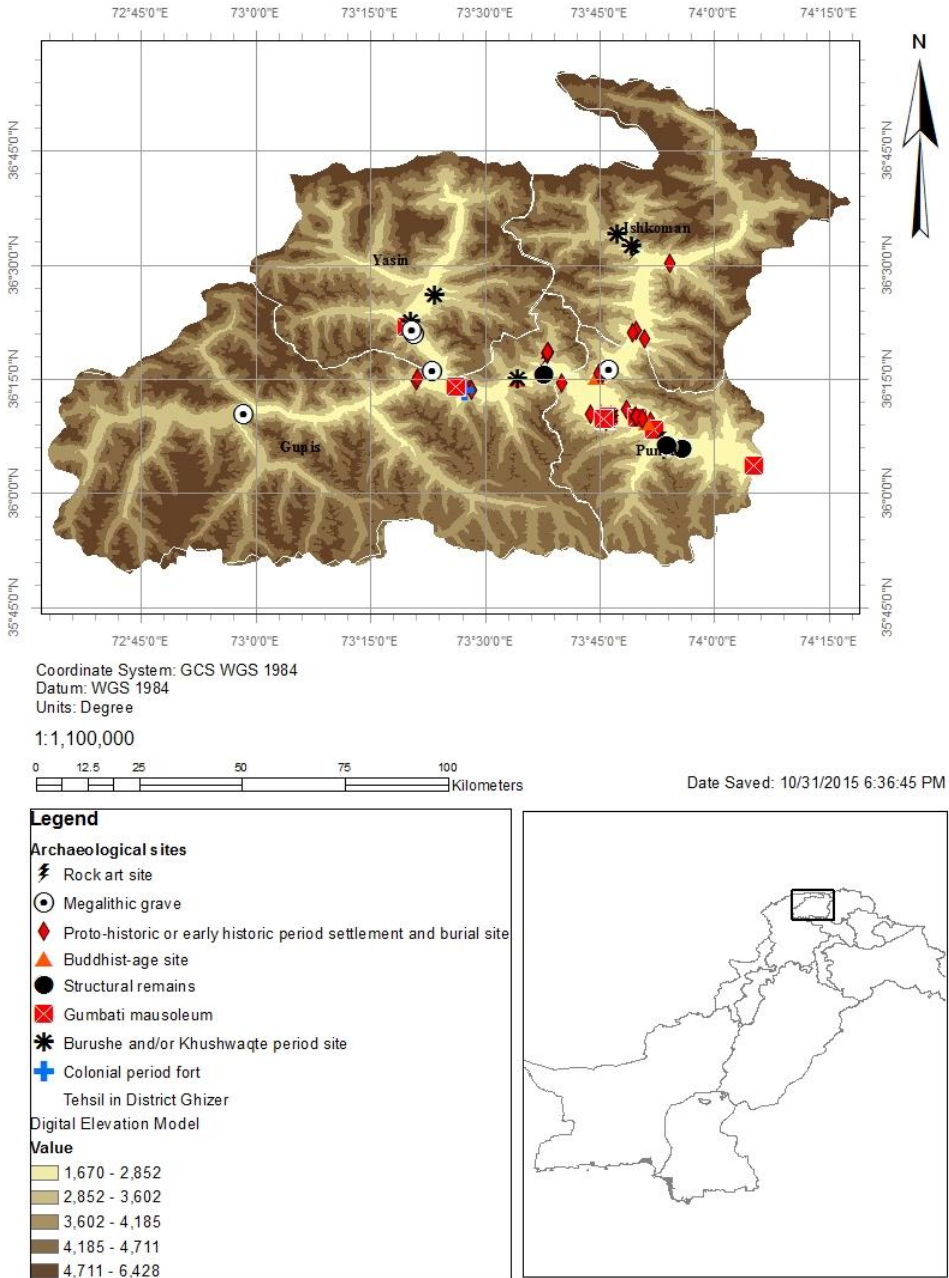
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**Fig. 1: Archaeological sites in District Ghizer, Gilgit-Baltistan.**



-9-

## **Marriage Ceremonies and Rituals in Astore Valley, Gilgit-Baltistan, Pakistan**

**Sarfraz Khan  
Zulfiqar Ali Kalhoro  
Zia-ur-Rehman**

### **Abstract**

*The marriage festivities in Gilgit-Baltistan are culturist as well as kaleidoscopic in nature, envisaging multi ethnic groups residing at short distances but practicing common ethos. The rituals are harnessing the indigenous culture and flourishing a peaceful and harmonized society. The present study aims to articulate the most mesmerizing and jubilant aspects of this enigmatic culture which entails a memo of unification in the society i.e. marriage ceremonies and the use of ornaments. To understand the prevalence of such marriage related rituals a historical method alongside ethnographic exploration was done. A mix method approach including a) key informants, b) focus group discussions (FGDs), and c) in-depth interviews was used for data collection. The selection of the respondents was mainly based on purposive sampling method. The target area for current research was District Astore in Gilgit-Baltistan, Pakistan where the prevalence of discrete social segregation and ethnic divisions was perpetuating. Entailing a denser historical significance Astore remained the communication corridor between Gilgit and Jammu Kashmir region in the past and side by side having international standing due to its natural splendors which attract the tourists from all over the world. This article focuses on the entire account into a precise historical background, understanding of the geography, language, and major ethnic groups, the marriage rituals and the unique ornaments of marriage practices in Astore valley.*

### **Introduction**

The Gilgit-Baltistan region of Pakistan holds a set of anomalous attributes ranging from cultural diversity to enriched historical accounts and intriguing topographic features which converges the global attentions. Spreading over an area of 72,496 square kilometers, this region comprises

of 10 varying districts inhabiting different patterns and dialects, ultimately making the entire region a blend of widely practicing ethos (Government of Gilgit-Baltistan 2015). The famous ancient trade route (famously known as *silk-route*) passes through the region which enhances its strategic importance. This traditional *silk-route* used for trade throughout ages and linked the Subcontinent with China and Central Asia and Europe. This strategic location of the region became lucrative to the then prominent rulers i.e. Sikhs of Punjab and Dogras of Kashmir in extending their powers by occupancy of the region. With ruling inclinations, the Sikhs and Dogras attacked and occupied a larger part of Northern area (present Gilgit-Baltistan region) from 1840 to 1890 wherein the areas of Gilgit and Astore are prominent (Jabir 2001). Prior to the Dogra reign, Astore has a consistent history which is inscribed in the Imperial Gazetteer of India (1908: 239):

The history of Astore or as the Dogras call it Hasora, is intimately connected with that of Skardu. More than 300 years ago Ghazi Mukhpun, a Persian adventurer is said to have married a princess of Skardu reigning family. The four sons born of this union became Ras of Skardu, Astore, Rondu and Kharmang. The independence of Astore ceased at the Dogra contest.

After a short span of Dogra's charge of Astore, this area came under the control of the British rulers. They established the Gilgit agency and divided the area into four sub-units i.e., Gilgit, Ladakh, Skardu and Kargil (Lorimer 1976:226). It is worth mentioning that, external affairs of the region were controlled by the British and the internal administration was largely left to the then Kashmir Government governed by Dogras (Zain 2010:183). In 1935 British government took the Jammu and Kashmir on lease for almost 60 years. Therefore, in this way the ruling land of Gilgit was widened during the British rule. In April 1947 British Government decided to formally retrocede the leased areas to Hari Singh's Jammu and Kashmir state on August 15, 1947. On the other side the local freedom movement (*jang-e-azadi*) got some momentum in Gilgit region. Gilgit scouts along with the Muslim officers of Bunji region (adjacent to Astore) launched a movement and besieged the British Viceroy's house in Gilgit. They defeated the foreign forces and established rule of independent in Gilgit on November 1, 1948. The newly raised independent government sent proposal to the government of Pakistan to annex the region to

Pakistan. Pakistani government accepted this proposal and sent a representative in the form of the political agent, by this way Gilgit came under the control of Pakistani in 1948.

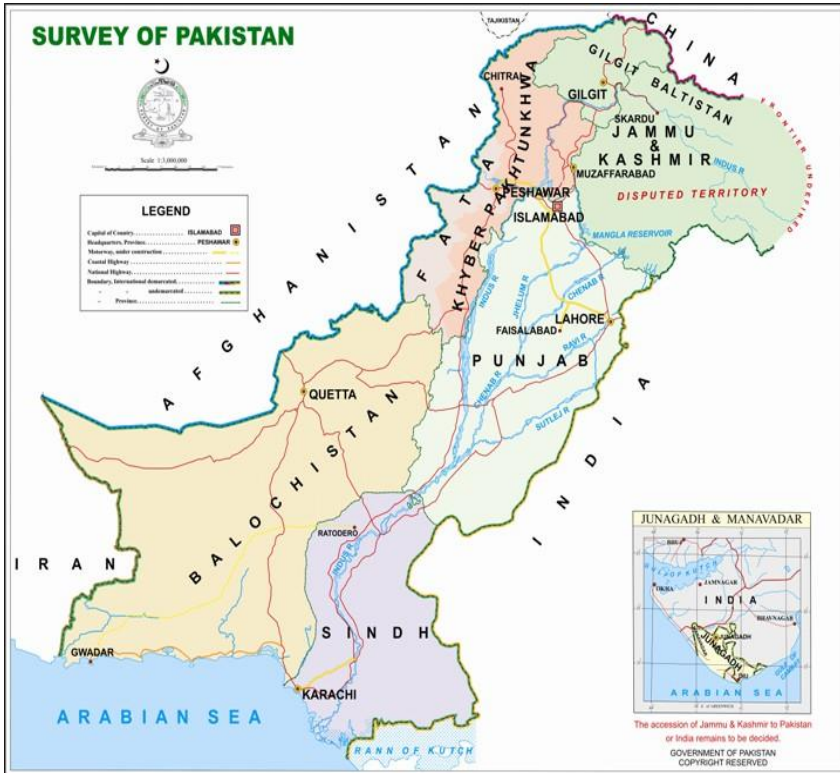


Figure-I: Map of Pakistan Showing Gilgit-Baltistan Region  
(Source: Survey of Pakistan 2015)

### Geography, Language, and Major Ethnic Groups in Astore Valley

The valley of Astore characterizes a rugged landscape comprising hill-sides. The hills are partly broken into cliffs and partly of a smooth surface, grown over with grass in tufts, and with bushes of cedar sprinkled over. In some areas Pine trees of smaller size stands before and makes a thin forest. Above the mountains there rise arrogant rocky and snowy peaks. At bottom this area is quite narrow with small level of cultivation (Drew, 1875:203). Broadly, Astore is spread over the Northern parts of Pakistan between  $34.8^{\circ}$ - $35.8^{\circ}$  N latitude and  $74.4^{\circ}$ - $75.2^{\circ}$  E longitude (Ali, 1995). Astore is bordered by Baltistan in the south-east side, Gilgit in East-North,

Diamer and Azad Kashmir in the Western side. The majority of the inhabitants of Astore valley speak the *Shina* language. The dialect of *Shina* language of Astore is somehow different from the rest of Gilgit-Baltistan. The words are pronounced in a slower frequency than those of people speaking *Shina* in Chilas, and *Juglot* and Gilgit.

According to the Imperial Gazetteer of India (1908:240):

“If the people of Astore are consulted they would probably describe their country as Shinaki, or the land of Shins, Where *Shina* is the spoken language.”

According to Drew (1875: 425) there were five prominent castes in the area namely: *Rono*, *Shin*, *Yashkuns*, *Kremins* and *Dums*. Biddulph (1880:34) also mentioned about the major ethnic groups in his famous book “*Tribes of Hindu Koosh*.” According to him there were following prominent castes inhabiting the mountainous valleys- namely *Ronos/Zundre/Haraiyo*, *Shin*, *Boorish or Yashkun*, *Kremin*, *Dum*, *Shoto and Ustad*. Apart from these tribes, as mentioned by Biddulph (1880: 34), there is also another caste present in Astore region which is called *Daramkhel*. These castes are unequally distributed over the whole region. The *Ronos/Zundre/Haraiyo* caste is in minority in Astore, in support of which Drew (1875: 427) accounts that: “As regard the *Rono* caste, they are a small number of families in Gilgit.” While Biddulph (1880:34) further asserted that: “*Rono* form 6 per cent of the Gilgit population and that it is the most honored caste of all, ranking next to *Mukhpuns* or the *Raja* caste of *Dardistan*.”

The ruling *wazirs* were usually chosen from the *Rono* family but sometime from the *Shin* and *Yashkun* families seldom. *Ronos* were also found in Nagir, Gilgit, Punial, and in westward of Yasin. In Nagir they were called as *Hara* or *Haraiyo* while in Chitral they are attributed with the name of *Zundre*.

The *Rono* marry both *Shin* and *Yashkuns*. *Ronos* are predominantly concentrated in the area of Rehmanpur in Astore valley. The second major caste was of *Shin*. They mainly are found in the areas of Gor, Chilas, Tangir, the Indus valley below Sazin, and the upper parts of the Gilgit valley above Punial. As far as the marriage patterns of *Shin* are concerned they prefer mix marriages i.e. they used to give daughters to *Ronos* and *Syeds* but they do not marry to the daughters of *Ronos* and *Syeds* in return but take wives from *Yashkuns* (Biddulph 1880:36). The third major caste of the area was of *Yashkuns*. Biddulph (1880:38) mentioned that:

They form the entire population of Hunza, Nager, and Ponyal, and nearly all the population of Yassin, besides being numerically superior in Gilgit, Sai, Darel, and Astor. In Hunza and Nager they do not call themselves Yeshkun, but Boorish; and in Yassin, Woorshik and Boorisho. In the areas of Hunza and Nagir they attribute themselves as Boorish and in Yassin they were called as Woorshik and Boorisho.

They follow the endogamous marriages; Drew (1875: 427) believes that the restrictions in their intermarriage with the *Shins* make them the purer race of the two. *Yashkuns* are found in entire territory of Astore. The major proportion of the caste groups is constituted by *Boorish or Yashkuns* while *Shins, Kremin, Dum, Shoto and Ustad* lower in numbers. According to the Imperial Gazetteer of India (1908:240): “The majority of Astoris belong to Yashkun caste, and the Shins are few in number. But they are more numerous in Gilgit.”

In the contemporary scenario in addition to above mentioned castes, there are a few additional castes like, *Syeds, Kremins, Dums, Shotos, Ustad* and *Gujjars*. The majority of these castes hold a lower position in the region except *Syeds*. The *Syeds* enjoy equally better position due to the association to the race of *Quresh* tribe of Arab. According to Biddulph (1880:39):

Syuds are treated with the highest respect, and receive in marriage daughters from the ruling families, but without reciprocity, for a Syud's daughter is given only to a Syud.

*Kremins* are millers and potters as mentioned by Biddulph (1880:39) and they mainly inhabit in *Darel*. Moreover, they do not intermarry with any other castes. As far as *Dums* are concerned they are musicians, minstrels and blacksmiths.

### **Research Objectives**

The main objectives of the present research were to:

1. Study the history of marriage ceremonies and rituals in the locale;
2. Document the major types of marriage practices amongst the community members; and
3. Study the outfits and ornaments people use at time of marriage in the locale.

## **Methodology**

Present research is mainly based on the ethnographic fieldwork conducted in Rehmanpur Union District Astore during 2013-14. A mix method approach including, a) Key informants, b) Focus group discussions (FGDs), and c) In-depth interviews were used to collect data from the respondents. The selection of the respondents was mainly done through the use of purposive sampling method.

In the first phase of the research 2 key informants (Mr. Rehman<sup>1</sup> age 130 years and Mr. Mohammad Hamayun<sup>2</sup> age 69 years) based on their knowledge about the marriage dresses, ceremonies, and rituals were consulted. In addition to the key informants, 3 FGDs were conducted amongst the selected community members to understand the use of outfits and ornaments during marriages. The information collected through both methods (key informants and FGDs) helped in devising the interview schedule for in-depth interviews.

In the second phase of the research, 20 in-depth interviews were conducted in the locale to understand the ceremonies, rituals, ornaments, and outfits of marriages. The information collected through in-depth interviews was also cross-checked from the key informants to enhance the validity and reliability.

## **Wedding Outfits and Ornaments**

The Astore valley is prominent for its tradition of distinctive attires. These outfits are sported by individuals during marriage ceremonies keeping in view their marital statuses and genders. The practices of distinctive attires is almost fading with the laps of time, but the mesmerizing nature of this anomalous material culture signifies it from the other regions of Gilgit-Baltistan. Most of the unmarried women on the occasions of wedding usually wear *Shai khoi* (white cap). Unmarried women wear a white but

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<sup>1</sup> Attributed as the most aged person in the entire Astore as well as in Gilgit Region but he was physically healthy. During his younger age he work in Gilgit residency, in Jammu Kashmir government offices, thus having a concrete knowledge of the then events especially the marriage patterns and ornaments.

<sup>2</sup> The local Nambardaar/Nobel of the region, his past ancestors also remained renowned Nambardaar/Nobel's of the area, who remained involved in the administrative and social issues of the people thus having an extensive knowledge of caste distribution, and intermarriage practices.

loosely interwoven woolen cloth covering their hairs and neck part. The married women usually wear *Loli khoi* (red cap) who used to wear a blouse of red color with embroidery.

On the other side the unmarried men do not wear any specific dress like women do prior to marriage. In the occasion of marriage the grooms are dressed in white attires with long woolen coats locally termed as *shuqa* (see fig. II). On the first day of the marriage the bridegroom usually wears a turban called *thato* (see fig. III) over his head. Around the *thato* a woolen thread is surrounded called *pasho*. With the support of threads of *pasho* an oval shaped intermingled woolen threads called *lapay* are hanged in the forehead of the bridegroom. While on the occasion when bride arrives in the groom's house the *thato* and the *pasho* are removed and a traditional round woolen cap (see fig. IV) is sported over the groom's head. The Imperial Gazetteer of India (1908:240) explained this cap wearing custom in the following words:

The inhabitants of Astore wear a peculiar head-dress, a bag of woolen cloth, half a yard long, which is rolled up outwards at the edges until it gets to fit comfortably to the head, round which the roll makes a protection from cold or sun nearly as good as a turban.



Figure-II. Traditional *Shuqa*



Figure-III *Thato*

The dressing of the bride is quite appealing and mesmerizing as compare to the bridegroom. The bride wears a red color suit mainly of *khaddar* (handmade cotton cloth). The bride used to wear a multi-colored round shaped cap. The cap is named as *paloli khoi* (see fig. V) in the local

language. It is surrounded by a chain of interconnected silver threads in a very distinctive manner. In the vertical round front portion of *paloli kholi* silver threads are hanged vertically which are locally known as *shanali*. At the brink of *shanali* a Quadra shaped ornament is hanged called as *sayway*. Over the hanging vertical threads *shanali*, there is an interconnected chain of silver threads separated by round shaped silver plates called *tokiye* in horizontal manner. This entire set of the hanging ornament is called as *silsila* (see fig. VI). This multifarious ornament of bride presents a traditional yet fascinating look.

The aspects of mass media intervention, exposure generated through the influx of tourism and education acquisition tendencies played a vital role in emerging new trends of wearing choices for the inhabitants of Astore valley. The traditional ornaments are gradually replaced by the modern charms. Prominently, the traditional wearing such as, *Shai kholi*, *Loli kholi* are entirely fading away in most of the areas, whereas the culture of *paloli kholi* is still practical in addition of modern embroideries.



Figure-IV Groom's Round Cap



Figure-V Bridal Cap



Figure-VI *Silsila*

Above all the wedding costumes are inscribed in the traditions of this area



i.e. the wearing of *Shuqa* and the woolen round cap by the groom. Despite the nurturing process of acculturation in Astore valley the area still holds a wider scope due to a tourist turnover. Under the shades of fascinating avenues, the local government has endeavored for the cultural preservation, through organizing cultural festivals, wherein these diminishing aspects of culture are displayed and marketed for awareness purposes for the new generation. One of the prominent festivals of such nature is *Rama* festival which is annually organized in Astore for the display of cultural outfits and ornaments. These cultural carnivals are some insights for individuals to orient them about the traditional attires.

### **Conclusion**

The multifarious past of Astore region in its cultural, historical and social dimensions converged into the diverse practices of various ethnic groups constituting a unified normative structure. The area experienced an eccentric conglomerate of distinct reigning groups representing diverse ethnic identities. The region has a multilayered marriage outfits ornaments. This consistent rehearsal converge the practices into a single structure of ethos. This later exhibited a common identity for the cultural patterns of Astore region. The key stance of the entire debate therefore lied in the fact that holding up with the culture sustains the recognition of a society was at top. The contemporary societies are facing multilayered issues, but to cope up with these newly bloomed challenges, the cultural practices enslove a significant solution of commonness and uniformity. Apart from the fact that globalization has abundant merits for the human races yet they have lost its quality of social being. Therefore, culture holds up and reminds what and who we are.

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## **Understanding *Pakhtun* Society through Proverbs**

**Ikram Badshah  
Sarfranz Khan**

### **Abstract**

*Current research was conducted in the village Toru in District Mardan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. The main objective of this research was to understand Pakhtun society through matal (proverbs) with special emphasis on Tarboorwali (agnatic rivalry) and cousin marriages. Tarboorwali (agnatic rivalry) and cousin marriages are indispensable part of Pakhtun culture. People express their distinct cultural identity and ideal Pakhtun behaviour through the expression of proverbs on various occasions. So, with the help of proverbs one can easily understand the worldview and perceptions of the people about Pakhtun customs, traditions, social institution, the ideology, and belief system. The matals were used as a daily activity and were interpreted in the socio-cultural context to understand the way of thinking and behaving. One can easily understand the feelings, aspirations, and customs and traditions of the Pakhtuns and how all these become meaningful in social discourse. One can understand the significance of social institutions such as Tarboorwali (agnatic rivalry) and cousin marriages by interpreting matals through discourse analysis.*

### **Introduction**

In *Pakhtun* society, proverbs occupy a special place in oral literature and are the most widely used for all folklore (Tair and Edwards, 1982; Akhtar, 1997). Rather than relics of the past, Pashto proverbs are still widely spoken and play an important role in the everyday lives of *Pakhtuns*. A wiser man is considered to be the one who speaks more proverbs (Khattak, 2006). *Pashto* proverbs are found in textbooks, newspapers, and are spoken in radio programs and in television dramas, as well as in daily conversations in the *bazaar* and at homes, between and among men and women (Bartlotti and Khattak, 2006). Proverbs can be heard in political speeches as well in political commentaries, in a situation of social conflict and in aggravated family arguments. The use of proverbs makes these not

only a clever form of verbal art, but also a potent tool of verbal combat (Enevoldsen, 2004). A proverb is a wisdom expressed in a sentence (Mieder, 1985:113).

According to Milner (1969:199) a proverb has the following characteristics: “(a) it is pithy, concise and easily remembered by the use of rhyme, rhythm, repetition, or alliteration; (b) it is vivid, homely, sometimes coarse, deals with people’s primary interests; (c) it singles out something abstract and universal based on experience and observation which might be stated literally or figuratively; (d) it sums up a situation by appealing to humor; (e) it is often linked to another saying which appears to give it the life; and (f) its effect is to raise a statement from the ordinary to emphatic level in order to urge, teach, praise or convince, or alternatively, to warn, blame, restrain or discourage” (cf. Sanauddin 2015).

The meanings of proverbs are contextual and depend on the intention of the speakers and perception of the listener (Norrick, 1985). Men and women used proverb differently, even proverbs are interpreted differently by different castes, classes and strata, and always serves the interests of a certain class. Proverbs reflect ideological struggles between the rulers and ruled in a society and if carefully unpacked and deconstructed, proverbs can provide some evidence of- voices from below, i.e., the worldview of the dominated group. Schipper (2004) argued that proverbial messages are an excellent yardstick for finding out the extent to which people continue to accept sexist ideas about women, while Kerschen (2012:3) believes that the nature of proverbs is such that, while they are brief, they are perhaps the best indicators of attitudes and beliefs (cf. Sanauddin 2015).

Burke and Peter (1987) stated that proverbs are “strategies for living” rhetorical devices for dealing with social situations. The proverbs also provide a kind of ethnographic record of tensions and conflicts in a society. They identify recurring situations in a culture and give such situations have occurred before, and have been handled in this or that way.

### **Theoretical framework**

Thick description of Clifford Geertz (1973:5-6, 9-10) was used to break ethnographic information down, sorting through layers of significance to derive the meaning from the native’s perspective. Geertz (1973:5-6, 9-10) used ethnographic methodology as a way to understand human behavior

and the context in which people actually behave. Norrick (1985) mentioned in the line with Geertz (1973: 5-6, 9-10) that the meanings of proverbs are contextual and depend on the intention of the speakers and perception of the listener. For instance, men and women use proverb differently, even proverbs are interpreted differently by different castes, classes and strata, and always serves the interests of a certain class.

So, different people interpret the same proverb differently, according to their socio-economic status, experiences, age set, gender, marital status and lineage system in a society. The worldview of the people was understood through the associated symbols attached with the proverbs in the day-to-day conversation while sitting in the *Hujra* (common space where family men sit and host guests), Mosque, marriage and funeral ceremonies, in playgrounds, and other public spaces.

### **Research Objectives**

The main objectives of the present research were to:

1. Know the importance and significance of *matal* (proverbs) in the everyday lives of *Pakhtuns*.
2. Understand the perceptions of people about *Tarboorwali* (agnatic rivalry) and cousin marriages through proverbs in the locale.

### **The Locale and Methodology**

This study is based on an ethnographic fieldwork conducted during 2012-2014 in the village Toru (*Daftarro*), District Mardan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. This village is situated at a distance of eight kilometers from main headquarter of the district. The village, Toru, is famous for its fertile land and produces high quality sugarcane and tobacco. *Nawab* and *Khankhel* are the landed gentry of the village, and their main subsistence is based on agriculture, while Syeds, Mohmand and *Dirogi* and some other ethnic groups are working mostly as peasants of *Khankhel* and *Nawab's* family in their agriculture fields. Some of the educated people in the locale are working in the education department, police, army and bureaucracy. Some are having their own businesses of raw/unrefined sugar (*Ghurr*), tobacco, and sugarcane crop.



Fig. I Map of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa  
(Source of Map: The Pakistan Research Group)

According to Safdar Khan (personal communication, July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2014) a local landlord and retired government officer that no authentic information is available regarding the nomenclature of Toru by any Pakistani writer but he cited an Afghan writer Mohammad Amin *Khugianay*, according to him a general in Alexander army *Torees* became sick during the expedition and he stayed there in the present Toru area and later on this area was named after him. With the passage of time, the word *Torees* changed into the present name 'Toru'. Majority of the inhabitants of the locale are *Pakhtuns* and Muslims (with Sunni sect). They speak *Yousafzai* dialect of *Pashto* language.

For the present research, mix methods approach was used for data collection. Four main qualitative methods; i) key informants, ii) Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), iii) in-depth interviews, and iv) discourse analysis ( to get an insight into the meanings of that popular verbal discourse circulating in the community under like oral history songs and particularly *Pakhto* proverbs which average member of the locale owns) were used for the collection and interpretation of data.

At the initial stage of the research, three key informants were approached, keeping in view their knowledge about history and culture, and their general reputation and political status in the locale. For elaborative understanding, three FGDs were conducted to know how people interpreted proverbs in the presence of others. In this way, the worldview of the people in private as well as public was deciphered through such discussions. At the second stage of the research, 66 in-depth interviews were conducted through purposive sampling technique in the community, to understand the perceptions of the people about social institutions, with special emphasis on *Tarboorwali* (agnatic rivalry) and cousin marriages.

### **The use and significance of proverbs in *Pakhtun* society**

The inhabitants of the village have strong belief in the traditional values and norms, and these are the driving forces which always guide them and give them identity. Proverbs are the guiding forces and make the social life of individuals more meaningful. They not only use the proverbs in different contexts and situations, but they act and follow them in every activity of life. The interesting thing about the proverbs is that if you ask someone to share some proverbs he knows, after telling a few proverbs, he will be unable to tell you more. However, once the conversation progresses, they will share proverbs in the running commentary to strengthen their arguments. This shows that proverb is basically life in a running status. The different get-together ceremonies and occasions are the best spaces of using proverbs. If you want to understand the perceptions of people, proverb is one of the major tool through which you can easily understand these.

In *Pakhtun* society the blood relationship is still considered very important which provides a base for the organization of lineage. Therefore, numbers of proverbs, which symbolize the importance of blood relations, are still used in daily conversations. For example the following proverb authenticates the point.

“Oba pa dang na byalegi” [Blood relatives cannot be separated from one another.]

The succeeding section will address the use of proverbs in *Pakhtun* society for social institutions such as, a) *Tarboorwali* (agnatic rivalry), and b) cousin marriages.

### Understanding the institution of *Tarboorwali* through proverbs

This section deals with the nature and extent of *Tarboorwali* (agnatic rivalry) through the use of proverbs in *Pakhtun* society. A *Pakhtun* attaches both positive and negative meaning to *Tarboor* (agnate/ patrilineal parallel cousin). Enmity with the agnates is contextual and situational. In one situation your agnate is your hardest enemy and in the other he is your (*matae*) strength and staunch supporter (personal conversation by Zakir Khan, July 2014 in the locale).

#### Negative connotations of *Tarboorwali*

“Tarboor khwar lara zoai pa kar lara” [Keep your cousins poor, but use them to your own advantage.]

The *Pakhtuns* usually do not like their cousins to be superior to them. They always keep their agnates weaker and dependent. If your *Tarboor* is getting strong socially, economically, and politically you will be the first person to come forward to devise strategies to weaken him. In *Pakhtun* society agnates are kept weaker, dependent, suppressed and repressed.

“Tarboor ko de khar ye lata prey ma arrawa” [Even if your cousin be a donkey, don't ride him. (He may throw you down)]

According to *Pakhtun* tradition, *Tarboorwali* is considered to be the most dangerous form of enmity. If your *Tarboor* is willing to be friendly and cooperative with you, never trust him, his apparent good will have something bad for you. So, never expect any good from your *Tarboor*.

“Tarboor da berray bor” [*Tarboor* is like berry bramble.]

It means that your *Tarboor* is of no use. He will never benefit you. He has no utility for you. Just like a bramble of berry is of no use, so are your agnates.

“Da tarboor pa las ba mar hum na wajni” [Don't kill a snake with the help of your agnate.]

Do not seek the help of your agnates to kill a snake. It can be interpreted



in two ways; firstly, there is possibility that your agnate will pretend to help you in killing the snake. In relying on his help, when actually he will not be helping, there is the possibility that the snake will bite you in the due process. The other interpretation is that your agnate is more dangerous than the poisonous snake.

“Tarboor da shpay mazwe dy” [Cousin is the hurdle of night.]

Cousin is the one who will be your well-wisher in public and face to face situation, but at your back, he will always try to harm you. A *Pakhtun* is considered not real, if he does not have any *Tarboor*. Here, *Tarboor*'s do not feel afraid of an outsider, but they challenge one another.

“Tarboor Khwar sata kho istimalawa ye” [Keep the cousin poor but use him against others.]

If your *Tarboor* becomes powerful he will turn against you; that's why, use your *Tarboor* always against other people so that he may not turn against you.

“Da Tarboor gakh pa Tarboor mategi” [A cousin starts biting his cousin first.]

It is always the *Tarboor* who will use his newly acquired force and wealth against his agnates, to show and exert his superiority.

“Khaple ba de zharai ao pradi ba de khandai” [Your relatives will make you weep, while a stranger will make you laugh.]

Again this shows the sort of rivalry found amongst the relatives in *Pakhtun* society. They are of the view that only close- relatives can put you in difficulties, and will let you face the music, and make you cry by their deeds, while other (who are not blood relatives) are not like that, because you do not come into contact with them in the manner you keep contact with cousins and close-relatives.

“Mar wazhali kha de Tarboor wahali kha da” [It is better to kill a snake and to humble a *Tarboor* (agnate).]

An enemy should be eliminated, but an agnate may be useful if kept in a

subservient role.

**Positive connotations of *Tarboorwali***

*Tarboorwali* is not always for bad uses nor will your *Tarboor* harm you in all the situations. In some situations, he will be your *matai* (strength) and will never hesitate to sacrifice his life for your *izzat ao Sharam* (honour and shame).

“Khaple na pradekegi” [One’s kin can never become stranger.]

It is synonymous in meaning to the English idiom, “Blood is thicker than water” However bad the attitude of your cousin may be in unpleasant situations, he can never turn into a stranger. The *Tarboor* will stand for your protection in difficult situations.

“Tarboor wror dy, tarla khor da” [Cousin is brother, and a female cousin is sister.]

In *Pakhtun* society, patrilineal male cousins are treated as brothers and female cousins as sisters. Their kinship ties are so strong that they cannot live alone or separately from them. The people of the locale believed that “if the entire world is against you, even in that hard situation, your *Tarboor* will come forward for your help, as you share your honour and shame with him.”

“Bada rora pa bad zai pakara” [A brother might be a rival but it is he that would support in the time of crises.]

People of the locale believed it strongly that it was always your harsh agnate, with whom you may have severe enmity, who would come forward for your help, before anyone would come for your help.

“Khabara da Khudai dapara kotak da ror aziz da para” [A word for the sake of God, a stick for the sake of your relatives.]

When one is asked about justice and the truth, one should speak the truth, but when one’s relatives are embroiled in a dispute, one should take up arms in their cause, whether the action is right or wrong. It is obligatory

over you to take sides with your relatives, otherwise the people will start letting you and your family down. According the perception of one of the respondents, Unity is strength and is indispensable for your survival in the society.

“Khaple de ka mar kri sueri ta ba de wachavi” [If your own kin kills you, at least he will put your dead body in the shade.]

If your relatives kill you, at least they will not disgrace you and they will take care of your corpse. This proverb shows the positivity of the close-relatives in that they are the ones who care for you in reality. If they harm you, they will not cross a certain limit of harshness and brutality.

“Khaple haga de che pa nangsial ke de pakar rashi” [A true comrade is one who comes to your aid in the time of trouble.]

Alamgir Khan, a local landlord, was once fighting with a village fellow over a water dispute. Exchange of fire broke out suddenly. His father's brother's son (FBS), with whom his relations were of restricted nature because of some family dispute, came forward for the help and protection with a gun in his hand. As both were from the same lineage and were sharing shame and honour that is why his cousin set his personal internal dispute aside when it came to a dispute with an outsider.

It is not only the same blood that determines your relation with your kinsmen, but also the *honour* that you share with members of your *Khanadan* (family/group). So you are not only sharing the blood but also *izzat* (honour) and *namus* (dignity) with your relatives.

“Ror ba zoie maase ao dusman tha ba ror maase” [May you not be without a son against a brother, or without a brother without an enemy]

This proverb reflects the contradictory nature of *Pakhtun* society. The main bone of contention is land in *Pakhtun* society that is why your sons and brothers' sons will always be having conflicting interests and loyalties.

“Khaple bud da wolo mianz de” [One's own weakness lie between the shoulder blades (That is, where one cannot see them).]

It means that a person never sees one own shortcoming. This proverb is used for those people who always see their family the only *Khanadani* (royal, from respectable pedigree) people and look down upon the families of other people.

### **Understanding cousin marriage through proverbs**

“Ka da tra lor de okra, che sra de okral, ao ko da mama lor de okra no spin de ao ko da bahar na de okra no hasi hesh khashak de” [If you are married to patrilineal parallel cousin, it means you got hold of the gold, if you are married to maternal uncle’s or mother’s sister daughter, you got hold of the silver, and if your wife is not from your family (*Khanadan*) then are having a straw good for nothing.]

This proverb shows the importance of consanguineous marriages in *Pakhtun* society. There is certain stratification in consanguineous marriage, the most important and preferred form of marriages is with the patri-clan, then with the matri-clan and then with other blood relatives.

“Da pagray khaple ao da pansi khple ke farak ve” [There is a hell of difference between the patri-clan and matr-iclan.]

This was the most frequent used proverb in the locale, *pagray khaple* means the relatives whom you share turban with. In *Pakhtun* society turban is a symbol of honour and prestige, so your patri-clan is your identity in the society. *Pansa* means the lower part of trouser which represents something inferior and insignificant. So the matri-clan represented as *Pansa*, has lower importance and significance in the *Pakhtun* society. During the election campaigning people look down upon the person who casts his/her vote for the candidate from matri-clan, and not patri-clan. In the locale, the people look down upon the person who preferred his matri-clan over his patri-clan.

“Gwakha ao nook na sara juda kegi” [Flesh and finger nail cannot be separated.]

It is very difficult to keep distance with your close relatives as your agnates may be your enemies but they will be your strength against the outsider. So, blood is thicker than the water.

“Las chi mat shi no gharhi la razi” [Finally, the blood relatives would take care of you.]

It is obvious that *Pukhto* (*Pakhtun* way of life) in terms of favours and oppositions is constructed around the principle of ‘segmentary lineage’ system that is regulated by complementary opposition. *Pukhto* is a sense of composition, which is utilized to retain *Azizwali* (Fraternity/close relations).

“*Speene pagre saro ta speen patkee khizo pa sar kare de*” [White turbans are given to men by their women.]

The females are considered the *nang* and *namus* (honour and dignity) of the family, clan and tribe. The male members are known as respectable in the society, only if they do not have any sort of stigma attached to their females. In case of perpetration of immoral acts on the part of the females, their male members are the ones who have to lose their dignity, status, honour and value that they have in their society.

“*Sare ghrona de ao khazi arramona de*” [The men are like the mountains and the women are their support.]

It is general misperception that women have no role in *Pakhtun* society. It is the womenfolk who always back their husbands and sons in difficult situations. When they face difficulty outside the home, it is always their women who encourage them to face that courageously. It is women-folk that make a person steer out of the difficulty and odd situation.

### **Conclusion**

Proverbs provide a window of opportunity to the researchers and ethnographers to peep into the socio-political lives of the people. The worldview and perception of the people can be deciphered by interpreting the proverbs in social settings. So, proverb is one of the main variables through which we can understand people psyche and their pattern of thinking. Through proverbs we can understand people perception of marriage pattern including preferred and prescribed form of marriage in the *Pakhtun* society. The values and the meaning the people are attaching with cousin marriage and *Tarboorwali* can be deciphered through the

prevailing proverbs. Though proverbs have roots in the past but we can understand the contemporary thinking patterns and behaviour of the *Pakhtuns* in a particular situation. Through proverbs we can understand the hierarchy, political domain and class system in the society. In nutshell, we can say that through proverbs we can understand the *Pakhtun* society as a whole, by applying discourse analysis and thick description of Geertz (1973).

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## **Durranis' Rule at Peshawar: A Historical and Cultural Profile**

**Razia Sultana**

### **Abstract**

*The rise of Durrani Empire at the political landscape of West Asia by the 18<sup>th</sup> century was indeed a unique development. The decline of Hotaki dynasty, Safavid Persia in the west, Mughal India in the east and Qarakhanid Turks in the North set the stage for the emergence of Durrani Empire. It is evident that Durrani during their rule never ceased the military ventures and the Eastern conquests were of paramount importance in this regard owing to the monetary benefits and political influence. In this connection Peshawar as a border city on the Eastern border of the empire was at the center stage politically, strategically and culturally. The valley of Peshawar was a strategic springboard and also contributed in terms of man power to all major military campaigns against the Mughal rulers in India. Besides, Peshawar valley used to be occupied by the Durrani rulers as a second capital during winters. Being the capital it became cultural hub of the empire and thus during Durrani period architectural and prose/poetical contributions of Peshawar were considered worth-while in comparison to other parts of the empire. As the history of West Asia and South Asia was deeply influenced by the Durrani Empire especially Peshawar being at the center stage. In this context the paper will explore the historic and cultural profile of Peshawar valley during Durrani rule and will analyze the progress and retrogress of cultural activities in the mentioned period.*

### **Introduction**

Having knowledge of the people and of their past, the establishment of an independent state by the Afghans in 1747, seems circumstantial, however, the role of historical forces could not be ignored here. Perpetual foreign dominance over the region, later called Afghanistan, for centuries, made it inevitable for the natives to establish their own government at that particular historical moment. Unfortunately, Afghanistan had never been ruled by its own people till the Ghilzais short and limited ascendancy

during 1714 to 1738. Apart from that, during most of the medieval times till the first half of the eighteenth century, half of its portion had been under the influence of Persians, while the rest was within the control of Mughals, who were basically dominant in Indian subcontinent. Again, it seems contrary to the developments taking place in Persia and India, whose glory was fading by then, while unexpectedly Afghanistan was taking its foundation as a new state in the region (Malleson 1878: 276).

For a while, the ascendancy of Persia was retrieved by Nadir Shah Afshar, who was the most powerful of the leaders in the region till his murder in October, 1747. From Persia to the heart of India, he had his sway over a vast territory. In his absence the area became leaderless and power vacuum was created. This outstanding situation pushed the Afghans to think over their own position, within the prevailing circumstances. Consequently, they sat together, deliberated and came to the conclusion that a kingdom of their own should be carved out, which had to be led by a leader of their own choice. This grand idea was given a practical shape during a few meetings which had been held at Qandahar, the home town of the future ruling elite. However, the selection of Ahmed Khan Saduzai was finalized by a saintly man, Sabir Shah. That way, the first state of the Afghans came into being, and a leader of their own lot had been selected as their king. This was a unique moment in the whole history of Afghan nation which cherished by them till date (Elphinstone 1815: 519).

This demonstration of sagacity on the part of Afghans bore fruit. Their leader, Ahmed Shah turned out to be a superb leader in war and peace. Being young, he was challenging. Also, he knew the tactics to channelize the warring nature of his people in a right direction. Similarly, a few other steps of him, taken soon after his selection, were of tremendous consequence for the newly establish Afghan state. For instance, the basic principles of his policy envisaged, that the concentration of power should be in the hands of the sovereign and, there would be no interference in the internal matters of the tribes. At the same time, having constituted an advisory council, which was comprised of leading tribal chiefs, nine in total, without whose consultation he would not take a single step, had further strengthened his position. Moreover, the social status of the king was no more superior than first among the equals. In fact, these few principles, the most appropriate to the Afghan nature, and tradition did miracle, a scattered community turned into a nation and it

built up huge empire, stretched from Khurasan to the capital of Mughals, Delhi (Gupta 1976: 280).

In fact, Ahmed Shah and even the lesser Durrani rulers were warlords, besides that, there were several other valid reasons which would prove Ahmed Shah's desire to be a warrior king, for instance, his youth, the confidence reposed by the leading chieftains in him, the warring nature of his people and the liberality, which he showed, soon after his accession. That act of generosity won for him the loyalties of the Afghans. Ahmed Shah, being empowered, knew the art of give and take in the arena of politics, he made his people the shareholders of state spoils and in return bound them to join hands with him in materializing his high ambitions, through a strong knot of nationalism (Husaini 1798:12).

Consequently, the rule of Ahmed Shah, which spread over twenty-six years, had been full of military adventure, either in Hindustan or Persia. Being an imperialist, he focused mostly on territorial expansion and comparatively lesser time had been spent over the building up of administrative institutions. His successor, Taimur Shah, did not express either of his capabilities, in the sphere of military or administration. Having no liking for war, the continuation of his father's policy became impossible. Similarly, being indolent and fond of self-indulgence he could not streamline the administrative set up of the empire, therefore, in a very short period it succumbed to troubles. By the time Zaman Shah and others took over, it was too late to protect the empire from the clutches of unending turmoil (Elphinstone 1815: 511-13 and 511-518).

Keeping in view, his pivotal role as a general and political leader, Ahmed Shah's, the pioneer of Durrani Empire, military successes were tremendous in India as compared to Persia. Since, territorially, and financially India was more profitable as compared to Persia so, by conquering India a huge area came under Durrani control, similarly, immense resources came into their possession, which had been exploited for the general development of the empire. As a result of Ahmed Shah being busy in the battle field from 1747 to 1769, he attained exceptional imperialistic gains, due to which historians rank him with Mahmood of Ghazni, a great general and administrator of the empire of Ghazni in the eleventh century (Ferrier 1858:69-70).

The administrative side of the Durrani Empire remained weak, because they could not build up institutions and properly devised systems,

which if had been set up, they could prolong their tenure as rulers. On the contrary, since they attained the authority through force so, they had to maintain it through the strength of their arms. However, the moment their military might was tarnished, existence of their ascendancy began to be evaded. For instance, the comparison of Ahmed Shah Durrani and Taimur Shah's reign explained the point under discussion. The former based and sustained his governmental system upon the strength of the arms, while the latter's indifference towards that, and lack of interest in warfare put the dynasty in trouble.

In fact, autocratic governments totally depend on the person of a ruler, if he was virtuous the state and the subjects flourished but if the case was the other way round the complete edifice had demolished all of a sudden. When Ahmed Shah set in his political career, he was a king of Qandahar only. But when he was retiring, he was an emperor of a vast empire. On the contrary, his successors took over as the rulers of an empire but by the end of their reigns it reduced to the size of a small kingdom, comprised of a few immediate territorial components. This is a great dilemma that Durrani could not produce a leader of Ahmed Shah's caliber, circumstances, luck or such other factors could be made responsible for that. If there had been one greater leader from the line of Durrani they could sustain their supremacy on the political scene for longer period. They would have been able to leave significant imprints on the history of the region, as happened in the case of Mughals, whose consolidator, Akbar, the great, set up the foundation of the empire on such strong footing that people forgot about the actual founder, Zahir-ud-Din Baber, who laid the foundation of the Mughals empire in 1526. Even the example of Saffavides is very much relevant in this case.

Peshawar and its surrounding hilly country played a very significant role in the military glory of the Durrani, because most of the expeditions led against India passed through the historic Khyber Pass and the Plains of Peshawar, which established the geo-strategic value of the area fully. Similarly, at many crucial occasions soldiers from this region enhanced the size of Durrani forces. So, it's right to say that the land and people of Peshawar had played a very significant part in the rise of the Durrani Empire. Any negative role of the land and people of Peshawar even during the trouble time civil war could hardly be traced.

Apart from other reasons, the political situation prevailed at the Mughal court, during that period, also initiated an invader like Ahmed Shah, who kept himself in touch with the traitors at the Mughal court, in order to properly chalk out his military strategies against Indian army. Those insincere courtiers further made easier the task of the founding father of Durrani. Between the years of 1747 to 1773 Ahmed Shah was the undisputed leader in the whole region, which included Persia, Afghanistan and a greater part of India. In the mean time, in the absence of any strong political power at the center, some local forces raised their heads in order to fill the vacuum created as a consequence, for instance, Marhata in Deccan and Sikhs in Punjab and some Muslim principalities also, for instance, Mysor (Malleon 1878: 277).

Sikhs remained a constant cause of trouble during the later part of Ahmed Shah's reign and throughout the rule of his successors. To an extent that they were the people who claimed a greater part of Durrani Indian possessions, soon after, the down fall of the empire in 1818. Especially, Peshawar was first raided and later taken over by the Sikhs in 1823 (Elphinstone 1815: 518).

Since, Ahmed Shah Durrani was an imperialist he did not stop war activity after conquering Peshawar. His insatiable thirst for warfare pushed him to carry on the military operations in India, which were counted ten in total, between 1747 and 1769 (Singh 1959: 349-50).

The military accomplishments of Durrani were remarkable, however, in the post Ahmed Shah period, the might of its arms did not demonstrate the same miracles. Taimur Shah, being temperamentally peaceful and took more interest in his extensive harem, due to which governmental matters suffered. Though, generally peace and prosperity prevailed and people felt respite from the period of war, however, prolonged military inactivity of the ruler on the war front made the warrior class impatient.

Taimur Shah's initial steps, after becoming the second monarch of the Durrani in 1773, were quite daring, for instance, shifting of the capital from Qandahar to Kabul and making Peshawar the second capital of the Durrani Empire. Similarly, the murder of those who opposed his candidature to the throne of Afghanistan had also hashed other opponents of him, for quite some time. However, he did not maintain the tempo, handling the problems at the first instance, therefore the grip over the

strings of government got slacken (Mss-Eur-F228/90: 1793-1800; Singh 348-49 and 318-19).

Meanwhile, Taimur Shah's love for Peshawar is not unknown, and needs to be mentioned here, however, these noble sentiments of him had never been reciprocated by the Peshawarites, because they considered him a Persian not a Pathan. The king would reside at Peshawar almost half of a year, and usually preferred to concentrate at Peshawar. To an extent, that when Taimur Shah got seriously ill he was at Peshawar, from where immediately he had been taken for Kabul, 1793. This incident emphasized upon the fact that even the last journey of that monarch took place between Peshawar and Kabul (Elphinstone 1815: 527).

Overall, Taimur Shah's period was of peace and prosperity, only two revolts occurred during his reign, of which one was very serious, that happen in Peshawar. A few of the conspirators led by Faizullah Khan Arbab and supported by the saintly man, Mian Umer of Chamkani, tried to bring coup, de'tat but did not meet success, due to timely reaction of the king and his supporters against the conspirators. Later the ring leaders of the conspiracy, except Mian of Chamkani, who had a religious bearing, were awarded death penalty. However, nothing of the same kind happened thereafter (Singh 1959: 352).

Three of the five Durrani monarchs, Taimur Shah, Zaman Shah and Shah Shuja, had strong liking for Peshawar, reason might be matrimonial and parental, because mother of the two, Zaman Shah and Shah Shuja, was a Yusafzai lady, a tribe settled down in Swat and Bunair Valleys. Throughout their tenure as ruler, they would rely upon the support of the tribes resided in the Peshawar region, and had seldom been disappointed. During their trouble times, those tribes of the hill-country, in the vicinity of Peshawar would provide refuge to the wandering Durrani princes (Singh 1959: 350-51).

Furthermore, due to being the residence of the Durrani's monarch, the status of Peshawar elevated politically. Its commercial value and geo-strategic significance had already been established, while the addition of political importance further enhanced the position of Peshawar within the empire of Durrani. Several Durrani families of importance shifted to Peshawar for permanent settlement here, which again enhanced the significance of the area.

Culturally, Peshawar remained dormant during the Durrani period. A few monuments were erected, for instance, Wazir Bagh, renovation of Balahissar and building of some very beautiful places within the fort for the royal family. Except the remnants of Wazir Bagh, the rest of the edifices had been demolished by the Sikhs, who arose as the new masters of the Peshawar region, after the down fall, of Durrani. Though Sikhs renovated and repaired the fort, Balahissar later on, but it had lost the touch of Durrani thereafter (Singh 1959: 351-53).

Since, Durrani did not patronized literary activities, therefore whatever, had been achieved that was the contribution, of those philanthropists and lovers of art and culture, who privately encouraged these activities, for instance, the family of Mian Umer of Chamkani. Though, poetry was dominant as a medium of expression however, some valuable work in prose had also been written, for instance, Murad Ali Sahibzada's *Tafseer-e-Yaseer* and Dost Mohammad Khan Khattak's *Tafseer-e-Husaini* (Singh 1959: 53).

Culturally, Durrani made a lukewarm progress in literature, during their rule, in Peshawar. It is considered a period where literary work could not maintained the standard of the classical period which produced poets like, Khushal Khan Khattak, Rahman Baba, Ali Khan and Kazim Khan Sheda. Literacy figures of such stature had not been produced during the Durrani's period. A unique point needs to be mentioned here, that literacy rate among the nineteenth century. Many religious magazines and booklets, which used to be written in Pushto mostly, were taught and learnt by women in their houses. Another important point which require to be pointed out is, that though Dari was a court language but most of the literary work whether contained substance or not was done in Pushto, particularly, in the Peshawar area.

By and large, the forces of decay started taking its roots during the days of Taimur Shah. Some very important parts of the empire, like Khurasan, Multan and Turkistan started taking sporadic moves towards independence, which the King could not suppress strongly, and consequently the other territorial units encouraged. Taimur Shah's inability to nip the evils in the bud made the situation complicated. As a result, his death heralded the troubled times, all of whom raised a claim for the throne of Afghanistan. However, the three of them were the favourite candidates, Humayun Mirza, Mahmood Mirza and Zaman Mirza. Thought

Zaman Mirza was junior than other two brother, but, apart from other factors the support of Payanda Khan Barakzai, made him the ruler of Afghanistan. Other claimants to the throne had either to reconcile with the new King or to renounce their claim or flee from country (Elphinstone 1815: 521).

Of the remaining two only, Mahmood became formidable who, took refuge in Persia, he was no dangerous unless Fateh Khan , the elder son of Payanda Khan joined him, after the murder of his father at the hands of Shah Zaman. Among the sons of Taimur, Zaman Shah had the talent for war and also the ability to set the administration on sound footing, but he could not get chance to achieve both of these goals, due to the troubles created by his own family members. If his own house had been in order, he could handle the troubles created by the rising regional powers. For instance, the Qajar in Persia, the Uzbeks towards the north and the Sikhs in Punjab. Despite all these constraints, Shah Zaman led his forces towards India in order to suppress the insurgency of the Sikhs for three times, but he to leave the matter in the middle and come back to the capital, in order to settle some serious uprising at home. Because every time when he left the capital some family member of him would revolt, this forced him to move backward (Singh 1959: 353-54).

Meanwhile, a political blunder, which was committed by Zaman Shah during the eighth year of his rule, was the murder of Sardar Payanda Khan Barakzai and his other supporters, who wanted to overthrow Shah Zaman. This situation had properly been exploited by Mahmood, a half-brother of Shah Zaman and Fateh Khan, an elder son of Payanda Khan, the jointly toppled the government of Shah Zaman and blinded him. It was the beginning of civil war in Afghanistan, which over the period turned from bad to worse (Elphinstone 1815: 521).

In fact, the root cause of displeasure of nobility against Shah Zaman, was, reversal from the policy of conciliation, co-operation followed by his grandfather. Being haughty, he tried to take away all power from his chieftains and concentrate it into his own hands. The Durrani nobility felt alarmed over those moves of Shah Zaman. If had been conciliatory and considerate several problems could have been averted, for instance the nobility would not have entered into a plot to dismiss the government of Zaman Shah as a result his rule would have been continued unhurt. It can further be assumed that he being a ruler



could much more be beneficial for the Durrani than others. The murder of leading tribesmen would also be averted and it would not have annoyed Fateh Khan Wazir to an extent to become the king-maker (Elphinstone 1815: 521-23).

Mahmood Shah the next ruler proved a total failure, due to his indolence and complete disregard towards state matters. All what he did was, left the governmental affairs at the disposal of Fateh Khan Barakzai and gave up his self to merry-making. Due to these lapses he remained on the throne of Afghanistan for not more than two and a half years. He had to be dismissed, because civil war was getting momentum, and many local and regional forces entered into the political arena of Afghanistan by then. A vigilant and talented leader was the need of the time, who could rescue the trouble stricken ship of the Durrani, but such desire proved a far cry at that juncture of Afghan history (Singh 1959: 355).

The removal of Shah Zaman from the political scene of Afghanistan, which still was comprised of huge territorial units, was a turning point. If to be seen from the retrospect, it completely changed the political scenario of the Afghan nation and state. Shuja became prominent, due to his role as an emancipator for his brother's miseries. He, being the governor of Peshawar at that perilous moment, revolted against Shah Mahmood, in order to avenge the harm done to his brother and to contend for the throne of Afghanistan also. Though for a while his attempts were foiled by the adherents of Shah Mahmood, however, soon troubles of Shah Mahmood provided him an opportunity to take over the reins of government in 1803 (Singh 1959: 355).

Since its inception till the murder of Payanda Khan Barakzai, the role of the nobility was constructive. Ahmed Shah attained greatness in the spheres of military and state policy due to the undivided support of his tribal chieftains. Similarly, Taimur Shah maintained the glory of his predecessor through the same factor. Even up to the selection of Zaman Shah, the leading men were loyal and playing their role for escalating the development of the empire. However, after the tragic incidence of killing a group of conspirators led by Payanda Khan the nobility assumed the role of villains. Consequently, they became insincere and traitorous just like that of Mughals. For instance, Shir Mohammad Khan, another Durrani noble became instrumental, during the reign of Shah Mahmood. Capable but, Shir Mohammad Khan was too ambitious, when he saw his motives

were not going to be achieved, he had raised a revolt with the collaboration of a Sayed of the mosques of Kabul. The pretext of their uprising was, the tendency of Shah Mahmood towards Qazalbashis, whom they termed as heretics. The policies of Shah Mahmood were declared by the Chief Imam as anti-Islamic, which made the involvement of common people against the existing government possible. However, the power of the masses had never been considered throughout the ages, by the people in power, but its pressure is immense, to an extent that no tyrant can stay whatever might be the magnitude of its tyranny and power. Keeping with the tradition, Shah Mahmood repeated the same indifferent/tyrannical attitude which cast him the throne (Singh 1959: 355).

The dismissal of Shah Mahmood and the enthronement of Shuja Mirza was not a simple phenomenon, a superb mind worked behind it, which had unfortunately been used for the attainment of ulterior motives. The interest of the empire was sacrificed at the expense of the interest of an individual. However, the arrival of Shuja as a new king of Afghanistan did not alter the prevailing troubled situation. It was moving from bad to worse. If to be seen in detail, expectation from Shuja that he would bring normalcy, was synonymous to wild imagination. He did not have the talent to settle the disorder or to put the decaying process on the reverse. On the contrary, he took certain steps, which if had been avoided would have at least slowed down the pace of decline. For instance, his developing of jealousy with the Premier, Shir Mohammad Khan, was of perilous consequences. He staged a coup, de'tat against the king, when he left for Sind to suppress the Amirs of Sind. The revolt, which had been raised after nominating Kaisar Mirza, a nephew of the king, as a parallel candidate for kingship, had to be subdued. For that, Shuja had to leave the matters with the Amirs of Sind unsettled, and moved to cope with the rebels. Though, the revolt was quelled but it left very unpleasant imprints over the course of events (Singh 1959: 355-56).

Similarly, not reconciling with Fateh Khan had proved to be a blunder of Shah Shuja. Fateh Khan offered his willingness to be included into the adherents of Shah, but his offer had not been entertained. If Fateh Khan had been won over by Shuja by appointing him on a prominent post, he would not have become a formidable rival and great troubles could have definitely been avoided (Elphinstone 1815: 527 and 529).

On the home front, Shuja caught into grave situation, because Fateh Khan was again instrumental in removing him and to replace him with Shah Mahmood, for the second time. Shuja being at Peshawar, had to check the moves of the combined forces of Ranjit and Fateh Khan, which conquered Qandahar and were preparing to attack Kabul. He met them near Gandamak, since he was no match for the excellent commandership of Fateh Khan, therefore, the defeat of Shuja was inevitable. The failure of Shuja made Ranjit the sovereign of Afghanistan once again (Das 382-83).

After getting hold of the throne of Afghanistan for the second time, Shah Mahmood neither changed in person nor in policies. He resumed his former activities and gave up himself to amusements once again. The affairs of government were left to Fateh Khan to be looked after by him. Fateh Khan handled the situation in a very shrewd manner, and for a while it was felt as if the good days of the Durrani rule had been revived. But, in fact that proved to be a sudden rise before complete demise. Another incident of grave consequences happened, which became the ultimate cause of the down fall of the Durrani Empire and or the dynasty.

Since the event is of historic importance, therefore it has to be mentioned here briefly. Fateh Khan was sent to check the military challenge put forward by the Persians against Herat, however, the governor of Herat, Feruz-ud-din, lacked in capability and resources to handle the situation, therefore he asked the king for help. The Shah sent a force under the command of Fateh Khan through quick marches. Reaching Herat, Fateh Khan removed the governor of Herat, Feruz-ud-din, and sent him to the capital, Kabul under honorary escort. Meanwhile, he successfully met the challenge offered by the Persian king. Fateh Ali Shah, which further boasted him up. Being in high spirits, Fateh Khan committed a serious blunder, which turned the labels of glory on him and consequently upon the dynasty of the Saduzai also. During a search for treasury the younger brother of Fateh Khan, Dost Mohammad Khan, entered into the house of the governor and insulted the royal ladies, which made the Shah furious. Shah Mahmood on the instigation of his son Kamran Mirza, issued the orders for the removal and blinding of Fateh Khan immediately, Kamran Mirza complied with the orders, as he already had hard feelings against the minister (Gupta 1976: 275).

The murder of Fateh Khan at the hands of Shah Mahmood and his son Kamran Mirza heralded country wide insurrection, which was

absolutely not unexpected. The numerous brothers of Fateh Khan, who were appointed on high posts violently, reacted and each of the territorial unit, which was under their control, declared independence. The structure of the Durrani Empire shattered to pieces. Shah Mahmood left the capital for Herat, Following which, except Herat the rest of the components of the kingdom were controlled by the brothers of deceased Fateh Khan independently. By 1818, the empire of great Ahmed Shah splintered to pieces (Das 949).

As mentioned before, Peshawar remained an integral part of the Durrani Empire till the end. However, after the dismemberment of the kingdom four Barakzai brothers, Yar Mohammad, Sultan Mohammad, Sayed Mohammad and Pir Mohammad assumed the control of it. For a while they remained as the governors of the Peshawar province, however, due to being vulnerable from all the sides, especially in the face of Sikh onslaughts, they could not protect the autonomy of their small principality. Soon afterwards, Sikh raided Peshawar up to the gates of Khyber, who became a power in Punjab by them, under the leadership of Ranjit Singh, so ultimately the Barakzai Sardars became dependants of Sikhs (Das 949). The ruler of Kabul, Mohammad Azim Khan, made an attempt in 1823, to thwart the ambition of the Sikhs, to retain Peshawar, but met with failure, which ultimately followed by his death. That success at Nowshera, uphold the claim of the Sikhs as the new masters of the territory. However, Sikhs, for the moment left Peshawar in the hands of Barakzai Sardars, as tributaries on the conditions of acknowledging Sikhs supremacy and payment of annual tribute (Das 383).

In the later part of their rule, from 1835 to 1849, Sikhs directly controlled Peshawar, which became a burden over them financially and administratively. People did not like their presence in the Valley as masters. Also, they did not have a control over the whole province, only the Peshawar proper and its immediate vicinity were under their direct hold. Other distant areas had been looked after by the local chiefs on their behalf in return of which the revenue of that area had been remitted to them (Das 949-950).

The presence of Sikhs in the region was proved quite beneficial for the English, because they needed a strong buffer zone against the Durrani onslaughts. Sikhs really shattered the desires of the rulers of Kabul to recover Peshawar. In the process they suppressed the Durrani so

many times that several proverbs and others stories of Sikhs bravery and Durrani's subsequent shattered confidence had become part of the folklore.

Moreover, cautious encroachments of the English became visible during the days of Shuja. An English mission's meeting with Shah Shuja at Peshawar was a testimony of that. They secured the support of the Durrani's for containing the aggression of the Franco-Persian nucleus, against their Indian possessions. By then the interest of the British in the region was obvious (Elphinstone 1815: 531 and 535).

Sikhs ascendancy, in the true sense remained in Peshawar till Ranjit Singh was alive, 1839. Thereafter, no Sikh leader was significant enough to be of his stature. They did not have the capacity or the sincerity to protect the Sikhs cause. On the contrary, they invited the foreigners, British, to take over. British were contented, till late with the Sutlej as a border between them and the Sikhs territory, however, later, keeping in view the circumstances they introduced a major shift in their policy towards the state of Punjab (Singh 1959: 358-62).

That shift of policy on the part of the English denoted aggression, which was evident from the kind of preparations they were making. Following which, between 1845-46 a series of wars was fought between the two, of which the battle of Sabraon stood the final and decisive. The objectives of the British and Sikh nobility were accomplished. Since, the whole of Ranjit Singh's dominion came under the influence of the British, except Kashmir, which was sold to Gulab Singh for a million pound sterling. That way, Peshawar came under the British hold. Though for a while an English advisor, George Lawrence was sent to Peshawar to supervise the local officials, however, the surrender of Sikh troops later empowered the British to take Peshawar into direct control. However, it's no astonishing a fact that no formal war was fought between Durrani's and English or for that matter between English and Sikhs for the possession of Peshawar. Later Colonel Lawrence's appointment as its first deputy commissioner in 1849 clearly explained that thenceforth neither the Durrani's nor the Sikhs but British were the possessor of Peshawar undisputedly (Gupta 1976: 275).

### **Cultural Attainment of Peshawar under Durrani's**

The word culture has been defined in various ways, for instance, "Behaviour peculiar to mankind, together with material objects that are

part of this behavior. Culture consists of language, ideas, beliefs, customs, codes institutions, tools, works of arts, and so on” (Britanica, Vol. V. Ed. 15<sup>th</sup>, 197). According to many others, culture is simply a way of life of people, which include everything that is concerned with man’s life. Moreover, the main components of culture are many, however, here; the word culture has been discussed in two perspectives, literary and monumental, in order to high light Durrani's achievements or failure in the same spheres (Tair 1988: 41).

### **Literary Activities**

Despite the great Ahmed Shah being a poet, poetry and prose both could not make substantial progress during Durrani's ascendancy. Many factors could be made responsible for that, for instance, too much involvement in war and later attention to the administrative work spared him no time to give attention to literary activities. Similarly, during the post-Ahmed Shah period, due to political chaos, civil war and religious squabbles the cultural and literary activities were affected. Consequently, even the work that had been done had little substance, therefore, it had truly been said that the poets and authors of eighteenth and nineteenth centuries could not maintain the standard of the classical period (Tair 1988: 40-41). In fact, the aforementioned reasons do not seem adequate enough to be considered for less literary activity, because prior to this, history of the same region had the example of Mahmood of Ghazni, who was a warrior king, but art and literature attained tremendous progress during his reign.

In case of Durani's, there were no clear reasons, which could be accepted except the negligence in literary work. That's why, the men of letters call this period, an age which was barren of excellence in the sphere of poetry and prose. Whatever, might have been the reasons underneath, Pushto poetry and prose had the reflection of the society prevailed during those days (Baraikoti 1995: 635-37).

So far as the medium of expression adopted by the literary men was concerned, Dari was a court language, but whatever had been written in the form of poetry or prose that was in Pushto also. Especially, in area of Peshawar, Pushto was spoken and people preferred to write in the same language.

Some prominent poets and authors of Ahmed Shah Durrani's period were:

- a. Nurul-Ain Waqif, wrote a Qasida on the person of Ahmed Shah.
- b. Nizamuddin Ishrat-Shah Nama-e-Ahmedi, which consisted of six hundred pages and was completed in 1773.
- c. Mohammad Mosani-Tarikh-e-Ahmed Shah.
- d. Imam-ud-din Hussaini-Tarikh-e-Ahmed Shah Durrani.
- e. Qazi Nur Mohammad-Jang Nama.
- f. Qabil Orakzai-Manajat (For Ahmed Shah).
- g. Tehmas Khan Tehmas, was an author of three books, for instance, he authored Ahmed Nama. He was basically a literary figure of Taimur Shah's period (Maghmom 1997).

Those prominent poets of Durrani rule, who mostly resided in the Peshawar were, Pir Mohamad Kakar, who was a court poet of Ahmed Shah Durrani and author of Diwan-e-Pir Mohammad Kakar, an excellent figure in his field. Faiz Mohammad Kakar was also a court poet of Ahmed Shah. Hafiz Alpuri was a Sufi poet and belonged to the reign of Taimur Shah. In his Diwan there were some couplets which explain the political situation of that period, for instance, in one of such couplets, the revolt against Taimur Shah in Peshawar had been mentioned, and especially the key figure of the revolt Faizullah Khan had duly been addressed. He was the only poet of significance during the reign of Taimur Shah in Peshawar Province. Other known poets of that age were, Najeeb, Mian Mohammadi Sahibzada, Bedel and Abdul Azim Ranizi. In total, some two hundred poets contributed to the literature of that period, among them were poets of prominence and ordinary (Maghmom 1997).

In fact, style wise Pushto poetry was influenced by the Persian pattern, for instance, Gazal, Rubai, Masnavi and similarly other forms were derived from the Persian literature, which had been adopted by the Pushto poets in such a way that these seem to be original (Tair 1988: 40).

Though, lesser work had been done in prose, in comparison with poetry, still there were some works, for instance, Murad Ali Sahibzada's Tafseer-e-Yaseer and Dost Mohammad Khan Khattak's Tafseer-e-Hussaini, which was translated in Pushto, could be presented as an example. Similarly, some magazines on religious subject were also written, for instance,

- a. Rasheed-ul-Bayan
- b. Dur Majalis

- c. Miraj Nama
- d. Mujezat etc.

These works were mostly popular among the women folk in Peshawar, due to which literacy rate of Pushtun women was higher than men (Maghmum 1997).

Another important but strange point which needs to be mentioned here was that literary activities in any form were not patronized by the royal family of the Durrani. They did have court poets and scribes but as such this activity had not been given due recognition and support by them. However, on private level, men of letters patronized the literary societies and personalities, for instance, the house of Mian Umer Sahib and his illustrious son Mohammadi Sahibzada, made significant contributions in this field. Many, prominent work of that age, in the form of Diwans and other of the same kind, were written upon the request of Mohammadi Sahibzada. The poets and writers were provided with financial assistance, which made them free of monetary problems and could concentrate more on their work (Baraikoti 1995: 639-40).

### **Monumental Works**

Peshawar being an historic city enjoyed prominence since ancient times, almost every ruling dynasty, whether they were Buddhists, Mughals or Durrani, erected an edifice or two as memorial during their rule, in order to be remembered by the posterity. For instance, many monuments of Buddhist origin are still visible in the city and valley of Peshawar at large. Mughals being culturally rich and versatile focused on building beautiful architectural pieces all over their empire, of which Peshawar was an important part. Their main contribution in Peshawar was Shalimar garden, Masjid Mahabat Khan, Garden of Ali Mardan Khan and the reconstruction of Bala Hissar on its present location. After the Mughal, Peshawar became part of the Durrani empire right from its start and remained as its part and parcel till the end.

During the Durrani rule, Peshawar had been elevated to higher status, as a province and its main city which was also called Peshawar, as a winter capital. Therefore, it had further been recorded that the nobility and many other families of prominence moved to this area and built houses and other buildings, which were beautifully constructed. They also laid some gardens and built reservoirs, where people would go to amuse



themselves.

However, very few remnants are visible at present. Of the monumental legacy of Durrani only the Wazir Bagh, which was laid out by the famous Fateh Khan Barakzai, the Wazir of Shah Mahmood.

In brief, the monumental legacy of Durrani is hard to be traced in totality because it was destroyed by the Sikh annual visitations for extracting the revenues from the locals.

### **Conclusion**

The founder of Durrani Empire Ahmad Shah Durrani was a good combination of warrior and political leader who not only undertook series of successful conquests in India, Persia and Central Asia but also laid down foundation of an Afghan empire which though disintegrated in the first quarter of 19<sup>th</sup> century but Afghanistan as a political entity continued its journey and the ruling dynasty also remained in power only shifting the rein of power from one house to the other of the same line of ancestry.

History is replete with the facts that Durrani's maintained the control on the region with their military strength therefore were more focused on military strategies and tactics especially as observed in the Ahmed Shah's rule. Peshawar came into the possession of the Durrani when Ahmad Shah, won it from Nasir Khan, in 1748. Peshawar was one of the fifteen *Hokumat-e-Ala* i.e. smaller provinces, of the Durrani Empire which had eight *villayats* or bigger provinces. Peshawar strengthened the glory of Durrani's because expeditions against India were carried out through this area and people of this region by joining Durrani's military force increased its capacity, quality and quantity. Peshawar was of immense importance to Durrani leaders and thus, was made winter capital in the reign of Taimur Shah in 1773.

The analyses of the literary and cultural activities of Durrani in Peshawar have revealed that very limited initiatives were taken in this regard because the major focus of the Durrani was in creating military might and carrying out successful expeditions. It is pertinent to mention here that men of letters have called the Durrani period, an age barren of excellence in poetry and prose. Different reasons could be amounted to the negligence of arts and literature in the Durrani period but the most important one is the missing of court patronization of arts and literature. It was this very reason which not only greatly jeopardized the progress of

arts and literature but also affected the motivation of poets. However, despite the constraints and lack of support Ahmed Shah Durrani's period also saw the work of some prominent poets and authors that included Nurul-Ain Waqif, Nizamuddin Ishrat-Shah Nama-e-Ahmedi, Mohammad Mosani-Tarikh-e-Ahmed Shah, Imam-ud-din Hussaini-Tarikh-e-Ahmed Shah Durrani, Qazi Nur Mohammad-Jang Nama, Qabil Orakzai-Manajat, Tehmas Khan Tehmas, Pir Mohamad Kakar and Faiz Mohammad Kakar. If Ahmed Shah and the subsequent Durrani leaders had given royal patronage to the literary activities, history would have seen more poets of prominence in that era and more contributions would have been registered. Similarly on private level, if more efforts were under taken for patronization like Mian Umer Sahib and his illustrious sons did, the results would have been different.

Although Peshawar after gaining importance as Winter Capital attracted many being a cultural hub, but still a significant hallmark is missing in the culture development of the region during Durrani period. The notable work of Durrani can only be seen in the form of Wazir Bagh and the renovation of Balahisaar. Regretfully architecture did not attain higher watermark in Durrani rule as seen in the period of Mughal ruler Shah Jehan whose period is regarded as the 'golden period of Indian architecture.' Perhaps it is due to the fact that Durrani rule was only for 71 years and only for 45 years Peshawar was their second winter capital and during this period their primary focus was on enhancing the military might with the intentions of increased military expeditions along with dealing the internal insurgencies which were threatening the Durrani Empire. Moreover, when Sikhs got control over the region all the edifices erected by the Durrani were incinerated leaving little or no trails of Durrani's way of life.

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