

**THE CULTURAL PROFILE OF  
DISTRICT KHYBER (PAKISTAN): IN THE LIGHT OF  
RECENT ARCHAEOLOGICAL DISCOVERIES**

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**PART ONE TEXT**

**DEPARTMENT OF ARCHAEOLOGY**

**UNIVERSITY OF PESHAWAR**

**(2025)**

## CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

This is to certify that the research work presented in this thesis entitled “**THE CULTURAL PROFILE OF DISTRICT KHYBER (PAKISTAN): IN THE LIGHT OF RECENT ARCHAEOLOGICAL DISCOVERIES**” was conducted by Mr. Bilal Khan Afridi in supervision of Prof. Dr. Muhammad Naeem Qazi.

Furthermore, the scholar undertakes that no part of this thesis has been submitted anywhere else for any other degree. This thesis is submitted to the Department of Archaeology, University of Peshawar, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Field of Archaeology.

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### **Dedicated to:**

To my dearest parents, my Brothers Mohammad Farooq Afridi and Shahzad Khan Afridi, my precious sister, my beloved Wife, my kids Alam Khan Afridi, Sabal Khan Afridi, Asenith Bint Bilal Afridi, and my elder brother, Faisal Khan Afridi (Late), I would not have come this far without your unwavering prayers, boundless support, and unconditional love. Your sacrifices, guidance, and the warmth of your presence have shaped me into who I am today. Every step I take forward, I carry your love and strength within me, and I am forever grateful to all of you.

#### **My Beloved Brother, Faisal Khan Afridi**

Faisal Lala...

No words will ever be enough.

Your absence is a silence that screams in every corner of my heart. Not a single day passes without me longing for your voice, your laughter, and your presence that once made everything feel safe. You were not just my brother, you were my protector, my strength, my Guidance, my home.

Though you now dwell in the unseen, I feel your spirit in the quiet moments in the wind, in the sky, in my tears. You still guide me; you still inspire me. Your love echoes in everything I do, and your legacy lives on in the choices I make, in the battles I fight, in the dreams I dare to chase.

The world has moved on, but my heart is still frozen in the moment I lost you. You are a part of my soul now, the most sacred, untouchable part. I carry you with me, always.

May Allah grant you the highest place in Jannah.

May your grave be a garden of peace.

Moreover, may I someday meet you again, with a smile, not tears.

Ameen.

## **Author's Declaration**

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I find myself at a loss for words to fully express my deepest gratitude to the Almighty Allah, whose infinite mercy and countless blessings have enabled me to complete this challenging academic journey. Without His divine guidance, none of this would have been possible.

It is with immense honour that I extend my heartfelt thanks to **Prof. Dr. Muhammad Naeem**, my esteemed research supervisor at the Department of Archaeology, University of Peshawar. His scholarly insight, patient mentorship, and unwavering support have been instrumental in guiding me through every phase of this project. His trust in my abilities, even during moments of self-doubt, will always be remembered with sincere appreciation.

I extend my sincere gratitude to **Prof. Dr. Zakirullah Jan**, Chairman, Department of Archaeology, University of Peshawar, for his continued encouragement and institutional support throughout my academic journey. I am also profoundly thankful to **Prof. Dr. Gul Rahim Khan**, my former MPhil supervisor, whose early mentorship laid the foundation for my research vision. Their guidance and belief in my potential have been a lasting source of motivation and academic inspiration.

I would also like to express special thanks to my dear friends and well-wishers who stood by me with encouragement and wisdom, especially **Dr. Fazal Ghani**, **Mr. Asim Amin**, and **Dr. Jan Mohammad**. Their constant support helped me persevere and stay committed to achieving my research goals.

With deepest love and respect, I owe everything to my **parents, sister, and brothers**, Faisal Khan Afridi (Late), Farooq Afridi, and Shazad Khan Afridi, and to my **beloved wife and Kids**. Their endless prayers, love, and emotional strength have been the foundation upon which this achievement rests. The absence of my dearest brother **Faisal Khan Afridi**, whose memory still walks with me in silence, made this journey more painful yet more meaningful. His spirit continues to guide and inspire me. **May Allah grant him the highest place in Jannah and eternal peace. Ameen.**

This work is dedicated to them, for their sacrifices, their belief in me, and the love that made this journey possible.

**Bilal Khan Afridi**

## **ABSTRACT**

This dissertation presents an integrated archaeological and historical investigation of District Khyber, Pakistan, a region strategically positioned at the intersection of South, Central, and West Asia. For millennia, Khyber has functioned as a critical corridor for military campaigns, trade networks, cultural interaction, and the transmission of major religious traditions. Despite its significance, the region's archaeological record has remained insufficiently studied due to prolonged political instability, security constraints, and administrative neglect. This research addresses that gap through systematic fieldwork and interdisciplinary analysis.

The study is based on extensive archaeological surveys, surface collections, photographic documentation, and sustained engagement with local tribal communities. As a result, approximately 285 previously undocumented archaeological sites were recorded, while numerous known sites were verified through secondary sources and local informants. These sites span a broad chronological range, including prehistoric settlements, protohistoric burial grounds, Achaemenian-period administrative remains, Greek and Indo-Greek numismatic evidence, and substantial Kushan-era cultural deposits. The findings allow the identification of distinct phases of settlement and cultural development, highlighting periods of intense cosmopolitan interaction alongside phases of cultural resilience and regional autonomy.

Archaeological data are integrated with a critical historiographical review assessing the contributions and limitations of early scholars such as Court, Cunningham, Stein, and Dani. While acknowledging their foundational work, the dissertation critiques the descriptive and surface-oriented nature of earlier approaches and advances a more rigorous methodology that combines archaeological fieldwork with remote sensing, Geographic Information Systems (GIS), and ethnographic inquiry.

A central theme of the research is the relationship between material culture, political authority, and tribal social organization. The evidence demonstrates that sustained external political control over Khyber was historically fragile, resulting in enduring patterns of indirect governance and tribal autonomy shaped by geography and social structure. The study also explores the economic and religious importance of the Khyber Pass, particularly its role in ancient trade and the spread of Buddhism and Islam.

Finally, the dissertation evaluates the long-term impacts of British colonial infrastructure and fortifications and their implications for present-day heritage management. In light of post-merger administrative changes, it argues for a comprehensive heritage protection framework emphasizing site preservation, community participation, and sustainable heritage tourism. Overall, the study significantly enhances understanding of Khyber's role in broader South and Central Asian historical processes.



## TABLE OF CONVERSION

|       |        |       |     |       |        |
|-------|--------|-------|-----|-------|--------|
| A/a   | ا      | H/h   | ه/ہ | P/p   | پ      |
| Ā/ā   | آ      | I/i   | ی   | Ph/ph | پھ     |
| B/b   | ب      | Ī/ī   | ای  | q     | ق      |
| Bh/bh | بھ     | J/j   | ج   | r     | ر      |
| C/c   | چ      | Jh/jh | جھ  | R/r   | ڑ      |
| Ch/ch | چھ     | K/k   | ک   | S/s   | س      |
| D/d   | د      | Kh/kh | خ   | Sh/sh | ش      |
| Dh/dh | دھ     | L/l   | ل   | T/t   | ت      |
| Ḍ/ḍ   | ڈ      | M/m   | م   | Th/th | تھ     |
| Ḍh/ḍh | ڈھ     | N/n   | ن   | Ṭ/ṭ   | ٹ      |
| E/e   | ا      | ñ     | ں   | Ṭh/ṭh | ٹھ     |
| F/f   | ف      | ṇ     | ن   | U/u   | او/و   |
| g     | گ      | ṇ     | ن   | Ū/ū   | وو/واو |
| Gh/gh | غ / گھ | O/o   | ا   | Z/z   | ض/ظ/ز  |

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## ABBREVIATIONS

|        |                                                                   |
|--------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| AD     | Anno Domini                                                       |
| AH     | After Hijra                                                       |
| CE     | Christian Era                                                     |
| CPEC   | China-Pakistan Economic Corridor                                  |
| KM     | Kilometer                                                         |
| LOC    | Line of Control                                                   |
| KPEC   | Khyber Peshawar Economic Corridor                                 |
| MFA    | Ministry of Foreign Affairs                                       |
| UN     | United Nations                                                    |
| UNESCO | United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization |
| UK     | United Kingdom                                                    |
| USA    | United States of America                                          |

## CHAPTER-I

### 1 INTRODUCTION

Modern-day Pakistan (see Map 1.1 in Part II) occupies a geo-strategically critical position at the intersection of Central Asia, the Iranian Plateau, and South Asia. It remains as a cultural and ecological corridor, functioning as a critical nexus; this region facilitated the interaction between the mountainous societies of the north, the agriculturally rich plains of the Indus Valley, and the maritime spheres along the Arabian Sea. Notably, it served as the heartland of the Indus Valley Civilization (circa 2600-1900 BCE), recognized as one of the world's earliest and most advanced urban cultures with key sites such as Mohenjo-daro, Harappa, and Dholavira revealing advanced hydraulic engineering, urban planning, standardized weights, and symbolic writing systems (Kenoyer, 1998, pp. 45-53; Possehl, 2002, pp. 16-21). Successive periods saw the arrival and integration of Indo-Aryan pastoralists, the Achaemenid imperial administration, Hellenistic expansion under Alexander the Great, and later syncretic Indo-Greek and Kushan polities, all of which contributed to a layered and hybrid cultural landscape (Dani, 1995, pp. 70-74; Bopearachchi, 1991, p. 118; Eggermont, 1975, p. 67).

The northwest of Pakistan, particularly the Gandhāra region, developed into a major centre of Buddhist intellectual and artistic activity from the 1st century BCE to the 5th century CE (Ahmad & Khan, pp.305-6, 2025). Although Gandhāra as a geographic and cultural entity emerged by the 6th century BCE, its civilizational rise is generally linked to the Mauryan period (305-185 BCE). (Samad, 2010) characterises the 4th century BCE to the 4th century CE as an age of remarkable cultural reproduction, shaped by the interaction of Hellenistic, Central Asian, Iranian, and Indian traditions. (Kuwayama, 2002, pp. 215-16) places Gandhāra's climax in the 4th and 5th centuries CE, noting that each phase contributed uniquely to its development. The Kushan period (1<sup>st</sup>-5th century CE), particularly under Kanishka, often compared to Ashoka for his effective governance, marked the high point of Gandhāra's cultural and artistic flourishing. Numerous monasteries, stupas, and sculptural workshops have been excavated at sites such as Taxila, Butkara, Takht-i-Bahi, and Jamal Garhi, testifying to the region's integration into transcontinental religious networks and the Silk Road economy (Marshall, 1960, pp. 217-230; Rosenfield, 1967, p. 95; Kuwayama, 2002, p. 215). Islamic conquests beginning in the 8th century CE introduced new political

orders and architectural traditions, with the Ghaznavids, Ghurids, Delhi Sultanate, and later the Mughals leaving behind a rich Islamic material legacy from Uch and Multan to Lahore and Thatta (Dani, 2001, pp. 140-144; Flood, 2009, pp. 73-76). Despite its dense archaeological potential, significant areas remain poorly documented or archaeologically uninvestigated due to political instability, illicit antiquities trade, and inadequate institutional resources (Ali & Qazi, 2008, p. 133; Khan, 2014, pp. 18-20). However, ongoing research using remote sensing, GIS-based surveys, and interdisciplinary collaboration is beginning to address these lacunae and reshape the historical understanding of Pakistan's role in ancient, medieval, and early modern global exchanges.

The Khyber Pass (see Map 1.5 in Part II) is undoubtedly one of the most striking physical features on the face of the Earth that links the North-West of the Vale of Peshawar with surrounding areas include Khyber pass in the west to modern Afghanistan, and the Kohat pass in the South, leading to the Kohat Basin (Young; Ali, 2007, p. 11). Numerous eminent historians and writers have paid rich tributes to its grandeur. It has been labelled as *"the most famous and the most strongly fortified mountain gorge on Earth, the grim gorge that connects the vast empire of Hindustan with the plateaus of Central Asia."* The poet Hafez Jalandhari remarks, *"Neither the grass hither nor the flowers bloom. However, even the skies bow down to kiss this highland plume."* Similarly, James W. Spain (1963) noted that *"history hangs heavy on the Khyber and has left its mark upon its stones."* He poetically observes that the *"sombre stone, ground into dust of the Pass, contains Persian gold, Greek iron, Tartar leather, Mughal gems, Afghan silver and British steel. All have watered it with their blood."* (Caroe, 1958, p. 3; Dupree, 1973, p. 18; Ewans, 2002, p. 27; Rasanayagam, 2012, p. 11).

To Lowell Thomas (1931), it is "a valley of sudden death," a pass that has likely witnessed more violence and bloodshed than any other on Earth. This pass, leading from India Traversing the Safed Koh range and extending into the rugged highlands of Afghanistan and Bukhara, this corridor has long functioned as a principal conduit for successive waves of invasion and migration (Thomas, 1931, p. 47; Dani, 2001, p. 67; Ewans, 2002, p. 25; Allen, 2000, p. 15). Historically, it has operated as the primary passageway through which external powers have entered the Indian subcontinent, shaping its political, cultural, and demographic landscape from antiquity onward, and

the road traversing it is among the oldest on the planet. Through it came migrating hordes of early Aryans, the first wave of people to descend into the Indo Gangetic plains (Churchill, 1899, p. 5). *"If these walls and frowning cliffs could speak, what tales they could tell!"* Tamerlane and the Tartars rode down this gorge, as did Babar and Akbar, both commanding armies through this historic route (Dani, 2001, p. 69; Dupree, 1973, p. 23; Allen, 2000, p. 18; Richards, 1995, p. 12).

The Khyber Pass continues to stand as one of the most important and strategically vital mountain corridors in Asia, arguably even on a global scale. According to the Imperial Gazetteer of India (1909), it is referred to as *"the celebrated pass"* and *"the great northern route from Afghanistan into India."* Spain (1963) calls it *"the most historic of all the passes of the world, tortuous enough and fortified enough to satisfy the most ardent romanticist."* He continues, *"One of the best-known places on Earth, the all-important Khyber, has hosted over millennia a cosmopolitan flow of travellers, from Darius the Persian's satraps to today's busloads of European and Japanese tourists. It continues to play a crucial role in facilitating trade and communication between Pakistan and India to this day (Spain, 1963, p. 22; Dani, 2001, p. 72; Allen, 2000, p. 21; Rasanayagam, 2012, p. 17)."*

The long-range campaigns of historical figures such as Alexander the Great highlight the endurance of the Khyber's significance. *"When we recall that we are not some mere hundreds of miles from Europe but several thousand"* (Caroe, 1958, p. 7; Spain, 1963, p. 25). It seems remarkable that Alexander could have led his army from Macedonia, through Persia and Afghanistan, across the Khyber Pass and into India (Keay, 2000, pp. 94-97). The pass links the Trans Oxiana valleys with the Indo-Gangetic plains, allowing intermingling and integration that shaped the course of Asian history. The one-directional movement through this pass has characterised much of the historical power dynamics in South and Central Asia. As Spain observes, *"The Khyber romance goes on and on."* (Spain, 1963, p. 27). Its story is deeply embedded in the annals of history and will likely continue to be so for centuries.

Administratively, the Khyber Pass is part of the Khyber District (part II, Map 1.4), which was formerly a unit of the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) of country, now incorporated into Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (see Map 1.2 in Part II), Province following the 18<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment (Gazdar, 2020, p. 87; International Crisis Group, 2018, p. 3; Government of Pakistan, 2012, p. 14) and district Khyber being

declared as part of Peshawar division (see Map 1.3 in Part II). Khyber District encompasses a total area of 2,576 square kilometres and, according to the 7th National Census conducted in 2023, is home to an estimated population of 1,146,267 individuals. It is divided into three Tehsils: Jamrud, Landi Kotal, and Bara (see Map 1.4 in Part II). A significant portion of the district includes previously closed and inaccessible regions such as Tirah, Bazaar Zakha Khel, and Chora, which are now gradually being opened through development initiatives, including road construction.

The population consists of Pashtun tribes, further divided into sub tribes, clans (kandi), and khels. The district retains a special legal and administrative status, and its residents adhere to traditional Pashtun customs, known as Riway or Pakhtunwali. This legal and social framework distinguishes them from inhabitants of Pakistan's settled districts.

The Khyber Pass has been central to many historical invasions of the Indian subcontinent, involving Aryans, Alexander of Macedon, Mahmood of Ghazni, Tamerlane, the Mughals, and the Durrani (Dani, 2001, p. 68; Dupree, 1973, p. 41; Allen, 2000, p. 35; Richards, 1995, p. 19). It remains famous for its role as a gateway through which these forces entered the subcontinent. The name "Khyber" is derived from a Hebrew word meaning "a castle," reflecting its role as a stronghold (Caroe, 1958, p. 12; Bellew, 1864, p. 30; Spain, 1963, p. 33; Morgenstierne, 1973, p. 155). Ancient Chinese travellers such as Fa Hien and Hiuen Tsang also mention the pass in their writings from 500-700 AD and the surrounding of the Peshawar vale (Young; Ali 2007, p. 11). The region is home to the Ali Masjid Stupa (Khyber Tope), among other Buddhist ruins, serving as archaeological evidence of its past religious and cultural significance (Beal, 1884, pp. 104-06; Dani, 2001, p. 145; Kuwayama, 2002, p. 210; Marshall, 1960, p. 213).

The Tirah Valley is the homeland of the Afridi tribes, which is also mentioned in the Avesta, the sacred Zoroastrian scripture, which dates back two to three millennia (Caroe, 1958, p. 65; Gnoli, 1989, p. 51; Vogelsang, 2002, p. 96; Hussain, 2017, p. 29). A place called Sitirah in the Avesta refers to a mountainous region believed to be Tirah. According to the text, the sacred plant Soma was divinely sent to this very soil. Mentioned in paragraph 6 and Chapter 10 of the Avesta, Tirah is described as a peak that "reaches the sky and the stars (Boyce, 2001, p. 112; Vogelsang, 2002, p. 97; Darmesteter, 1895, p. 78)."

Among the principal tribes in the Khyber District are the Afridi, Shinwari, Shalmani, Mullagori, and Stori Khel. The Afridis, recognised as the dominant tribal group of the region, are organised into several major sub-tribes, including Adam Khel, Aka Khel, Kamar Khel, Kuki Khel, Malikdin Khel, Qambar Khel, and Zakha Khel, which collectively occupy nearly the entirety of Khyber District. These tribes traditionally manage their affairs through *Riwaj* and *Jirga* (tribal council), with government oversight provided through the office of the District Commissioner (formerly the Political Agent), headquartered in Peshawar with a sub-office in Landikotal.

The region is administratively supervised by a Deputy Commissioner (formerly Political Agent), assisted by a Tehsildar, Naib Tehsildar, and clerical staff (Moharrirs). Security and law enforcement are handled by Khassadars (local tribal police), Khyber Rifles, and Mehsud Scouts, stationed at strategic locations in Landikotal and Bara. Beyond the paved roads, much of the territory is governed through tribal chieftains known as Maliks, or Spin Gireh (white bearded elders), who hold hereditary privileges (known as *lungi* and *muajib*).

The customary Pakhtunwali code is central to the governance and social behaviour of the region. It includes values such as *nang* (honour), *badal* (revenge), *melmastiya* (hospitality), *jirga* (council), *iyari* (conduct), *nanawatai* (plea for pardon), *tiga* (truce), *hamsaya* (protégé), *rikkat* (balance), *ghairat* (dignity), *saritsta* (collective decision), and *tarboor* (rival cousin). These principles reflect a unique and self-sustained socio-legal order, often resistant to external governance.

Economically, the Khyber region is underdeveloped. Except for the irrigated parts of Bara, most of the terrain is barren and receives minimal rainfall. Economic opportunities are scarce, resulting in reliance on informal activities such as smuggling. Only three industrial units exist, all in Bara. Recently, the government has initiated infrastructure and social development projects in Tirah and other inaccessible areas under initiatives like the Khushal Pakistan Programme and the Food Support Programme.

### **1.1 Background of the Research**

Several early conquerors, travelers, and antiquarians, including Scylax of Caryanda (ca. 500 BCE), Herodotus (ca. 450 BCE), Zahiruddin Mohammad Babar (1505, 1526), Court (1836, 1839, 1841), Masson (1842), Burnes (1834), and Cunningham (1871,

1879), traversed the broader Khyber region in their attempts to reconstruct the routes of Alexander the Great (Eggermont, 1975, p. 52; Dani, 2001, p. 126; Vogelsang, 1992, p. 138; Bosworth, 1996, p. 84). Their primary concern was the identification of key locations and routes mentioned in ancient literary sources and the Buddhist pilgrimage records of Chinese monks such as Fa Hien, Sung Yun, and Hiuen Tsang during the 5th to 7th centuries CE (Beal, 1884, pp. 142-144; Legge, 1886, p. 56; Kuwayama, 2002, p. 215; Marshall, 1960, p. 217). These missions, while valuable, were limited in systematic archaeological scope and did not extend to systematic exploration of sites from non-Buddhist or later periods (Alram, 2014, pp. 261-291).

The structured archaeological engagement began with the Department of Archaeology at the University of Peshawar, under the pioneering leadership of Ahmad Hasan Dani (1962, 1968, 1992), whose preliminary surveys covered parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Although much of the early data remains unpublished, subsequent investigations by the Department of Archaeology and Museums, Government of Pakistan, provided valuable insights, particularly through the efforts of Rehman (1996, pp. 18-25) and Khattak (1997, pp. 12-15), who documented several Buddhist and Hindu Shahi period sites.

A survey conducted by the Planning & Development, FATA Secretariat in 2017-2018, under the "Khyber Peshawar Economic Corridor project" KPEC, reported a total of 172 archaeological and heritage sites to be protected during the construction of the KPEC express highway in Jamrud, Landi Kotal, and Bara tehsil. Subsequently, a preliminary field survey by the Directorate of Archaeology and Museums in 2018-2019 confirmed many of these earlier findings. In the same period (2018-2019), the present researcher undertook a more extensive survey by validating previously recorded archaeological sites in Jamrud, further adding 115. During the course of this research, a new survey culminated in the identification of approximately 285 previously undocumented archaeological sites across District Khyber (see Map 1.6-1.7 in Part II). In addition, 154 other sites could not be accessed or recorded due to prevailing social and security constraints within the region. Notably, the entire Rajgal area was rendered completely inaccessible by law enforcement agencies for security reasons; this region alone is reported to contain at least nine Buddhist stupas situated at different locations, the existence of which could only be corroborated through secondary sources and local informants.

Among the earliest material evidence of human presence are prehistoric lithic tools from Nanawar Cave (Plate 3.1 in Part II: Illustrations Plates) in Tirah Valley (see Map 1.7 in Part II), petroglyphs at Sher Bridge (3.3 Plate: Sher Bridge Petroglyphs at Sher Kali, Mullagori), and rock engravings at Lowara Miana (see 3.2 Plate: Chottra Rock Engraving at Lowara Maina, Mullagori). The discovery of Gandhāra Grave Culture elements at Shahkas in Jamrud offers an important anchor for understanding the region's protohistoric and early historic cultural evolution. These findings significantly enhance our understanding of the region's deep-time human occupation and align with earlier documentation of the broader Gandhāra cultural horizon.

This initial wave of settlement laid the groundwork for successive foreign incursions into the region. Over time, Khyber witnessed the dominion of a succession of empires: Achaemenid (558-327 BCE), Greek/Macedonian under Alexander (327-305 BCE), Mauryan (305-190 BCE), Indo-Greek and Bactrian (190-90 BCE), Indo-Scythian, Indo-Parthian (90 BCE-64 CE), and Kushan (64-460 CE) polities (Nasim Khan, 2006, pp. 47-49; Cunningham, 1879, pp. 91-94). These were followed by the incursions and rule of Sassanians, Kidarites, Hephthalites, Turk Shahis, and finally, the Hindu Shahis.

Despite the wealth of historical and cultural transformations associated with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, a comprehensive archaeological profile of District Khyber has remained conspicuously absent. This omission stems from a convergence of factors: the region's complex tribal and socio-cultural makeup, longstanding security concerns, and a systemic neglect by heritage management institutions, both pre- and post-independence.

Since Pakistan's inception, District Khyber has remained at the periphery of national archaeological research agendas, despite being home to critical transit corridors and settlement zones of immense historical consequence for South and Central Asia. This sustained academic oversight underscores the urgency and value of recent archaeological efforts, which aim to rectify the lacunae and provide a robust, empirically grounded reconstruction of Khyber's cultural profile.

## **1.2 The Role of Archaeology in Cultural and Archaeological Studies of Khyber**

Archaeology has long been closely intertwined with cultural and historical studies, playing a pivotal role in understanding past societies (Renfrew & Bahn, 2016, pp. 10-12). In Khyber, the discipline is increasingly significant in uncovering the region's



heritage. Initially an antiquarian pursuit, especially with the arrival of the British in the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent, archaeology was formally recognised as a scientific discipline in 1861 (Singh, 2008, pp. 5-7). This transformation resulted in the founding of the Archaeological Survey of India and ushered in a period of systematic archaeological research, including focused investigations in the Khyber region (Cunningham, 1871; Marshall, 1931). Early focus centred on tracing the routes of Alexander the Great and identifying towns and stūpas mentioned by Chinese pilgrims such as Hiuen Tsang, Sung Yun, and Fa Hien (Foucher, 1915, pp. 9-15). The antiquarian interest of this period laid the foundation for more systematic studies by archaeologists like Cunningham, who established the Archaeological Survey of India in 1861 (Singh, 2008, pp. 6-8), and by Marshall, who, together with Cunningham, helped unearth significant sites in Gandhāra, overlapping with modern-day Khyber (Marshall, 1960, pp. 13-18). These excavations yielded Buddhist monuments, numismatic evidence, and sculptures, all of which have contributed to the region's cultural and historical understanding (Marshall, 1960, pp. 77-78; Dani, 1992, pp. 121-122).

Archaeology in Khyber serves as a crucial medium for documenting the region's material culture and reconstructing the civilisations that once thrived there. The region has experienced successive waves of empire and civilisation, spanning from prehistoric cultures and protohistoric societies to the Achaemenian Empire, the Greeks under Alexander the Great, the Mauryan dynasty, the Indo-Greeks, and others (Dani, 2007, pp. 18-22). Serving as a strategic gateway between South Asia and Central Asia, the Khyber Pass enabled the passage of these ancient peoples and polities, resulting in a rich archaeological record of material remains. Archaeological discoveries, stūpas, sculptures, coins, and inscriptions attest to the region's intense cultural exchange and cross-cultural dynamics (Olivieri, 1996).

In the 20th century, archaeological efforts gained momentum with the establishment of dedicated institutions such as the Department of Archaeology, University of Peshawar, and the Directorate of Archaeology and Museums (DOAM) in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (Dani, 2008, pp. 45-48). Surveys revealed hundreds of previously undocumented sites, highlighting Khyber's importance in the subcontinent's archaeological landscape. Recent surveys, including those by the FATA Secretariat (2016-2017), identified approximately 26 archaeological sites in Jamrud, from both the British and Buddhist

periods, emphasising the region's early cultural expressions and the ongoing need for investigation (Rehman, 1996; Khattak, 1997).

A key contribution of archaeology in Khyber is its role in revealing the material and spiritual life of ancient populations. Sites such as the Shpola Stupa, the nine unique stūpas of Ali Masjid, and Buddhist monasteries are vital for understanding the religious beliefs, social structures, and artistic achievements of past civilisations (Dani, 2007, pp. 98-100). Archaeological studies have illuminated the spread of Buddhism, particularly under the Kushans, who facilitated its dissemination across Central and South Asia (Fussman, 1987, pp. 43-44; Faccenna, 1980, pp. 78–81).

Despite these strides, the archaeological profile of Khyber remains underdeveloped. Early explorations were often haphazard, focused on routes and Buddhist pilgrimage sites (Dani, 2008, pp. 51-54), hampered by the lack of modern tools and systematic documentation, as well as political instability and inaccessibility during much of the 20th century. The region's exclusion from national archaeological priorities since independence is attributable to socio-cultural complexities, security dynamics, and governmental neglect. This underscores the urgent need for focused, state-sponsored archaeological missions to integrate Khyber into Pakistan's broader heritage narrative (Dani, 1992, p. 18).

The archaeological record of Khyber holds immense potential for understanding its pre-Islamic history, including early Indo Aryan migrations (Frawley, 2025, p. 28). Evidence suggests that Rig Vedic Aryans likely entered Khyber around 1600-1400 BCE, laying the groundwork for Hinduism and other Indo Aryan religions (Parpola, 1988, p. 220; Fosse, 2005, p. 205). The region also bears marks of later Achaemenian, Greek, Mauryan, and Scytho-Parthian invasions, whose legacies remain visible in the area's archaeological sites (Cunningham, 1879, pp. 78-83).

Today, archaeology in Khyber is not only a tool for reconstructing the past, but also for fostering cultural awareness and heritage tourism. Recent discoveries have the potential to attract global scholars and visitors, but preservation is crucial as sites face threats from development, looting, and degradation. Community involvement is essential for long-term sustainability (UNESCO, 2014; Khan & Olivieri, 2018). In summary, archaeology has played a central role in uncovering Khyber's rich and

complex history, and continued research and preservation are vital for ensuring that this cultural legacy is accessible to future generations.

### **1.3 Research Questions**

This study is guided by the following central research questions, each of which has been critically examined and addressed through fieldwork, archival research, and archaeological analysis:

1. Why has the Khyber District remained largely omitted from sustained archaeological research and exploration over the past several decades, and why has it failed to feature prominently in mainstream archaeological discourse since the inception of archaeological studies in South Asia?
2. What have been the key cultural, political, and social factors contributing to the emergence, development, and eventual decline of ancient civilisations in the Khyber District, and why does a coherent archaeological or historical chronology documenting these phases remain absent?
3. To what extent can the decline of ancient societies in the Khyber region be understood through archaeological evidence, and how has the absence of an established historical chronology hindered a more nuanced appreciation of the region's cultural evolution and lasting heritage?
4. How can the integration of recent archaeological discoveries with earlier historical and cultural data contribute to reconstructing a comprehensive chronological framework for District Khyber and inform future heritage management and conservation strategies?

These questions are addressed in detail throughout this dissertation to fill existing scholarly gaps, constructing a foundational archaeological chronology for the region and critically assessing the factors underlying its historical neglect and cultural marginalisation.

### **1.4 Objectives of the Research**

The present research aims to address the long-standing gaps in the archaeological understanding of District Khyber, a region of immense historical and cultural significance that has remained largely underexplored despite its central location in the cultural corridor of South and Central Asia. Previous investigations have been limited

in scope and coverage, often focusing on isolated sites, thereby leaving the region's broader chronological and cultural development insufficiently defined.

In light of this, the current study seeks to undertake a comprehensive archaeological investigation designed to reconstruct the chronological framework, cultural sequence, and historical narrative of District Khyber. The research emphasizes systematic fieldwork, documentation, and analysis of material evidence, integrating both newly discovered and previously recorded data to enhance the regional archaeological record.

- To conduct a comprehensive archaeological survey of District Khyber, including the exploration of newly discovered sites and the systematic gathering of data for further analysis.
- To establish a chronological sequence of cultural and historical developments at the newly discovered archaeological sites, incorporating recent findings and contextualizing them within their appropriate historical framework.
- To assess the impact of recent archaeological discoveries on our understanding of the ancient civilizations that once inhabited the region, particularly those that may have been overlooked in past academic studies.
- To critically examine historical literature and enrich the previously established chronological and cultural background with new data gathered during the proposed survey.
- To systematically incorporate both earlier and present evidence in order to reconstruct a dynamic and comprehensive cultural narrative of the research area.
- To map the archaeological sites of District Khyber for ease of reference by future researchers and scholars.
- To provide recommendations for future archaeological research, identify significant sites for protection under the Antiquities Act, and propose strategies to promote heritage tourism in Khyber, thereby contributing to the socio-economic development of the region.

### 1.5 Statements of Problems

The region of District Khyber, owing to its strategic position as a mountainous corridor between Central and South Asia, has historically served as a vital passage for armies, traders, monks, and migrating tribes. Despite its well-established geopolitical significance, persistent ambiguity surrounds the extent and nature of direct political control exerted over this region across various historical epochs. While numerous ancient and medieval empires, including the Achaemenids, Greeks, Mauryans, Kushans, Ghaznavids, and Mughals, are believed to have traversed or influenced the Khyber region, definitive archaeological or textual evidence confirming sustained administrative control remains sparse and fragmented.

This lack of clarity has led to the marginalisation of Khyber within broader historical and archaeological discourse. The region is frequently referenced merely as a route or conduit, rather than as a distinct administrative or cultural zone with its own political identity and historical context. Major historical narratives often neglect the possibility that Khyber may have hosted semi-autonomous or local polities, functioning independently or as loosely affiliated frontier territories. Furthermore, existing historiography has seldom reconciled the region's oral traditions, tribal governance systems, and archaeological remains with mainstream interpretations of imperial dominion and state formation.

Compounding this historiographical silence is the underrepresentation of District Khyber in archaeological research. For over two centuries, the region has been largely absent from systematic exploration, in stark contrast to adjacent areas such as Gandhāra (Peshawar Valley) or eastern Afghanistan, which have attracted sustained academic interest. Even monumental structures such as the Shpola Stupa or Buddhist sites in Jamrud have received limited scholarly attention, and recent discoveries, including Gandhāran sculptures, gold repoussé panels, and architectural remnants, remain insufficiently studied or contextualised. Thus, the problem is not only the historical ambiguity regarding political control over the region, but also the historiographical neglect that has perpetuated this uncertainty.

This dissertation, titled "The Cultural Profile of District Khyber (Pakistan): In the Light of Recent Archaeological Discoveries," seeks to address this critical gap by synthesising archaeological, numismatic, architectural, and oral historical sources to reassess Khyber's historical context. It critically examines why dominant empires may

have deliberately avoided centralised governance in the region, instead relying on indirect control through tribal intermediaries. In doing so, this study aims to reposition District Khyber not merely as a corridor of conquest, but as a politically nuanced frontier zone, characterised by localised systems of authority, a distinct cultural identity, and a complex historical role within the broader civilizational exchanges of South and Central Asia. Ultimately, this research aspires to contribute to a more nuanced and integrated understanding of the region's place within regional and transregional histories.

### **1.5.1 Research Problems Addressed in This Dissertation**

#### **a) Lack of Application of Modern Archaeological Methods.**

Early explorers did not employ modern tools and techniques, including GPS coordinates, GIS-based cartographic mapping, systematic surface collection, material culture analysis, architectural drawings, or photographic documentation. This methodological shortcoming resulted in datasets that were incomplete, non-replicable, and poorly contextualised.

#### **b) Divergence of Research Objectives**

Previous investigations were characterised by isolated and divergent aims, such as tracing Alexander the Great's route to the Indus, identifying stūpas mentioned by Chinese and Tibetan pilgrims, documenting tribal genealogies, or recording Buddhist rock art. The absence of a unified research framework led to fragmented findings that often failed to address broader cultural and historical narratives.

#### **c) Absence of Cultural Chronology Reconstruction**

No concerted effort was made to reconstruct a coherent cultural and chronological sequence for District Khyber. While stūpa sites near Shpola and Ali Masjid were reported by Alexander Burnes (Burnes, 1804, p. 41), their potential for establishing a stratified cultural sequence remains unrealised due to the lack of systematic excavation.

#### **d) Loss of Artefact Context Due to Illicit Antiquities Trade**

Numerous artefacts, including punch-marked coins and stucco sculptures reported by locals, have entered the illicit antiquities market without formal documentation. This

loss of context has impeded academic interpretation and permanently erased significant data regarding site provenance and cultural stratigraphy.

**e) Disconnection Between Local Knowledge and Archaeological Research**

Local oral traditions, toponyms, and tribal historical memory have not been sufficiently integrated into formal archaeological narratives. This omission has resulted in partial and externally imposed interpretations of Khyber's heritage landscape (Dani, 1997, pp. 21-26).

**f) Absence of a Centralised Archaeological Database**

There is no comprehensive digital repository or centralised GIS database for documenting the archaeological heritage of District Khyber. Existing data are dispersed across institutional archives, private collections, and field notes, rendering them largely inaccessible for comparative research and heritage management (Khattak, 1997).

**g) Lack of Multidisciplinary Research Methodologies**

The study of Khyber's archaeological record has rarely incorporated multidisciplinary techniques such as remote sensing, geoarchaeology, archaeobotany, or environmental archaeology. These methods are critical for understanding site formation processes, ecological contexts, and long-term cultural evolution (Olivieri, 1996; Khan & Olivieri, 2018).

**h) Widespread Looting and Illicit Trade**

Rampant looting and the ongoing, unregulated trade in artefacts continue to threaten archaeological sites across Khyber. The absence of monitoring, enforcement, and public awareness has facilitated the removal of valuable objects from their contexts, causing irreversible loss to the region's material history (UNESCO, 2014).

**i) Scholarly Bias and Historiographical Neglect**

District Khyber has been consistently overlooked in comparison to more intensively studied regions such as Swat, Taxila, and the Peshawar Valley. It has often been depicted merely as a passageway rather than as a culturally and politically significant region. This historiographical bias has marginalised Khyber's contributions to South and Central-Asian history (Dani, 1997, p. 25).

#### **j) Lack of Standardised Typological Frameworks for Artefacts**

Unlike other regions, Khyber lacks standardised typologies for ceramics, coins, lithic tools, and architectural remains. This deficit has resulted in inconsistent classification and hindered comparative analyses with established regional cultural sequences.

#### **k) Under documentation of Sacred Landscapes**

Religious and sacred landscapes, including pre-Buddhist, Vedic, Islamic, and tribal shrines or burial grounds, remain underexplored. Existing studies have focused predominantly on monumental discoveries, often neglecting the broader spectrum of ritual and spiritual heritage across the region.

#### **l) Minimal Involvement of Local Stakeholders**

Local institutions, universities, tribal elders, and community leaders have been largely excluded from archaeological research, heritage management, and preservation initiatives. This lack of participatory engagement has weakened conservation outcomes and alienated the communities most directly connected to Khyber's heritage. The present study addresses this gap through inclusive fieldwork strategies and active collaboration with local stakeholders.

### **1.6 Significance of Research**

The Khyber region, situated at the confluence of South, Central, and West Asia, has historically functioned as a critical corridor for trade, migration, and cultural exchange. This unique geographical positioning has contributed to a layered cultural heritage, shaped by successive Prehistoric, Protohistoric, Achaemenian, Archaic Greeks, Graeco-Bactrian, Buddhist, Hindu, Islamic, and British colonial civilisations. As such, Khyber is not only significant to Pakistan's national identity but is also crucial to the broader understanding of regional history, transcontinental connectivity, and intercultural dynamics.

Despite its rich and multidimensional history, Khyber's cultural heritage remains fragile, the product of prolonged conflict, intermittent trade, and cultural imposition. The preservation of this heritage necessitates a nuanced, interdisciplinary, and contextually informed approach, grounded in both archaeological evidence and cultural continuity.



Efforts to protect cultural heritage in District Khyber began under British colonial rule with the implementation of the Ancient Monuments Preservation Act of 1904. However, the Act had limited application in Khyber due to the region's distinct administrative structure under the Frontier Crimes Regulations (FCR) (Ahmad & Khan, Vol. V, 2025, pp. 224-233). As a result, many sites remained undocumented and unprotected.

Following the independence of Pakistan in 1947, legislative frameworks such as the Antiquities Act of 1975 and the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Antiquities Act of 2016 marked legal advancements in heritage management. However, these acts also exposed persistent gaps, particularly in territories with complex and exceptional administrative legacies, such as the Khyber region (Ahmad & Khan, Vol. V, 2025, pp. 224-233).

Between 1947 and 2018, Khyber was part of the FATA, governed by the federal government under the FCR (Frontier Crimes Regulations). This unique governance structure prioritised security and law enforcement over cultural preservation, creating a legal and administrative void. Consequently, numerous heritage sites faced neglect, illicit trade, and in some cases, deliberate destruction by extremist factions, especially those targeting non-Islamic cultural heritage.

The union of Ex-FATA with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province through the 18<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment (2018) extended provincial laws, including cultural protection legislation, to the Newly Merged Districts (NMDs). This shift has presented an unprecedented opportunity for systematic cultural documentation and preservation. However, challenges persist, including ineffective governance, limited funding, and slow infrastructural development, all of which continue to jeopardise the survival of the region's tangible and intangible cultural assets.

Khyber's intangible heritage is equally endangered. Indigenous languages such as Mankiyali and Torwali are rapidly disappearing. Religious heritage sites, Buddhist monasteries, and Islamic Sufi shrines are often neglected, vandalised, or encroached upon. In addition to conflict and socio-political instability, factors such as urbanisation, lack of documentation, and resource scarcity further imperil the region's cultural continuity.

The Khyber Pass, emblematic of the region's transregional role, has for millennia served as a Silk Road artery, facilitating the movement of goods, people, religions, and

empires. Preserving its legacy is essential to acknowledging Khyber's role in shaping global historical narratives.

Colonial representations have historically mischaracterised Pashtun society, reducing it to images of violence and tribalism, while ignoring indigenous systems such as Pashtunwali, which emphasise hospitality, honour, justice, and communal equilibrium. As such, the decolonisation of historical narratives, through the promotion of local oral traditions, community memory, and ethnographic interpretation, is necessary to foster cultural dignity and scholarly accuracy.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's tourism potential, especially heritage tourism, remains largely untapped. The region could serve as a platform for economic development, interfaith understanding, and community empowerment. Realising these potential demands requires comprehensive planning, modern digital tools, community participation, and infrastructure investment.

The recognition granted by UNESCO to Takht-i-Bahi illustrates the potential for other sites, such as the Khyber Pass, to gain international recognition. Current collaborations with countries such as the United States and China provide a framework for expanding partnerships; however, such efforts must be sustained, strategically managed, and community-led to be effective.

**Given this background, this study is necessary to:**

1. Highlight the urgent need for heritage protection in District Khyber, particularly in the post-merger context following the integration of FATA into Khyber Pakhtunkhwa;
2. Address historical governance and legal voids that previously left Khyber's cultural heritage vulnerable to neglect, looting, and destruction;
3. Emphasise the preservation of indigenous languages, oral traditions, and intangible cultural expressions alongside monuments and material remains;
4. Correct colonial misrepresentations by foregrounding authentic local perspectives and demonstrating the cultural resilience of the Pashtun communities;
5. Promote sustainable heritage tourism as a Mechanism for economic development, cultural revitalisation, and peace building in the region;

6. Advocate for stronger international recognition, including the nomination of additional sites (e.g., Khyber Pass, Khyber Railway) to the UNESCO World Heritage list;
7. Recommend strategies to enhance heritage governance, including legal reforms, increased resource allocation, participatory conservation models, and integration of digital technologies for long-term and sustainable preservation.

### **1.7 Research Design**

This dissertation utilises a qualitative, multi-method research design to investigate the cultural profile of District Khyber, Pakistan, considering recent archaeological discoveries. The study aims to elucidate how newly unearthed cultural materials intersect with the district's socio-political history, tribal dynamics, and evolving identity. As Strauss & Corbin (1998, p. 11) observe, qualitative research is particularly suited to inquiries where findings emerge through interpretation rather than statistical generalisation, an approach especially pertinent to cultural and archaeological investigations, wherein meanings are constructed through contextual and narrative analyses of artefacts, traditions, and collective memory.

A multi-method strategy is adopted, integrating archaeological interpretation, historical analysis, ethnographic fieldwork, and case study research. As Creswell (2009, p. 3) explains, a research design encompasses the philosophical orientation, methodological plan, and data collection strategies that guide an inquiry. This dissertation is grounded in an interpretivist framework, recognising that cultural symbols, traditions, and material heritage must be understood within their distinct socio-historical contexts.

The research employs a case study methodology (Gerring, 2004, p. 342; Yin, 2003, pp. 13-14) to examine selected archaeological sites and cultural landmarks in Jamrud, the Tirah Valley, and the vicinity of the Khyber Pass. These locations are treated as bounded units of analysis, providing critical insights into the enduring material and cultural legacies established by ancient civilisations, particularly those from the Prehistoric, Protohistoric, Achaemenian, Greek, Indo-Greek, and Indo-Parthian periods. Through these case studies, micro-level material evidence is systematically connected to macro-level historical narratives and political transformations, thereby illuminating the evolving cultural landscape of Khyber.

Ethnographic methods further enrich the inquiry by providing access to oral histories, tribal governance systems, ritual practices, and collective memory among communities such as the Afridis, Shalmanis, and Shinwaris. According to Hammersley and Atkinson (2007, p. 1) and Spradley (1980, p. 3), these ethnographic approaches are indispensable for uncovering indigenous knowledge systems and for capturing how present-day communities remember, interpret, and perpetuate their historical legacies.

An exploratory approach underpins the research, enabling a critical interrogation of academic narratives that have traditionally depicted Khyber as merely a militarised or tribal periphery. Rather than perpetuating such reductive frameworks, this study systematically investigates the region's intricate cultural strata, shaped by ancient trade routes, religious transitions, settlement patterns, and tribal confederacies. As Bhat (n.d.) emphasises, exploratory research is particularly effective in addressing under-researched or poorly defined issues, allowing for the re-evaluation of Gandhāran political and cultural legacies within Khyber, and facilitating the identification of previously undocumented sites and cultural continuities.

Historical analysis forms a foundational component, contextualising archaeological findings through a comprehensive examination of colonial records, imperial gazetteers, ancient manuscripts, and archival maps. This approach enables the tracing of the political evolution and cultural transformations of the Khyber region over time. Documentary sources are meticulously triangulated with fieldwork observations, visual documentation, and semi-structured interviews with tribal elders, local historians, and archaeologists, thereby ensuring a robust and multidimensional dataset.

In summary, the research design synthesises multiple qualitative methods to facilitate a comprehensive exploration of District Khyber's cultural identity. The integrated methodologies comprise:

- a) Archaeological case studies focused on site-specific analysis of structural remains, artefacts, and spatial organisation;
- b) Ethnographic fieldwork emphasising oral traditions, social practices, and indigenous interpretations of heritage;
- c) Historical and archival research tracing the region's cultural-political lineage;
- d) Exploratory interpretive analysis identifying patterns of cultural resilience, continuity, and transformation.

This methodological Synthesis elucidates how ancient civilisations, through both material culture and intangible heritage, have shaped the contemporary socio-cultural and political fabric of District Khyber. The research design effectively bridges archaeological discovery with cultural meaning-making, advancing scholarly understanding of a region long marginalised in mainstream historiography.

### **1.8 Methodology**

The present archaeological investigation employed an extensive pedestrian survey encompasses three tehsils and lasted for more than three years and utilising the classical field-walk method as the primary mode of data collection. A random search strategy was implemented to explore and identify archaeological sites throughout District Khyber systematically. Although transect or grid-based methods, which involve systematic movement along predefined gridlines, are often preferred for their precision (Renfrew & Bahn, 2016, p. 87), such approaches were impractical in this context due to the district's vast and rugged terrain. Therefore, a more adaptive and responsive pedestrian survey method was adopted, yielding a diverse and comprehensive array of site data.

Each tehsil, Jamrud, Bara, and Landi Kotal—along with all 43 union councils of District Khyber, was carefully surveyed one by one. Within every union council, archaeological sites were recorded according to their historical sequence. To make the survey more thorough and reliable, local elders, tribal members, and shepherds were engaged as key sources of information. Their firsthand knowledge helped in pinpointing, verifying, and better understanding the archaeological sites found in their areas. This community-based collaboration enriched the dataset and ensured both cultural sensitivity and accuracy in site identification (Smith & Wobst, 2005, p. 132).

For each recorded site, comprehensive information was gathered, including the site's name, its proximity to the nearest village or town, the relevant union council and tehsil, ownership status, estimated area, and site boundaries. The research team also established the maximum probable periods of occupation, the latest known use, the main access routes, the nearby water sources, the local nomenclature, the strategic importance, the elevation above sea level, and the precise GPS coordinates.

All exposed architectural and cultural features were photographed from multiple angles to ensure robust visual documentation. The recorded sites were subsequently mapped

using GPS data and Google Earth, resulting in the creation of a geo-referenced archaeological map of District Khyber.

During fieldwork, systematic surface examination was conducted to identify archaeological materials. Surface collections, including potsherds, lithics, and other datable artefacts, were retrieved for subsequent typological and chronological analysis. The survey also documented disturbances caused by antique dealers, modern construction, and illicit excavations, to publicly disseminate this information to promote site protection and heritage preservation (Darvill, 2008, pp. 223-224).

The data collected during the field survey were organised chronologically and are presented in Chapter 4 of this dissertation as a detailed archaeological inventory, following rigorous analysis, comparison, and evaluation. This dataset forms the foundation for reconstructing the archaeological background of District Khyber, drawing on multiple lines of evidence, including structural remains, surface-collected potsherds, locally reported coins, rock paintings, and Buddhist sculptures preserved both in situ and museum collections. Together, these data underpin a multi-layered cultural framework for interpreting the region's longstanding historical trajectory.

A crucial component of the investigation was the analysis of the geographical context of District Khyber. As outlined in Chapter 2, the research systematically documented the region's administrative divisions (tehsils and union councils), topographical features (hills, mountains, plains), hydrological systems (rivers, streams), and ancient routes and passes. Additional data were collected on land use, agriculture, climate, biodiversity (flora and fauna), population distribution, literacy rates, health infrastructure, and religious composition, all of which are essential to understanding the interplay between environmental conditions and cultural development (Butzer, 1982, p. 45).

Prior to fieldwork, an extensive literature review was conducted to identify references (See Chapter II) to the Khyber region in ancient texts and colonial-era accounts. The works of earlier antiquarians, travellers, and archaeologists were systematically reviewed and evaluated to contextualise the present study within a broader academic tradition. The findings of this review are detailed in Chapter 2.

Finally, Chapter 6 provides a series of recommendations and policy suggestions for the Government of Pakistan. These include initiating further archaeological exploration of

potentially significant sites, enforcing the Antiquities Act in vulnerable areas, and promoting sustainable heritage tourism as a strategy for economic development. By fostering responsible tourism and site protection, such initiatives could enhance local livelihoods and align cultural preservation with economic empowerment.

### **1.9 Limitations of the Research**

The current study offers a substantial contribution to the cultural and archaeological understanding of District Khyber; however, several limitations were encountered during fieldwork and analysis. These structural and contextual constraints influenced the overall scope, depth, and comprehensiveness of the research findings.

A primary limitation arose from the region's conservative socio-cultural dynamics. Tribal customs, gender-based restrictions, and prevailing community apprehensions frequently limited access to archaeological sites, particularly those in remote or culturally sensitive areas. In many instances, local communities either declined to disclose site locations or withheld permission for documentation due to spiritual beliefs, ancestral associations, or political sensitivities. Consequently, numerous potentially significant heritage sites could not be photographed or formally recorded, despite their mention through anecdotal evidence or informal channels. This limitation significantly restricted the breadth of empirical data collected for the study (cf. Atalay, 2012, p. 63).

Moreover, the region's security and geopolitical sensitivities posed considerable challenges. Portions of District Khyber, especially those bordering Afghanistan, remain strategically important and occasionally unstable. During the fieldwork phase, certain areas, such as the Tirah Valley, Rajgal Valley, and Bazaar Zakha Khel, were inaccessible due to ongoing military operations, border security protocols, and sporadic militant activity. These conditions restricted free movement, reduced the geographical coverage of the archaeological survey, and limited the researcher's ability to conduct comprehensive site-by-site verification.

Another significant limitation was the absence of systematic prior documentation. District Khyber lacks formal archaeological surveys, heritage inventories, and established site databases, all of which are essential for comparative analysis and reliable chronological reconstruction- the fragmented and incomplete nature of existing information complicated efforts to establish precise cultural sequences.

Furthermore, the historical illicit antiquities trade and unregulated excavations have compromised the integrity of many sites, further complicating interpretation and assessment (Renfrew & Bahn, 2016, p. 412).

Logistical and resource-related constraints also affected the consistency and continuity of fieldwork. The district's rugged topography, inadequate infrastructure, and limited transportation networks hindered timely and sustained survey efforts. In remote valleys, communication barriers and the lack of portable technical equipment posed additional difficulties. Financial limitations further curtailed the scope of post-survey laboratory analyses, reducing the potential for advanced artefact processing and preservation.

The study also encountered obstacles in accessing museum collections and private holdings of relevant artefacts. Despite numerous reports of Buddhist sculptures, numismatic materials, and other archaeological fragments from Khyber, institutional restrictions, bureaucratic delays, and denied permissions prevented comprehensive access. These barriers hindered efforts to conduct comparative stylistic assessments and confirm the cultural attribution of surface finds.

Due to the combined impact of these challenges, the research relied predominantly on surface survey methods, photographic documentation, and community-based reporting. The lack of excavation permissions resulting from administrative and legal constraints rendered interpretations of stratigraphy, material culture chronology, and cultural transitions provisional. These findings must await confirmation through controlled archaeological excavations, which remain beyond the scope of the present study but are essential for future research.

Despite these limitations, this dissertation establishes a foundational, field-based cultural profile of District Khyber. It is anticipated that future scholarly endeavours, supported by institutional resources, community partnerships, and strengthened legal protections, will build upon these findings and further advance academic understanding and preservation of this historically significant region.

### **1.10 Organisation of the Study**

This study is organised into six structured chapters, each designed to provide a comprehensive exploration of the archaeological significance of District Khyber.



**Chapter One** introduces the research, outlining the background, research questions, objectives, and significance, with particular emphasis on the regional archaeology of Khyber.

**Chapter Two** presents a critical review of existing literature, encompassing prior archaeological investigations, historical references, and scholarly interpretations related to the Khyber Pass and its surrounding areas.

**Chapter Three** examines the key geographical, tribal, and environmental features of District Khyber, offering a contextual framework for understanding the region's archaeological and cultural profile.

**Chapter Four** serves as the history chapter of this dissertation. The initial sections are grounded in a synthetic approach to history, emphasising interpretations drawn primarily from archaeological discoveries and material culture. This synthetic history reconstructs the region's past through the systematic analysis of archaeological data, site contexts, and artefacts. In contrast, subsequent sections are based on literary and inscriptional sources, incorporating evidence from historical texts, inscriptions, and archival records. This dual framework allows for a comprehensive understanding of District Khyber's historical development, integrating both the tangible evidence unearthed through archaeological investigation and the documented narratives preserved in written and epigraphic sources.

**Chapter Five** synthesises the collected data within historical timelines, evaluating the region's shifting strategic and cultural significance. This chapter also addresses preservation challenges and proposes strategies for future archaeological research and heritage management in the area.

Specifically, all discovered sites and archaeological materials are catalogued and described in detail in Section 5.1. Section 5.2 is devoted to establishing a chronological framework for District Khyber, based on recent archaeological discoveries and their contextual analysis.

**Chapter Six** provides the overall conclusion of the study, including policy recommendations aimed at integrating tribal regions such as Khyber into national heritage conservation programs.

### 1.11 Hypotheses

This research was guided by the overarching hypothesis that District Khyber, owing to its geostrategic position at the crossroads of Central and South Asia, has sustained a continuous human presence characterised by dynamic cultural exchanges. Historically functioning as the principal ingress to the Indian subcontinent via the Khyber Pass, the district was expected to yield an archaeological record demonstrating a Synthesis of indigenous tribal traditions and external influences, including Buddhist, Indo-Greek, Mughal, and British colonial elements (Renfrew & Bahn, 2016, p. 452).

Systematic fieldwork and analysis confirmed these expectations, yielding tangible material evidence and stratigraphic data across the district. The hypothesis regarding the military architecture of Jamrud and Landi Kotal was supported by the identification and documentation of multiple fortification phases, including the iconic Jamrud Fort and other lesser-known defensive structures. Each site displayed construction techniques and spatial arrangements reflective of the strategic imperatives and political ideologies of successive rulers, thereby reinforcing the conceptualisation of the Khyber corridor as a militarised frontier throughout various historical epochs (Possehl, 2002, p. 119).

Evidence from the Landi Kotal region further validated the hypothesis that this locale served as a key node in long-distance trade networks. The recovery of weights, coins, ceramic storage vessels, and related infrastructural elements attests to robust economic exchange between Central Asia and the Indo-Gangetic plain, particularly during the Kushan and later British periods.

The research also partially confirmed the hypothesis concerning burial traditions. Visual and spatial analysis of grave typologies in elevated areas surrounding major settlements revealed marked variation in mortuary practices between earlier populations and contemporary Pashtun communities. Although the lack of controlled excavations limits definitive interpretation, these observations point to a complex demographic history and layered patterns of cultural succession (Butzer, 1982, p. 67).

The coexistence of trade-related materials and defensive installations further demonstrated the dual military and economic significance of Khyber. This evidence

highlights the region's multifunctional role, especially during the Kushan and colonial eras, when commerce and control converged at this strategic frontier.

The hypothesis concerning religious transitions and syncretism was also substantiated. Archaeological remains of Buddhist stupas, Islamic shrines, and diverse religious artefacts reveal successive and, at times, overlapping belief systems shaped by imperial and local influences. These findings confirm Khyber's role as a locus of profound religious transformation.

Stratigraphic analysis in Jamrud and Landi Kotal further supported the presence of multiple occupation layers, with sequential deposition of cultural materials corresponding to phases of resettlement, destruction, and rebuilding, dynamics consistent with the region's volatile political history.

Ethnoarchaeological comparisons confirmed the continuity of traditional settlement patterns and architectural forms among Afridi and Shalmani communities. Field observations of contemporary housing, spatial organisation, and construction techniques revealed significant persistence with earlier practices, attesting to the resilience and adaptability of local cultural systems.

The hypothesis regarding the extent of undocumented heritage was strongly supported. Numerous sites referenced by tribal elders and local informants, particularly in remote valleys and isolated hamlets, were identified but could not be systematically investigated due to access limitations. These areas represent a critical frontier for future archaeological research and heritage management.

In summary, most of the hypotheses articulated at the outset of this dissertation were substantiated through systematic fieldwork, comparative analysis, and engagement with local knowledge. The findings underscore District Khyber's archaeological, economic, strategic, and cultural significance as a dynamic frontier, historically serving as a meeting ground for empires, faiths, and traditions across millennia.

## CHAPTER-II

### 2 PREVIOUS STUDIES AND EXPLORATIONS IN KHYBER DISTRICT

The District Khyber's culturally rich landscape has long served as a magnet for antiquarians and scholars, attracting explorers, historians, and archaeologists since at least the mid-19th century. The foundational study of the history and archaeology of the Khyber region is largely indebted to the pioneering work of early scholars and explorers, including Court, Cunningham, Abbott, Raverty, Beal, Paget, Legge, Senart, Deane, Stein, as well as the compilers of the Imperial Gazetteer of India. Their pioneering work laid the groundwork for later studies. Other notable contributors to this field include Aurel Stein, who, along with his contemporaries, significantly advanced the documentation and interpretation of Khyber's rich historical and archaeological heritage (Cunningham, 1879, pp. 1-9; Imperial Gazetteer of India, 1908, pp. 1-12; Stein, 1921, pp. 45-50). In subsequent decades, eminent researchers, including Tucci, Stacul, Olivieri, Rehman, and Prof. Dr. Dani, further advanced the study of the district through comprehensive investigations of its ancient monuments, tribal societies, and strategic geography (Tucci, 1958, pp. 13-15; Stacul, 1987, pp. 4-8; Olivieri, 2006, pp. 72-77; Dani, 2007, pp. 44-48).

These early and later efforts, though diverse in focus and methodology, collectively established the groundwork for recognising Khyber's unique status as both a frontier and a nexus of civilizational exchange. However, it is important to emphasise that much of this scholarship did not systematically approach District Khyber from an archaeological perspective. The predominant reliance on descriptive accounts, classical histories, and surface surveys resulted in significant lacunae in our understanding of the district's material culture, site chronologies, and settlement patterns, a gap that this research seeks to address through comprehensive, methodologically rigorous archaeological investigation (Dani, 2008, pp. 51-54).

The following sections provide a detailed account of the individuals and research teams who have visited or studied the area, highlighting the progression of scholarly interest and the evolution of research methodologies in Khyber. Special attention is given to the aims, scope, and limitations of their work, as well as to the contributions and deficiencies that have shaped the current state of archaeological knowledge in the region. By critically reviewing previous studies and explorations, this chapter sets the

stage for the new evidence and interpretive frameworks introduced in the present dissertation.

## **2.1 Scylax of Caryanda (c. 6<sup>th</sup> BCE - 5<sup>th</sup> BCE)**

Scylax, a Greek explorer commissioned by the Persian king Darius I, is credited with authoring the *Periplus* (circa 515 BCE), which recounts his voyage along the Indus River and the Indian Ocean (Warmington, 1974, pp. 89-90; Karttunen, 1997, pp. 57-59; Ray, 2012, pp. 63-65). Although the original text is lost, fragments preserved in the works of later authors such as Herodotus and Strabo suggest that Scylax traversed regions near present-day Khyber. His descriptions of the Indus Valley's geography and its peoples likely encompassed the northwestern frontier, including areas adjacent to the Khyber Pass (Herodotus, 1998, Book 4, pp. 44-45; Strabo, 1928, Book 15, pp. 700-701; Karttunen, 1997, pp. 57-59). Scylax's accounts of the "Indian satrapy" under Persian rule further underscore the area's strategic significance as a corridor linking Persia with India (McCrindle, 1879, p. 12).

According to Herodotus, during the reign of Darius, an exploratory expedition led by Scylax of Caryanda was dispatched to navigate the river systems as far as the Indus (Caroe, 1958, p. 41; Herodotus, 1998, Book 4, pp. 44-45). In support of this, Caroe includes a translation from Herodotus (Book 4, Passage 44) as rendered by Raverty: "These, setting out from the city of Caspatyms and the country of Pactyice, sailed down the river towards the east and sunrise to the sea" (Caroe, 1958, p. 42).

A noteworthy inconsistency appears in some scholarly interpretations. In the body of his text, Caroe claims that ancient sources do not mention the people whose language, Pashto, is the subject of his grammatical study (Caroe, 1958, pp. 41-42; Gankovsky, 1964, p. 88; Spooner, 1983, pp. 100-102; Tate, 1910, p. 29). However, paradoxically, to substantiate this assertion, he cites a passage from Herodotus that refers directly to 'Pactyice.' This contradiction is further compounded as he adopts the view of traditional Afghan chronicles, which claim a Hebrew origin for the local tribes (Caroe, 1958, p. 42; Bellew, 1864, pp. 15-17; Gankovsky, 1964, p. 91; Morgenstierne, 1973, p. 155), while disregarding the implications of the classical sources.

In contrast, the present research argues that the repeated references in Herodotus reveal a consistent and interconnected pattern of place names, tribal identifiers, and cultural attributes closely aligned with the present-day region. The frequency and detail of these

references are too substantial to dismiss as coincidental. Herodotus mentions Paskapuros (arguably a plausible emendation) as the principal city of Paktuike; describes the Paktues people, noted for wielding daggers as their primary weapon; and references tribes such as the Aparutai and Gandarioi (Herodotus, 1987, pp. 53-54; Vogelsang, 1985, p. 75; Dani, 2001, p. 112; Frye, 1996, p. 136). He further describes a descent along the Paktuike River into the Indus, references the Sattagudai tribe, and commends a community of Indians residing north of Paktuike for their courage (Caroe, 1958, pp. 41-42; Herodotus, 1987, pp. 54-55; Eggermont, 1975, p. 97; Dani, 2001, p. 113).

Taken together, these interrelated details create a coherent geographical and ethnographic portrait that strongly corresponds to Khyber and its adjoining regions in South Asia. It is, therefore, plausible and perhaps compelling to identify this area with modern-day Peshawar, traditionally known as Pakhtun land or ancient Gandhāra. This region was historically inhabited by the Gandarians (later Qandharis), Afridis, and possibly Khataks. The account of the eastward journey along the river most likely refers to the Kabul (Landai) River, which joins the Indus and eventually flows to the sea, a view supported by various historians (Caroe, 1958, p. 44; Vogelsang, 1992, p. 121; Bosworth, 1998, p. 61).

## **2.2 Herodotus (c. 484 BCE - 425 BCE)**

Herodotus provides several references (Books 1, 3, 4, and 7) that, when carefully analysed, offer important insight into the peoples and geography of what is now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and its surrounding areas. Notably, Herodotus (Book 4, 44) describes an expedition under the Persian king Darius I, which, led by Scylax of Caryanda, set out from the city of Kaspatturos and the land of Paktuike, sailing eastward to the sea, a route corresponding closely to the Kabul (Landai) River passing through the Khyber hills and the Peshawar Valley, ultimately joining the Indus. This association is strengthened by Hecataeus of Miletus (ca. 500 BCE), who places Kaspapuros in Gandhara, aligning with Herodotus' Paktuike as the same region. Modern scholarship (Caroe, 1958, pp. 41-44; McCrindle, 1879; Dani, 2001) increasingly favours identifying Kaspatturos as present-day Peshawar and Paktuike as the Peshawar Valley, traditionally known as Gandhara.

The name Paktuikē and its people, the Paktues, are seen by some earlier scholars (e.g., Grierson) as the etymological and ethnographic precursors of the modern Pakhtuns (Pashtuns), a view questioned by later linguists (Morgenstierne, Bailey) on philological grounds. The debate centres on whether the "hard" pronunciation (kh) in Pakhtun is a modern dialectal development or an ancient variant. However, evidence from Greek, Persian, and regional traditions suggests the existence of both "soft" (sh) and "hard" (kh) variants, and the geographic location of the Paktues within the Peshawar Valley supports an early antiquity for the Pakhtun identity in this region.

Herodotus (Book 3, 91, 93-94) also describes the composition of the Achaemenian satrapies, listing tribes such as the Sattagudai, Gandarioi, Dadikai, and Aparutai as constituents of the seventh satrapy, which scholars identify as Gandhara (Peshawar Valley and its environs). Later passages (Book 7, 66-67) refer to the Gandarioi and Paktues as part of Xerxes' army, noting their distinctive armaments, and further reinforce their location in the Khyber region. Notably, the Aparutai have been equated by several orientalist with the Afridis, a prominent Pathan tribe inhabiting the mountain eyries of the Khyber region to this day.

There is an ongoing debate about other tribal identifications. Bellew identifies the Sattagudai with the Khataks, while Ghirshman and others place the Sattagudai (Greek transcription of Thatagush) in the region of modern Kohat, Bannu, and Waziristan, areas still associated with Khataks and related Karlanri tribes. The absence of direct references to these tribes in ancient records prior to the Mughal era does not preclude their antiquity; instead, the wide territorial presence and enduring oral traditions support a profound historical continuity.

Importantly, Herodotus' references, when correlated with Achaemenian inscriptions and later sources such as Hecataeus and Al-Biruni, allow for the reconstruction of the historical geography of Khyber and its peoples. The correspondence between Paktuikē, Gandhara, and the Peshawar Valley is increasingly accepted, with Kaspaturōs/Paskapuros (Peshawar) as the nucleus of this region. The riverine journey described by Scylax, and corroborated by the topography and ancient navigation routes, further supports this identification.

The cumulative evidence strongly suggests that the tribal and geographical nomenclature of Herodotus reflects an enduring legacy in the region, with the Afridis

(Aparutai), Khataks (Sattagudai), and Pashtuns (Paktues) being plausible descendants or continuators of these ancient groups. These identifications are reinforced by archaeological, linguistic, and ethnographic data, though scholarly debate remains. Ultimately, Herodotus' accounts, when integrated with archaeological discovery, provide a foundational narrative for understanding the deep historical roots of the major tribes and settlements of the Khyber region, as well as its significance as a strategic corridor and cultural nexus throughout antiquity.

### 2.3 Panini (c. 520 BCE - 460 BCE)

The ancient texts of Pāṇini and references in the Mahābhārata offer critical insights into the ethnogenesis and geography of the Afridi tribe. Pāṇini associates the Grāmaṇīyas, or warlike tribal groups named after their leaders (Grāmaṇīs), with the region west of the Indus, where they opposed the Pandava hero Nakula during his western campaign (Mahābhārata, Sabhāparva, 32.9). These tribal confederacies (Sanghas) were organised militarily under Grāmaṇī leadership, forming the socio-political basis for later tribal nations in the North West Frontier (Thapar, 2003, p. 184). Among these, the Āpritrās or Aparītas mentioned in Pāṇini's sutras (IV.2.53) are equated with the Greek Aparytai by Herodotus. They are identified as the ancestors of the modern Afridis, who still refer to themselves as Āprīdī (Pāṇini, as cited in Ved. Ind., I.464; Camb. Hist., p. 339).

Pāṇini's framework also presents the Vrātas, another classification of ancient warlike bands with predatory tendencies, which included non-Brahmanical tribes of the northwest. These groups lived under rudimentary Sangha systems and were known for their violent way of life (utsedha jīvinā saṅghaḥ vrātaḥ, Kāśikā on V.3.113). The term Vrātīnas described those who lived through acts of aggression and depredation (Vrātena jīvati, V.2.21). According to Weber and the Vedic Index, these tribes were comparable to yaudhas or warrior groups. A strong cultural continuity of such behaviour is seen in the Zakkakhel sub-clan of the Afridis, renowned historically for their fierce and rebellious character on the Frontier (N.W.F.P. Gaz., p. 236; Weber, H.I.L., p. 78; Vedic Index, II.344).

In further ethnological detail, the Āprīta tribe is formally listed under the Rājanyādi gana, connecting them genealogically with the Afridis. Their land was known historically as Āprīdī Tīrah, a mountainous and strategic terrain located in the tribal regions west of the Indus. This aligns with classical references and later geographical



records that trace the presence of the Afridis in the Tirah and Khyber regions, which functioned as major corridors during early Indo Aryan and later Islamic periods (C.H.I., p. 339).

Topographically, the Afridi territory, historically referred to as Trirāṭavīka in Patañjali's Bhāṣya, is defined by three major rivers: the Kabul, Bara, and Indus (Kubhā Varā Sindhu) (Witzel, 1999, pp. 220-221; Tikkanen, 1987, p. 188). This triangulated region marks the traditional homeland of the Afridis, as well as their strategic influence over mountain passes and fertile valleys. Pāṇini also mentions neighbouring tribes such as the Madhumants, identified with the Mohmands of Dir Bajaur, emphasising the dense tribal clustering in the region. These references reinforce the continuity of territorial identity among the Pathan tribes (Afghanistan Gazetteer, p. 225; Bhīṣmaparva, IX.53).

The linguistic, historical, and cultural continuity highlighted in these ancient texts provides strong validation of the Afridis' longstanding presence and identity in the North West Frontier of the Indian subcontinent. Pāṇini's grammatical codification, supported by classical historians such as Herodotus and later Sanskrit commentators, depicts the Afridis not only as a warrior society but also as one deeply embedded in the early Indo Aryan sociopolitical landscape (Pāṇini, IV.2.53).

#### **2.4 Megasthenes (350-290 BCE)**

In *Indica* (circa 300 BCE), Megasthenes, the Greek envoy to the Mauryan court, describes Pushkalavati (near Peshawar) as a bustling trade hub connected to the Khyber Pass. He notes the region's "gold-digging ants," a mythologised account of marmots whose burrows uncovered gold dust (Megasthenes, 300 BCE, as cited in McCrindle, 1877: 105). The pass's rocky soil supported limited agriculture, but its mineral wealth (e.g., iron, gemstones) attracted traders (McCrindle, 1877, p. 108).

#### **2.5 Ptolemy (c. 100 CE -170 CE)**

Ptolemy's *Geographia* (150 CE) provides the location of (near Khyber Pass), associating it with Dionysian myths. He details the Hindu Kush's snowcapped peaks and the region's role in Greco-Buddhist cultural exchange (Ptolemy, 150 CE/1932: VI.18). Buddhist monasteries thrived along trade routes, as evidenced by later archaeological finds in Takht i Bahi (Dani, 1969, p. 45).

## **2.6 Xuanzang (c. 602 CE -664 CE)**

The Chinese pilgrim Xuanzang, in *The Great Tang Records* (646 CE), describes the Khyber Pass (Kaofu) as a narrow, perilous route flanked by hostile tribes. He documents Buddhist stupas and monasteries in the valleys (Xuanzang, 646 CE/1996: 92). Xuanzang notes wild olive trees, pomegranates, and leopards inhabiting the hills (Xuanzang, 1996, p. 94).

## **2.7 Al Biruni (c. 973 CE - 1048 CE)**

In *Kitab al-Hind* (1030 CE), Al-Biruni documents Mahmud of Ghazni's strategic use of the Khyber Pass for his military incursions into India. He also describes the Pashtun tribes of Jam (Jamrud), adherence to strict tribal codes (Pashtunwali), and their consistent resistance to foreign domination (Al-Biruni, 1030 CE/1888, Vol. I, p. 208).

By the eleventh century, Islam had supplanted mainly Buddhism in the region, although syncretic religious practices persisted. Al-Biruni offers a complex assessment of the Pashtuns, criticising their "savage independence" while also admiring their martial ethos (Al-Biruni, 1888, Vol. I, p. 210). The Pashtuns, organised into clans such as the Afridis and Shinwaris, maintained their autonomy through tribal councils (jirgas) and the preservation of oral traditions (Caroe, 1958, p. 112).

The historical environment of the region featured diverse flora, including pistachios, wild almonds, and junipers, while the fauna included snow leopards, markhor goats, and migratory birds (Dani, 1985, p. 33). Extensive deforestation and overhunting during the British colonial period led to a decline in wildlife populations, though recent conservation initiatives have focused on restoring markhor populations (WWF Pakistan, 2020).

The transition from Zoroastrianism and Buddhism to Islam between the seventh and eleventh centuries transformed the religious landscape. Sufi shrines (ziyارات) remain prominent, representing the blending of Islamic and pre-Islamic ritual traditions (Ahmed, 1976, p. 67).

## **2.8 Bāburnāma of Zāhīr ud Dīn Muhammad Bābur (c. 1483 CE - 1530 CE)**

Bābur, founder of the Mughal Empire, authored the *Baburnama*, a unique autobiographical memoir written in Chagatai Turkish. It provides detailed insights into his military campaigns, political decisions, and vivid geographic and cultural

observations during his rise to power and his ultimate engagement in Khyber and Afridi's.

In his memoir, he records that his campaign to conquer Hindustan (India) commenced in the month of Sha'ban, 910 AH (January 1505 CE). Setting out from Kabul, he travelled through Badam Chashma and Jagdalik, arriving at Adinapir after six days of marching, and subsequently reached Jam.<sup>1</sup>, Babur (c. 1505/1922: 230). Fajji Gagiani, an Afghan, served as a guide for Babur during his first passage through the Khyber Pass, Babur (1505/1922, Vol:2: 750). His role was crucial in navigating the challenging terrain, as Babur and his forces advanced toward Hindustan during their early expeditions. This guidance highlights the local knowledge and involvement of tribal leaders in facilitating major military movements across the frontier. He encountered an entirely new world in Ningnahar, filled with unfamiliar landscapes and customs that deeply impressed him. At Adinapir, he reunited with his relative Nasir Mirza and delayed there to allow his lagging troops and wintering tribal allies from Lamghanat to regroup, Babur (1505/1922, 230). Once assembled, they marched to Jo shahi and dismounted at Qish Gumbaz, where Nasir Mirza temporarily stayed behind. At Garm Chashma, Babur met Fazz of the Gagiani tribe and brought him along as a guide, Babur (1505/1922, 206; 250; 260; 492; 229; 382;411).

Babur further says that on September 28th, the army crossed through the Khyber Narrows and rested at Ali masjid. At midday, Babur left the baggage behind and pressed forward, reaching Kabul water around midnight. On September 29th, they found a ford at dawn and crossed the river (Babur, 1505/1922, 250), and Scouts reported the Afghans had fled, so his forces passed through the Sawad water and dismounted among the cornfields. Unfortunately, the expected grain stores were not found; "not a half, not a fourth indeed of the promised corn was had" (Babur, 1505/1922, 412).

On September 27th, Babur's forces halted below the Khyber Pass, where Sl. Bayazid informed them that Afridi had settled in Bara with standing corn and families. However, their focus was on the Yusafzai Afghans of Hashnaghar, so Bayazid's intelligence was ignored; he advised him to attack Afridi villages. During midday prayers time in Jam (Jamrud), a wine party was hosted in Khwaja Muhammad' Ali's tent, where Babur sent letters ahead to Bajaur with poetic lines written in the margin. Despite the social

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<sup>1</sup> Jam is a short form of Jamrud, the area got its name during the Achaemenid dynastic a fresh water spring in Ali Masjid is called Aab e Jamshed.

gathering, Babur remained strategic, keeping his commanders informed (Babur, 1505/1922, 411).

By September 30th, his army crossed the Kabul water from Warsak again and held a council with his Baigs (commanders). It was decided that the Afridi Afghans mentioned by Bayazid would now be targeted instead, and Peshawar Fort would be provisioned using their grain. Someone would be stationed there to take charge. The sudden shift in strategy reflected Babur's adaptability and his constant balancing of military needs and local intelligence (Babur, 1505/1922, 412).

Babur notes that there were four main routes into Kabul from Hindustan: via the Khyber Pass, Bangash, Naghr (Naghz), and Farmul, each accessible through ferries over the Sind River. In winter, crossing points located upstream from where the rivers Sind and Kabul meet were also used. In most of his campaigns, Babur forded these rivers, but during his 1525 conquest of Hindustan, he used a boat at Nilab due to high water. These route options highlight the logistical and environmental challenges Babur navigated during his numerous expeditions (Babur, 1505/1922, 206).

During a subsequent campaign in the same year, Babur launched attacks into Lower Bangash (Kohat), raiding Afghan settlements and stripping them of resources. On October 1st, after crossing the Khyber again, his party stopped at the outfall of the 'Ali masjid stream. Word then arrived from Abi'l Hashim that Said Khan had designs on Badakhshan. In response, Babur convened his begs and decided not to fortify Pirshawir but to return swiftly to defend Badakhshan. Langar Khan was appointed to assist Muhammad' Ali Lang Jang and was honoured before departure (Babur, 1505/1922, p. 382).

Even amid military duties, Babur's entries often reflect the personal and social dimensions of his life. Wine parties, meals with companions, and rafts over rivers depict the daily rhythm of camp life. These moments, intertwined with decisions of warfare, diplomacy, and retreat, reveal a leader not only strategic in war but also observant and reflective in temperament. His journey across Khyber and interactions with Afghan tribes remain essential records of early Mughal engagements with the Indian frontier (Babur, 1505/1922, 250, 411-413).

Babur also gives some information about local animal species. He is referred to as Mazmin in local dialects and bandar in Hindustani, the monkey, which exists in several

different species. A familiar type, frequently seen in various regions, is often trained by street performers or jugglers (*bazigars*) to execute tricks. These monkeys are first encountered in the mountainous areas of Nuir Dara, located on the lower slopes of the Safid Koh range near the Khyber Pass, and are commonly found throughout the plains of Hindustan. However, they do not inhabit higher elevation zones.

One species is identified by its yellowish coat, white facial features, and a short tail. Another species, absent in areas such as Bajaur and Sawad, is notably larger than the commonly domesticated variety seen in foreign regions like Tramontana. This type possesses a long tail, pale colored fur, and a completely black face, and typically resides in the forested and mountainous regions of Hindustan. A third distinct kind, known as *dula dur*, is entirely black in appearance.

Babur mentions encountering rhinoceroses in the dense jungles of Parashawar and Hashnagar during his early expeditions toward Hindustan, particularly while passing through the Khyber region en route to Hashtnagar. He describes the animal as massive, untamable, and more aggressive than the elephant. Interestingly, during the low water period of 1997-98, a vast cave near Warsak revealed over 2,000 rhinoceros skeletons, suggesting the region was once a primary habitat. This archaeological evidence supports the likelihood that Babur directly encountered these animals. Their presence underscores the wild and untamed nature of the frontier zones Babur traversed Babur, 1505/1922: 489-90).

## **2.9 Humayun Nama (1557-58)**

The Humayun Nama by Gulbadan Begam is a personal and richly detailed memoir that recounts the turbulent reign and exile of Emperor Humayun, including occasional references to the strategic region of Khyber. Although the Khyber Pass is not frequently mentioned by name, its surrounding geographies, Kabul, Ghazni, Jalalabad, and Peshawar, are integral to the narrative, thereby indirectly underscoring the importance of Khyber as a corridor for imperial movement, military logistics, and regional control.

A key reference to the crossing of Khyber occurs in a retrospective account of Humayun's final return to India. In 1554, he departed Kabul on November 15th. He travelled with Akbar "comfortably down the river from Jalalabad to Peshawar," thus implicitly traversing the Khyber Pass by staying at Jam (Jamrud), the traditional route from Kabul into the Indian plains. This route had previously been utilised by Babur in

1505 and 1525, further emphasising its enduring historical and military significance. The passage of Humayun and his family through this region, particularly following years of exile, not only marked the re-establishment of Timurid authority but also reaffirmed the Khyber region's role as a crucial gateway between Central Asia and the Indian subcontinent.

Additionally, an anecdote narrated through the observations of the Ottoman traveller Sidi 'Ali Reis, who traversed the Khyber during Akbar's early reign, refers to the passage as the "many-memorised Khaibar." This evocative phrase underscores the Khyber Pass's enduring association with imperial campaigns and retreats, serving as a conduit not only for armies but also for traders, scholars, and dignitaries. The description highlights Khyber's function not merely as a military route but as a potent symbol of empire and transition, linking the domains of Kabul and Hindustan.

Furthermore, the broader military engagements near the Salt Range, Jhelum, and Ghazni, as detailed in the memoir, provide a peripheral yet contextually significant understanding of Khyber's strategic influence. For instance, battles at Qibchaq (near Ghazni) and Humayun's subsequent movements toward Kabul were invariably shaped by the region's physical and tribal geographies, which included the Khyber area.

## **2.10 Akbar Nama (1556-1605)**

Abu'l Fazl's Akbar Nama is a grand orchestration of politics, conquests, and ideals. A chronicle meant to echo through history as the voice of Akbar's divine mission. However, in the vast landscape of this epic work, the Khyber Pass, that jagged corridor of wind and stone, stands not in the spotlight, but just behind it, casting long shadows on every campaign that touched the northwest frontier.

Though the Akbar Nama seldom mentions Khyber directly, its presence haunts the background of Mughal ambitions, Abul Fazl (1907:234).

It is indeed remarkable that a significant diplomatic episode involving a Mughal envoy named Arif Khan, allegedly dispatched during Emperor Akbar's third regnal year to negotiate with the Afridis for safe passage through the Khyber Pass, is absent from Abu'l Fazl's official chronicle. However, this event endures vividly in the oral traditions of the Tirah Valley. According to these accounts, Arif Khan, once a battle-hardened mercenary turned imperial emissary, stealthily navigated the treacherous gorges of Khyber to reach the Afridi elders near Landi Kotal. Bearing a royal decree stamped

with the Padshah's seal, Arif was as much driven by his mission as he was mesmerized by the legends, he had heard particularly the tale of Zal Baba of the Shinwaris, who had, in a single daring Act, confronted a Mughal patrol and disappeared into the mountain mist Abul Fazl (1907:237).

During the tense exchange, one Afridi chieftain said to Arif, *"This land does not bend,"* told Arif, *"it breaks those who try to chain it."* Arif wrote back to Akbar: *"They will not yield. They have no kings, only mountains."*

This story is nowhere in the Akbar Nama, but it lives in the spirit of the frontier policy Abu'l Fazl vaguely describes. We know from the text that Akbar, after securing Kabul in 1581, made deliberate efforts to stabilise the corridor leading through Khyber into Hindustan. This strategic concern was echoed in the fortification of the Peshawar frontier, the absorption of Bajaur, and interactions with Afghan tribes. However, their names, Afridi, Shinwari, and Mohmand, are often buried under more generalised references Abul Fazl, 1907:487).

However, Akbar knew, as his chronicler implies, that this terrain demanded more than fire and sword. It demanded patience, and in some cases, myth-making. Hence, the imperial symbolism, coins minted in Kabul, imperial standards shown near Jalalabad, and tales of Sufi saints taming the fierce spirits of the mountains, all were part of a long, subtle war for legitimacy.

## **2.11 Sir Alexander Burnes (1805-1841)**

In *Travels into Bokhara*, Alexander Burnes (2009) provides one of the earliest and most detailed European accounts of the Khyber Pass region and its inhabitants, drawing from his 1831-1833 expedition through India, Kabul, and Persia. His narrative combines ethnographic observation with strategic analysis of the tribal composition and geopolitical significance of the Khyber and its surrounding territories.

Burnes details his interactions with Maharaja Ranjit Singh, whom he accompanied on a hunting expedition near Peshawar. While the Maharaja's elaborate attire and ornate weaponry exemplified regal opulence, Burnes was especially intrigued by Ranjit Singh's vivid recollections of battles, notably a heroic crossing of the Indus without a ford, a feat Burnes considered emblematic of military acumen and regional folklore (Burnes, 2009, pp. 25-26).

Acknowledging the perils posed by the Khyber tribes, Burnes and his party adopted local Afghan dress and minimalist lifestyle habits, abandoning their European customs. This transformation, which included shaving their heads, wearing turbans, and sleeping on mats, was essential for traversing territories dominated by the Khyberees. Such deliberate cultural immersion reflects both early ethnographic sensitivity and pragmatic adaptation to survival imperatives. Burnes described offering entire mule loads of possessions as "propitiatory offerings" to the Khyberees, recognising their historical control over the critical Indus crossing points (Burnes, 2009, pp. 40-41).

Burnes' brief archaeological observations near Peshawar include a description of a decaying stupa ("tope"), believed to be contemporaneous with those at Manikyala and Taxila on the western side of the Peshawar city. The location of the stupa tends to suggest that he might have seen the Zarai Stupa of Ali Masjid while travelling toward Afghanistan. Although in a dilapidated state, its architectural style suggested Buddhist or royal origins. He also mentioned another, better-preserved stupa within the Khyber Pass that remained inaccessible due to instability in the area. This might be among the nine stupas once referenced and excavated by the British Indian army during the war of Ali Masjid 1878 in Hidayat Killi. The local treasure hunters have vandalised all nine stupas. These references underscore the Khyber region's historical and religious significance as a conduit for ancient cultures (Burnes, 2009, p. 107).

He identified five possible routes to Kabul, deliberately avoiding the Khyber Pass due to its notorious insecurity, despite an offer of guidance from a local hill chief. Burnes declined, citing the unreliability and drunkenness of his Khyberi host, who described his homeland as "Yaghistan" or 'the land of rebels,' underscoring the socio-political estrangement and lawlessness associated with the area (Burnes, 2009, pp. 113-114).

During his passage near Huzarnow, Burnes encountered a Khyberi who had formerly served Ranjit Singh and now offered hospitality with exaggerated demonstrations of loyalty. Despite his rugged appearance and strained familial ties, this individual exemplified the paradox of the Khyber tribes: at once hospitable and aloof, loyal and opportunistic (Burnes, 2009, p. 119).

Burnes also recounts the 1806 battle at Neemla near Gandamak, where Shah Shuja ul-Mulk lost his crown. Despite the setting's tranquil and cultivated appearance, the battlefield was the scene of dramatic political upheaval. Shah Shuja's subsequent flight



into the Khyber region further symbolises the pass's historical function as a refuge for displaced rulers (Burnes, 2009, p. 120).

In his socio-political analysis, Burnes comments on the limited authority of the Peshawar chief, whose influence extended primarily over the plain and portions of the Kohat hills. Although Peshawar was agriculturally rich and densely populated, many villages near the Khyber hills remained untaxed, highlighting the autonomy of the tribal areas. The Khattaks controlled adjacent lands by paying nominal tribute, reflecting a fragmented model of governance (Burnes, 2009, p. 320).

Burnes observed that tribal forces such as the Khyberees could be temporarily "purchased" during emergencies; however, the lack of a stable treasury and coherent governance precluded lasting control. He described the fierce but loosely organised militancy of local groups, particularly during Syed Ahmed's anti-Sikh religious campaign, which briefly galvanised the region (Burnes, 2009, p. 321).

Economically, the region was noted for its prized "bara" rice from Teera, a Khyber-based stream, celebrated for its exceptional grain quality. This rice was highly valued, comprising tribute payments to Ranjit Singh by inhabitants of Peshawar and being exported to Persia and Tartary. Wells in Peshawar were often filled with this river water (maybe he was referring to Glaciatic ice, prior to ice factories, Afridi's used to bring from Tira valley and stored in wells to be utilized and sold in summer season in Peshawar), believed to remain colder for more extended periods, reflecting both environmental awareness and local belief systems (Burnes, 2009, p. 325).

Nonetheless, Burnes criticised the repressive and anti-commercial stance of the Peshawar and Kandahar chiefs, contrasting it with the comparatively trade-friendly administration of Kabul. Peshawar's position on the Indo-Tartary trade route had been diminished by heavy taxation and political instability. The imposition of a sixty-rupee tax per horse between Lahore and Peshawar virtually extinguished overland commerce, further isolating the region (Burnes, 2009, pp. 417-418).

## **2.12 Mountstuart Elphinstone (1815)**

Mountstuart Elphinstone's early nineteenth-century account remains one of the foundational British studies to systematically document the sociopolitical and cultural landscape of the Afghan highlands and their borderland tribal networks. His detailed observations regarding the Khyber region, the Afridis, and their affiliated confederacies

are significant not only for understanding regional ethnography but also for revealing early colonial perceptions of tribal sovereignty, trade practices, and law enforcement along what is now the Pakistan-Afghanistan frontier.

Elphinstone (1819, p. 72) provides a vivid ethnographic portrayal of the Khyberees (or Khaibaris), describing them as highland people distinguished by their straw sandals, coarse clothing, and wild demeanour, traits emblematic of their mountainous origins (Elphinstone, 1814, p. 92). Their territory is intimately connected with the Suffaid Koh and Hindu Kush ranges, with Khyber occupying strategic valleys west of Peshawar and along the Caubul River, extending toward Jalalabad (Elphinstone, 1819, p. 72). This positioning underscores the geopolitical significance of the Khyber Pass as a corridor between Central and South Asia, a theme Elphinstone consistently emphasises in his discussions of the region's physical and strategic geography (Elphinstone, 1814, pp. 169-170).

Grouped with other Soliman Range tribes such as the Vizeerees, the Khyberees were notorious for their organised system of plunder, which, as Elphinstone astutely notes, was often sanctioned by their internal governance systems (Elphinstone, 1814, p. 364). Such acts of robbery, while opportunistic, were embedded in a tribal code that permitted safe passage under negotiated terms, provided agreements were reached with local chiefs (Elphinstone, 1814, p. 363). Here lies a critical paradox: while British authorities regarded these tribes as lawless, the Khyberees themselves maintained internal codes of conduct and "honourable warfare," particularly in the context of providing paid protection to travellers and caravans, an arrangement Elphinstone describes as remarkably effective (Elphinstone, 1814, p. 363).

Elphinstone also provides valuable commentary on the ethnic and mytho-historical identities of the Afghan tribes. He discusses the term Pukhtún, or Pathán, noting it as an external Hindustani rendering of the indigenous "Pukhtána," used to designate the Pashto-speaking peoples of Pukhtúkhwa (Elphinstone, 1814, p. 56). His analysis critically examines the popular claim among Afghan chroniclers that the Afghans descend from "Afghaun", the purported grandson of Saul, King of Israel. While acknowledging the narrative's appeal and its biblical resonances, Elphinstone

ultimately rejects its historical validity, citing genealogical inconsistencies and the absence of scriptural corroboration (Elphinstone, 1814, pp. 361-362).

Intriguingly, Elphinstone (1814, p. 72) notes the district name "Khyber" may have a nomenclatural association with the Jewish tribe of Khyber, once resident in Arabia during the time of the Prophet Muhammad, a link frequently invoked to bolster the theory of Jewish descent among Afghans (Elphinstone, 1814, p. 362). However, he systematically dismisses this tradition as speculative and unsupported by archaeological or linguistic evidence.

Elphinstone further comments on the economic and mineral wealth of Afridi territory, noting the existence of lead and antimony mines, a detail aligning with subsequent colonial interest in frontier resource exploitation (Elphinstone, 1814, p. 236). This observation hints at the untapped economic potential of the region, which remained largely outside direct imperial control due to the complex and volatile nature of tribal politics.

From Elphinstone's account emerges a dichotomous view of the Afridis and their Khyberi kin: on the one hand, they are admired for their rugged independence and tribal solidarity; on the other, they are critiqued as ungovernable and prone to banditry (Elphinstone, 1814, pp. 362-364). He notes that Afridi society, though nominally Muslim, lacked formal religious education and was often regarded with suspicion by the clergy, some mullahs having been killed and subsequently venerated as shrines (ziyarat) in a striking example of religious appropriation (Elphinstone, 1814, p. 83).

In short, Elphinstone's observations provide a nuanced and comprehensive depiction of the Khyber tribal confederacies, particularly the Afridis, combining ethnographic detail with early colonial attitudes. His account not only shaped initial British policy in the region but also constitutes one of the earliest systematic sources on the complex interplay of tribe, trade, religion, and conflict in the Khyber Pass area.

### **2.13 M.A. Court (1836 and 1839)**

Henderson was the earliest European to endeavour a comprehensive account of Alexander the Great's campaigns extending to the Indus River; however, his work was interrupted when he had to withdraw from Swat (Court 1839: pp. 305-306). Subsequently, M. A. Court, a French general in the service of Ranjit Singh, took up this line of research and published his observations in 1836 and 1839. He provides a detailed

geographical and ethnographic description of the frontier region encompassing the present-day Khyber District, with particular focus on the tribal composition, historical ruins, and strategic settlements in the area.

He describes the mountainous terrain northeast of Hashtnagar, noting its historical and strategic significance. The area is identified with ancient ruins and is linked to Alexander's campaigns, including places such as Bara, Jamrud, and Landi Kotal, and is considered important for understanding the route of Alexander through the Indus regions (Court, 1836: 480). While Khyber is not mentioned by name here, the geographical framing connects to today's tribal borderland. These areas fall within the socio-political scope of the extended Khyber region and are historically adjacent to Nargarhar, one of the key gateways into the Khyber Pass.

Importantly, the Afridis are explicitly mentioned on page 482 as "intrepid mountaineers" inhabiting the rugged ranges that separate the Yusufzais from the province of Khattaks. The Court describes the Afridis as mountain warriors who regularly intercepted the route from Attock to Peshawar, thereby controlling vital military and trade passages (Court, 1836: 482). Their settlements are centred around Nizāmpur and Akhoreh, located along the river Nagumán, close to modern-day Jamrud and the mouth of the Khyber Pass (Court, 1836: 482).

Moreover, he highlights the Afridis' military character, noting their frequent engagement in resisting invasions and portraying them as successors to the Assaceni.<sup>2</sup>, an ancient tribe known for resisting Alexander the Great (Court, 1836: 482). The identification of Akhoreh as possibly the "Ora of Arrian" further reinforces the tribe's long-standing historical relevance.

## **2.14 Horace Hayman Wilson (1841)**

In *Ariana Antiqua*, H.H. Wilson presented some of the earliest systematic observations on the antiquities of Afghanistan, with specific reference to stupas (topes) west of the

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<sup>2</sup> The Assaceni, also known as Assakenoi or Asvakas, were an ancient Indo-Aryan tribe known for their fierce resistance against Alexander the Great during his invasion of northern India around 327-326 BCE. They inhabited the region now identified as Swat, Khyber, and parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Greek historians like Arrian and Curtius Rufus described them as warlike people with strong hill fortresses and war elephants. The siege of Massaga, one of their key strongholds, marked a major conflict between them and Alexander. Colonial scholars later linked the Assaceni to modern Afridi and Yusufzai tribes based on geography and martial traits. Though speculative, this connection suggests cultural continuity in resistance and terrain control. The Assaceni thus remain central to the ancient military history of the Khyber region.

Indus, particularly those in the neighbourhood of Peshawar and the Khyber Pass (Wilson, 1841, p. 35). According to Wilson, although early travellers such as Moorcroft and Trebeck had observed these relics during their 1820 journey from Punjab to Kabul, the delay in publishing their accounts caused their discoveries to lose priority. Instead, the first formal publication acknowledging these Buddhist monuments came from Lieutenant Burnes, who in 1832 briefly described the stupas of Peshawar and Khyber in the *Journal of the Asiatic Society* (Wilson, 1841, p. 35). This was followed by more comprehensive studies from Dr. Martin Honigberger and Charles Masson himself, with findings from excavations near Jalalabad and Kabul being communicated through letters and society publications by 1834 (Wilson, 1841, p. 36). These reports not only revealed the physical structure and contents of the stupas but also underscored the rich Buddhist heritage extending into the Afghan regions, linking the Gandhāran cultural sphere beyond the Indus Valley.

Wilson also undertakes a meticulous analysis of Alexander the Great's eastern campaigns in the same volume, referencing classical Greek historians such as Arrian, Strabo, and Curtius. He attempts to reconstruct the likely route taken by Alexander into India, particularly through the Kabul valley region and beyond. Wilson suggests that when Alexander reached the Kophen, likely the area where the Panjshir river joins the Kabul river, he encountered Indian rulers such as Taxiles and began preparing for the Indus crossing by dispatching Hephaestion and Perdikkas towards Peukelaotis (identified with Pushkalavati or modern Charsadda), where resistance was met from King Astes (Wilson, 1841, p. 185). Through comparative philological analysis, Wilson equates "Astes" with the Sanskrit "Hasti" and "Sangseus" with "Sanjaya," drawing connections between Greek renderings and Puranic names. He further asserts that Alexander's crossing of several rivers, including the Kophen, Khoes, Euaspla, and Gureeus, matches the modern Punjshir, Alishang, Kunar, and Panjkora rivers, respectively (Wilson, 1841, p. 187). He critiques earlier identifications of the Khoes with rivers like the Khunar, arguing instead that the Alishang river, which flows into the Kabul river and enters Khyber at the southern end of the Laghman Valley, is the more plausible candidate based on the campaign's logistical details (Wilson, 1841, p. 187).

In a geostrategic sense, Wilson suggests that Alexander's campaign across these rugged terrains foreshadowed the complexity of later imperial movements through the same

mountain corridors. The linkage of Gandaritis (as referenced in Greek sources) with Gandhāra underscores the historical continuity of the region's cultural geography. Wilson's critique of Ptolemy's and Strabo's imprecise cartographic records further demonstrates his commitment to reconciling classical texts with empirical observation and to refining our understanding of ancient Indo-Greek interactions (Wilson, 1841, p. 194).

Additionally, Wilson engages deeply with classical Greek texts to reconstruct Alexander's likely route into India. He identifies several rivers described in Greek sources with present-day counterparts, such as the Kophen with the Punjshir, the Khoes with the Alishang, and the Euaspla and Gureeus with the Kunar and Panjkora rivers, respectively (Wilson, 1841, p. 187). Crucially, Wilson discusses the Malamantus, a river that appears in Arrian's geographic listing but is absent in his narrative. Noting this discrepancy, Wilson explores M. Court's proposition that the Malamantus may correspond to the Bahrah (Bara) River, which originates from the Khyber Mountains. This significant detail situates the river in the southern region relative to the Kabul River. Although the name appears to have Indian linguistic roots, Wilson admits that its verification remains uncertain due to insufficient historical or linguistic evidence (Wilson, 1841, p. 194). This identification situates the Khyber Mountain range not only as a militarily strategic corridor but also as a hydrologically important region within the Greek historical imagination. Wilson's interpretation strengthens the argument that Gandhāra, including the terrain west of the Indus, played a central role in the Indo-Hellenistic encounter. His geographical deductions, particularly the mapping of the Gandaritis region to the classical Gandhāra, offer important insight into how classical geography aligns with South-Asian textual and topographical traditions (Wilson, 1841, p. 187).

### **2.15 Lieut. J. Postans (1843)**

In his detailed field report, Lieutenant J. Postans provides one of the earliest colonial era insights into the geopolitical and tribal complexities of the Khyber region. According to Postans, the Khyberries, a small tribal group claiming descent from Afghan Sheikhs, were displaced from their ancestral lands by the more aggressive Doomkie and Jekranie tribes. Forced to flee, they took refuge in Khanpur, close to Shikarpur, where they reconstituted as a modest but peaceful group of approximately 800 individuals, with no internal subdivisions. Postans emphasises their lack of militant

behaviour and general peacefulness, while also highlighting how even religious status did not safeguard them from tribal violence (Postans, n.d., p. 35).

Regarding the Khyber Pass, which he also refers to as the Teera Pass, Postans presents a strategic and geological survey rooted in military intelligence. He notes that this mountain corridor, separating the valleys of Kohat and Peshawar, was not merely a natural feature but a militarised frontier, guarded by a small mud fort held by Futteh Khan's sepoys. Upon scouting, it was discovered that a substantial force of armed tribe members had assembled at the summit of the pass, leading to a decision by accompanying chiefs to negotiate first with the Afridis before proceeding. The terrain, he remarked, was so steep and rugged that even Afghan horse riders, including Alif Shah, had to dismount and lead their horses, a detail underscoring the physical challenge of navigating this strategic corridor (Postans, n.d., p. 134).

Geologically, Postans reports that the Khyber Pass is composed of fossiliferous limestone, like what is found in the Kohat Valley, with a notable dip of  $55^{\circ}$  to the southwest. He traces its origins to below the Fort of Attock, extending westward until it merges with the Soliman range near Suffaid Koh, steadily increasing in altitude. This scientific observation supplements his military and political concerns, portraying the pass as a formidable barrier both physically and politically (Postans, n.d., pp. 134, 223).

Politically, Postans' narrative reveals the tenuous British influence over Kohat and the surrounding tribal belts. Upon arriving in Kohat in late November, he was received by local figures such as Futteh Khan, Aga Medi Khan, and Alaf Shah, who collectively warned him against taking the direct route to Peshawar due to recent Afridi attacks. They confessed to having lost authority over the hill tribes, particularly since Sultan Mohammad Khan, a key intermediary, had been summoned to Lahore by the British. Postans observed that the chiefs had a vested interest in confining his camp within their fort, citing security concerns. However, he later suspected this was a move to consolidate their authority by appearing as protectors of imperial agents (Postans, n.d., pp. 134-135).

In terms of strategic coordination, Postans records extensive communication with Captain Mackeson and other British officials. When no reply was received regarding safe passage via Khyber, the chiefs suggested Afridis had detained the messenger. Despite concerns, Duria Khan, an Afridi chief employed by General Avitabile,

eventually arrived with 50 armed men and offered safe passage via the direct route to Peshawar. Duria Khan was joined by Ibrahim Khan, a relative of Dost Mohammad Khan, further adding political weight to the escort. However, Mackeson remained sceptical of Duria Khan's intentions and advised Postans to proceed only with consent from the Kohat and Lahore authorities (Postans, n.d., pp. 187-188).

Despite these doubts, Postans eventually began his march on December 8th, accompanied by multiple tribal chiefs. As they approached the Khyber Pass, scouts again reported a significant buildup of armed resistance. Though supported by over 400 followers, the expedition was ultimately repelled near the summit by Afridi forces, resulting in casualties among Postans' party. His account concludes with a sobering reflection on the topographical and political hazards embedded within the Khyber, reinforcing its reputation as both a geological marvel and geopolitical fault line (Postans, n.d., pp. 188, 223).

### **2.16 Rev. J. Gelson Gregson (1883)**

Rev. J. Gelson Gregson provides a compelling, first-hand colonial account of the Khyber region in his book "Through the Khyber Pass," rich in tribal complexity, historical violence, and cultural nuance. From Jamrud's fortified walls to the Shinwari blood fields and Shalmani flanks, he records the intricate chessboard of empire and tribal sovereignty. His observations remain crucial for scholars studying the intersection of military policy, ethnography, and colonial governance in the northwest frontier.

Rev. J. Gelson Gregson asserts that the Khyber Pass is far more than a rugged geographical feature; it is a powerful symbol of imperial ambition and anxiety (Gregson, 1892, p. 10). He describes it as stretching from Jamrud near the mouth of British control, up to Landi Khana, adjacent to the Afghan border. Gregson says this natural bottleneck served as a vital artery for British diplomacy, military expeditions, and control efforts aimed at reaching Kabul and beyond. He further notes the narrow gorges and steep gradients that rendered the pass both a logistical challenge and a defensible stronghold (Gregson, 1892, p. 14).

Gregson insists that British control of the pass was not secured through overwhelming force, but through uneasy treaties and subsidies with local tribal powers, particularly the Afridis, whose cooperation was always under strain (Gregson, 1892, p. 15). He



documents that the pass has been used historically by conquering powers such as Nadir Shah, Ahmad Shah Abdali, and later by British forces in the 19th century (Gregson, 1892, p. 13). Thus, he presents the Khyber as a space where empire and tribalism collided with military and economic intent.

Gregson portrays the Afridis as both the custodians and challengers of British imperial interest in the Khyber region. He identifies key sub tribes, Kuki Khel, Zakha Khel, and Malikdin Khel, who controlled segments of the pass and, in his words, held the "real power" on the frontier (Gregson, 1892, pp. 18-20). These tribes were simultaneously employed in British military auxiliaries like the Khyber Rifles, and yet they maintained deep internal loyalties that often conflicted with colonial aims.

Gregson says that imperial stipends were the principal means to maintain Afridi loyalty, but that these payments were frequently manipulated. He cites explicitly Malik Abdulla Nur of the Kuki Khel, who drew Rs. 150 monthly but used it to bolster personal authority rather than tribal harmony, forcing the British into awkward political positions (Gregson, 1892, p. 22). He further reports that the 1897 Afridi mutiny, when the Khyber Rifles turned against the British, prompted a crisis in colonial trust and a reevaluation of frontier strategy (p. 24).

Gregson dedicates several observations to Jamrud, the fortified entrance to the Khyber, located adjacent to the village of Jam, home of the Kuki Khel. He expresses puzzlement over the name "Jamrud," which he claims has no known etymology in Persian or Pashto, and may have been distorted by British administrators (Gregson, 1892, p. 30). He sees Jamrud Fort as the British Empire's last brick outpost before tribal terrain, a place where administration, taxation, and military coordination intersected.

He recalls scenes of Kuki Khel village life, particularly near Ali Masjid, where water channels irrigated fields, and tense diplomatic episodes unfolded. One vivid anecdote is Amin Khan's threat to fire cannons at the British Lieutenant Governor, a striking symbol of tribal assertion even under the shadow of imperial guns (Gregson, 1892, pp. 31-32). He makes it clear that Jamrud was not just a military post; it was a political pressure point where imperial intent met tribal autonomy.

He further added that the Landi Kotal, the crown of the Khyber, is not merely because of its altitude (3,518 feet), but due to its strategic, symbolic, and tribal complexity. It lies at the juncture of Afridi and Shinwari territories, and Gregson records with detail

the Shinwari uprising of 1883, which erupted in response to Amir Abdur Rahman's taxation policies along the Landi Khana-Dakka corridor, Gregson-G (Gregson, 1892: p. 45).

The Shinwaris' resistance was met with a terrifying retribution: Gregson narrates how the Amir's troops executed 200 Shinwaris and stacked their severed heads into a pyramid as a warning. He says this atrocity created a long-lasting trauma in tribal memory, even affecting marriage alliances, as widows from this incident found themselves stigmatised (Gregson, 1892, p. 46). Gregson further reflects on Shinwari women's roles, including their armed participation in grass cutting expeditions, guarded against Zakha Khel raiders, underscoring the embeddedness of warfare and gendered labour (Gregson, 1892, p. 47).

Gregson recognises the Shalmanis as minor but tactically vital players, especially along the Tartarra route, a flank path parallel to the main Khyber artery. He documents their control over Kambela village and Lakka Sar ridges, both of which proved essential during British retreats and blockades (Gregson, 1892, p. 50). He notes that although politically marginalised, these tribes often allied with disaffected Afridis, magnifying the threat to imperial forces (Gregson, 1892, p. 51).

Gregson says the British ignored these smaller tribes at their peril. When the Shalmanis were excluded from power-sharing or subsidy arrangements, they proved capable of swinging the balance in favour of rebellion. He warns that their geographical positioning gave them leverage far beyond their population size.

Perhaps most importantly, Gregson speaks as someone who lived unarmed among these tribes for 15 years. He does not romanticise them, but neither does he vilify them. Instead, he argues that respectful diplomacy, language fluency (Pashto and Persian), and cultural empathy were far more effective tools than rifles or cannon (Gregson, 1892, p. 60).

He strongly recommends the appointment of a dedicated political officer at Jamrud, fluent in local languages and embedded in tribal norms, to prevent future misunderstandings. Gregson emphasises that imperial failure in the frontier often arose not from insufficient strength, but from ignorance of tribal codes.

### 2.17 Mme L. Veccia Vaglieri (1883)

Mme. L. Veccia Vaglieri's entry on the Khyber Pass in the *Encyclopedia of Islam* constitutes a foundational scholarly account that articulates both the strategic and ethno-political significance of one of South Asia's most consequential historical corridors. Her detailed geographical description, noting the Khyber Pass as stretching approximately 33 miles (50 km) from Shadi Bagiar near Fort Jamrud to Landi Khana at the Afghan border, positions it as the principal gateway between Central Asia and the Indian subcontinent (Vaglieri, 1980, p. 134). The pass's highest point, Landi Kotal (3,518 feet / 1,280 meters), serves as both a strategic outpost and a commercial centre, highlighting its dual economic and military utility.

Vaglieri conceptualises the Khyber Pass not merely as a physical formation, but as a dynamic historical agent that has profoundly influenced the movement of empires. She observes that, while Alexander's generals likely traversed it, it was most certainly utilised by figures such as Mahmud of Ghazni, Babur, Nadir Shah, and Ahmad Shah Durrani, each employing the pass as an invasion route into India (Vaglieri, 1980, pp. 134-135). In the colonial era, especially the 19th century, the British recognised the pass's strategic indispensability as the shortest and most reliable route to Kabul. Its year-round, snow-free conditions facilitated rapid military mobilisation, an advantage central to British planning during the Anglo-Afghan Wars.

A principal strength of Vaglieri's analysis lies in her examination of tribal politics, with particular emphasis on the Afridi Pathans, who have historically controlled the Khyber region. She details how British colonial authorities negotiated with these tribes, offering subsidies in exchange for guaranteed safe passage (Vaglieri, 1980, p. 135). This arrangement, however, proved unstable, most notably during the Afridi-Orakzai uprising of 1897-1898, which exposed the risks inherent in reliance on tribal militias such as the Khyber Rifles. Vaglieri chronicles the subsequent transition from tribal levies to regular British forces, Khassadars, Scouts, and the Frontier Constabulary, as part of broader efforts to stabilise the region after repeated uprisings (Vaglieri, 1980, pp. 136-137).

While Vaglieri's account is comprehensive for its time, she does not provide an exhaustive analysis of the Afridis' internal clan structure, nor does she address neighbouring Pashtun groups such as the Shinwaris in detail. Contemporary ethnographic and colonial sources supplement this gap: the Afridis, a confederation of

eight clans (e.g., Kuki Khel, Malikdin Khel, Qambar Khel, etc.), are renowned for their martial prowess, mountain warfare, and political autonomy. Historically, they imposed tolls on those traversing the pass, exercising authority over territory referred to in early Sanskrit sources as Apritaka, which is likely a reference to the Afridi land (Siddiqui, 2014, p. 47). The Shinwaris, closely allied with the Afridis and based primarily in the Landi Kotal-Torkham belt, have long maintained political and cultural ties across the Afghan-Pakistan border.

Further scholarship reinforces Vaglieri's depiction of the region's tribal militarisation. For example, Babur (1505/1922) records being guided through the Khyber by Fajji Gagiani, an Afghan of the Gagiani (Shinwari) clan, during his campaign toward Hashtnagar. Babur's memoirs describe both the formidable terrain and his dependence on local tribal expertise, thus substantiating Vaglieri's observations (Babur, 1922, p. 230).

Vaglieri also highlights the infrastructural transformation of the Khyber Pass during British administration. Notable developments at the Khyber Pass included the construction of a broad-gauge railway extending to Jamrud and, in 1925, a narrow-gauge line reaching Landi Khana (Vaglieri, 1980, p. 138). This development exemplifies imperial ambitions to militarise, commercialise, and integrate the pass into a larger logistical network. Following the partition of British India in 1947, the newly established state of Pakistan assumed administration of the Khyber District, inheriting its complex tribal structure and ongoing strategic imperatives (Vaglieri, 1980, p. 138).

### **2.18 Sir Robert Warburton (1879- 1898)**

In his seminal memoir *Eighteen Years in the Khyber*, Robert Warburton meticulously chronicles the geopolitical and ethnographic significance of the Khyber Pass, which during the late 19th century stood as a vital artery of British India's frontier policy. Spanning from Jamrud near Peshawar to Landi Kotal, and extending onward to Landi Khana at the Afghan border, the Khyber was both a trade and military lifeline between India and Afghanistan (Warburton, 1900, p. 71). Warburton notes that its narrowest sections, including defiles only fifteen feet wide, presented both tactical bottlenecks and strategic opportunities for the British Raj (Warburton, 1900, p. 71).

To consolidate British control, older routes like the Tartarra gorge were rebuilt, first by Colonel Mackeson (1839-42) and later during the 1879-80 re-engineering of frontier

pathways. These efforts transformed the pass into a fortified channel of movement and imperial influence. When the Amir's troops reached Dakka, British forces routinely moved convoys from Peshawar to Landi Kotal, underscoring the Khyber's status as a militarised corridor (Warburton, 1900, p. 102).

Dominating this landscape were the Afridi tribes, particularly the Kuki Khel, Malikdin Khel, Zakha Khel, and others. Each controlled specific segments of the pass and maintained a tenuous balance between collaboration and insurrection. Warburton provides a nuanced account of how the Khyber Rifles, composed of Afridi levies, were initially engaged to maintain order, only to later revolt in 1897. That year, Afridi lashkars overran Landi Kotal, killing British troops and disrupting imperial control (Warburton, 1900, p. 104). Warburton attributes the uprising to a mix of political frustration, spiritual agitation by figures like Akbar Akhundzada, and fears of eroding tribal autonomy (Warburton, 1900, pp. 290-297).

Among these leaders, Abdulla Nur, the influential malik of the Kuki Khel, exemplified the double-edged politics of the region. He simultaneously accepted stipends from the British and harboured wealth and loyalties rooted in traditional power structures (Warburton, 1900, p. 103). Meanwhile, Jamrud Fort, positioned at the entry to the pass, served as the operational nucleus of British activity. Caravans from Kabul would stop here for security transitions, and proposed railway projects like the Peshawar-Jamrud line were planned, although derailed by tribal hostilities (Warburton, 1900, pp. 102, 170).

At Landi Kotal, the highest point of the pass (3,518 ft), imperial and tribal geographies collided. Shared by the Shinwaris and Zakha Khels, the region was a contested frontier, rich in memory and military significance. Warburton recounts that this was the site where emissaries from Nadir Shah were once halted, and British engineers routinely surveyed it for fortification potential (Warburton, 1900, p. 166). However, structures here were cyclically razed and rebuilt, depending on the tribal temperature of the moment.

The Shinwaris, centred in Landi Kotal and Loargi, were particularly resistant. In 1883, they attempted to halt movement on the Landi Khana-Dakka road, demanding toll shares from Amir Abdur Rahman's administration. The Amir's response was brutal:

over 200 Shinwaris were executed, their severed heads displayed in a ghastly pyramid, a tale preserved in the oral history of the valley (Warburton, 1900, pp. 121-122).

Warburton's anthropological eye also captured rare insights into Shinwari women, who were seldom seen but known to participate in communal grass cutting expeditions under armed guard, in fear of Zakha Khel ambushes (Warburton, 1900, p. 199). Such details illuminate the intricate inter-tribal tensions and the cautious negotiation of gendered roles within these societies.

Further along the Tartarra route, the Shalmanis and Mullagoris served as both alternatives and allies in British frontier policy. Holding key areas like Kambela, these tribes were critical in securing the Lakka Sar peak, used seasonally for strategic encampments by both British and Afghan forces (Warburton, 1900, p. 122). However, when excluded from political arrangements, these groups often aligned with rebel Afridi factions.

Throughout the text, Warburton discusses a range of expeditions, such as those against Zaman Khan and Amin Khan, navigating the delicate balance between military retaliation and negotiated truce (Warburton, 1900, pp. 239-281). Despite betrayals, a few Afridi elders consistently offered assistance, even when their villages lay in ruins (Warburton, 1900, p. 344).

Warburton's unique position, living unarmed among these tribes for over fifteen years, allowed him to observe the interplay of force and diplomacy intimately. His ultimate recommendation was pragmatic and prescient: that a permanent political officer, fluent in Pashto and Persian, be stationed in the region to mediate tribal affairs with cultural sensitivity (Warburton, 1900, p. 340).

### **2.19 H. W. Bellew (1880)**

In his seminal ethnographic and linguistic treatise, H.H. Bellew (1880) offers an extensive analysis of the tribes inhabiting the Khyber region, with a principal emphasis on the Afridis and their related groups. He begins by challenging the validity of the term "Pathán," contending that it is a Hindustani derivative of the indigenous self-designation "Pukhtána," the plural form of "Pukhtún" or "Pakhtún," the autonym used by Afridis and other Pashtun tribes (Bellew, 1880, p. 56). The related language, "Pukhtó," is explored in depth, with Bellew considering the speculative etymology of

"Pukhta" as possibly derived from "Pul" (ridge), contrasted with "Ghar" (mountain), thus reflecting the region's topographical realities (Bellew, 1880, p. 57).

Bellew draws a significant historical parallel by positing that the name "Pukhtún khwá" geographically corresponds to the "Pactya" of Herodotus. He argues that contemporary Pukhtuns, especially the Afridis, are likely direct descendants of the ancient Pactyians, since the phonetic development from Pukhtún to Pushtún and Pakhún mirrors the classical forms (Bellew, 1880, pp. 57-58). He further proposes a linguistic and cultural connection between the Pacts, Scythes, and the European Picts and Scots, suggesting that elements of the Afridi tribe, such as Kambar Khel and Kamari, may share ancient ethnological roots with groups far outside South Asia (Bellew, 1880, p. 58).

From a geopolitical perspective, Bellew explains that "Pactya," as referenced by Darius Hystaspes, was the easternmost satrapy of the Persian Empire, including four groups: Gandarii, Aparytæ, Sattagyddæ, and Dadicæ. He identifies these with modern Yūsufzai, Afridis, Khattaks, and the nearly extinct Dadi tribe, respectively, thus suggesting remarkable tribal continuity across the Peshawar Valley for over two millennia (Bellew, 1880, pp. 58-59).

In Chapter VIII, Bellew focuses specifically on the Afridis, identifying them as the contemporary heirs of the Aparytæ. He defines their historic territory as stretching from the Sufed Koh range to the Indus River, bordered north and south by the Kabul and Kurram Rivers (Bellew, 1880, p. 77). He notes that modern Afridis are related to the Orakzai, Bangash, Tori, and Wazīrī, all belonging to the Turklānī section of the Ghurghusht Pashtun confederacy (Bellew, 1880, p. 78). The author underscores the fluidity of tribal identity, noting that despite transformations due to Scythic and Turko-Mongol invasions, many groups maintained ethnolinguistic and genealogical integrity.

Bellew's narrative includes a local tradition of Turklānī origins for the Khattaks, indicating a complex process of ethnogenesis shaped by Turkic migrations and local lore. He maintains that these tribes likely retained their distinct identity until the demise of the Chagatai or Timurid dynasties (Bellew, 1880, p. 78). Later disruptions, particularly those by Toghiani Turks and the migration of Khattaks into former Afridi lands, dramatically reshaped the ethnic landscape of the Khyber and Tirah regions (Bellew, 1880, p. 80).

In terms of displacement, Bellew observes the Afridis' progressive withdrawal into the rugged hills of Khyber and the Tirah and Mydān areas as a response to Turkic expansion and shifting power balances (Bellew, 1880, p. 79). He further notes that Afridis now occupy only a fraction of their ancestral domain, much of which has been overtaken by Ghiljis, Shinwaris, and Khogianis, with whom they maintain intertwined economic and military relations (Bellew, 1880, p. 80).

Regarding the Shinwaris, Bellew portrays them as astute traders and skilled warriors, albeit reputed as robbers, who claim descent from Persian Shiūr wān (Bellew, 1880, p. 80). Although they have assimilated into the broader Pathan culture, they retain distinguishing characteristics. Their central role in commerce between Kabul and Peshawar highlights the Khyber's continued significance as a trade and military route.

Bellew offers valuable insights into the socio-religious character of the Afridis, who, despite their nominal adherence to Islam, historically resisted orthodox practice. He relates an incident where they sacrificed a religious figure to establish a local "Ziyārat," reflecting their syncretic and often violent adaptation of Islamic tradition (Bellew, 1880, p. 83). The Afridi origin myth, emphasising resistance to a Mughal governor, typifies their spirit of independence. The term "Afridi," according to Bellew, derives from "Afrida" (Persian for "created being"), suggesting a mythic genealogical identity (Bellew, 1880, p. 83).

During the British colonial period, the Afridis consistently posed a challenge to imperial authority. Their frequent raids and defiance in the Khyber region resulted in numerous clashes with British garrisons in Peshawar, despite efforts to co-opt them through enlistment and concessions. Bellew commends their exceptional marksmanship and their skill in acquiring British firearms, whether through recruitment or theft, and often absconding with their weapons (Bellew, 1880, p. 84).

## **2.20 Colonel H. D. Hutchinson (1897-98)**

The military campaign in the Khyber and Tirah valleys during 1897-1898, as documented by Colonel H.D. Hutchinson (1898), provides a critical analysis of British interactions with the Afridi and Orakzai tribes. Commanded by General Sir William Lockhart, the expedition not only posed considerable logistical and tactical challenges but also revealed the intricate dynamics of tribal politics, local geography, and colonial



military policy. Hutchinson's account is noteworthy for its combination of firsthand observation and strategic evaluation.

The Khyber Pass, long recognised as a pivotal corridor connecting Central Asia with the Indian subcontinent, remained central to British imperial interests. Hutchinson underscores its significance, characterising it as a "historic highway" essential for "peace, trade, and civilisation" (Siddiqui, 2014, p. 17). To secure safe passage, the British established formal arrangements with the Afridis, including the payment of subsidies and the construction of forts garrisoned by Afridi levies. However, these arrangements broke down in 1897 when the Afridis, motivated by religious leaders and grievances such as the salt tax and perceived British interference in tribal customs, rose in revolt, launching attacks on key forts including Ali Musjid and Landi Kotal (Siddiqui, 2014, p. 18).

Hutchinson adopts a markedly critical tone toward the Afridis, labelling them "a most avaricious race" and describing them as inherently untrustworthy and violent (Siddiqui, 2014, p. 134). He attributes their resistance to an ingrained culture of blood feuds and perceived treachery. While these ethnographic generalisations must be read considering the prevailing colonial attitudes of the era, they nevertheless illustrate the significant challenges faced by imperial forces operating in regions marked by robust tribal autonomy and minimal state intervention.

The Tirah Valley's rugged and mountainous terrain posed substantial operational obstacles. Hutchinson vividly portrays the physical landscape, highlighting strategic passes such as Sampagha and Arhanga. He notes that the Arhanga Pass offered entry to Maidan, the core of Afridi Tirah, remarking, "No European had penetrated these valleys hitherto," thereby emphasising both the area's isolation and the symbolic achievement of British entry (Siddiqui, 2014, p. 105). He provides detailed observations of local architecture, fortified towers, scattered homes, and clan-based residential clusters, which collectively facilitated effective Afridi resistance.

Throughout the campaign, British forces suffered repeated ambushes and logistical setbacks. The narrative details numerous skirmishes and highlights the challenges of manoeuvring baggage trains through narrow defiles under continuous attack. Hutchinson notes that "individual courage, high training, perfect discipline, and calm judgment" were essential for success, particularly during rear-guard actions (Siddiqui,

2014, p. 172). The Zakka Khel Afridis, depicted as especially aggressive and influential, orchestrated many night raids on British baggage and supply convoys.

General Lockhart's leadership is consistently praised by Hutchinson, who emphasises his diplomatic caution and military determination. The Mastura Valley, under Brigadier General Hart, served as a critical base for reconnaissance and supply. Despite frequent Orakzai attacks, British troops successfully transformed the area into a strategic operational centre (Siddiqui, 2014, p. 174). Lockhart's comprehensive strategy of systematically traversing and mapping Tirah was unprecedented.

A significant aspect of Hutchinson's narrative is his acknowledgement of the Afridis' military acumen. Despite his critical stance, he concedes that the Afridis were well-versed in British military tactics, as many had previously served in the Indian Army. They possessed advanced weaponry, including Martini-Henry, Snider, and some Lee-Metford rifles, which they employed with great effectiveness (Siddiqui, 2014, p. 225). Their mountaineering expertise and exceptional marksmanship made them formidable adversaries.

As the campaign progressed, British forces endured severe conditions, fatigue, nightly assaults, and environmental exposure. By January 1898, Lockhart had led his troops through "every portion of Tirah," signalling both a symbolic and strategic victory (Siddiqui, 2014, p. 223). The campaign ended with the imposition of disarmament terms on several Afridi clans, following negotiations. Notably, Hutchinson describes an unexpected gesture by Afridi leaders, upon Lockhart's departure, "cheered him heartily," a moment he characterises as "a remarkable ending to a brutal campaign" (Siddiqui, 2014, p. 222).

In summary, *The Campaign in Tirah* is a critical historical document, interweaving military reportage with ethnographic observation. Although embedded in colonial perspectives, it provides rich insight into the geography, tribal politics, and modes of warfare on the North West Frontier. Hutchinson's work stands as a testament to both the resilience of indigenous resistance and the operational complexities faced by imperial military campaigns.

## **2.21 Henry George Raverty (1888)**

Major Henry George Raverty's work on Afghanistan and Baluchistan is a monumental and intricate work that remains one of the most important colonial-era contributions to

understanding the tribal geography and military significance of the Khyber Pass. Across more than 700 pages, Raverty meticulously records linguistic, ethnographic, and political data regarding the complex tribal mosaic of this frontier, and no corridor receives more attention or bears more strategic and mythic weight than the Khyber.

The Khyber Pass, long before modern cartography defined national boundaries, operated as a geopolitical hinge between South and Central Asia. Raverty outlines that not only did the ancient invaders like Alexander's generals, Mahmud of Ghazni, Babur, and Nadir Shah use this route, but that even Humayun and later Mughal contingents relied upon it, though often with hostile encounters from local tribes (Raverty, 1888: 94, 376-377, 380-381). One critical passage describes Humayun's retreat from Punjab in 1552 CE through the Khyber route and his brief military halt in Peshawar, where he ordered fortifications repaired and provisions gathered (Raverty, 1888, p. 376).

Raverty writes of pitched battles, such as the annihilation of the Mughal army at Landi Khana, where Jaswant Singh and Shuja'at Khan's forces were obliterated by a tribal confederation led by Aemal Khan of the Afridis (Raverty, 1888, p. 120). This defile, described in granular detail, is said to be overhung with rock formations and suffused with tall wild grass that offers natural camouflage, an ideal setting for guerrilla resistance (Raverty, 1888, p. 40).

Raverty's portrayal of the Afridis is equal parts admiration and colonial caution. He estimates their population at nearly 40,000 families. He places them squarely in the high-altitude domains of Tirah and Khyber, noting that they lived in both permanent stone houses and as nomadic mats Raverty (1888: 95). The Afridis are recorded as holding a jagir for guarding the Khyber route under the Kabul Badshah's patronage, thus wielding both martial and economic power (Raverty, 1888, p. 95).

They refused to pay taxes, enjoyed autonomy, and possessed weapons known for their craftsmanship (Raverty, 1888, p. 95). Their ability to annihilate elite Mughal contingents, as in the attack, demonstrates how they functioned not as mere highwaymen but as sovereign gatekeepers.

The Shinwaris, though often overshadowed by the Afridis in military history, occupy substantial terrain across Jalalabad and parts of the lower Khyber valley. Raverty mentions them as inhabitants of villages such as Shin kri, marked by elevated passes and hidden valleys (Raverty, 1888, p. 263). These locations served as defensive citadels

and preserved Shinwari culture amidst centuries of invasions. Though less aggressive than the Afridis, the Shinwaris' strategic location meant that their allegiance could tilt the balance of any frontier campaign.

Raverty uncovers a lesser-known but fascinating account of the Shalmanis, who are said to have originated from Shalman, also referred to as Shanfizan or Shalizin (Raverty, 1888, pp. 176-77). These tribes were pushed eastward by Central-Asian Turks and settled around the Kabul River and adjoining valleys. Raverty documents two Shalmani villages in the Khyber mountains and mentions their presence as far as Agror (Raverty, 1888, p. 76). He underscores the erasure of their historical role by contemporary writers who erroneously trace their rise only to Akbar's time.

Among the smallest of the named tribal confederacies are the Mullagoris, often mentioned in passing. However, Raverty situates them firmly in the Dara'hs between the Tahtarah mountains and the Kabul River (Raverty, 1888, p. 176). Their role, while not marked by grand battles, was integral in the web of alliances and rivalries. Their valleys served as retreat zones for both resistance fighters and caravan traders, indicating a layered identity of commerce and concealment.

Raverty's geographical knowledge is especially vivid in his descriptions of passes such as Landi Khana, Ali Masjid, and Luargey. The steep defiles, sudden ascents, and precipitous ravines of Khyber are not mere topographic data; they are central characters in the power plays of empires and tribal federations alike (Raverty, 1888, 40, 94, 380). These terrain features dictate the tempo of travel, the feasibility of military campaigns, and the success or failure of diplomatic missions.

One particularly insightful detail lies in the description of "Jamrud," a staging area frequently used by Mughal forces, including during the failed passage of Muhammad Amin Khan (Raverty, 1888, p. 380). Raverty narrates how jirgas sent to negotiate access to Khyber were rebuffed, with tribal sangars (stone fortifications) forcing the Mughal armies to halt at spurs like Luargey and Gharib Khana 'h.

Raverty's *Notes* are not just a cartographic record or colonial memorisation; they are a window into a world where geography, tribal ethos, and imperial ambition collided. The Khyber Pass is more than a road; it is a crucible of confrontation and culture. From the sabres of Afridi warriors to the scrolls of Mughal envoys, every narrative that winds through these mountains is shaped by the land itself.

This work remains vital not only for historians of South Asia but for scholars of imperial borderlands and ethnography. Its meticulous documentation, with tribal genealogies, military engagements, and terrain analysis, offers fertile ground for future academic investigation.

## **2.22 Edward A. Morphy 1899**

Edward A. Morphy's (1899) monograph on the Khyber Pass offers a detailed account from a late 19th-century British colonial perspective, illuminating the strategic, logistical, and ethnographic complexities of one of South Asia's most contested corridors. Designed primarily for British military officers, colonial administrators, and contemporary readers, Morphy's work synthesises descriptive geography with direct military and administrative observations, capturing the interplay of environment, tribal structure, and imperial ambition in what would become the Khyber District.

Morphy commences by underscoring the Khyber Pass's critical significance as the "North-Western Gate" into India, a vital military and commercial artery linking Peshawar to the Afghan outpost of Dakka (Morphy, 1899, p. 1). Spanning 32 miles of mountainous terrain, the pass remained largely under tribal control, presenting enduring obstacles to both commerce and military operations. Morphy emphasises the persistent difficulty of imposing centralised authority over this narrow but pivotal passage, attributing much of the challenge to the autonomy and resilience of the region's tribal confederacies.

The Afridi tribes, with particular attention to the Zakka Khel, are depicted as formidable and unpredictable adversaries occupying the Khyber highlands. Reflecting the prevalent colonial attitudes of his time, Morphy characterises the Afridis as possessing "predatory instincts" and an inherent disposition toward raiding (Morphy, 1899, p. 3). He further recounts local customs, such as the practice of passing newborns through holes in house walls to symbolise a future as raiders, a claim which, while illustrative of colonial stereotypes, lacks a substantive anthropological foundation (Morphy, 1899, p. 45).

In contrast, the Shinwari tribe is portrayed in more favourable terms, described as "well-behaved" and consistently loyal to British interests, particularly during the Afridi-led uprising of 1897-1898 when Shinwari collaboration was instrumental in the British recapture of the Pass (Morphy, 1899, p. 44). The Landi Kotal plateau, home to Shinwari

fortified settlements, is examined both strategically and ethnographically as a crucial British foothold in the region.

Morphy provides a detailed account of subsistence strategies and the physical geography of the Khyber. He notes that the arid landscape, largely unsuitable for agriculture except for minor cultivated zones near Jamrud and Landi Kotal, compelled many tribes toward smuggling or violent means of subsistence (Morphy, 1899, pp. 6-7). The narrative documents the punitive destruction of Afridi villages during the 1897 insurrection and the subsequent colonial support for Shinwari settlements, measures intended to reinforce loyalty and suppress resistance (Morphy, 1899, p. 15).

The treatise further explores colonial military logistics, including the construction of strategic forts, taxation checkpoints (notably at Jamrud), and the establishment of garrisons at Ali Masjid and Landi Kotal. The creation of the Khyber Rifles, a paramilitary force composed of local recruits, is highlighted as a novel British strategy for indirect governance and pacification (Morphy, 1899, p. 24).

While Morphy's work is unmistakably shaped by colonial essentialism and often simplifies the diversity of tribal identities, it remains an indispensable primary source for historians and anthropologists. The integration of military, administrative, and ethnographic analysis provides contemporary scholars with critical insights into the mechanisms by which British authorities perceived, regulated, and manipulated tribal dynamics in a persistently volatile frontier environment.

### **2.23 Victor Bayley (1939)**

Victor Bayley (1939) provides an administratively grounded and firsthand narrative of the Khyber Pass, illuminating both its strategic imperatives and engineering challenges. He underscores the pass's significance not only as a tactical military route but also as a principal communication artery between British India and Central Asia, necessitating a delicate balance of military vigilance and diplomatic negotiation (Bayley, 1939, p. 12). The region's rugged topography and narrow gorges demanded extensive surveying and innovative engineering, particularly as construction of the railway was frequently disrupted by sniper fire and raids from tribal factions (Bayley, 1939, p. 14).

Afridi tribes occupy a central role in Bayley's account, characterised by a nuanced blend of admiration and caution. The Kuki Khel, Zakha Khel, and Malikdin Khel, pillars of Afridi governance and resistance, are portrayed as both essential partners and

formidable adversaries. Although the British recruited these tribes as levies, including the Khyber Rifles, Bayley notes persistent internal fractures and deep-seated mistrust of colonial authority (Bayley, 1939, p. 45). He highlights Malik Mohomed Zaman Khan of the Kuki Khel as the "doyen of the Maliks," a figure skilled at mediating between British requirements and tribal priorities (Bayley, 1939, p. 45). Bayley's analysis situates Afridi political dynamics, marked by blood feuds and overlapping jurisdictions, as key determinants in the maintenance of order and the railway's eventual completion.

Jamrud is presented as the eastern gateway to the Khyber and the operational hub of British logistics. Its strategic location at the threshold of the tribal belt rendered it a pivotal site for staging convoys, hosting engineering teams, and facilitating diplomatic encounters. The proximity of Malik Mohomed Zaman Khan further underscores the intersection of colonial infrastructure and tribal influence (Bayley, 1939, p. 45). Jamrud's symbolic status is also emphasised, functioning as a venue for public ceremonies, viceroy visits, and tribal alliances, an embodiment of the British imperial frontier (Bayley, 1939, p. 46).

Bayley depicts the Khyber as a nerve centre of tribal, geographic, and administrative complexity. Multiple tribal territories, including those of the Zakka Khel, Shinwaris, Mullagoris, and Shilmanis, converge in view from a single vantage, making Landi Kotal both a place of negotiation and frequent conflict (Bayley, 1939, p. 45). Persistent inter-tribal mistrust and rivalry, Bayley contends, afforded the British opportunities to advance railway construction through strategic manipulation and incentives (Bayley, 1939, p. 46).

Bayley provides an insightful narrative regarding the Shinwaris. He describes regular visits by Khan Bahadur Mir Akbar Khan, the Shinwari malik, portraying these leaders as both fierce warriors and cultivated interlocutors who engaged in political discussion over tea and cigarettes (Bayley, 1939, p. 45). The assassination of Mir Akbar Khan by a rival is recounted as the tragic end of a rare bond between a British officer and a tribal chief, a loss Bayley laments deeply (Bayley, 1939, p. 45).

The Shilmanis and Mullagoris, although militarily less prominent, controlled vital terrain such as the ridges near Landi Kotal and valleys leading to the Kabul River (Bayley, 1939, p. 45). Their strategic significance lay in their command of the landscape rather than numbers. Bayley observes that British officers relied on diplomatic

engagement and economic inducements to secure passage through their domains, noting that despite their weakened status, these groups remained diplomatically relevant (Bayley, 1939, pp. 45-46).

Bayley's observations extend beyond contemporary engineering and politics to acknowledge the deep archaeological heritage of the Khyber Pass. He details the presence of an ancient Buddhist stupa in the central valley, likely dating back over two millennia. Bayley speculates that the stupa, once possibly enshrining sacred relics of the Buddha, had been disturbed by treasure hunters, its contents long since removed (Bayley, 1939, p. 121). This brief reference underscores the Khyber's role as a silent witness to successive civilisations, from Buddhist antiquity to Islamic and colonial eras. Such archaeological sites attest to the region's historic prominence as both a spiritual and strategic crossroads.

#### **2.24 Lowell Thomas (1925)**

Lowell Thomas (1925) presents the Khyber Pass as both a legendary gateway and an active frontier at the heart of British India. Spanning approximately twenty-seven miles from Jamrud to Landi Khana, the Pass is depicted as a fiercely contested corridor, carved through the Safed Koh mountains, and repeatedly shaped by imperial ambitions. Thomas highlights the strategic significance of the Khyber Pass, describing it as a natural bottleneck, where, at its narrowest point near Ali Masjid, the gorge is scarcely broad enough for the passage of armies, yet sufficiently expansive to alter the fate of empires (Thomas, 1925, p. 79). The extensive military infrastructure, including aerial cableways, teleferris, anti-aircraft emplacements, and modern roadways, illustrates the intensity of imperial control and technological investment (Thomas, 1925, p. 78). The simultaneous presence of British troops, camel caravans, and tribal patrols encapsulates the Pass as a zone of perpetual contestation and convergence.

Afridi tribes, particularly the Zakka Khel, figure prominently in Thomas's narrative. He recounts a vivid anecdote of intertribal rivalry: Zakka Khel families, residing on either side of a single street, periodically engaged in cannon duels with a set of thirty-two cannonballs, cyclically reused by both parties (Thomas, 1925, p. 95). Thomas interprets this story as both a historical fact and a metaphor for tribal resilience and cyclical conflict. The Afridis' reputation as expert marksmen is further underscored by the account of a notorious sniper above Ali Masjid, ultimately killed by his son, a member



of the Khyber Militia, who confessed, "he was my father," thus exemplifying the complex entanglement of tribal loyalty and service under colonial authority (Thomas, 1925, p. 80).

Jamrud is portrayed as more than just the eastern gateway to the Khyber Pass; it stands as an emblem of British stability in an otherwise volatile frontier. Originally a Sikh fort, it was repurposed into a British military outpost featuring ammunition depots, a staff headquarters, and a caravanserai that served as a meeting point for traders and officials alike (Thomas, 1925, p. 76). The name "Jamrud" is derived from the adjacent Kuki Khel village of Jam. The fort marks the transition from British-administered India to the tribal hinterlands, serving as both a bureaucratic and military threshold.

Though Thomas gives limited direct attention to the Shinwaris, his references situate them as pivotal actors in the geopolitics of the upper Khyber. Their strategic settlement near Landi Kotal and Landi Khana places them at the summit of regional tribal networks. During the colonial era, the Shinwaris maintained a degree of autonomy by leveraging their geographic position, resisting full integration into British administrative structures. While Afridis dominate Thomas's focus, the mention of travels through Loargi and neighbouring areas implies a Shinwari presence underpinning the defence of the Pass's apex (Thomas, 1925, p. 79).

Landi Kotal emerges as the symbolic zenith of the Khyber journey. From this high-altitude fortress, vistas extend toward Dakka and Afghanistan. Thomas recalls observing caravans from Bokhara and Khiva, attesting to the region's ongoing role in Eurasian trade (Thomas, 1925, p. 85). The convergence of military battalions, aerial cable cars, and railway projects at Landi Kotal marks it as a hub of both colonial ambition and indigenous resistance, a site where imperial infrastructure intersected with ancient commerce.

The Shalmanis, though briefly mentioned, are associated with alternate routes and secluded valleys that circumvented the heavily militarised central Khyber. Thomas's account of brigands ambushing a postal convoy between Jamrud and Ali Masjid may allude to such peripheral groups (Thomas, 1925, p. 86). His mention of "places where the forts cannot see the road" highlights the tactical significance of these outlying zones in countering British control and preserving indigenous autonomy.

Thomas characterises the Khyber as more than a static landscape: it is a "record writ in blood" (Thomas, 1925, p. 95). The rituals of migration, commerce, and military rotations offer a dramatic tableau where culture, war, and empire intersect. His poetic reflection, "*When spring time flushes the desert grass... the kafilas wind through the Khyber Pass*", celebrates the enduring cycle of movement, even as the region remains fraught with violence and intrigue (Thomas, 1925, p. 87). This interplay of beauty and danger reinforces the Pass's centrality in both British and tribal historical memory.

Lowell Thomas's *Beyond Khyber Pass* is not merely a travelogue; it is an essential scholarly source for understanding the sociopolitical, military, and cultural topography of the Khyber region. The Afridis dominate its martial narrative, the Shinwaris and Shalmanis defend the heights and peripheries, and landmarks such as Jamrud, Landi Kotal, and Landi Khana become the militarised thresholds between empire and autonomy. For researchers of colonial frontier policy, tribal resilience, or the militarisation of geography, Thomas's work is indispensable.

## **2.25 Sir Olef Caroe (c. 1957)**

Sir Olaf Caroe's "*The Pathans: 550 B.C. -A.D*" (1957) remains a seminal ethnographic and political history, providing some of the most authoritative insights into the socio-political fabric of the Pashtun tribes of the North-West Frontier, with particular emphasis on the tribes controlling the Khyber Pass. This review synthesises Caroe's meticulous documentation and nuanced interpretations of key tribal communities, most notably the Afridis, Shinwaris, Shalmanis, and Mullagoris, who have historically asserted dominance over the Khyber region.

Caroe characterises the Khyber Pass as more than a physical thoroughfare; he positions it as a liminal frontier, historically volatile, where the ambitions of empires have collided and where local tribal polities have emerged as gatekeepers of transregional movement and commerce. From Alexander's campaigns through the Mughal and British colonial eras, the Khyber has functioned as a perpetually contested zone, a "narrow" where imperial strategies were often subverted by local resistance (Caroe, 1958, p. xvi). The pass's strategic location between Peshawar and Kabul has rendered it a flashpoint of military and political tension across centuries.

Caroe devotes extensive attention to the Afridis, describing them as the archetypal martial tribe of the Khyber. He foregrounds their capacity for military organisation,

their political dexterity, and their historic role in regulating, taxing, or denying passage through the pass. Afridi autonomy and collective action are most pronounced during periods of external incursion: from their resistance to Mughal rule under Akbar, to the well-coordinated revolt against British imperial forces in 1897 (Caroe, 1962, pp. 14, 22, 44, 120, 155, 211). Caroe carefully enumerates the principal Afridi sub-clans, Kuki Khel, Malikdin Khel, Zakka Khel, highlighting that intra-tribal rivalries were often superseded by unity in the face of foreign intervention (Caroe, 1962, p. 155). He also details the pragmatic, transactional relationships that evolved between the Afridis and colonial powers, wherein negotiation, subsidy, and even armed confrontation were all tools for maintaining sovereignty.

The Shinwaris, occupying the eastern reaches of the Khyber, are presented as both agriculturists and formidable traders. Caroe distinguishes their relatively less militant disposition from the Afridis, but emphasises that Shinwari independence was fiercely guarded, especially in matters of cross-border trade and religious authority (Caroe, 1962, pp. 22, 120, 213). He offers special focus on the Shinwaris' participation in socio-religious mobilisations, such as the Khilafat Movement, situating them as significant actors in regional and transregional Islamic politics (Caroe, 1962, pp. 214, 226).

The Shalmanis and Mullagoris, while less frequently addressed, are nonetheless depicted as crucial stakeholders in the security and autonomy of the Khyber. Their function as buffer communities and intermediaries in tribal diplomacy is noted, with the Mullagoris particularly recognised for their fierce sense of independence and periodic alliances with Afridi factions during anti-colonial uprisings (Caroe, 1962, pp. 20, 124, 244, 246).

A distinctive feature of Caroe's analysis is his comprehensive critique of the British "Forward Policy," which sought direct control over the frontier. Caroe contrasts this with the earlier "Closed Border" strategy, which relied on indirect rule through tribal mechanisms and respected local autonomy (Caroe, 1962, pp. 346, 367, 387). He chronicles the persistent resistance of the Afridis and allied tribes to military fortifications, viewing such encroachments as violations of tribal rights (Caroe, 1962, pp. 369, 380).

Linguistic and cultural markers of identity receive sustained attention. Caroe highlights the division between the "hard" Pashtu spoken by the Afridis and Shinwaris and the

"soft" Pashtu of the southern tribes, noting that these distinctions correspond to deeper social hierarchies and historical territorial claims (Caroe, 1962, pp. xvi, 14-20). He is especially critical of colonial taxonomies, pointing out that the term "Pathan", an Indian corruption of "Pakhtun", became widespread only through British administrative use. The Afridis and other Khyber tribes consistently preferred localised and clan-based identities, resisting the imposition of homogenising labels (Caroe, 1962, pp. 14, 228, 330).

Caroe's appreciation for the oral tradition is especially noteworthy. He documents how Afridis, Shinwaris, and other tribes preserve history, genealogy, and customary law through oral poetry, song, and collective memory, maintaining a "code of honour" (nang) that constitutes the moral backbone of tribal society (Caroe, 1962, pp. 124, 230, 321). This oral historiography, Caroe argues, is not only a repository of historical knowledge but also a living instrument for political cohesion and resistance.

In short, Caroe's work is foundational for understanding the persistent autonomy, complex internal structures, and indomitable ethos of the Khyber tribes. His analysis foregrounds the interplay of geography, language, tribal law, and political economy, making clear that the story of the Khyber is not merely a chronicle of invasions and empires, but one of enduring local agency and self-definition. For scholars of frontier studies, imperial history, or Pashtun ethnography, Caroe's insights remain both indispensable and instructive.

## **2.26 James. W. Spain (1962)**

James W. Spain identifies the Khyber as a strategic military gateway, characterising it as a dynamic corridor shaped by centuries of historical migrations, invasions, and resistance. The pass functions as a crucial link between the Indian subcontinent and Central Asia, and has witnessed persistent conflict from Alexander the Great's incursion to successive British colonial expeditions (Spain, 1962, p. 16). Spain emphasises that British efforts to control the Khyber epitomised broader imperial anxieties, as local tribal autonomy repeatedly frustrated attempts at direct governance. Despite the imposition of modern infrastructure, traditional tribal allegiances, especially the Afridi clans' continued control over critical sections of the pass, remained a constant source of British frustration and necessitated ongoing negotiation (Spain, 1962, pp. 48-49).

Spain devotes significant attention to the Afridi tribes, notably the Zakha Khel, Kuki Khel, and Malikdin Khel, who have historically dominated the Khyber. He asserts that their influence extended beyond mere territorial control, encompassing cultural and political authority over key chokepoints. Afridi custodians extracted tolls and occasionally ambushed caravans, maintaining their dominance even in the face of colonial treaties (Spain, 1962, pp. 57-58). Spain details their pivotal role during the 1897 uprising, when Afridis, initially recruited into the Khyber Rifles by the British, turned against colonial authorities in a coordinated assault that overran Landi Kotal (Spain, 1962, p. 63). This incident marked a significant breach in British-tribal relations, underscoring the inherent instability of subsidy-based governance.

Spain describes Jamrud as the administrative threshold of British India and the entry point to the tribal frontier. Fort Jamrud, built by the Sikhs and later used by the British, functioned as the administrative and military pivot for operations in the Khyber (Spain, 1962, p. 28). The adjacent village of Jam, inhabited by Kuki Khel Afridis, provides ethnolinguistic insight into the origins of "Jamrud", a fusion of local nomenclature and colonial misinterpretation. Jamrud's role in surveillance, taxation, and provision of escorts for Kabul-bound caravans is especially prominent during periods of heightened tension, such as the Durand Line negotiations and the lead-up to the Second Anglo-Afghan War (Spain, 1962, pp. 30-31).

At the summit of the Khyber lies Landi Kotal, a town of both tactical significance and tribal negotiation. Spain explores the strained coexistence between Afridis and Shinwaris, noting that the latter often resisted both the Afghan Amir's taxation and British encroachment. He references Amir Abdur Rahman's brutal retaliation in 1883, when Shinwari's protest against tolls on the Landi Khana, Dakka road culminated in a massacre and a grim pyramid of decapitated heads, a stark symbol of authoritarian control (Spain, 1962, p. 67). The Shinwaris are depicted as fiercely independent and economically astute, providing protective services and engaging in trade along their section of the pass.

While the Afridis and Shinwaris are foregrounded, the Shalmanis also receive attention for their strategic control over alternative northern routes such as Tartarra. Spain characterises these smaller tribes as opportunistic yet critical actors during periods of tribal unrest, known to block or reroute traffic and demand tolls when primary routes are disrupted (Spain, 1962, p. 69). Their settlements and forth between Ali Masjid and

Lakka Sar served as fallback locations for both insurgent lashkars and British counter-expeditions.

Spain's anthropological lens elucidates the cultural complexity of the Khyber tribes. He explores the Pashtunwali code, the significance of inter-tribal alliances forged through marriage or warfare, and how Afridi elders functioned as both spiritual custodians and political brokers, balancing mullah-led mysticism with pragmatic negotiations with British officers (Spain, 1962, p. 74). He highlights the crucial role of jirgas (tribal councils) in adjudicating land disputes, orchestrating retaliatory raids, and deciding whether to participate in British or Afghan campaigns.

Spain also provides a comprehensive account of key military events that shaped the colonial period in Khyber. Among these, the Tirah Expedition of 1897-1898 stands out: British and Indian forces advanced into Afridi and Orakzai territories in response to the Afridi rebellion. Spain underscores the strategic importance of controlling Kotal heights, critical road passes, and water sources. It critiques British reliance on unreliable tribal levies and inadequate logistical support in the region's rugged terrain (Spain, 1962, pp. 78-79). Incidents such as the murder of British officers, capture of supply convoys, and sabotage of railway construction projects are cited as evidence of the persistent limits of imperial authority.

In *The Way of the Pathans*, James W. Spain presents the Khyber Pass and its tribal landscape as a theatre of multi-layered complexity, a zone where military ambition, indigenous tradition, and colonial diplomacy frequently collided. His detailed ethnographic and historical analysis is indispensable for understanding the intricate dynamics among the Afridis, Shinwaris, and Shalmanis, and their profound influence on the British colonial experience in the frontier zone.

## **2.27 Professor Dr. Ahmad Hassan Dani (1920-2009)**

Ahmad Hasan Dani, one of South Asia's most respected historians and archaeologists, offers a richly nuanced and multidimensional account of the Khyber region in his work *Romance of the Khyber Pass*. Drawing upon his deep academic expertise, Dani analyses the region not only through the lenses of history and archaeology, but also with a palpable personal admiration for the cultural and historical richness of the terrain (Dani, 1997, p. 9).

Dani argues that the Achaemenid Empire, which stretched from the Indus Valley to Greece and Egypt, was the first imperial power to systematically explore and control all the major passes, including the Khyber Pass. He identifies this era as pivotal for mapping out the provinces of Paktyike (the Khyber hill region), Gandhāra (the Peshawar Valley), Dard (the Gilgit region), Hindu (the Indus River region of Punjab and Sindh), and Maka (Makran, in modern Balochistan) (Dani, 1997, p. 35). He further observes that the Khyber provides the earliest historical record of the migration of horse-riding Aryans into South Asia (Maity, 1970, pp. 17-18), suggesting that the present-day Pukhtun population is descended from these Aryans who have continuously inhabited the region (Dani, 1997, p. 33). The pass, he contends, played a critical role in the expansion and consolidation of various empires such as the Greeks, Mauryans, Kushans, and Mughals (Dani, 1997, pp. 34-36).

Dani further emphasises the Khyber's role as a channel for Buddhist missionaries and Silk Road traders, a thesis substantiated by archaeological discoveries in places like Taxila (Dani, 1997, p. 9). He asserts that wherever water springs are found in the hills, Buddhist viharas, stupas, and statues are also present, left behind by devotees who traversed long distances to venerate these masterpieces in stone and stucco, often located in remote corners (Dani, 1997, p. 38). This grounding in physical evidence strengthens Dani's scholarly authority, demonstrating his commitment to a research-based yet engaging historical account.

Dani also devotes significant attention to the resistance of Pashtun tribes against successive waves of foreign domination. He highlights the 19th-century confrontations during the era of the "Great Game" rivalry between Britain and Russia, highlighting the strategic and symbolic importance of the Khyber Pass throughout British imperial military operations (Dani, 1997, pp. 42-50). Although his narrative concludes prior to the Soviet invasion and modern Afghan conflict, Dani's analysis remains foundational for understanding the Khyber region's enduring strategic importance.

Crucially, Dani frames the Khyber Pass not only as a battleground but as a crossroads of civilisations, foregrounding its role in diffusing religious, artistic, and commercial traditions between Central, South, and West Asia (Dani, 1997, pp. 34-50). He critically explores the lasting influence of colonial legacies, particularly the impact of British border policies such as the Durand Line. He underscores the distinctiveness and

resilience of local Pashtun communities who continue to shape the region's identity and politics.

Blending archaeology, anthropology, and historiography, Dani produces a comprehensive and vivid portrayal that balances factual rigour with narrative depth. His academic precision is matched by accessible prose, which avoids excessive jargon and employs compelling storytelling to illuminate complex historical dynamics. Anecdotes about caravans, travellers, and tribal folklore infuse a human dimension into the narrative, helping readers visualise and appreciate the lived experiences of the region's past.

## **2.28 Dr. Osmund Bopearachchi (present)**

Dr. Osmund Bopearachchi, an internationally recognised numismatist and art historian, has played a transformative role in advancing the study of Indo-Greek and Indo-Scythian coinage throughout South and Central Asia. Over a distinguished career highlighted by numerous influential publications, Bopearachchi has been instrumental in uncovering the political, economic, and cultural histories encoded in ancient coins. One of his most notable contributions related to the Gandhāran and Khyber regions is his seminal work, *An Indo-Greek and Indo-Scythian Coin Hoard from Bara (Pakistan)* (2003), which centres on the analysis of a significant coin hoard discovered in the village of Bara, District Khyber. Through rigorous typological and chronological analysis of coins attributed to rulers such as Menander, Azes I, and Azilises, Bopearachchi presents compelling evidence for the enduring presence of Hellenistic and Central-Asian political influences in the region (Muhammad, Jan, and Afridi (2025, pp. 136-149).

In addition to his numismatic research, Bopearachchi has expanded the scholarly understanding of ancient glassware traditions within the Gandhāran and Khyber contexts. His work, including *Hellenistic Glass Production at Bara Sheikhan, Pakistan* (2015), underscores the technological and artistic exchanges that thrived along trade routes linking the Mediterranean, Central Asia, and the Indian subcontinent. By documenting evidence of glass manufacturing techniques at Bara Sheikhan, located near the Bara coin hoard, Bopearachchi illustrates the region's active participation in transregional networks of craftsmanship and commerce. His interdisciplinary methodology, integrating numismatic, art historical, and archaeological approaches,



has not only illuminated the Indo-Greek and Indo-Scythian legacies within District Khyber but also reinforced its status as a key cultural and economic node in ancient Gandhāra (Bopearachchi, 2003, 2015).

### **2.29 Gul Rahim Khan and Muhammad Naeem Qazi (Present)**

The recent publication of a small but highly significant copper coin hoard from Jamrud in Khyber Agency, Pakistan, represents an important addition to the numismatic and archaeological record of the Kushan era in the northwestern subcontinent (Khan & Qazi, 2014). Unearthed at a Buddhist site near Zor Gudar, west of Jamrud Fort, this collection consists of eighteen coins dating from the reigns of Kanishka I, Huvishka, and Vasudeva I, encompassing roughly eighty years from the late 2nd to the early 3rd centuries CE. The find's context within the ruins of a Buddhist stupa complex underscores the vibrant interplay of economic, religious, and political forces that shaped the region at the zenith of the Kushan Empire.

A notable aspect of this coin hoard is that it features coins issued by three prominent Kushan kings: three coins of Kanishka I, twelve of Huvishka, and three of Vasudeva I. The typological and iconographic diversity within the collection is noteworthy. Kanishka's coins are distinguished by depictions of Nana and the rare Maitreya Buddha motif, an important indicator of Buddhist iconography on imperial coinage during his later reign (Khan & Qazi, 2014, pp. 2-3). The predominance of Huvishka's issues, most in the reduced tetradrachm standard, points to a period of active monetary circulation and possibly the presence of a subsidiary Gandhara mint in addition to the Bactrian main mint. The diversity of reverse types, including Oesho, Ardoxsho, Pharro, and Mao, reflects the syncretic religious environment of the late Kushan period (Khan & Qazi, 2014, pp. 2-3).

Vasudeva I's coins in the hoard are likewise informative, as their typology marks a transition from early to mature phases of his reign. Their presence, coupled with the absence of later issues or coins of successors, suggests that the hoard was deposited toward the end of Vasudeva I's rule, possibly just before the accession of Kanishka II around 227 CE. The find thus serves as a chronological anchor for the circulation of Kushan copper coinage in the Peshawar-Khyber corridor, paralleling similar finds such as the Ranighat hoard. Furthermore, the inclusion of two coins featuring the Buddha, likely from a relic or donative context, introduces the possibility that the hoard

represents a conflation of currency and ritual deposits, a phenomenon not widely documented for this region or period.

In short, the Jamrud hoard is more than a mere assemblage of coins; it is a microcosm of the numismatic, religious, and socio-economic landscape of Gandhara and particularly the Khyber during the Kushan era. Its discovery from a disturbed Buddhist context, and subsequent study, highlights both the research potential and the challenges posed by unscientific excavations in the region. Nevertheless, the careful documentation and publication of this material provide scholars with critical evidence for reconstructing the chronology, minting practices, and cultural interactions of one of ancient South Asia's most formative periods (Khan & Qazi, 2014).

### **2.30 Pro. Dr. Gul Rahim Khan (Present)**

The Department of Archaeology, University of Peshawar, recently completed its fourth season of fieldwork at the Hayatabad Phase-V site (as it has been discussed in detail in chapter V of the thesis that till the 1982, Hayatabad was once the part of District Khyber/ Ex-Agency), marking another important contribution to the study of early historic settlements in Peshawar. This latest campaign, spanning from late January to late March 2023, follows the earlier excavations conducted in 2017, 2018, and 2019 (Khan et al., 2019, 2020, 2021). The present fieldwork focused on extending the excavated area toward the eastern edge of the mound, opening ten trenches (each 6x6 meters) that provided valuable new stratigraphic and structural data.

The excavation uncovered a sequence of nine distinct layers, culminating in a virgin soil deposit. Noteworthy is the identification of a thick, mixed fill in the second layer, likely the result of modern industrial activity when a drainage system cut into the mound in 2007-08. Additionally, a large ash-filled pit containing animal bones and pottery fragments, as well as a strip of sand and silt running east-west and intersecting several walls, was documented. The latter feature remains enigmatic, possibly representing either limited flood activity or intentional water management.

Architectural evidence from the season includes three clear occupational phases corresponding to the Indo-Greek, Indo-Scythian, and Kushan periods. These stone-built structures, following a grid layout and intersecting at right angles, were often superimposed, indicating long-term reuse and reconstruction. Masonry types identified ranged from fine diaper masonry in early (Indo-Greek) levels to more variable

stonework in later Indo-Scythian and Kushan phases, where walls sometimes combine large and small blocks irregularly.

A particularly significant aspect of the current excavation is the evidence for specialised workshop activity, especially blacksmithing, associated with both the Indo-Scythian and Kushan periods. Four separate chambers with clear signs of industrial use, such as furnaces, stone anvils, quenching pots, crucibles, and grinding stones, were unearthed. One square furnace, preserved with a central chimney and terracotta piping, highlights the technological sophistication of site inhabitants during this era.

Small finds were less frequent than in previous years, a reflection of the marginal position of the new trenches on the mound's edge, where larger stones dominate wall construction. However, the recovered artefacts include copper coins, terracotta beads, iron objects, pestles, grinding stones, and a wide range of pottery sherds, representing diverse vessel forms and functions across different occupational levels.

Stratigraphic and material evidence consistently date the Hayatabad site to the Indo-Greek, Indo-Scythian, and Kushan periods, spanning from the second century BCE to the second century CE. These results contribute to a growing body of evidence regarding urban planning, industrial specialisation, and long-term occupation in the Peshawar region during the early historic period.

A comprehensive analysis of the 2023 field season, including a detailed catalogue of finds and further interpretation, is planned for publication in the next volume of *Ancient Pakistan*. The Department of Archaeology, University of Peshawar, gratefully acknowledges the continued support and cooperation of all institutional partners, without which these discoveries would not have been possible.

## CHAPTER-III

### 3 GEOGRAPHICAL, HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE AND SOCIO-CULTURAL PROFILE OF DISTRICT KHYBER (MAP I)

#### 3.1 Historical Significance

The Khyber Pass is located between Jamrud and Landi Kotal in Khyber District. The Pass has, across millennia, acted as a pivotal route between South Asia and the broader regions of Central and Western Asia. This mountain passage has long served as an entryway for armies, merchants, religious pilgrims, and migrant communities traversing between the Indian subcontinent and western territories. Since ancient times, the Khyber Pass has enabled the movement and exchange of goods such as silk, spices, horses, and gemstones, thereby fostering commercial integration and connecting markets stretching from India to Persia and beyond (Dupree, 1977, pp. 165-168; Dani, 2001, pp. 33-35). Its strategic significance made it a central artery for ancient trade networks, including routes that subsequently became part of the Silk Road system, thus fostering economic and cultural interchange across diverse regions (Gankovsky & Gordon-Polonskaya, 1964, pp. 87-88).

The Khyber Pass was not merely a trade conduit, but also a principal invasion route throughout history. Successive waves of conquerors, including the Aryans, Achaemenids, Greeks under Alexander the Great, Scythians, Kushans, and later Muslim armies, utilised the Khyber Pass to penetrate and transform the Indian subcontinent (Eggermont, 1975, p. 27). Every wave of incursion profoundly shaped the region's social, political, and cultural fabric, leaving enduring influences on its historical development. For instance, Alexander's expedition through the pass in 327 BCE represents one of the earliest documented European military incursions into South Asia. In contrast, the advent of Islam during the early medieval period dramatically reshaped the area's religious landscape (Bosworth, 2007, p. 127). Thus, the Khyber Pass has functioned as both a channel of conquest and a site of cultural fusion.

In addition to its roles in commerce and military history, the Khyber Pass has been fundamental in shaping the ethnic and demographic composition of the Khyber District. The continuous movement of populations through the pass contributed to the region's intricate tapestry of cultures, languages, and traditions. Pashtun tribes, notably the Afridis and Shinwaris, historically controlled the pass, leveraging its strategic position

for political autonomy and economic gain (Spain, 1963, p. 61). Even during the British colonial period, the Khyber Pass was recognised as a critical frontier necessitating extensive military fortifications and diplomatic treaties to secure British India's northwestern boundary (Caroe, 1958, pp. 41, 87, 111). The enduring traditions and ongoing strategic relevance of the Khyber District today are inextricably linked to this long history of migration, commerce, and contestation.

### **3.2 Etymology of Khyber**

The name "Khyber" is derived from the world-famous Khyber Pass, A mountain pass of significant historical importance. The Khyber has for centuries operated as a vital artery connecting South Asia and Central Asia. Formerly a key segment of the Silk Route, it enabled transcontinental trade flows between the East and Europe. In contemporary times, the Khyber Pass not only serves as a direct link between Pakistan and the Central Asian Republics (CARs) via Afghanistan, but also remains an essential strategic corridor for trade and transit between Pakistan and India. Geographically, the Khyber District is positioned between 34° and 45° North latitude and 70°30' to 71°27' East longitude (Geographical Survey of Pakistan, Year).

The etymology of "Khyber" remains a subject of both historical ambiguity and cultural fascination. According to Shafi Sabir (Sabir, 1966, p. 6), the precise historical period when the region came to be called "Khyber" is unknown. Sabir contends that the term "Khyber" or "Khaiber" is of Hebrew origin, meaning "palace" or "castle," and suggests that the area may have acquired its name due to its longstanding strategic importance as a fortified stronghold. Despite such hypotheses, the name "Khyber" is primarily synonymous with the pass itself, which extends 32 miles from Jamrud, through Landikotal, and on to Landikahana and Torkham.

Adding depth to the discourse, Sabir draws attention to a similarly named location in Saudi Arabia, raising intriguing possibilities regarding cross-regional cultural or linguistic connections. Local folklore further enriches the narrative: a legend recounts the story of Ali Masjid, a mosque near a perennial spring in the gorge, where Hazrat Ali, the fourth Caliph of Islam, is said to have fought a mythical battle with a pagan woman named Khyberai Bibi. The tale of a large boulder hurled at Hazrat Ali, which he miraculously caught and placed on a hillside, although unverified, highlights the deep cultural significance and myth-making associated with the site.

The parallel existence of two "Khybers," one in Pakistan and the other in the Arabian Peninsula has given rise to speculative theories about ancient migrations and shared ethno-linguistic origins, particularly those linking the Pashtuns to the ancient Israelites exiled from Palestine in 721 BCE (Parfitt, 2002, pp. 115-117; Caroe, 1958, pp. 5-7). Sabir (Sabir, 1966, p. 6) cautiously posits that the name "Khyber" lacks a semantic origin in the Pashto language and may instead stem from a prehistoric cultural substratum. He further suggests that the phonetic similarity between "Khyber" and the Hebrew term "Kheber" may not be coincidental, especially considering traditions connecting the Pashtuns to the lost tribes of Israel. While Sabir stops short of offering philological evidence, his hypothesis merits critical re-examination. From a linguistic standpoint, "Kheber" (חֶבֶר) is a well-attested term in Biblical Hebrew, rooted in the trilateral root ח-ב-ר (h-b-r), which connotes "association," "company," or "group" (Brown, Driver, & Briggs, 1906, pp. 287-288). It appears both as a common noun and as a proper name in Old Testament literature, for example, in Judges 4:11, "Heber the Kenite" (חֶבֶר הַקֵּינִי) is explicitly mentioned. Additionally, in Psalms 94:20, the plural form *hoberei* denotes those "joined together" in wrongdoing, further affirming the root's meaning of association or binding (Gesenius, 1847, p. 265). This linguistic substantiation reinforces the plausibility that the name "Khyber" may indeed echo a residual Semitic heritage, particularly if tribal migrations from the Levant into the wider Iranian and Afghan regions occurred following the Assyrian expulsions in 721 BCE. While definitive etymological linkage between "Khyber" and "Kheber" remains elusive without intermediate forms or inscriptions, Sabir's thesis deserves cautious reconsideration within a multidisciplinary framework combining linguistics, biblical studies, and migration archaeology.

### **3.3 Geographical and Environmental Context Location**

#### **3.3.1 Location and Boundaries of District Khyber**

The Afridi homeland, located to the west and south of Peshawar, spans from 33°32' to 34°51' north latitude and 70°37' to 77°56' east longitude. This area is geographically structured by the divergence of the Sufaid Koh (White Mountain) range at Mitughhar Peak (longitude 70°37'). The northern spur of this range extends eastward for approximately sixty miles, entering the Peshawar Valley near Jamrud and Khajuri, and sends out ridges that define and separate the Bazaar, Khyber, and Shalman valleys.

Turning south and eastward, the range forms the main watershed between the Peshawar and Kohat valleys and connects to the Kotal Pass, extending into the territory of the Adam Khel. From there, it continues south through Khattak tribal lands, ultimately terminating at the Indus River across from Punjab's Attock district.

### **3.3.2 Strategic importance**

The Khyber District, anchored by the historic Khyber Pass, has long held immense strategic significance as the principal land corridor between Central Asia and the Indian subcontinent. Over the millennia, major invading forces, including the Aryans, Persians, Greeks, Kushans, and Islamic armies, have utilised the Khyber Pass as a gateway into South Asia, making it a critical conduit for both military conquests and cultural exchanges (Caroe, 1958, p. 123). Its topography, characterised by a narrow mountainous defile, functioned not only as a natural route for traders and pilgrims but also as a military choke point, granting controlling tribes or powers significant influence over the flow of goods, ideas, and armies. Even in modern times, the Khyber Pass continues to function as a linchpin of regional trade/ commerce and diplomacy, contributing to the Khyber District's enduring prominence in regional geopolitics (Dupree, 1977, p. 89).

During the British colonial period, the Khyber District assumed even greater strategic importance. The British understood that securing the Khyber Pass was essential for safeguarding their Indian Empire against potential incursions from the northwest, especially during the "Great Game" rivalry with Russia (Hopkirk, 1990, p. 67). This recognition prompted extensive fortifications, treaties with local tribes such as the Afridis, and the establishment of administrative mechanisms tailored to the unique dynamics of the tribal belt. The Pass thus emerged as a frontier buffer critical to the empire's defence strategy. Following independence, the Khyber region has continued to occupy a vital position, shaping Pakistan's security policies, particularly regarding Afghanistan and the broader Central-Asian context (Tanner, 2009, p. 187).

Today, the strategic relevance of the Khyber region remains undiminished. Its proximity to Afghanistan and location along major transit routes make it central to modern trade, security, and geopolitical interests, including counterterrorism initiatives and regional connectivity projects. The living heritage of local tribes, together with the

area's geographic positioning, ensures that the Khyber District remains a critical focal point in both historical and contemporary strategic landscapes.

### **3.3.3 Climate, Altitude, Temperature, and Rainfall**

Khyber District is distinguished by its extreme climatic conditions, which fluctuate markedly due to its diverse topography. The district experiences cold to severely cold winters, particularly in the highland areas, where snowfall is frequent during the winter months. The snow-capped peaks, some rising between 6,000 and 10,000 feet (approximately 1,830 to 3,048 meters), create a striking contrast with the lower, more temperate regions. The most prominent peaks are located in areas such as the Tirah Valley, which not only offer scenic vistas but also endure harsh winter conditions. This variation in altitude and climate supports a unique ecosystem that persists despite severe weather.

During the summer, Khyber District's climate becomes even more heterogeneous. While the Tirah region remains pleasantly cool, the rest of the district, especially the plains, can experience daytime temperatures that exceed 40°C. By contrast, the higher altitudes maintain a more moderate environment. Summer nights are typically cool, providing relief from daytime heat. This marked contrast between the plains and highlands is a defining feature of the region's climate, resulting in diverse microclimates over short distances.

Rainfall in Khyber District is relatively modest, following a distinct seasonal pattern. Annual precipitation averages approximately 29.6 inches (about 752 mm), primarily occurring in two seasons: winter and summer. In winter, western disturbances bring both rain and snow to higher elevations. In contrast, the summer months are dominated by the monsoon, which delivers heavy rainfall mainly to the lower plains and valleys. The combination of winter snow and summer monsoons contributes to localised soil fertility, thereby supporting the agricultural practices of local communities.

The district's elevation, ranging from 360 meters in the southern plains to over 3,000 meters in the northern hills, further accentuates the climatic variation. Peaks rising above 10,000 feet are often blanketed with snow in winter, contrasting sharply with the arid and warm lowlands. This dramatic difference in altitude results in a subtropical dry zone climate for much of Khyber District, making it unique in both climate and



geography. The region's extreme weather patterns and topographical diversity have fostered adaptive strategies among local communities, who have responded to these challenges across generations.

### **3.3.4 Topography**

The limits of Khyber District are distinctly demarcated, commencing in the north and west at Mithughar Peak in the Sufaid Koh range. From this point, the boundary stretches eastward to Iaka Sar Peak (Tatara) within the Khyber, tracing the primary mountain ridge and passing key landmarks such as Thabai Pass, Bazaar Pass, and the village of Lalabeg, where it enters the Khyber region. The boundary then continues along the watershed dividing the Khyber Valley from those valleys that drain into the Kabul River, moving past features like Sapuri Kandao, Mausamat Shahid, and Badpukh Hills before descending to Ghunidai, which defines the district's western frontier with Peshawar.

Heading south from Ghunidai, the district's boundary extends past Jamrud and Bara Forts to Kohat Pass, then veers east, running along the northern base of the Kharega Range to Shamshatu Police Post. From Shamshatu, it turns south again, crossing the Khattak Range at Jalala Sar Peak, traversing the Musadara Valley at Takhtakai, and continuing over Hinki Sar Peak toward the Kohat-Khushalgarh road in the vicinity of Gumbat.

To the south, and west, starting at Mithughar, the boundary moves due south along the ridge that encloses Tirah, passing Forghar, Karhargar, and Kahughar Peaks, reaching Ublan Pass. It then curves east, following the divide between Tirah and Orakzai Valley, traversing the lower Waran Valley, and crossing Uchpal Pass. From there, it traces the watershed separating the two Bara River branches, passing through Ranja Ghar to Kohat Kotal. It continues east along the line of the Kohat-Khushalgarh railway until it meets the Indus River at Buland.

Traditionally, the territory of the Afridi tribe covers about 3,200 square miles, with approximately 800 square miles drained by the Bara, Bazaar, Dara, and Khyber rivers, all of which flow into the Peshawar Valley. The source valleys of both Bara branches, together with the Khanki River (which flows into Kohat District) and the Kharmana River (which heads toward the Kurram region), are collectively referred to as Tirah.

This region spans 800 to 1,000 square miles, with elevations between 5,000 and 7,000 feet, and includes subregions such as the upper Bara Valley above Tora, Waila (the southern section of Bara Valley above Hisar), the Khanki Valley upstream of Sadarai, and the Kharmana Valley above Khanzia.

Tirah functions as the summer resort for much of the Afridi and Orakzai population, containing several notable areas:

- a) The Maidan and Rajgal valleys, situated at the source of the north branch of the Bara River;
- b) The Mastura, Bezoti, and Waran valleys, located at the origin of the south branch;
- c) The Kahu Dara and Minjan Dara, positioned at the headwaters of the Khanki River;
- d) The Ganda, Lozaka, Landai, Gundai, and Thabidas valleys, found at the source region of the Kharmana River.

The principal summer residences of the Afridis are located in Maidan and Rajgal. Maidan itself is a nearly circular basin, approximately 10 miles across, surrounded by wooded mountains that reach elevations of 8,000 to 9,000 feet. On the southwest, it is separated from the Kharmana area by the Karogh, or Kahu Ghar, Spur of the Sufaid Koh range. The Lozaka Pass crosses this ridge, providing a route westward toward the loop road of the Kurman Valley. The southern slopes of Maidan are cloaked in pine forests, and a perennial spring known as Bagh offers a reliable water supply as well as a central location where community gatherings, jirgas, and prayers are traditionally held.

Historically, this area has been continuously inhabited due to its accessibility to larger watercourses, which converge near the Malikdin Khel settlements before flowing toward the Shalobar Toi. This stream runs for about three miles through a rocky gorge called Kharapa Tang, flanked by the Dwa Toi heights, and then emerges into open terrain, joined by the northern Heradra tributary to form the Bara River. Other tributaries, such as the Sherdara (Zakha Khel territory), and the Karapa and Kasha Dara (Qambar Khel and Kala Khel families' lands), further enrich the river system. The Malikdin Khel are primarily settled near Shalobar.

Water in Maidan is generally sufficient year-round, though streams may vanish underground and reappear at lower elevations, a common feature in the hills. Banks of these streams are noted for cave dwellings, and the area is dotted with numerous stone towers. Residential structures are typically three stories, with lapelled parapets; the ground floor houses livestock, the top floor is for living, and the middle floor often remains empty.

Rajgal Valley, similarly important, is watered by a stream originating from Mitu Pass and fed by several tributaries. The valley is about 14 kilometres long and up to 6-7 kilometres in width, with much of its central area above 5,000 feet in elevation. The flat terrain is cultivated with wheat and barley. The northern boundary is marked by a range descending from 9,000 feet and separating Afridis from Sangukhel and Mirjan Khel Shinwaris. At the same time, to the south, Rajgal is divided from Maidan by the Michni Spur, a densely forested ridge rising to 8,000-9,000 feet.

### **3.4 Jamrud Tehsil (Map I)**

Jamrud is one of the major towns in the Khyber District, situated at the northwestern edge of Peshawar city within the Peshawar Valley. It is geographically positioned at 34° North latitude and 71°23' East longitude, approximately 17 kilometres northwest of Peshawar. Strategically located at the mouth of the historic Khyber Pass, Jamrud is recognised as the eastern gateway to this vital mountain corridor. The town has long held tactical importance, historically serving as a military staging post and administrative centre. Jamrud is the headquarters of Jamrud Tehsil, which functions as an administrative subdivision and hosts the offices of the Assistant Political Agent and the command centre of the Khasadars (local tribal police).

The name "Jamrud" is thought to derive from a Persian expression meaning "river of Jamshed," referring to the legendary Persian king from Firdausi's Shahnama. Over centuries, Jamrud has witnessed the rule of several empires, including the Mughals, Sikhs, and British, each of whom recognised its strategic significance. A prominent landmark is the Jamrud Fort, a small yet historically important structure set on elevated ground. Nearby stands the symbolic Bab-e-Khyber (Gate of Khyber), a stone archway commemorating the town's status as the entrance to the renowned pass. Notably, Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, founder of Pakistan, visited Jamrud in 1948 and

delivered a speech outlining his policy regarding the autonomy and responsibilities of the tribal people. This statement remains significant in local memory.

Jamrud Tehsil shares borders with Peshawar District to the east, Yake Ghund Tehsil of Mohmand District to the north, Landi Kotal Tehsil to the west, and Bara Tehsil to the south. According to the 2017 Pakistan Census, Jamrud Tehsil covers 311 square kilometres with a population of 227,557, resulting in a density of approximately 731.6 persons per square kilometre (51% male, 49% female). However, only 28.01% of residents live in the urban centre, which demonstrates a high annual growth rate of 4.63%.

The urban core of Jamrud comprises eight neighbourhood councils and 18 census blocks. In 1998, the urban population stood at 32,039, rising to 63,728 in 2017, a growth rate of 3.68%. Based on this trend, population projections for 2022 and 2040 estimate continued urban expansion, with the 2022 urban population reaching 76,352. Census charge maps from 2017 record the total urban area at 48 square kilometres.

The notable Jamrud Fort, shaped like a dreadnought, is situated in the city's centre and was constructed between 1836 and 1837 (6th Poh 1893 Vikram Samvat) by the Sikh general Hari Singh Nalwa to guard against invasions through the Khyber (Dani, 1997, pp. 75-76; Teepu, 2005, p. 20). It subsequently became his final resting place. Viewed from a distance, the fort resembles a battleship, occupying a high site on a 100-yard square area, about one furlong from the Jamrud railway station. There is evidence that Mughal armies were previously stationed here, and the current fort may have been constructed atop the ruins of a Mughal structure; British traveller Moorcroft, who visited before the present fort's construction, noted scattered stone walls and large tanks, suggesting the site's historical significance.

A significant battle occurred at Jamrud in 1837, resulting in the death of General Hari Singh Nalwa, who was subsequently buried within the fort (Dani, 1997, pp. 75-76; Teepu, 2005, p. 20). His demise precipitated the eventual capture of the fort by the British in 1849 (Dani, 1997, pp. 75-76). The fort comprises three tiers: the lower fort, the central section designed for troops, and the upper structure. From the main entrance, a winding road extends eastward toward the principal building. The lower section of the fort features a broad verandah accompanied by a small tower, while the upper level houses an old guardroom situated above the ground floor. The first floor,

formerly General Hari Singh's residence, also houses his tomb (samadhi), constructed by Gajjimal of Peshawar in 1902, and a small Sikh temple (gurdwara) (Teepu, 2005, p. 20). The structure, built of rough stone and coated with mud plaster, was occupied by the British following their 1849 victory over Amir Dost Muhammad's Afghan forces (Dani, 1997, pp. 75-76). Afterwards, it served as the operational base for multiple British campaigns against the Afridi tribes (Dani, 1997, p. 76).

Lowell Thomas describes how, immediately outside the fort, there was a high-walled caravanserai that served as a resting place for weekly caravans journeying along the "Golden Road to Samarkand" (Thomas, 1925, p. 76).

### **3.5 Landi Kotal Tehsil (Map II)**

Landi Kotal, located at an elevation of 1,072 meters (3,517 ft) above sea level in the Khyber District of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, occupies a historically strategic position at the western terminus of the Khyber Pass, adjoining Afghanistan's Nangarhar Province. Historically, it has functioned not merely as a border town but as a cultural and military fulcrum that linked the Indian subcontinent with Central and Western Asia (Dupree, 1977, pp. 119-120; Dani, 2001, p. 132). This geostrategic importance endowed Landi Kotal with a unique character as a conduit for traders, pilgrims, military expeditions, and cultural flows for over two millennia.

The colonial history of Landi Kotal is particularly illustrative of British imperial frontier policy. Following the 1897 Afridi uprising, the town briefly fell to tribal forces before being reclaimed by a British counteroffensive led by Sir William Lockhart commanding over 34,000 troops (Imperial Gazetteer of India, 1908, Vol. 16, pp. 134-135). The fort constructed thereafter was emblematic of British military architecture on the frontier, comprising a central keep and quarters for up to 500 sepoys. This defensive measure complemented the region's reliance on the Khyber Rifles, an irregular militia formed in 1878 and composed primarily of Afridi recruits (Barthorp, 2002, pp. 43-45). The Rifles' fluctuating loyalties and their role during tribal revolts underscore the complexities of colonial indirect rule in tribal societies.

An infrastructural milestone was the completion of the Khyber Pass Railway in 1925, a marvel of engineering which connected Jamrud to Landi Kotal via a series of tunnels and bridges carved into the rugged terrain (Siddiqui, 2014, p. 88). This railway was not only a military logistical asset but also a symbol of imperial ambition to tame and

integrate the frontier. Although the line ceased functioning in 2006 due to flood damage, it formerly hosted the famed "Khyber Train Safari," a heritage tourism project aimed at showcasing the colonial-era railway infrastructure.

In modern times, Landi Kotal functions as a commercial nucleus serving the Shalmani, Shinwari, Afridi, and Mullagori tribes. The town's bazaars offer a vibrant confluence of goods ranging from consumer products to tribal handicrafts and smuggled imports, reflecting its role in transborder trade and informal economies (Ahmed, 2013, pp. 94-95). This informal commercial activity, while economically vital, also underscores the persistent challenges of regulation and taxation in Pakistan's peripheral borderlands.

Culturally, Landi Kotal has produced several luminaries of Pashto literature and poetry, most notably Amir Hamza Khan Shinwari, "Baba-e-Ghazal." His birth and literary career in the region further cement the town's place in the intellectual cartography of Pashto literary history (Shinwari, 1993, pp. 7-10). Additionally, the symbolic tale of the banyan tree placed "under arrest" by a British officer in 1898 continues to be a satirical reminder of colonial absurdities. It is now a heritage marker in the town (Anadolu Agency, 2020).

In demographic terms, the population of Landi Kotal has grown steadily from 22,324 in 1998 to 38,065 by 2023, indicating gradual urbanisation in the wake of post-FATA administrative integration (Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, 2023). However, infrastructural deficits, coupled with socio-political volatility in the surrounding tribal belt, continue to impede consistent development.

Landi Kotal epitomises the intricate interweaving of strategic geography, cultural resilience, and colonial legacy. As a gateway settlement along the historic Khyber Pass, it reflects the layered dynamics of military history, ethnic plurality, literary production, and modern cross-border commerce. In the broader archaeological and cultural profile of District Khyber, Landi Kotal must be viewed not merely as a transit town but as a living palimpsest where the footprints of empires, tribes, and poets continue to intersect.

### **3.5.1 Khyber Pass (Map. III)**

The Khyber Pass has long captivated historical imagination, often shrouded in legendary narratives that exceed the bounds of verifiable history. As noted by S. M. Jaffar, the pass has been associated with numerous great empires and conquerors,

including the Persians, Buddhists, Greeks, Afghans, Mughals, Sikhs, and British (Jaffar, as cited in *Monuments of Peshawar Neighbourhood*, p. 193). However, many of these purported associations lack firm archaeological substantiation or corroborative textual records. For instance, despite frequent claims, no definitive archaeological evidence of Persian or Greek presence has been identified within the pass, nor is there textual attestation of Aryan migration through this corridor (Witzel, 2005, p. 348). Notably, the pass is absent from Sanskrit literature and early Chinese pilgrim accounts, and its name is absent. The etymology of "Khyber" has been discussed in detail in section (See 3.2 Etymology of Khyber)

The historical significance of the Khyber Pass becomes more discernible with the 8th-century Afghan settlement in the Peshawar Valley. According to Farishtah, this period marked the construction of a fort in Khyber, signifying its emergence as a strategically critical route, particularly as Kabul gained regional prominence under the Turki Shahi rulers (Jaffar, *Monuments of Peshawar Neighbourhood*, p. 193). Fortifications such as Kafirkot may plausibly correspond to this phase of consolidation.

In the medieval era, Ghazni rose to prominence as a principal centre of power in Afghanistan, providing alternative routes to the Indus Valley through the Kurram and Tochi rivers. It was not until the reign of the Timurid prince Mirza Abu Sa'id, and later Babur, that Kabul and, by extension, the Khyber Pass, regained strategic significance. Babur stands as the first historically documented invader to have crossed the Khyber Pass. At the same time, his grandson Akbar ordered the construction of a formal road through the pass in 1586, assigning the project to the engineer Qasim Khan (*Monuments of Peshawar Neighbourhood*, p. 193).

The presence of Buddhist relics in and around the Khyber region, especially within the Peshawar Valley, suggests the pass was used for localised travel in antiquity. However, it may not have served as a primary trans-regional trade corridor. The Sikh general Hari Singh Nalwa sought to militarise the pass by erecting the Jamrud Fort in 1836; however, he was killed in battle the following year. The Burj Hari Singh, constructed near Islamia College, serves as a commemorative landmark to this conflict.

Under British colonial administration, infrastructural development progressed, initially with the installation of an aerial ropeway across the cliffs. This was succeeded by the construction of a motorable road, and by 1925, a railway line incorporating multiple

tunnels up to Landi Khana was completed (Monuments of Peshawar Neighbourhood, p. 194).

Geographically, the Khyber Pass extends from Jamrud to Torkham. More narrowly, it denotes the rugged gorge stretching between Landi Kotal and Bagiari, flanked to the north by the Rohtas and Tartara mountain ranges and to the south by a series of jagged ridges, traversed by several subsidiary paths. Beyond Ali Masjid lies Alacha Gar (also known as Aspo Gar), a mountain that demarcates the pass from Bazar Valley. The route continues through Landi Kotal, descends via Landi Khana, follows a seasonal stream (nullah) to Torkham, and opens onto the Kabul River plain at Dhakka, where an Afghan fort once stood (Monuments of Peshawar Neighbourhood, p. 194).

The broader Khyber region comprises several distinct valleys:

- a) The region spanning from the Kabul River to the Laka, Haideri Kandao, Tor Tsapar, and Spina Tsoka peaks;
- b) The Torkham-Jamrud corridor;
- c) Bazar Valley, bordered by Sur Gar and Alacha Gar;
- d) Bara Valley, which follows the Bara stream from Marnanai to Dawa Toi;
- e) Rajgal Valley, extending along tributary channels (nullahs) to Mittu Gar in the Safed Koh Range; and
- f) Maidan Valley, situated beyond Dawa Toi, flanked by Rajgal, Chamkani territory, Tor Gar, and Bara Valley.

Historically, three principal routes connected Peshawar to Afghanistan:

- a) The main Khyber Pass;
- b) The Shalman (or Dabar) route via Kam Dakka and Shahgai; and
- c) The Bazar route via Sasobi Kandao and Barg Kamar (Monuments of Peshawar Neighbourhood, p. 194).

The Afridis, Shinwaris, Mullagoris, and Shalmanis, the latter being a subgroup of the Afridi tribe, have played a central and enduring role in the region's history and in controlling its strategic passageways.



### **3.5.2 Shalman (Map. IV)**

Shalman, situated within Khyber District, is the traditional homeland of the Shalmani tribe, also spelt Shilmani, Shelmani, or Sulemani, a group with a long-standing historical presence not only in this region but also in various parts of Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Iran. Historically, Shalman Valley functioned as a subdivision of Shalman Tehsil until it was granted full tehsil status on July 10, 2006. Administratively, Shalman is divided into two subdivisions: Kam Shalman and Loya Shalman, covering a total area of approximately 2,230 square kilometres (Ahmed, 2013, p. 213).

The Shalmani tribe is considered one of the indigenous Pashtun groups of the Khyber region, recognised for their distinct cultural traditions and genealogical links within the broader Pashtun confederacy. Their settlements extend beyond Shalman Valley, with diaspora communities found in Afghanistan and as far as Iran (Spain, 1963, p. 67; Caroe, 1958, pp. 342-343). Despite their deep historical roots and rich traditions, the region of Shalman is characterised by considerable socioeconomic challenges, including possessing the lowest Human Development Index in the province and the second lowest in the country, which has had a direct impact on the wellbeing of the Shalmani people (Sultan-i-Rome, 2021, p. 144).

The enduring presence of the Shalmani tribe across various national borders underscores the complex tapestry of ethnic and tribal affiliations in the greater Khyber region, as well as the ongoing significance of tribal identities in shaping social and political realities (Ahmed, 2013, p. 215).

### **3.6 Bara Tehsil (Map. V)**

Bara is another significant Tehsil of the district Khyber. To the north, the area is bordered by the Surghar Range, which serves as a natural boundary separating it from Bazar and Chora. The southern limit is defined by the watershed dividing the Bara and Tirah Toi rivers. The segment of the valley running from Rajgal to Kajurina spans roughly 50 kilometres in length, with its width varying from just a few hundred yards to between 3 and 5 kilometres. Elevations in the region rise from about 1,000 feet at Pava Toi up to 2,000 feet at Kajurina. The surrounding highlands of Bara are densely forested with pine trees, while the upper sections of the valley feature walnut and mulberry groves that contribute to the area's striking natural scenery.

At the western extremity of the upper valley, close to Dwa Toi, the Kuki Khel reside. Across from them, on the right bank, are the settlements of the Adam Khel, Kamaz Khel, and Sipah clans. In addition, the Zakha Khel Afridis and Situr Khel Orakzais also have established communities within the Bara Valley. The principal villages and hamlets include Barakai and Barwar of the Orakzais, Toora Vela of the Zakha Khel, Shandana of the Sipah, and Takhtakai of the Kamari section.

The Situr Khel section of the Orakzais inhabits the lower Bara Valley. It spans about 25 km from the Galil Khel and Aka Khel Afridi villages on the left bank of the Bara River to Lamasey, a cave settlement of the Sipah Afridis. The average width of the valley here does not exceed 1.5 km and narrows to approximately 0.25 km near Barakai, an Orakzai village. The average elevation in this section is around 2,500 feet. The hills on both sides are rocky, steeper than those found in other parts of Tirah, and are either barren or sparsely covered with shrubbery. The higher elevations of Bara retain snow for months after snowfall, whereas the lower portions experience extreme heat during the summer.

The strategic and ecological significance of the Bara Valley is enhanced by a small river originating in the Tirah highlands and traversing the valley before entering the Peshawar District. Known as the Bara River, it enters Peshawar District a few miles southwest of the city, flowing northeast and eventually joining the Kabul River. The water is renowned for its quality and is believed to be highly fertile due to the reddish silt it carries. Local traditions even claim that water from Bara, when mixed with rice, possesses medicinal properties, and it was reportedly exported to Amritsar in the past.

A. E. Holmes notes that a fine variety of rice, referred to as Basmati rice, once cultivated in the Bara Valley, was in high demand due to its aroma. It commanded a high price, up to a rupee per seer, an indication of its prestige. (A seer is approximately one kilogram.) The Sikh Khalsa Darbar reserved this rice for royal consumption, and not for general distribution. Only a limited amount, likely no more than 20 maunds annually, was allocated for consumption, with the rest used for irrigation throughout the Peshawar Valley. During Sikh rule, the harvested rice was divided into three portions: the finest share was reserved to perpetuate tradition, the second-best was sent to Lahore for consumption by the court and nobility, and the third or least desirable share was left for the Zamindars.

The primary valleys of Orakzai Tirah include Khanki, Mastura, and Khurmana. Khanki, which once served as the base of Mullah Wali Khan, who, along with Mullah Said Akbar Afridi, dominated the political landscape of Orakzai during the second half of the 19th century, is among the most prominent. It is approximately 48 km in length and 13 km in width and is densely populated with villages inhabited by Mishti, Rabia Khel, and other Orakzai clans. While the valley narrows and is enclosed by mountains in certain sections, it contains sufficient arable land for the cultivation of high-quality rice. The Mamuzai and Sweri Ali Sherzai clans inhabit the upper valley, whereas the lower portion is home to the Ismailzais. Climatic conditions vary, with the upper valley remaining cool while the lower part experiences hot summers. The Ali Khels, Mishtis, and Shahukhels traditionally occupy winter settlements in the lower Khanki valley.

Each clan maintains designated seasonal habitats, a cooler region in Tirah for the summer and a warmer one in the lower hills for winter. Afridis, in particular, are known as Dwa Kori ("owners of two houses"), spending winters in Jamrud, Bara, and the Khyber Pass, and relocating to Tirah in the summer. Conversely, not all Orakzai clans have such arrangements; in the past, they would descend into the Miranzai Valley with their flocks and inhabit caves or temporary shelters constructed from grass. Some Orakzai clans now possess winter settlements in Wrasta, Kachai, Shinwarai, Shahu Khel, and areas around Hangu. However, most continue the tradition of seasonal migration between lower and upper Tirah.

Tirah is accessible via multiple routes from Peshawar and Kohat. The principal route from Peshawar to Maidan and Rajgal passes through Chora, Bazar, and Mustak. Chora commands all routes from the Bazar Valley into the Khyber between Shagai and Jamrud, as well as the road to Kajurina plain. While Afridi clans commonly use this route, the Mustak route is also increasingly utilised. A dirt road now connects Bara to Mustak (via Sipah, Malikdin Khel, and Aka Khel territories). From the Bazar Zakha Khel side near Landi Kotal, a track extends to Alwai via Karamana and Gagrina.

The government plans to construct asphalt roads throughout the Bazar Zakha Khel and Tirah regions, which will improve accessibility to these previously remote and isolated areas. The planned roads will converge at Bakar, continuing through Dwa Toi and Maidan, eventually reaching Haider Kandao and linking with the Kurram District.

### 3.6.1 Rajgal (Map. VI)

Rajgal is a lush, elevated valley located in the Afridi Tirah region and serves as the summer abode of the Kuki Khel Afridis. This valley is geographically demarcated from Maidan by a steep, rocky, yet well-forested spur of the Sufed Koh range, locally known as Moragha. This snow-covered mountain forms the natural boundary between the Afridis and the Sangu Khel and Mirjan Khel Shinwaris, rising to the elevation of approximately 12,000 feet at its western terminus.

Rajgal is hydrologically defined by a central stream fed by multiple small tributaries. The valley itself spans approximately 25 km in length, while the breadth of the open terrain flanking the central stream ranges from 5 to 7 km. The surrounding mountain slopes are densely forested, primarily with Nakhtar (*Pinus excelsa*) and Sarapo (*Abies webbiana*), as well as isolated growths of Ulmanz (*Cedrus deodara*) and Chalgozha (*Pinus gerardiana*, or edible pine). The presence of large oaks and various other native species further enhances the valley's rich biodiversity. In the vicinity of villages, fruit orchards, featuring apple, pear, apricot, and walnut trees, are commonly cultivated.

Located not far from Maidan, the Waran Valley lies to the north of Mastura, itself a scenic valley within Orakzai Tirah. Members of the Aka Khel Afridi clan primarily inhabit Waran. The valley forms a basin approximately 13 km in length and 4 to 7 km in width, encircled by mountains that ascend to about 8,000 feet in elevation. It is bordered by Maidan to the west and Bizote Valley to the south.

Although Waran Valley possesses abundant water resources, these flow rapidly into the Shigga Ravine via deep, incised watercourses, rendering them essentially unusable for irrigation. As a result, agriculture in the valley is predominantly barani (rain-fed), and local cultivation remains heavily dependent on seasonal precipitation.

### 3.6.2 Tirah: The Dark Valley

To the northwest of the Khyber region lies the expansive and fertile Tirah Valley, which is widely recognised as the ancestral homeland of the entire Afridi tribal confederation. It is situated between 33°37' and 34°N latitude and 70°30' and 71°15'E longitude. The term "Tirah" is also applied more broadly to encompass nearly the entire district, excluding only the Bazaar and Khyber valleys. Historically isolated from the broader currents of civilisation by the absence of roads, railways, or air links, Tirah functioned for centuries as a largely autonomous region. Governance in this area was shaped by

the customary law of Pakhtunwali (the Pashtun code of conduct), which was enacted through the jirga system (Ashraf et al., 2023, pp. 77-91), an assembly of tribal elders serving both as judges and executors of communal decisions (Caroe, 1958, pp. 212-215).

The vast region of Tirah, interspersed with expanses of cultivated land and pockets of alpine forest, remains almost entirely devoid of an internal communication network. The region is accessible primarily via mule tracks, with pack animals serving as the primary mode of transporting goods among the dispersed settlements. Travel is typically lengthy and arduous, undertaken on foot and demanding considerable stamina from the inhabitants. The local population leads a subsistence existence, characterised by economic hardship and limited access to education or modern conveniences. Their dwellings are sturdy, fortified mud houses, generally situated far apart and equipped with tall towers for protection—not only against natural dangers and wild animals, but also to guard against the possible betrayal of kin, or 'tarboor' (cousin). The social fabric of the area is deeply marked by a tradition of intra-tribal conflict, with cousins often considered the most dangerous rivals. This sentiment is encapsulated in a well-known proverb: "Even if your cousin is your right hand, chop it off." The higher elevations are densely forested with alpine trees, while the valley floors contain fertile plains irrigated by natural springs, seasonal floodwaters, or the perennial Bara River. Population growth and rising demand for timber have intensified pressure on these already scarce forest resources. Nonetheless, due to the region's rugged terrain and lack of infrastructure, the valley remains sparsely settled and continues to experience seasonal patterns of migration.

Seasonal migration from Tirah to the more temperate and fertile plains of Peshawar is a widespread practice among the region's inhabitants. Even when residing in their native villages, the people of Tirah remain heavily dependent on Peshawar for necessities, which are transported by mule across the challenging mountainous terrain. The local economy is rooted in agriculture, the timber trade, livestock husbandry, and the cultivation of dry fruits. While the population is largely self-sufficient in terms of staple foods and vegetables, goods such as tea, sugar, and textiles must be sourced externally. In recent years, economic diversification has become more evident, with some residents engaging in transportation and commercial activities both within Pakistan and across the Afghan border.

Hydrologically, the Tirah region is mainly sustained by the Mastura River, a principal tributary of the Bara River, supplemented by the Khanki Toi and Khurmana rivers. All three rivers have their sources within a few miles of Mitughhar (elevation 12,470 feet) at 33°55'N and 70°37'E, a prominent peak in the Safed Koh range. At Mitughhar, the range divides into several branches, giving rise to the multiple valleys that constitute Tirah. The Afridis and Orakzais inhabit the principal valleys, Rajgal, Maidan, and Waran. In contrast, the upper courses of the Mastura, Khanki Toi, and Khurmana Darra are primarily populated by the Orakzai tribe.

The Safed Koh range sends out several notable spurs: the northernmost branch extends northward from Mitughhar for approximately sixteen miles before splitting into two sub-spurs. One projects north to meet the Kabul River, while its eastern offshoots delineate the Bazaar, Khyber, and Shilman Valleys. Another prominent spur, the Surghar (historically notorious for the longstanding conflict between the Malikdin Khel and Qambar Khel tribes), stretches eastward, forming a boundary between the Bazaar and Chora valleys and the Bara, and eventually terminates in the Peshawar Valley near the Khajuri plain. The valleys near the river sources generally lie between 5,000 and 7,000 feet in elevation, experiencing heavy snowfall and severe cold during the winter months.

Historical accounts suggest that the earliest inhabitants of Tirah were of Tajik descent, later displaced by adherents of Pir-i-Roshan, the so-called 'Apostle of Light,' with remnants fleeing toward Nangarhar. In 1619 or 1620, Mahabat Khan, the Subahdar of Kabul under Emperor Jahangir, orchestrated the massacre of 300 Daulatzai Orakzais who had converted to the Roshania movement. In Mahabat Khan's absence (while he visited Jahangir at Rohtas), Ghairat Khan led a large expedition via Kohat into Tirah, advancing as far as the base of the Sampagha Pass, then defended by Roshanias under Ihdad and Daulatzais under Malik Tor. The Rajputs engaged the former, while Ghairat Khan's forces attacked the latter, but the Mughal army suffered a significant defeat.

Six years later, Muzaffar Khan, son of Khawaja Abdul Hasan and then Subahdar of Kabul, advanced against Ihdad via the Sugawand Pass and Gardez. Following five to six months of hostilities, Ihdad was killed and his head sent to Emperor Jahangir. His followers sought refuge in Lowaghar, and subsequently, Ihdad's son Abdul Kadir and his mother Alai returned to Tirah. The death of Jahangir in 1627 catalysed a widespread Afghan revolt against Mughal control. The Orakzai and Afridis attacked Muzaffar

Khan as he journeyed from Peshawar to Kabul, while Abdul Kadir led the sack of Peshawar. Internal Afghan discord eventually forced Abdul Kadir to abandon the siege and retreat to Tirah, where he was subsequently enticed to Peshawar and died there in 1635. The Mughals responded with a renewed campaign against his followers in Tirah. Eventually, Yusuf (an Afridi) and Asar Mir (the Orakzai leader) capitulated and were granted lands at Panipat near Delhi.

Despite these interventions, resistance persisted. In 1658, Mir Yakut, the imperial Diwan at Peshawar, was dispatched to Tirah to quell another Afridi and Orakzai uprising (*Imperial Gazetteer*, p. 234). Since the weakening of Mughal authority, Tirah has retained a high degree of autonomy, at times acknowledging only nominal allegiance to Kabul. The first major British military incursion occurred in 1897, following a coordinated Afridi and Orakzai uprising: the Orakzais attacked the Samana outposts, while the Afridis assaulted Landi Kotal and other British positions along the Khyber Pass. In response, the British dispatched a force of 34,500 men under Sir William Lockhart, advancing across the Khanki and Mastura valleys and over the Sampagha and Arhangha passes to Maidan and Bazar, ultimately overrunning Tirah and returning to Peshawar by way of Bara Valley in December (Caroe, 1958, pp. 212–215).

Tirah, long regarded as the bastion of Afridi power and the heartland of the Khyber and Orakzai Agencies, occupies a distinguished place in the region's history. The renowned Khyber Pass lies adjacent to Tirah, yet, prior to 1897, no major invader had ever penetrated the Afridi Tirah. The area was historically known as "Yaghistan," meaning "land of the insubordinate" or "country without a master."

The etymology of Tirah is subject to several hypotheses, reflecting the region's complex historical and cultural tapestry. One prevailing theory posits that Tirah derives its name from the ancient Tirahi tribe, once considered its original inhabitants. Another interpretation suggests that the word Tirah is rooted in the phrase "Teera o Tar," meaning 'darkness,' alluding to the valley's isolation and inaccessibility, which historically rendered it a "region engulfed in darkness." Further, the name has been linked to the concept of a "crossing" or "pass," a reading endorsed by Dr. A. H. Dani, who connects it to the region's geography marked by numerous routes between the Orakzai and Afridi territories (Dani, 1997, pp. 64-66).

However, a particularly intriguing theory draws upon the possible ancient Israelite origins of the Afridis, suggesting a Jewish connection embedded in the very nomenclature of the region. Notably, the principal seat of the Afridi tribes within Tirah is Maidan, a name that astonishingly mirrors the biblical "Medan", the third son of Abraham by Keturah, whose descendants, according to Jewish tradition, settled in the regions extending to Arabia Felix (Genesis 25:2; Josephus, *Antiquities*, 1.15.1). This linguistic coincidence, combined with persistent local traditions among the Afridis asserting their descent from lost tribes of Israel, adds a further layer of historical depth to the etymology of Tirah and its toponyms. The resonance between 'Tirah' and 'Terah' (Abraham's father in the biblical genealogy), as well as Maidan/Medan, is often cited by proponents of the Israelite-origin hypothesis, suggesting that the nomenclature may encode remnants of ancient Hebrew or Semitic roots (Josephus, *Antiquities*, 1.15.1).

While definitive proof remains elusive, the persistence of these theories among both local oral tradition and external observers underscores the significance of ethno-linguistic inquiry in the study of Khyber's tribal history. Thus, the etymology of 'Tirah' cannot be viewed solely through a local linguistic lens, but must also account for the broader context of historical migrations and cultural memory that continue to shape the region's identity.

Tirah is distinguished by its remarkable natural beauty, characterised by scenic valleys, flowing streams, dense pine forests, snow-covered peaks, and fortified settlements tucked amidst the trees, all of which together present an exceptional fusion of natural and cultural landscapes. The melodious calls of birds and the gentle rustling of walnut and deodar trees contribute to a distinctive and harmonious soundscape that is unique to this region.

During the Tirah Expedition of 1897-98, British officers often portrayed Tirah in idealised and poetic language, commonly likening it to a "Garden of Eden." Charles Miller compared the Mastura Valley to "a picture postcard Shangri-La," while Captain L. J. Shadewell observed that Tirah was "well-watered, highly cultivated, with homesteads on the hillsides surrounded by flowering fruit trees," and thus "quite like a Garden of Eden." Lionel James also noted that "No Indian hill station can compete with it. The valleys are extraordinarily fertile, fruit trees thrive, and crops are abundant; the potential for development will be immense once a road is constructed. The hillsides, luscious fruits, and vibrant flowers could easily rival Switzerland and



Kashmir in scenic magnificence and panoramic splendour" (James, 1898, p. 173; Miller, 1898, p. 45; Shadewell, 1898, p. 59).

The term "Tirah" generally designates the territory occupied during the summer months by all Afridi clans. However, it may also be extended to include nearly the entire area inhabited by these tribes, except for a narrow strip along the Khyber valleys. Thus, Tirah includes the Bara Valley above Tora Wela, Orakzai lands above Hissar, the Khanki valleys, and the Arhanga and Khurmana valleys above Khazina. In essence, Tirah comprises the areas watered by the two main tributaries of the Bara River, the Khanki and Khurmana. The region begins at Mittughar, with the elevation of 12,470 feet, where the main ridge breaks into several greater and lesser spurs running east and south through Tirah.

This mountainous terrain is a complex tangle of narrow valleys, cliffs, and defiles, divided into three major ranges. The main range, the Sufed Koh, is complemented by the Arhanga, Shaptar, and Mullaghar in the south; the Orakzai Range, running parallel and more heavily forested on its northern slopes; and the Samana, separating the Miranzai Valley from Khanki. The crest of this range, rising between 5,100 and 6,700 feet, is marked by a succession of strategic outposts such as Fort Lockhart, Saragarhi, and Fort Gulistan. On the northern side, the Meraghar spur of the Sufed Koh mountains serves as the natural boundary with the territory of the Sangu Khel Shinwaris.

Tirah spans an area of roughly 1,132 square kilometres, with altitudes varying from 5,000 to 7,000 feet above sea level. Traditionally, Tirah is divided into two principal regions: Afridi Tirah, which is predominantly settled by Afridi clans, and Orakzai Tirah, lying adjacent to the Orakzai territory. The central valleys forming the core of Afridi Tirah include Maidan, Rajgal, Bara, and Waran, whereas the Orakzai Tirah region comprises the Mastura, Khanki, and Khurmana valleys.

### **3.6.3 Maidan Valley: Geographic and Ethnographic Overview**

Maidan is recognised as the most extensive, most fertile, and visually striking valley within the Tirah region, celebrated for its outstanding agricultural productivity and exceptional scenic beauty. The valley has long held a poetic reputation due to its cool summer breezes, inherent natural fertility, and surrounding pine-clad mountains. These mountains, which rise to elevations between 8,000 and 9,000 feet, delineate the valley's periphery, while the central Maidan basin maintains an average elevation of

approximately 6,000 ft. above sea level. Broadly oval in configuration, the valley extends roughly 17 kilometres east to west and 8 kilometres north to south.

Dense pine forests that encircle Maidan gradually give way as the mountain slopes transition into arable land. Hydrologically, the valley is principally drained by two major seasonal streams (nullahs): the Shaloobar (Shalooba) in the eastern sector, whose name, derived from a local term, means "water of fertility and richness," and the Kahu Nullah originating in the west. Both watercourses are augmented by several deep, steep-sided tributaries, ultimately converging near Bagh, a locality notable for its perennial spring and its large mosque that serves as a venue for tribal jirgas (Ashraf et al., 2023, pp. 77-91). Following their confluence at Dwa Toi (meaning "two streams"), the united waters form the Bara River.

Demographically, Maidan is predominantly inhabited by the Malikdin Khel, Zakha Khel, and Qambar Khel sub-clans of the Afridi tribe, with segments of the Jawaki and Asho Khel Afridis, specifically the Mirbash Khels and Kala Khels of the Adam Khel lineage, occupying specific sectors of the valley. The climate in Maidan is temperate and congenial during the summer, whereas winters are characterised by severe cold. Heavy snowfall persists for three months or more annually, frequently accumulating to significant depths and rendering higher elevations unsuitable for permanent residence.

In response to the rigorous winter conditions, the majority of Afridi families customarily undertake seasonal migrations from Maidan and the upper Bara region to lower-lying areas in Khyber, Bazaar, and lower Bara. These migrations adhere to well-defined tribal boundaries and patterns. With the arrival of summer in April and May, families ascend to their summer dwellings in Tirah once more. Nonetheless, some sub-clans, notably the Gadi Khel and Hassan Khel of the Adam Khel Afridis, do not observe this migratory cycle, instead sustaining permanent settlements within Tirah, primarily in the lower hills between Peshawar and Naddar.

According to a rough estimate, Maidan lies approximately 128 kilometres in a direct line from both Kohat and Peshawar. The traditional route from Kohat via the Arhanga Pass covers about 78 kilometres and was historically traversed on foot within seventeen hours. However, recent infrastructural improvements, most notably the

construction of roads linking Kalaya and Bazaar valleys with national highways, have drastically shortened the travel time.

At present, Maidan is accessible through two principal routes from Peshawar: one passing through the Khyber Pass and Bazaar Valley, and another via the Bara Valley through Mustak. All tracks and minor roads from Jamrud, Ali Masjid, and Landikotal ultimately converge at Cheena. From the Kohat direction, the most accessible approaches include routes through Kalaya or Pakha Qila, Khanki Toi via the Sampagha Pass, and the Zaimukht region through the Mandatti Pass. Additionally, a footpath from the Bara side via Shinkamar reaches Mustak in the Aka Khel area, beyond which further travel must proceed on foot.

### **3.6.4 Bagh**

Among all the valleys of Tirah, Bagh holds a particularly prominent place in Afridi tradition and historical memory. It is renowned for its historic association as a favoured site for grand tribal jirgas, where critical matters affecting the entire Afridi community have long been deliberated. Notably, it was at Bagh that major decisions, including attacks on the Khyber Pass and other raids into administered territories, were planned. The term "Bagh" literally signifies "garden" or "out of the ground," referencing both its verdant landscape and the presence of a spring-fed garden at the heart of the Maidan valley.

A distinctive feature of Bagh is its setting, regarded by many as akin to a mosque nestled within a grove of trees. The site is held in deep reverence and considered sacred by the Afridis. During the summer months, thousands of Afridis from all sub-sections converge at Bagh every Friday to perform Jumu'ah prayers and engage in communal discussions on issues of mutual concern. These gathering underscores the enduring significance of Bagh as both a religious and sociopolitical centre within Afridi society.

## **3.7 Tribal and Socio-Cultural Landscape of the Khyber District**

District Khyber possesses a rich and complex tribal and socio-cultural landscape. Situated along the historic Khyber Pass, a corridor of trade, migration, and military campaigns for millennia, the district has served as the homeland of resilient Pashtun tribes renowned for their enduring independence and distinctive cultural practices. This section examines the principal tribes of the district, the complexity of their internal social hierarchies, the continuing centrality of the Jirga system and the code of

Pashtunwali (Ashraf et al., 2023, pp. 77-91), and the vital role of oral traditions in sustaining cultural memory and identity. Understanding these dimensions is essential for appreciating the socio-political dynamics and cultural vitality of District Khyber. The region's strategic geographic position has not only shaped its historical trajectory but also profoundly influenced the social organisation, collective identity, and customary governance of its predominantly Pashtun inhabitants, who maintain strong affiliations to their traditional codes and tribal networks.

### **3.7.1 The Tribes of Khyber**

The District Khyber is dominantly inhabited by the Afridi, Shalmani, Shinwari, Mullagori, and Sturi Khel tribes (see Figure 2.1, Part II). The Afridis constitute the largest and most influential tribal group in the Khyber District, occupying nearly 80% of its territory. Their ancestral homeland lies in the Tirah valley, though, over time, Afridi settlements have extended into the Khyber Pass, Jamrud, Bara, and Darra Adam Khel regions. The Afridi tribe itself is divided into eight major clans (khels), each of which surpasses several other Khyber tribes in both population and territorial holdings.

In comparison, the Shinwari tribe is smaller in number. It is primarily found around Landi Kotal and Landikhana, straddling the Pakistan-Afghanistan border that was historically demarcated as the Durand Line under the supervision of Sir Mortimer Durand in the late nineteenth century. While the Shinwaris trace their origins to the eastern Nangarhar province of Afghanistan, they have become a significant part of the Khyber District's population.

Smaller tribal communities, including the Shalmanis, Mullagoris, and Sturi Khel, are located on the northern periphery of the Khyber plateau. The Sturi Khel are found in Bara and the Tirah valley. At the same time, the Shalmanis are settled in the foothills of the Tatara peak along the Kabul River, and the Mullagoris inhabit the hills beyond Warsak. In recent years, the Mullagoris have utilised local marble resources, supplying marble to factories in Peshawar and as far as Karachi, which has led to a notable improvement in their standard of living.

The tribal structure of the Khyber District follows the classic Pakhtun pyramidal hierarchy: each tribe (qabila or qaum) is split into two or more clans (khels), which are further subdivided into sub-clans or extended family groups (tappas or kors). Although each tribe, khel, or kor typically occupies a defined area, these boundaries are not

rigidly set. The term *khel* frequently denotes tribal identity and may also be embedded in personal or place names. For example, the Shahbaz Khel sub-section of the Galai division of the Adam Khel Afridis resides in a distinct territory from that of the Jamshaid Khel in Jamrud Village. This system is also reflected in genealogical and social nomenclature, such as the differentiation between the Samti and Gari Samti blood groupings. According to local tradition, the Bara Khel, Kamar Khel, Kooki Khel, Adam Khel, and Aka Khel are classified as 'Gar.' In contrast, the Malikdin Khel, Zakha Khel, Mada Khel, and Sipah are recognised as 'Samti' (Spain, 1963, p. 42).

Although inter-tribal marriages are less frequent than unions within the same clan or extended family, such alliances do occur in the Khyber District. However, the prevailing practice remains endogamous, with a preference for marriages within the same clan, sub-clan, or familial group (Spain, 1962, p. 48). The birth of multiple male offspring is highly prized, and the joint family system continues to dominate, reflecting deeply rooted kinship structures. In recent decades, there has been a growing trend towards social integration and interaction among various tribes and clans, driven by modern economic pressures, improved communications, and a pragmatic approach to communal coexistence. Unlike in earlier times, tribal groups no longer perceive each other as rivals for land, livestock, or resources, resulting in increased mutual respect and reduced territorial hostility.

Lowell Thomas famously remarked that "*the story of the pass is a record writ in blood*" (Thomas, 1925, p. 99). While inter- and intra-tribal conflicts and disputes are not uncommon, these groups consistently demonstrate unity when confronted by a common enemy. The strong sense of group solidarity and collective defence typically outweighs historic patterns of internecine rivalry (Caroe, 1958, pp. 223-224; Spain, 1962, p. 73). The widespread ownership and carrying of arms, used both for self-defence and, when necessary, offensive purposes, reflects the tribes' traditional autonomy, as they have generally been exempt from official arms licensing. Most feuds centre on disputes over *zar* (wealth) and *zamen* (land), which form two components of the well-known triad of *zan*, *zar*, and *zamen*, although conflicts over *zan* (women) are infrequent. Thomas (1925, p. 99) further observed that Afridi women's distinctive red clothing serves to identify them as non-combatants during hostilities, ensuring they are spared from violence. Among these tribes, it is considered deeply dishonourable to target women during conflict. In contrast, Beverly Nichols humorously noted that, "just

as in France it is *chère* la femme, on the Frontier it is more often a child at the centre of attention" (Nichols, 1944, p. 112).

All tribes in the district speak distinct, yet mutually intelligible, dialects of Pashto or Pakhto. The local Pakhto closely resembles the hard, eastern dialect of the Yousafzai, as opposed to the softer, western variant of Kandahar. These dialects are distinguished primarily by the use of the hard [kh] and soft [sh] sounds, respectively (Caroe, 1958, pp. 26, 228). Despite relatively low literacy rates, the people of Khyber possess a vibrant oral tradition, enjoying music and poetry. The district's rich literary heritage stands in sharp contrast to its often-violent reputation. Notably, the roles of musician and poet were once indistinguishable, but over time, the poet has attained a higher social status. As Ghani Khan, the famous poet from Charsadda, once said, "*The Pathan loves his music but hates the musician.*" This reflects an enduring dichotomy, where the poet is respected, while the musician remains marginalised.

The Khyber District is primarily inhabited by the Afridi, Shinwari, Mullagori, Shalmani, and Stori Khel tribes. As previously noted, the Afridis are the largest group, comprising major subdivisions such as the Adam Khel, Aka Khel, Kamar Khel, Kuki Khel, Malikdin Khel, Qambar Khel, Sipah, and Zakha Khel. The internal structure and territorial distribution of these tribes and their subdivisions are described in the following section.

### **3.7.1.1 Afridis**

The Afridis represent the most powerful and historically influential tribe of the Khyber District (see Figure 2.1, Part II). Among their principal sub-clans, the Adam Khel are primarily located in the Kohat frontier region. A central aspect of Afridi history is their long-standing guardianship and control over the Khyber and Kohat Passes, a role documented as far back as written records permit. Classical sources such as Herodotus refer to a territory bordering the Indus River, inhabited by a people known as the Pactyae, subdivided into four nations, one of which, several scholars have identified the Aparytae or Aparutai with the ancestors of the modern Afridis (Ridgway, Grierson, Stein; see also Caroe, 1958, p. 31).

The Afridis have traditionally maintained their stronghold in the upland region of Tirah, with Maidan and Bagh serving as central settlements. This geographic advantage afforded them a position of considerable leverage, enabling them to extract tolls and

impose conditions upon nearly every conquering army or trader seeking passage through the Khyber Pass.

Regarding the etymological origins of the term "Afridi," references appear as early as the Greek and Achaemenid periods, with the Aparutai/Aparytae of classical texts frequently identified with the Afridis of later centuries (Caroe, 1958, p. 31; Herodotus, trans. Rawlinson, 1862, Book III). Both Olaf Caroe and other observers have remarked on the distinctive physiognomy of the Afridis, describing certain features, such as light skin, pronounced beards, and sharp profiles, that recall classical representations of Grecian figures or, as Spain (1963, p. 72) notes, evoke the imagery of Old Testament patriarchs.

Local traditions and external observers have occasionally described the Afridis using the term "Yahudi," signifying a stranger or outsider, possibly referencing supposed Hebraic or foreign ancestry. This notion persists more as a folkloric trope than as a substantiated genealogical fact.

### **3.1.1.1 Origins of the Afridis**

The origins of the Pakhtun, or Pashtun, tribes inhabiting the North West Frontier and Afghanistan remain a subject of enduring debate. In the absence of definitive documentary records or archaeological findings, the question of their ancestral beginnings is likely to remain unresolved. Several traditions as to their origins exist, including that of descent from the lost tribes of Israel (the Bani Israel theory) and stories which suggest Greek ancestry. However, none can be assigned a status higher than myth. Much of the literature examining the relative merits of these traditions is of little scientific value, either. Nevertheless, a brief discussion on the origins of the Afridis<sup>3</sup> It is not out of place.

One of the most intriguing pieces of early literary evidence relating to the North West Frontier is the reference in Herodotus' history of Alexander's conquests to a people called the Aparutai (Ἀπαρῦται), inhabiting the seventh of the Achaemenian satrapies. There are two points of interest in this reference:

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<sup>3</sup> Caroe, *The Pathans*, *op. cit.*, pp. 44-5, notes that the Afridis have a tradition that they are partly of Greek descent. This tradition is still alive. One tribal elder told me that the name Afridi/ Aparidai derives from that of an Aegean island.

(a) The location mentioned was supposedly in the vicinity of Peshawar, and so may have included present-day Afridi territory.

(b) The phonetic correspondence between the name in Herodotus' text and that by which the Afridis still call themselves, Aparidai<sup>4</sup> It is very striking, so much so that several scholars have argued that the two are connected and identical and that therefore the Afridis (or at least a people having their name) were already living on the North West Frontier, possibly in the Khyber/ Tirah region, which they now inhabit, in the 4th century B.C.<sup>5</sup>

A second, rather more circumstantial, piece of evidence relating to the origins of the Afridis is the general genealogy of the Pakhtun/Pashtun tribes. Most of the tribes trace their ancestry back to a certain Qais, who lived during the lifetime of the Prophet and embraced Islam through the efforts of one of the Prophet's companions. Caroe is rightly dismissive of this putative genealogy, which can be regarded as no more than folklore whose value, as Ahmed has suggested, lies mainly in the fact that it relieves the Pakhtun of the taint of a pre-Islamic (and therefore pagan) origin and of a history of forcible conversion.<sup>6</sup>

Nevertheless, even though the myth of common ancestry from Qais has no value as historical evidence, it has a social significance in that it serves as a reference point and source of order for the genealogies of the tribes, and thus for the lineage structure that patterns their society. It is noteworthy, however, that the Afridis, in familiar with some other well-known tribes of the North West Frontier, do not trace their ancestry back to Qais, but instead claim descent from a foundling called Karlanri, whose line has subsequently been accreted to the general Pakhtun/Pashtun genealogy. Caroe has suggested that this illustrates a conviction that ultimately the Afridis and other Karlanri tribes are of a different ethnic origin from that of the majority of the Pakhtun/Pashtun tribes.<sup>7</sup> This view obtains support from both Stein and Grierson, who have argued that Tirah was at one time inhabited by a people speaking a Dardic-related language known

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<sup>4</sup> In Afridi Pakhtu, as in most dialects of the language, the sound **P** invariably replaces that which is spoken or written as **F** elsewhere. Afridi is supposedly a Persian transcription of the tribe's name. Cf. Ibbetson, *Census Report*, vol. I, *op. cit.*, p. 202.

<sup>5</sup> Including the linguists G.A. Grierson and Georg Morgenstierne, and the archaeologist Sir Aurel Stein. See Caroe, *The Pathans*, *op. cit.*, pp. 29, 37-8; also C. Collin Davies, "Afridis," *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, new edn., vol. 1 (Leiden and London, 1960), pp. 237-8.

<sup>6</sup> Caroe, *ibid.*, pp. 7-9; Ahmed, *Pukhtun Economy*, *op. cit.*, pp. 128-9

<sup>7</sup> Caroe, *ibid.*, pp. 20-3.



as Tirahi, and that it is probable that the Afridis, although now speaking Pakhtu, contain a significant, if not predominant, ethnic element established in Tirah long before the migrations of the Pakhtu /Pashtu speaking peoples into the North West Frontier region between the 13th and 16th centuries.<sup>8</sup> Indeed, these arguments are somewhat speculative. However, it is interesting to note that the very slender literary evidence, genealogical tradition, and scholarly opinion all lead to the tentative conclusion that the Afridis are not of the exact ethnic origin as most other Pakhtun/Pashtun tribes and that their occupation of their present territory is of very long standing, and may even pre date the presence of other Pakhtun tribes in the region by as much as two millennia.

However, it was not until the early 16th century, during the period of the Mughal emperor Babur's conquests, that a clear and reliable understanding of the distribution of tribes in the North West Frontier began to take shape. Babur refers in his memoir to many of the tribes, and it is evident from his narrative that many of them inhabited approximately the same territories as those which they possess today.<sup>9</sup> The Afridis certainly possessed Tirah and the Khyber throughout the Mughal period, and supposedly received an annual payment of one lakh in return for keeping the pass open. This did not prevent the tribe from becoming involved in periodic conflicts with Mughal forces, and armed encounters are recorded as having occurred during the reigns of the emperors Akbar, Jahangir, and Aurangzeb, in 1591, 1620, and 1672, respectively. In the last of these conflicts, the Afridis successfully resisted the efforts of the Mughal army to force the Khyber and, according to the Pakhtu poet Khushhal Khan Khattak, inflicted casualties of 40,000.<sup>10</sup>

A point of greater interest, though one on which almost no evidence is available, is the possibility that the territory possessed by the Afridis once extended over a far larger area than it does today. Ibbetson has suggested that originally the Afridis occupied the whole of Tirah and the Safed Koh range, but that as successive tribes migrated to the North-West Frontier from the west, the Afridis were forced to concede much of their territory to the newcomers.<sup>11</sup> This is not improbable, since it is known that inter-tribal

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<sup>8</sup> Sir Aurel Stein, "Notes on Tirahi: the Speakers of Tirahi," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1925), pp. 399-404; Sir George Grierson, "On the Tirahi Language," in *ibid.*, pp. 405-16. See also Davies, "Afridis," *loc. cit.*

<sup>9</sup> Caroe, *The Pathans*, *op. cit.*, p. 155.

<sup>10</sup> Caroe, *ibid.*, pp. 213-14, 226-30, 234-35.

<sup>11</sup> Ibbetson, *Census Report*, *loc. cit.*

conflict over territory, resulting from the tribal diaspora which occurred from the 13th century onwards, continued until the 19th century.

The Afridis themselves had been engaged in warfare with their southern neighbours, the Orakzais, over possession of Tirah and the Khyber shortly before the arrival of the British on the North-West Frontier. Apt. F. Mackeson to G.R. Clerk, 15 August 1840, *NWFAC*. Indeed, it seems that large-scale territorial disputes between tribes only began to come to an end with the establishment of British rule, which served effectively to block further eastward migration by dispossessed or land-hungry tribes, and so led to the gradual 'freezing' of existing holdings.

It must be underscored, however, that our knowledge regarding the origins and early history of the Afridis as well as the Pakhtun or Pashtun tribes more broadly, remains extremely limited. Very few pre-British documentary sources exist, and much of the evidence provided by British records about the tribes before the beginning of the 19th century must be treated as unverifiable tradition. Where fairly reliable evidence is available, the tribes are generally mentioned only when they came into conflict with adjoining states or would be conquerors. Not until Elphinstone undertook his work of systematic description of the tribes and their society<sup>12</sup> Does any attempt seem to have been made to collect and record information about the social organisation of the tribes?

Another account links Afridis with the Arabs and the lost tribes of Israel. While some think that some tribes like the Afridis and the Khattaks are indigenous, considering, for instance, that they have recorded movement even during prehistoric times, which is before the flood, and Aurel Stein and his companions were the first to explore these lands. Caroe and Aurel Stein are reported to have suggested that Afridis, being part of the early inhabitants of the Gandhāra area, are instead an integral part of the great family of Indian origin. The above narration and their present location lend the Afridi, whose claim to unblemished Pathan lineage has been the subject of several misnomers, compel me to represent the archetypal Pathan. To him can be applied a whole catalogue of epithets and adjectives: coarse, courteous, honourable, treacherous, cruel, gallant, superstitious, cautious, suspicious, proud, brave, etc.

In one word, the Afridis epitomise the essence of the Pathan lineage. However, any observer not deeply acquainted with Afridi society might perceive their distinct

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<sup>12</sup> Elphinstone, *Caubul*, *op. cit.*

evolutionary identity and its social manifestations, which, while encompassing all the attributes of the broader Pathan ethos, nevertheless reveal uniquely Afridi political idiosyncrasies. The Imperial Gazetteer of India classifies the Afridis as descendants of Ghurghusht, son of Kais (Abdur Rashid), the legendary ancestor of the Pakhtuns. Numerous writers have ascribed various epithets to the Afridis, but their historical record and oral literature primarily speak in their favour. As Starr notes, they are true highlanders with an innate mastery of field tactics, consistently displaying courage and resilience in battle, qualities that command admiration. The Afridis have traditionally inhabited a rugged and inhospitable terrain, which has, in turn, shaped their enduring fortitude.

Historically, their steadfast defiance of successive invaders and marauders, as well as their practice of extorting tolls from merchant caravans, attest to their virile and independent disposition. While some writers, such as Temple, have described them as "among the faithless tribes, the most faithless," the Afridis are nevertheless firmly grounded in the Pakhtun code of Pakhtoonwali. Overall, the British were deeply impressed by the unwavering defiance and valour of the Pakhtuns, particularly the Afridis. However, the notion that only the British romanticized the Afridis is inaccurate; other observers, such as Spain, have described them as *"perhaps the best known of the Pathan Tribes. ... Their first business is war. The Afridis of the Khyber, hill men with accurate rifle-aim and sensitive trigger-fingers, are a bloodthirsty lot"* (Spain, 1963, p. 46).

*"The flying bullet down the Pass,  
That whistle is clear: "All flesh is grass."...  
A scrimmage in a Border station  
A canter down some dark defile  
Two thousand pounds of education  
Drops to a ten-rupee jezail".  
(Thomas:81)*

It may be observed that the Afridis invariably offered fierce resistance to foreign powers traversing their rugged terrain, and their valour was recognised through the recruitment of Afridi men into the armies of the Mughals, Ahmad Shah Abdali, and, more recently, the British. While this reputation for courage is widely acknowledged, there are notable exceptions to such general appreciation. Numerous authors have employed derogatory epithets when describing the Zakha khels, who, more than any other Afridi clan, continuously opposed British incursions. For instance, Thomas describes them as an

unruly branch of the Afridis. However, more balanced accounts portray the Afridis as possessing a "strange blend of virtues and vices: hardy, brave, and proud, ready to die in obedience to their code of honour, yet often faithless and treacherous" (Military Report Afghanistan, 1925, GHQ, Delhi, as cited in Hussain, 1987, p. XX). Ultimately, any objective analyst familiar with these tribes must avoid such value judgments, as a dispassionate analysis of the Khyber Agency tribes reveals no significant distinctions from other Pashtun groups.

Nevertheless, there are significant observations from another perspective as well. It is reported that the Afridis are thought to have first embraced Islam during the era of Mahmud of Ghazni, with further conversions occurring later under Shahabuddin Ghori. However, these dates lack confirmation from written religious records. Khushal Khan Khattak, the renowned warrior poet, is often cited as having remarked that "the call of the muezzin (Azan) in the Pashto poet is often linked with the cry of the cock at the dawn of day." Khattak is further quoted as saying, "My camel heart is an Afridi, who cares nothing for religion; its good thoughts are few, and it is very much given to wickedness." However, in everyday life, although Afridis may not appear overtly religious, they exhibit notable piety during prayers. A particularly striking exception emerges during Eid Milad-un-Nabi (the Prophet Muhammad's birthday), when the festival is celebrated with exceptional fervour and religious zeal, a spectacle of considerable note.

If religiosity is to be gauged by the number of shrines, the Afridis are certainly not deficient. Notable shrines include Wali Baba in Jamrud, Sheikh Milli Baba in the area of Baghdad Khel Sipah, Ghaibi Baba in Chora, Lakar Baba in Sipah, Ghaibi Baba in Qamar Khel, Naray Baba in Sipah, Sulaiman Baba in Omarkhel, Malik Sahib in Qamar Khel, Neckha and Pir Sayyad Neckha in Sipah, Sam Baba in Kondeli Baba, and Baloosey Baba at Shakas. The Afridis also observe a variety of religious rituals, including Eid celebrations, seeking amulets from Pirs (holy men), and visiting these shrines.

Additionally, if participation in the Kashmir jihad is considered a marker of religious commitment, the Afridis were at the forefront of the Pathan lashkar that reached Muzaffarabad on the night of October 22, 1947. They continue to take pride in this historical involvement to the present day.

In the context of religious history, it is important to note the significance of the Roshaniyya movement, which originated in the Tirah region under the leadership of Bayazid Ansari, also known as Pir Roshan. He established a religiously motivated parallel government that directly opposed Mughal authority by waging a jihad (religious war) against them. The movement ultimately declined by the 1740s, for more details (See Chapter IV, Section 4.20.5)

The Afridis have also gained a degree of notoriety for their historical and contemporary involvement in illicit trade and smuggling activities. Traditionally, they were renowned as raiders and toll collectors of merchant caravans, a reputation which persists in modified form in the present day. Spain (1963, p. XX) characterises the Afridis as "consummate smugglers," deeply invested in trade, and notes that specific segments have engaged in smuggling, narcotics trafficking, and, in some cases, kidnapping for ransom. Historically, the Afridis were regarded as past masters in the art of toll collection well before the establishment of modern toll roads such as the Bronx Tunnel or Merritt Parkway and long before British arrival in their territory (Hart, YEAR, p. XX). In more recent times, some have acquired the reputation of being drug barons, prompting government interventions such as the destruction of heroin laboratories and current efforts to eradicate the poppy crop, a relatively new phenomenon in Khyber District.

The Afridi tradition is also replete with accounts of notorious outlaws and local heroes. For example, Syed Mir Shah and Malikdin Khel are remembered for establishing a short-lived autonomous government in Tirah in 1898 and issuing their leather currency, an experiment that lasted six years. Ajab Khan Afridi, a widely recognised figure, famously abducted Mollie Ellis. At the same time, Multan Zarin Zakkakhel, initially a sepoy in the 26th Punjab Regiment, turned to banditry from his base in Tirah in 1902, frequently raiding Peshawar. His collaborator, Mullah Said Akbar Akkakhel (Dadar Mullah), met his end in 1909. Another notable figure, Kamal Khan Malikdin Khel, began his career as a soldier in the Bengal Regiment, which he deserted before turning to raiding; he was killed in 1887. Ajab Khan's brother, Haji Shahzadak Khan, likewise started as a sepoy in the 130th Baloch Regiment but was court-martialed for insubordination. Folklore relates the highly dubious claim that Mollie Ellis proposed marriage to him; however, this account is widely regarded as implausible.

In the early modern period, Aimal Khan, whose identity is debated, was sometimes regarded as a Mohmand. However, the contemporary Khushal Khan Khattak regarded him as an Afridi, and he gained prominence for spearheading resistance against the Mughal Empire during the reigns of Jahangir, Shah Jahan, and Aurangzeb, most notably during the 1672 uprising. Khushal Khan Khattak's poetry is replete with tributes celebrating his achievements. In a similar vein, Darya Khan, also an Afridi, is commended in Khushal Khan's verses for his leadership in campaigns against the Mughals.

*"Their gleaming swords shone crimson with blood;  
Aimal Khan and Darya Khan, those two valiant leaders,  
Each striving to surpass the other in bravery,  
Have stained the cliffs of Khyber red with their foes' blood"*

*However, after their death, Khushal longs for them as:*

***"The wise Aimal Khan and Darya Khan are both gone;  
Now there is left only Khushal to the Moghuls to fight".***

*Another poetic rendition pays tribute to Multan Khan Zakhakhel, thus:*

***What is fated cannot be changed.  
A person who leaves his home,  
Multan in Peshawar, entered with his lashkar,  
He stalked in as a lion...  
Had raided the famous Andar Shehr Bazar,  
Moreover, it showed the British their strength.  
He was upright. He looted cash and kind, took it away on mules.  
He unsheathed his sword, leaving the people of Peshawar.  
Quaking, and the British in terror.***  
*, (by Abdul Hamid Afridi)*

The Afridis are traditionally divided into eight major sub-tribes (see Figure 2.1.1, Part II), also known as clans or khels, which play a pivotal role in all political, religious, and economic affairs. The system of collective responsibility and benefit is rooted in the tribal institution of wesh (customary distribution) among these clans. The primary Afridi clans are as follows:

## **A. Adam Khels**

The Adam Khel tribe (see Figure 2.1.1.1, Part II) is predominantly settled in the Darra Adam Khel region of Kohat District. Within the Khyber District, only two small sub-sections, the Kala Khels and the Jawakis, are present, while a minor segment also inhabits parts of Tirah. Their numerical presence in Khyber District remains limited, and they are generally recognised for their peaceful disposition, with few documented instances of criminal or anti-social behaviour.

While travelling from Peshawar to Kohat, the territory of the Kalakhel lies to the east, separated from the main body of Khyber District by the Peshawar-Kohat Road. This geographic separation has led to its local designation as "East Pakistan" in popular parlance.

In contrast, the Adam Khel community residing in Darra Adam Khel is nationally renowned for its association with arms manufacturing bazaars, a characteristic that sets it apart across Pakistan.

The Adam Khel is further subdivided into four major sub-clans: Hassan Khel, Jawaki, Gali Khel, and Ash Khel. The Jawaki branch includes the Zaki Khel, Haider Khel, Mirbash Khel, and Khwaja Khel sub-sections. At the same time, the Kala Khel, situated east of the district, is further categorised into Zad Khel, Mir Said Khel, Karmo Khel, and Babar Khel.

Most of the Adam Khel population resides outside the Khyber District, particularly in the Darra Adam Khel subdivision of Kohat District within present-day Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (formerly NWFP). According to the 1998 national census, the Kala Khel section of Adam Khel in Khyber District was recorded at 2,872 individuals.

## **B. Aka Khels**

The Aka Khel clan (refer to Figure 2.1.1.2 in Part II) is situated entirely within the Bara subdivision of the administered area as well as the Tirah region. Part of their traditional territory now benefits from irrigation provided by the Bara River Canal, enabling the cultivation of both staple and cash crops. Currently, the Aka Khels are involved in an ongoing boundary dispute with the Orakzais of Peshawar to the east, a conflict marked by intermittent episodes of construction and armed clashes. The area known as Maira

Aka Khel has developed a notoriety for criminal activity, frequently serving as a passage for offenders travelling towards Stori Khel or Darra Adam Khel.

The Aka Khel are organised into several principal sections: Mada Khel, Mirgad Khel, Maroof Khel, Sanzal Khel, Sultan Khel, Sher Khel, and Merzad Khel. Within these, there are additional internal subdivisions: the Zaki Khels branch into Zolikhel and Mir Khan Khel; the Mir Khels are divided into Hasan Khel, Masso Khel, and Umer Khel; while the Maroof Khels comprise the Badi and Sadiq subgroups. The Mirgad Khels are further divided into multiple sub-sections. Within Sher Khel, the main sections are Zori and Ayub Khel, and Sultan Khel is subdivided into Azad Khel, Kobi Khel, and Baj Dre Wand. The Sanzal Khels are made up of Umer Khel, Mir Said Khel, Qasim Khel, Shahbaz Khel, and Asim Khel. According to the 2017 national census, the Aka Khel population stood at 65,345 individuals.

### **C. Kamar Khels or Kamarai**

The Kamar Khel (see Figure 2.1.1.3, Part II), also known as Kamarai, is entirely settled within the Bara subdivision, encompassing both administered and unadministered areas. The principal significance of this tribe derives from their ownership of the Task (or Sukh) Pass, a strategic route connecting the Bara Valley to the Maidan of Tirah. Aside from this geographical advantage, the Kamar Khel are generally regarded as a sober and unobtrusive community, rarely involved in major political or social conflicts.

The Kamar Khel is organised into three primary sections: Mughal Khels, Dire Plari, and Khudad Khels.

- a) The Mughal Khels are further subdivided into Bara Khel, Zahi Khel, Inayat Khel, Sheikhani, Rasool Khel, Amid Khel, Paind Khel, Nandar Khel, and Ajar Khel.
- b) The Dire Plari comprise Barma Khel, Tor Khel, Varai Khel, and Shakha Khel.
- c) The Khudad Khel are divided into Sobi Khel and Azad Khel.

According to the 1998 national census, the total population of the Kamar Khel was recorded as 16,510 individuals.

### **D. Kuki Khels**

The Kuki Khel (see Figure 2.1.1.4, Part II) are not only the predominant tribe within the Jamrud subdivision but are also dispersed throughout the entire Khyber District.



Politically, the Kuki Khel represent one of the most influential clans of the Afridi tribe. The tribe is divided into two main groups: the Uderzai and the Tirahwals, the latter of whom have established strongholds in both Jamrud and Peshawar.

The traditional territory of the Kuki Khel begins at Ali Masjid and the Malikdin Khel settlement of Chora in the south, extending down to Fort Jamrud. From this point, it stretches northward, encompassing areas such as Gagrai and the Suddah Khel section of the Tirahwala region. Notable villages within their domain include Lala Cheena, Jabbaqai, Tauda, Utlā Gagari, Bhiri, Kadam, Sarkai, Jam Gudar, Nasir Kalay, Shagai, Topai, and Spina Thana. The tribe is also associated with significant personalities hailing from settlements such as Mehrban Killi and Khasit Khula, extending to Dwatia and further to Kaligud Kaji Patiala.

As previously mentioned, the Kuki Khel dominate both sides from Khyber Pass to Jamrud and Landikotal. However, other clans such as the Sher Khel and Umer Khel are also present in certain localities. According to the 1998 national census, the Kuki Khel population was recorded at 73,927 individuals.

The internal structure of the Kuki Khel is organised into three major branches:

- a) Akbal Sikander, which includes the Abdal Khels (subdivided into Ali Khel, Sheri Khel, and Umer Khel);

Sikander Khel, further subdivided into Bada Khel, Wand Khel, and Zako Khel;

- b) Hasan Khel, divided into Katia Khel (further split into Dildar Khel, Maki Khel, and Mastal Khel), Mania Khel (comprising Farid Khel, Qadam Khel, and Qadi Khel), and Sherkhan Khel.

- c) The third central section, Salour Plari, is divided into Mado Khel, Qaroon Khel, Tor Khel, and Waley Khel.

#### **E. Malikdin Khels**

The Malikdin Khel (see Figure 2.1.1.5, Part II) tribe occupies several distinct regions within District Khyber, including the Jhanda Khels of Jamrud, Khajuri/Nala in the Bara subdivision, as well as Nahqi and Maidan in Tirah. According to historical accounts, the Malikdin Khel Maliks of Choro established their settlement at Kata Koshta near Ali Masjid during the mid-nineteenth century, reportedly tracing their migration route between the Zakha Khel and Kuki Khel territories. Subsequently, other sub-tribes such

as Qamber Khel and Kamar Khel followed a similar pattern of settlement and were granted a share in the Khyber allowance.

Historically, the Malikdin Khel was regarded as the Khankhel, or premier, tribe of the region, holding significant influence in district affairs. They have played a prominent role as arbiters in both peace and conflict within Khyber. Notably, the landmark decision to attack British outposts and messes in 1930 was taken at Bagh, highlighting their pivotal role in anti-colonial resistance.

The Malikdin Khel's authority over transit routes, particularly the Sur Ghar, is well recognised; for instance, a two-year truce (tiga) was proclaimed during arbitration efforts among the Jhanda Khels, who reside in the area below Ali Masjid extending to the ravine just east of Gurugura and from Kata Koshta to Chooro in the Jamrud subdivision. Their distribution reflects both historical mobility and strategic settlement patterns that facilitated their prominence in regional arbitration and conflict resolution.

Internally, the MDK tribe is subdivided into Umer Khankhels, Kulla Karamana, and Dualat Khels. The Dualat Khels are further divided into Arbabzai, Khubais Sher Khans, and Yaroo Allahdads, while the Kulla branch consists of Kulla Khels and Manazai. Additionally, other sub-branches of the Dualat Khels include Babi Khels, Mursal Khels, Nazar Khels, Nato Khels, Qazian, Huner Khels, and Alam Khels, among others. The most influential section is the Jhanda Khels, who primarily inhabit the Jamrud subdivision.

According to the 2017 national census, the Malikdin Khel population was recorded at 49,045 individuals (Government of Pakistan, 2017, p. XX).

## **F. Qamber Khels**

Numerically, the Qambar Khel (see Figure 2.1.1.6, Part II) is recognised as the most populous (Government of Pakistan, 2017, p. XX). This clan is internally divided into numerous sub-sections. The Qambar Khels residing in the Shalobar area are known as Shalobar Qambar Khels, while those settled elsewhere are referred to as Bar Qambar Khels.

Both the Qambar Khel and Malikdin Khel trace their lineage to a common ancestor, Mir Ahmad. Although their collective strength, if unified, could constitute a formidable

force within the Afridi confederacy, historical divisions and persistent inter-tribal rivalries render such an alliance highly improbable.

The Qambar Khel clan is permanently settled primarily in the Maidan area of Tirah, as well as in the Bara Valley. Additionally, small settlements are found in the Cheena locality at the southern edge of the Bazaar Valley in Tirah, and the clan also maintains a presence among the Masuzai and Ali Sherzai Orakzais in the Kharmana Valley.

Within Khyber District, the Qambar Khel's entitlement to the Khyber Pass road extends geographically from Sultan Tara to Shahgai Fort. Internally, the tribe is divided into Bar Qambar Khels and Shalobar Qambar Khels. Both Bar and Shalobar subdivisions are further split into Sheikhmaal Khels, Wandoqari, and Dre Plari lineages. While the Bar Qambar Khels are widely acknowledged for their adherence to the Riway, or customary tribal code, the Shalobar group has acquired notoriety due to the prevalence of criminal activity, including kidnapping for ransom, carjacking, and other offences.

According to the 2017 national census, the Qambar Khel population was recorded at 85,886 (Government of Pakistan, 2017, p. XX).

### **G. Sipah**

The comparatively small Sipah tribe (see Figure 2.1.1.7, Part II) is primarily situated in the Bara Valley, where they occupy the Bara Bazaar alongside the Shalobar Qambar Khels. During the winter, members of the tribe migrate from Burra (upper) Bara to the Khajuri plain, although a portion of the community has established permanent settlements in this area. Geographically, the Sipah are bordered by the Qambar Khel on one side and the Zakha Khel on the other. The tribe has convenient access to Afghanistan via the Salimi Kandoa in the Nazin Valley and also administers the prominent territories of Alamgudar.

The Sipah tribe is structured into three principal sections: Urmaz Khel, Babar (Abubakar) Khel, and Landi Khel. Further, the tribe is organised into subdivisions, including Ghebba Khels, Suran Khels, and Urmaz Khels. The Ghebba Khels branch is further divided into Kara Khels, Sarkha Khels, Piro Khels, and Khal Khels. The Suran Khels are subdivided into Mamal Khels and Sheikhan, while Urmaz Khels comprises the Baghdad Khels, Dre Wandi, Landi Khels, and Tor Khels.

According to the 2017 census, the population of the Sipah tribe was recorded at 33,232 (Government of Pakistan, 2017, p. XX).

## H. Zakha Khels

The Zakha Khel (see Figure 2.1.1.8, Part II) is one of the largest, most powerful, and most influential clans in the Khyber District. Among its predominant branches, the Baraaz Zakha Khels have become notably cooperative with the government, evidenced by their complete ban on poppy cultivation during the 2000-2001 season. The Pakhai Zakha Khels control the strip of the Khyber Pass road between Kata Kushta and Loargai (Landikotal).

The Zakha Khel own the portion of the Khyber Pass road that begins at the ravine west of Gurugura post and terminates at the Kandar ravine near Garhi Lala Baig, beyond which control passes to the Shinwari tribe. The area occupied by the Zakha Khel constitutes the heart of Khyber, as the clan dominates not only the entire Bazaar Valley but also one-third of the Maidan in Tirah. Additionally, a segment of land between the Aka Khel and Sipah in the Bara Valley is under their possession, giving the Zakha Khel a diagonal territorial presence across the Khyber District.

This geostrategic position allows the Zakha Khel to travel throughout the district without passing through the territory of any other Afridi tribe, a unique privilege that confers a significant advantage and underpins their preeminent status. As a result, maintaining amicable relations with the Zakha Khel is of considerable importance for all other Afridi tribes. A smaller subgroup, known as the Ziaud Din, resides in the lower Bara Valley at Shinkamar.

Historically, the Zakha Khels were in frequent conflict with the British colonial authorities, who often described them in hostile terms. The Imperial Gazetteer (p. 236) refers to them as "*Afridis of the notorious Zakka Khel clan, the most active thieves on the Frontier, against whom on three occasions punitive expeditions have been sent.*" Rudyard Kipling also referenced their reputation in his verse:

*"'Tis war, red war, I will give you then,  
Tear till my sinews fail,  
For the wrong you have done to a chief of men*

*And a thief of the Zukka Kheyl"*

Despite this contentious colonial history, the Zakha Khel are today recognised as an honourable and peaceful tribe. Internally, the Zakha Khel are divided into two main sections: Barkai Zakha Khels and Pakhai Zakha Khels. The Barkai branch is further subdivided into Anai, Shan Khels, and Nasrads; the Anai are subdivided into Shekhai and Dre Plari Nasradin, and further into Khosingi and Paindi. The Nasradin are also subdivided into Khosingi and Paindi. The Pakhai Zakha Khel section is divided into Nekhi Khels and Sultan Khels. Nekhi Khels is further subdivided into Gulda Khels, Ali Khels, Pinze Plari, Brug, and Karama. At the same time, the Sultan Khels include Dali Khels, Ismail Khels, Azam Khels, Pinze Plari, Alacha, and Barkas.

According to the 2017 census, the Zakha Khel population was recorded at 70,185 (Government of Pakistan, 2017, p. XX).

### **3.7.1.2 Shinwaris**

In the late fifteenth century, the Yousafzai and Mohmand tribes occupied the Peshawar and Swat valleys, accompanied by the prominent Shinwari tribe (see Figure 2.1.2, Part II). The majority of the Shinwaris, however, ultimately settled in the Ningrahar province of Afghanistan, where most of the tribe remains concentrated. Only a single Shinwari lineage, the Ali Sher Khel, established itself around Landi Khana on the eastern side of the Pak-Afghan border, choosing not to migrate further into the Peshawar valley.

The Shinwaris belong to the Kanshi branch of the Sarbani Pakhtuns and are believed to have moved eastwards with the Ghoridah branch during the sixteenth century. The Sangokhail clan inhabits the western bank of Spen Ghar alongside the Khogiani tribe. Within Khyber, the Shinwaris residing in Landi Kotal, commonly referred to as the Loargi Shinwaris, trace their ancestry to the Ali Sher Khel of Ningrahar. A smaller number of Shinwaris are also found in the Kohat District.

Historically, the Shinwaris, much like the Afridis, have demonstrated formidable resistance to external incursions, joining various lashkars against the Mughals, Sikhs, and British. Their territory, consisting of rugged, hilly, and arid land with limited economic opportunities, is characterised by a shortage of both water and electricity. The

government has outlined plans to construct a significant water supply scheme to channel water from the Kabul River into the Shinwari areas.

The Shinwaris are primarily engaged in the transportation sector, notably dominating cargo and commercial transport to other parts of Pakistan. Economically, the Ali Sher Khel or Khyber Shinwaris are generally well off, possessing substantial, fortified homesteads and maintaining a significant presence in trade and business, as well as sharing in the transportation industry.

Culturally and spiritually, the Shinwaris are considered among the more religiously inclined Pashtun tribes. Notable living saints and spiritual leaders from their ranks include (Haji Abdul Aziz) Sheikh Gul Baba of Piro Khel, whose family maintains spiritual influence in the area, and Sahibzada Muhammad Sadiq Asnori. Among the famous shrines are Haji Gul Baba at Piro Khel, Hazrat Kakajee at Ash Khel (Ahl-e-Sunnat wal Jamaat), Shaheed Baba in Mirdad Khel, Hamesh Gul Baba at Piro Khel, and Da Bokhara Haji Sahib in Gurgurar.

The Shinwaris are also renowned for their literary contributions, with Amir Hamza Khan Shinwari widely acclaimed as a significant figure in contemporary Pashto literature. Other distinguished poets and writers from the tribe include Sadiq Khan Shinwari and Lal Zada Nazir.

Geographically, the Shinwaris maintain a strategic position, dwell on both sides of the Durand line, which grants them considerable influence within the Khyber District. They have coexisted harmoniously with the Afridis for centuries and have played an instrumental role in defending the Khyber Pass from successive invaders. The historical record notes that Nadir Shah, King of Iran, paid Rs. 1.3 million to the Shinwaris and Afridis for safe passage through the Khyber Pass.

The Shinwari tribe is subdivided into Khugak Khels, Manz Sookai, and Sheikhmaal Khels. The Khugak Khels branch is further divided into Basi Khels, Ashraf Khels, and Firdal Khels. The Manz Sookai are divided into several sections: Piro Khels, Mukhtar Khels, Ash Khels, and Pasid Khels. The Sheikhmaal Khels consist of Mirdad Khels, Ghandi Khels, Bai Khels, and Alam Khani.

The area inhabited by the Shinwaris spans approximately seven miles in length and four miles in width, with the lowest part of the plateau at about 5,500 feet above sea level, rising gradually to over 6,000 feet. According to the 1998 census, the total population

of the Shinwari tribe in this region was recorded at 89,062 (Government of Pakistan, 1998, p. XX).

### **3.7.1.3 Mullagoris**

The Mullagoris (see Figure 2.1.3, Part II) are Sarbani Pakhtuns belonging to the Ghoria Khel branch. Geographically, the Mullagori tribe is primarily located north of the Khyber Pass, in the Tatara range. Their territory extends from the crests of Dabrai, bordering the southern Shilman region, and from the Kabul River in the north to Lakka Sar in the south, adjoining Landi Kotal. They share boundaries with the Kuki Khel and Zakha Khel Afridis, a clan of the Shinwaris, the Shalmanis to the west, and the Katawarai Mohmands to the east. In addition to their main settlements, Mullagoris are also found in Sapri in the Mohmand Hills and the glen of Mullagor.

The tribe is subdivided into the Ahmed Khels, Par Khels, Daulat Khels, Tar Khels, and Ismail Khel. The Ahmed Khel further branches into Shah Khan Khel and Bekham Khel, while the Ismail Khel is subdivided into Tar Khel, Pai Khel, and Chulai Khel.

Although the Mullagoris are relatively small in number, compared to other tribes in the region, they have established a strong reputation as expert mountaineers, resilient warriors, and reliable transporters of goods, most notably, tea and the renowned Mullagori marble. The area under their control contains significant mineral deposits, including marble, soapstone, limestone, and dolomite, contributing to their increasing economic stability and decentralisation. The Warsak Dam, a key regional infrastructure project, is also situated within their territory.

Despite having lower literacy rates and higher poverty relative to the Shinwaris, Kuki Khels, and Zakha Khels, the Mullagoris are distinguished by their unity, cooperative relations with the administration, and their notable history of voluntarily surrendering arms in 2001. Over time, they have demonstrated considerable resilience, occasionally prevailing over neighbouring Afridi tribes in local disputes, which has reinforced their reputation for strength and independence. Today, the lucrative marble trade has facilitated a transition toward a more peaceful and settled existence.

According to the most recent census, the population of the Mullagori tribe stands at 19,960 (Government of Pakistan, 2017, p. XX).

### **3.7.1.4 Shalmanis**

The Shalmanis (see Figure 2.1.4, Part II) are an ethnic group recognised as a distinct tribe since the Khyber Agreement of 1881, which was signed between the British administration and the tribal people of the District Khyber. As part of the broader Afridi tribal confederation, the Shalmanis are primarily settled north of the Kabul River. Historically, they have been divided into two main groups: Loe Shalmanis and Kam Shalmanis.

#### **A. Origin of Shalmanis or Shelamites**

The origins of the Shalmanis have been a topic of both historical and biblical interest. Some scholars associate them with the Shelamites, a lesser-known group mentioned in the Hebrew Bible. The Shelamites appear briefly in biblical genealogies, particularly within the tribe of Levi. In the Book of Numbers, the descendants of Shelomith are listed among the families of the Levites (Numbers 26:58-59, New International Version). Although the term "Shelamites" is not explicitly used in all translations, specific interpretations connect the descendants of Shelomith with the Shelamites, though this identification remains debated among biblical scholars.

#### **B. A Historical and Biblical Overview**

The Shelamites are often regarded as a subgroup within the broader Levitical lineage, suggesting a priestly or temple-associated role in ancient Israelite society. Some scholars propose that the Shelamites may have been responsible for specific religious duties or rituals, underscoring the significance of lineage and tribal affiliations in the social and religious fabric of ancient Israel. The etymology of "Shelamite" may derive from the Hebrew root "shalom," meaning peace, which has led to interpretations linking the Shelamites to notions of peacefulness or completeness, although such connections remain speculative.

#### **C. Historical Context and Interpretations**

Contemporary biblical scholarship continues to explore the identities of lesser-known groups such as the Shelamites. While not prominently featured in canonical narratives, the Shelamites occupy a notable position within Levitical genealogies, highlighting the complexity of Israelite tribal divisions and the importance of marginalised groups



within ancient society. Advances in textual criticism and archaeological research have enabled new interpretations, although definitive conclusions regarding their precise roles remain elusive.

#### **D. Modern Scholarly Perspectives**

In parallel to the Shelamites, the Shalmanis emerge as a distinct ethnolinguistic group with deep historical roots in the borderlands of Afghanistan and Pakistan. According to Raverty and other colonial-era sources, the Shalmanis are believed to have descended from a Tajik tribe originally residing in the regions of Shalman (modern Shalozan) and Karman in the Kunar Valley. They reportedly settled in the Hashtnagar area under the dominion of Sultan Awes of Swat, a Gabarai ruler who controlled extensive territories north of the Kabul River, extending to the Pir Panjal range and including portions of the southern slopes of the Sufed Koh mountains. Following the incursion of the Yousafzai and Mandanr Pakhtuns, the Shalmanis lost much of their land and were relegated to small hill settlements near Tatara (Hussain, 1991, p. 91).

Today, the Shalmani homeland stretches from Dabrai Kotah in the east to the Shalman Ghaikai (spur) in the west, with the Kabul River forming the northern boundary and the Landikotal Plateau lying to the south. Historically, prior to the permanent opening of the Khyber Pass in 1878, primary trade routes connecting Kabul and Peshawar traversed Shalmani and Mullagori territories, thereby enhancing their strategic and economic significance.

The Shalmanis are organised into three major clans: Halimzai, Kam Shalman, and Tarakzai. The Halimzai are subdivided into Ghunda Khel and Yousaf Khel, while the Kam Shalman branch consists of Haroon Kor and Amir Khan Kor. The Tarakzai are further divided into Hassan Kor, Wazir Kor, Wali Mohammad Kor, and Durma Kor. According to the 1998 national census, the population of the Shalmani tribe was recorded at 30,114 individuals.

Economically, the Shalmani territory is rich in resources, with deposits of marble, soapstone, limestone, and dolomite. While these mineral resources offer considerable potential for local development and economic empowerment, their exploitation has been limited by historical marginalisation and infrastructural constraints.

### **3.7.1.5 Stori Khel (also Suturi Khel or Sadoori Khel)**

A significant portion of the Stori/ Sturi Khel tribe (see Figure 2.1.4, Part II) is primarily located in Orakzai District, with a smaller population residing in the Bara Valley near Khajoori. The tribe became the subject of considerable attention following the Ganj incident of 1997, which involved the abduction of several men and women from the Ganj district of Peshawar city. Subsequently, reports have implicated specific individuals, notably the late Jan Stori Khel and his brother Dost, in incidents of kidnapping for ransom. As a result, the local administration has implemented a series of punitive measures, including a blockade targeting the affected area.

It is important to emphasise, however, that such criminal activities are associated with only a small segment of the tribe. The broader community has demonstrated cooperation with governmental authorities, particularly in efforts related to the eradication of poppy cultivation.

#### **A. Sethur and the Stori Khel: Linguistic Parallels and Tribal Memory**

The name Sethur appears briefly in the Hebrew Bible, specifically in Numbers 13:13, as one of the twelve scouts appointed by Moses to explore the land of Canaan. Sethur, identified as the son of Michael, represents the tribe of Asher, one of the twelve tribes of Israel. Beyond this brief mention, historical and genealogical records concerning Sethur remain sparse, and no archaeological data have yet surfaced to provide further biographical or tribal context. Nevertheless, the inclusion of Sethur among Israelite tribal representatives is notable for studies in biblical ethnography and the broader question of Israelite tribal dispersal.

In the field of modern ethnolinguistic research, an intriguing phonetic resemblance has been observed between the biblical "Sethur" and the Stori (also spelt Stoori or Sturi) Khel, a sub-clan of the Afridi tribe in the Khyber District of Pakistan. The Stori Khel, although one of the lesser-studied Pashtun tribal units, has long inhabited the strategic Tirah Valley and its environs. Historically associated with the Afridi tribal confederacy, they have contributed to the region's defence, commerce, and agrarian life across centuries. While the phonological similarity between "Sethur" and "Stori" may appear coincidental, oral traditions within the Stori Khel suggest a deeper origin narrative.

According to oral accounts preserved among Stori Khel elders, their lineage is believed to trace back to the Ten Lost Tribes of ancient Israel. While such oral traditions are difficult to verify through standard historiographical or genealogical methods, similar claims have been noted among other Pashtun groups, some of whom assert descent from the ancient Israelites. These assertions, though controversial and treated with caution in mainstream academia, find some resonance in historical claims found in Jewish, Islamic, and Christian traditions regarding the eastward migration of the "Bani Israel" (Children of Israel) following the Assyrian conquest in the late eighth century BCE, which ultimately led to their settlement in areas encompassing present-day Afghanistan and Pakistan.

To date, no direct genealogical or archaeological evidence conclusively links the biblical Sethur with the Stori Khel. Nevertheless, the enduring oral memory of Israelite origins within the tribe remains of anthropological significance. Oral histories, while not always verifiable, are integral to the formation of cultural identity and the transmission of collective memory across generations. In this instance, the convergence of linguistic resemblance (Sethur/Stori), geographic seclusion, and persistent oral tradition merits further scholarly attention.

Notable researchers, including Grierson (1915), Bellew (1891), and various contemporary genetic anthropologists, have occasionally addressed such connections within the broader context of Semitic-origin hypotheses for the Pashtun tribes. However, these claims continue to be debated due to the absence of verifiable archaeological or genetic continuity. The topic nonetheless offers a promising avenue for interdisciplinary research, combining textual exegesis, comparative linguistics, tribal anthropology, and oral historiography.

Although the association between Sethur and the Stori Khel remains speculative, it should not be entirely dismissed, especially in light of the tribe's oral claim to Israelite ancestry. Future research employing DNA analysis, comparative Semitic linguistics, and ethnoarchaeological survey techniques could provide greater clarity regarding the plausibility of these claims and expand our understanding of long-distance tribal migrations in antiquity.

### **3.7.2 The Socio-Political and Cultural Landscape of District Khyber: An Integrated Analysis**

District Khyber is distinguished by an intricate Synthesis of traditional tribal structures, collective assemblies (Jirga), the unwritten ethical code of Pashtunwali, robust oral traditions, complex language dynamics, religious pluralism, and a vibrant literary legacy (Ahmed, 1980, pp. 27-31; Barth, 1959, pp. 112-119; Lindholm, 1982, pp. 99-110; Spain, 1963, pp. 144-145; Nichols, 2020, p. 116). This Synthesis not only underpins social cohesion and identity but also mediates responses to external pressures, modernisation, and the preservation of intangible heritage (Assmann, 2011, pp. 12-19; Johnson & Lindholm, 2017, p. 46).

#### **3.7.2.1 Segmentary Tribal Structures and Social Order**

Khyber's tribal society operates through a hierarchical but segmentary kinship system. The qawm (tribe), such as Afridi, Shinwari, Mullagori, Stori Khel, and Shalmani, is the principal unit, providing a sense of enduring identity rooted in shared ancestry (Ahmed, 1980, pp. 18-24; Glatzer, 1998, p. 266; Spain, 1963, pp. 151-154). Each qawm is divided into khels (major clans), which further subdivide into plarina or kor (lineages or extended families), forming the basic unit of everyday cooperation, land tenure, and collective action (Caroe, 1958, pp. 173-174; Simmons, 1966, p. 72). Kinship is strictly agnatic, with social status, inheritance, and group affiliation transmitted through the male line (Ahmed, 1980, p. 14).

While the system is theoretically egalitarian, leadership roles (Maliks, Khans) are often contested and based on consensus, negotiation, and personal reputation rather than formal hierarchy (Nichols, 2020, p. 119; Spain, 1963, p. 157). Territoriality is paramount: each tribe, clan, and lineage maintain recognised rights over ilaqa or qalamro (territory), which are fiercely defended and central to tribal identity (Barth, 1959, p. 132; Glatzer, 1998, p. 272). The principle of tarboorwali (paternal cousin rivalry) creates both competition and the possibility for alliances, contributing to the dynamic balance of power within and between tribes (Ahmed, 1980, pp. 62-67).

#### **3.7.2.2 The Jirga System: Customary Governance and Conflict Resolution**

The jirga remains the institutional core of Pashtun governance, justice, and social regulation (Barth, 1959, pp. 126-129; Ahmed, 1980, pp. 72-76; Glatzer, 1998, pp. 273-

274). Jirgas are convened at multiple scales from resolving family disputes to adjudicating intertribal conflicts and negotiating with state authorities (International Crisis Group, 2006, p. 14; Tribal Governance Report, 2009, p. 35). Members are selected by informal consensus, based on age, wisdom, social reputation, and knowledge of *riwaj* (custom) and *Pashtunwali* (Ahmed, 1980, pp. 73-75; Rauf, 2011, p. 63).

Jirgas address a vast spectrum of issues:

- a) Land and water rights, honour (*nang*), blood feuds (*badal*), personal or collective grievances, management of communal resources, and the enforcement of customary moral norms (Nichols, 2020, p. 124; Lindholm, 1982, pp. 102-105).
- b) Punishments can include fines, social shaming, exclusion, or even expulsion from the community, all enforced through collective consensus rather than the apparatus of the state (Norwegian Refugee Council, 2013, p. 23; Spain, 1963, pp. 156-157).
- c) The jirga is also a venue for negotiation with external authorities, balancing tribal autonomy with evolving relations to the Pakistani state (Nichols, 2020, p. 143; Tribal Governance Report, 2009, pp. 39-41).

Modern challenges: While the jirga is lauded for accessibility, cultural legitimacy, and conflict mediation, it has been criticized for gender exclusion (women traditionally do not participate) and potential clashes with statutory law, especially concerning human rights and due process (Wimpelmann, 2017, pp. 70-73; Rauf, 2011, pp. 61-63).

### **3.7.2.3 Pashtunwali: The Code of Honour and Social Ethics**

*Pashtunwali* is the unwritten ethical code governing all spheres of Pashtun life, individual, familial, and collective (Ahmed, 1980, pp. 111-113; Boesen, 2000, pp. 310-312; Caroe, 1958, p. 154). Its core tenets include:

- a) *Melmastia* (hospitality): Welcoming and protecting guests, regardless of background or even enmity, as a sacred obligation (Spain, 1963, p. 160).
- b) *Nanawatai* (asylum): Granting sanctuary and mediation to any petitioner, reflecting mercy and communal responsibility (Ahmed, 1980, pp. 111-112).

- c) Badal (justice/ revenge): Pursuit of justice and redress for wrongs, central to tribal jurisprudence but also a cause of long-standing feuds (Lindholm, 1982, pp. 113-114; Barth, 1959, pp. 140-142).
- d) Nang (honour): Embodies integrity, courage, and the safeguarding of family and tribal reputation (Nichols, 2020, pp. 99-101).
- e) Sabat, turah, hewad, paighor, azadi: Loyalty, bravery, land, avoidance of shame, and love of freedom are all deeply valued (Boesen, 2000, p. 314; Rashid, 2000, pp. 36-38).

Pashtunwali functions both as a moral compass and a regulatory framework, defining virtues and vices, rights and duties, conflict, and resolution (Rahman, 2011, p. 224; Lindholm, 1982, p. 119). The emphasis on female honour (namus) and associated restrictions on women's public roles is both an enduring tradition and a source of contemporary debate (Rauf, 2011, pp. 65-68; Wimpelmann, 2017, p. 74).

#### **3.7.2.4 Oral Tradition and Cultural Memory: Mechanisms of Heritage Transmission**

In the absence of widespread historical literacy, oral tradition and cultural memory are foundational for the continuity of Khyber's heritage (Assmann, 2011, p. 37; McKenzie, 1965, p. 41; Ahmed, 1980, p. 143).

Forms of oral tradition include:

- a) Storytelling (qissay, dastan): Historical events, tribal origins, heroic epics, and moral tales are recounted at gatherings, especially in hujras (communal male guesthouses) (McKenzie, 1965, pp. 43-45; Anderson & Eggert, 2001, p. 53).
- b) Poetry (shayri): Pashto oral poetry features genres such as landai (two-line folk verse, often by women), charbeta (quatrain), ghazal (classical mystic lyric), and epic poems, with poets like Khushal Khan Khattak and Rahman Baba influencing collective consciousness (Rahman, 2002, pp. 11-13; Shinwari, 1982, pp. 9-10).
- c) Proverbs (mataluna): Condensed wisdom and values, frequently used in daily conversation and jirga deliberations (Rahman, 1996, p. 129).
- d) Genealogies (shajaray): Oral recitation of family trees, vital for land rights and social status (Barth, 1959, p. 148).

- e) Folk songs and music: Express emotions, commemorate events, and accompany rituals; traditional instruments include rubab and drums (Siddiqui, 2018, p. 67).
- f) Riway (customary law): Knowledge is passed orally, crucial for dispute resolution (Glatzer, 1998, p. 273).

Cultural memory is reinforced through commemorations, toponyms (place names), and ritual practices, anchoring community identity and shared historical consciousness (Assmann, 2011, p. 41; Barth, 1959, p. 139).

### **3.7.2.5 Linguistic Landscape**

The linguistic profile of District Khyber is dominated by Pashto in various dialects, with the Afridi and Shinwari tribes as principal speakers (Rahman, 1995, pp. 12-13; Bellew, 1891, p. 53). Other languages, Hindko, Urdu, and, historically, Persian and Arabic are present in specific contexts, such as trade, education, or religious scholarship (Allchin & Allchin, 1982, p. 287; Rahman, 1996, p. 130).

Pashto remains the primary medium for oral and written literature, social interaction, and identity formation (Siddiqui, 2018, p. 66). Proximity to the Afghan border has enabled limited exposure to Dari and cross-border linguistic influences (Shackle, 2015, p. 96).

### **3.7.2.6 Religious Composition and Spiritual Landscape**

Almost 98% of District Khyber's population identifies with the Sunni sect of Islam, with religious life centred on mosques, hujras, and Sufi shrines (Barth, 1959, p. 140; Ahmed, 1980, p. 177). Pre-Partition religious diversity included significant Hindu and Sikh communities, now reduced to a handful of families (Shackle, 2015, p. 91). Notable spiritual figures and shrines, such as Haji Gul Baba (Piro Khel), Hazrat Kakajee (Ashkhel), and Sahibzada Muhammad Sadiq Asnori, continue to play pivotal roles in communal life, with annual commemorations, pilgrimages, and healing rituals (Lindholm, 1982, p. 153; Siddiqui, 2018, pp. 93-95).

### **3.7.2.7 The Khyber School of Literature and Intellectual Legacy**

The rise of the Khyber School of Pashto literature has had a transformative impact on the region's literary milieu. Amir Hamza Khan Shinwari (1907–1994), celebrated as "Baba-e-Ghazal," was instrumental in forging a novel blend of romantic and Sufi

elements within Pashto poetry (Shinwari, 1982, pp. 6–7; Siddiqui, 2018, p. 101; Pashto Literary Journal, 1993, p. 43). Shinwari's influence extended from poetry and prose to radio drama and literary criticism. At the same time, his disciples institutionalised literary societies such as Bazm-e-Adab and Ulasi Adabi Jarga, nurturing subsequent generations of poets (Literary Society Records, 2007, p. 14).

A cadre of poets, Akram Farooq, Lalzada Nazer Shinwari, Khatir Afridi, Khyber Afridi, Murad Shinwari, Noor Muhammad Zigar, and others, broadened the movement's thematic scope, infusing Pashto literature with lyricism, mysticism, and regional identity (Siddiqui, 2018, p. 114; Pashto Literary Biographies, 2016, p. 52). The school's intellectual impact extended to prose, literary criticism, and modern semiotics, positioning it as both a guardian and innovator of cultural tradition (Rahman, 2011, p. 224; Pashto Literary Journal, 1993, p. 67).

### **3.7.2.8 Heritage Transmission and Social Continuity**

The intricate interplay of tribal structures, ethical codes, oral traditions, language, and literature ensures the intergenerational transmission of heritage in Khyber (Assmann, 2011, p. 49; Johnson & Lindholm, 2017, pp. 44-46).

- a) Oral genealogies reinforce identity formation, shared stories, and commemorative practices (Ahmed, 1980, p. 144).
- b) Conflict resolution and social cohesion rely on precedent and wisdom encoded in oral traditions and jirga decisions (Barth, 1959, pp. 140-141).
- c) Cultural resilience is maintained through adaptation to modernisation while safeguarding foundational values and traditions (Nichols, 2020, p. 150; Spain, 1963, pp. 159-160).

Modernisation, media exposure, and literacy are changing forms of heritage transmission, but oral tradition and collective memory remain powerful forces shaping the district's socio-political and cultural landscape (Rahman, 2011, pp. 230-231; Siddiqui, 2018, pp. 141-142).

## **3.8 Water Resources and Their Role in Ancient Settlement Distribution**

Water availability has historically served as the principal determinant of human settlement patterns in the semi-arid and mountainous regions of District Khyber



(Allchin & Allchin, 1982, p. 243; Dani, 2001, p. 85). The region's river systems, while limited in volume, have supported irrigation and habitation, dictating the location and sustainability of early settlements (Kenoyer, 1998, p. 58; Stein, 1930, p. 67). Recent archaeological surveys indicate a strong correlation between watercourses and site density, particularly in riverine zones (Khan, 2016, pp. 127-130). In District Khyber, the majority of the Archaeological sites are located near rivers or freshwater springs, especially in the Tirah valley, Bara.

### **3.8.1 Bara River**

The Bara River, which originates from the combined rivers of the Rajgal and Maidan valleys, formally emerges at Dwa Toi in central Tirah at the elevation of about 5,000 feet (Gazetteer of the Khyber Agency, 1921, p. 31). As the river flows eastward, descending to roughly 2,000 feet near Khojari, it passes between the Surghar Range to the north, which separates it from the Chora (Bazaar) Valley, and the Torghar or Zia-ud-Din Range to the south, which marks the boundary between Aka Khel and Orakzai territories. Eventually, the Bara River joins the Kabul River near Nisatta, after passing within two miles of Peshawar (Khan, 2013, p. 92).

Throughout its roughly 100-mile course, the Bara River has played a crucial military and agricultural role. In antiquity and the medieval era, its consistent but modest flow provided essential irrigation for both banks, enabling sustained agriculture and settlement (Stein, 1930, p. 110). British colonial engineering records cite the construction of a closed masonry flume above Fort Bara to divert water for Peshawar's needs (Gazetteer of the Khyber Agency, 1921, p. 32). A modern weir built in 1988 near Ilm Gudar further supports agriculture (Irrigation Department KP, 1990, p. 53). Despite an average discharge of only 155 cubic feet per second, seasonal rains in the Tirah Hills periodically swell the river, carrying fertile silt that renews valley soils (Khan, 2016, p. 133). These qualities have made the Bara River a persistent axis for both ancient and contemporary settlement.

### **3.8.2 Chora River**

Chora River streams eastward and northeastward along the northern flank of the Surghar Range, eventually entering the Peshawar plain and joining the Khyber stream near Mathra Thana (Dani, 2001, p. 112). Unlike the Bara, the Chora River is not a strong perennial stream and provides limited water resources to the Bazaar Valley.

While Cheena and a few localities enjoy abundant year-round water, most villages depend on rain-fed ponds and seasonal runoff, constraining agricultural output and population density (Khan, 2016, p. 136).

Archaeological and ethnographic data reveal that these hydrological differences shaped habitation patterns: the Bara River valley displays denser, long-term settlement, whereas the Chora basin is characterised by smaller, often transhumant, or temporary, communities (Allchin & Allchin, 1982, p. 244; Kenoyer, 1998, p. 59). Seasonal and geographic variation in water availability thus determined not only economic opportunity but also the permanence and distribution of communities in District Khyber.

### **3.8.3 Famous Places**

District Khyber features numerous sites of cultural, historical, and ecological importance, such as Bagh in Maidan, Haider Kandao and Tarkhokas in Bar Qamber Khel, Nahqi in Malikdin Khel, Tora Wela and Bokar in Zakha Khel, Spin Drang and Ghaibi Nika in Sipah, Gahri and Saukh in Kamarkhel, Mustak in Aka Khel, Shinkamar in Ziauddin Zakha Khel, Barki in Stori Khel, and Lakar Baba in Sipah (Gazetteer of the Khyber Agency, 1921, p. 47). Many of these locations align with ancient pathways or settlements referenced in oral traditions and local histories (Ahmed, 1980, p. 128).

### **3.8.4 Famous Peaks**

Magnificent mountains and peaks such as Laka'sar, Narai'ghar, Takhta'kai, Tor'ghar, Gan'jai Morgha, Ro'taz, Lu'zaka, Sanda'pal, Soor'Ghar, and Ma'lai Ghar dominate the landscape of the region. These elevations, ranging from 6,000 to 10,000 feet, function not only as natural barriers and climate regulators but have also historically delineated tribal boundaries and served as critical strategic vantage points (Caroe, 1958, p. 174; Dani, 2001, p. 71). Additionally, several of these peaks are associated with seasonal festivities or possess spiritual significance for local communities (Siddiqui, 2018, p. 98).

### **3.8.5 Flora and Fauna**

The Khyber's hills are generally rocky, bare, and steep; vegetative cover has suffered from centuries of overgrazing and woodcutting, leaving only scattered shrubs and bushes that nevertheless provide significant firewood and pasture (Wazir, 2010, p. 210).

In Tirah, remnants of forest persist, with species such as deodar cedar (*Cedrus deodarus*), *Abies webbiana*, *Prosopis*, *Kaempferia*, *Zizyphus nummularia*, *Monothea buxifolia*, *Pinus excelsa* (blue pine), oak, *Acacia nilotica* (kikar), fir, spruce, *Pinus gerardiana* (chalthoza pine), walnut, chestnut, *Acacia modesta* (palosa), *Morus alba/nigra* (mulberry), *Tamarix dioica*, *Dalbergia sissoo* (shewa), *Ficus religiosa* (pipal), *Olea cuspidata*, and *Dodonea viscosa* (Wazir, 2010, p. 214; Khan, 2016, p. 142).

The diversity of fruit plants in Tirah, including apple, pear, apricot, pomegranate, grapes, mulberry, and walnut, has contributed to subsistence agriculture and local trade networks (Dani, 2001, p. 113).

Wildlife in the region, primarily concentrated in the Tirah Valley, comprises mountain sheep, black bear (*Ursus arctos*), leopard (*Panthera pardus*), jackal (*Canis aureus*), hyena (*Hyaena hyaena*), fox (*Vulpes bengalensis*), wolf, porcupine (*Hystrix indica*), mongoose (*Herpestes edwardsii*), monkey, chukor (*Caccabis chukar*), and see-see partridge (*Ammoperdix bouhami*), among other species (Gazetteer of the North West Frontier, 1919, p. 55). These species reflect both the ecological wealth and conservation challenges faced by the region, particularly considering habitat loss and population pressures (Wazir, 2010, p. 219; WWF Pakistan, 2015, p. 39).

## CHAPTER-IV

### 4 HISTORY OF KHYBER

#### 4.1 Historical Overview

Khyber Pass is located at the crossroads of South and Central Asia, and has for millennia functioned as one of the world's most iconic and strategically significant mountain corridors, shaping the destinies of empires and civilizations alike (Caroe, 1958, pp. 3-4; Dani, 2001, p. 52; Spain, 1963, p. 22). From antiquity to the present, it has served not only as the principal gateway between the Indian subcontinent and the highlands of Central-Asia, but also as a fulcrum of cultural integration, military campaigns, and economic exchange (Ali, 2021, p. 55; Allchin & Allchin, 1982, p. 244; Wink, 1991, p. 146). Historians and travelers, ranging from James W. Spain, who observed that "*history hangs heavy on the Khyber*" (Spain, 1963, p. 22), to Lowell Thomas, who famously described it as "*a valley of sudden death*" (quoted in Dani, 2001, p. 63), have underscored its reputation as both a site of grandeur and transformation. The Pass has witnessed the advance of Persian satraps (Vogelsang, 2002, pp. 78-80), the armies of Alexander the Great (Allchin & Allchin, 1982, pp. 160-163), and successive waves of conquerors and migrants, becoming a stage for the movement of goods, ideas, and religions, including Buddhism and Islam as well as for the emergence of complex social traditions (Beal, 1884, pp. 104-106; Dani, 2001, pp. 130-132; Kenoyer, 1998, pp. 158-159).

In the present day, the region encompassing the Khyber Pass is administratively defined as District Khyber, as mentioned above, which was formerly part of Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas (Ali, 2021, p. 55). Encompassing an area of 2,576 square kilometres and home to a population exceeding half a million, the district is administratively divided into Bara, Jamrud, and Landikotal tehsils (Government of Pakistan, 2012, p. 14). Historically, its social structure has been shaped by prominent tribal affiliations, most notably the Afridi, along with the Shinwari, Shalmani, Mullagori, and Stori Khel, who have traditionally governed their affairs through customary laws (Pakhtunwali) and the jirga system (Caroe, 1958, pp. 114-118; Barth, 1959, pp. 15-17; Ahmed, 1980, p. 24). The region retained considerable political autonomy until recent constitutional reforms; even after administrative integration, traditional values of honour, hospitality, and collective decision-making continue to

play a significant role in local society (Ali, 2021, p. 55; Norwegian Refugee Council, 2013, p. 9).

Economically, the district faces persistent challenges due to its mountainous terrain, limited agricultural resources, and reliance on cross-border trade (Gazetteer of the Khyber District, 1932, pp. 121-141). Development programs, infrastructure investments, and security initiatives, particularly those implemented by the Pakistan Army, continue to shape its modern trajectory (International Crisis Group, 2018, p. 3). However, much of District Khyber retains a complex interplay between state authority and local tribal governance, preserving a distinctive cultural and administrative identity (Ali, 2021, p. 55; Spain, 1963, p. 34).

The Khyber Pass region has an unparalleled role in world history, serving not only as a military route and cultural crossroads but also as a living repository of civilizational memory (Dani, 2001, pp. 52-53; Kenoyer, 1998, p. 159). The archaeological record of Khyber further attests to its enduring significance, a theme that will be explored in depth in the following sections of this chapter (Dani, 1967, pp. 47-60; pp. 2-3).

#### **4.1.1 The Historical Ambiguity Regarding Direct Political Control over Khyber**

Despite its pivotal role as a mountainous corridor bridging Central and South Asia, the Khyber region remains enshrouded in ambiguity concerning the nature and extent of direct political control exercised by major empires. Both archaeological and textual evidence confirm the movement of armies, traders, monks, and migrating tribes, including Achaemenid, Greek, Mauryan, Kushan, Ghaznavid, and Mughal forces, through this terrain. However, sustained imperial administration within the Khyber is only sporadically attested and remains poorly understood (Bopearachchi, 1998, pp. 17-19; Dani, 1969, pp. 34-36).

This historiographical uncertainty has contributed to the frequent marginalisation of Khyber in broader South and Central-Asian narratives. The region is often depicted as a transient passage rather than acknowledged as a discrete administrative or cultural entity possessing its political dynamics (Pieper, 2021, pp. 21-22). Few studies have systematically considered the possibility that Khyber may have supported semi-autonomous polities or locally governed territories, which functioned independently or as loosely affiliated frontier zones (Erdosy, 1995, p. 122).

Moreover, prevailing historical frameworks seldom integrate the region's rich oral traditions, tribal institutions, and material culture with mainstream interpretations of imperial power and state formation. The underrepresentation of Khyber in systematic archaeological research further perpetuates this ambiguity; compared to neighbouring Gandhāra or the Peshawar Valley, Khyber has experienced only sporadic and limited field investigation, resulting in the neglect of monumental sites such as the Shpolā stupa and Jamrud Buddhist complexes (Olivieri, 1996, p. 29).

This thesis aims to address these historiographical gaps by synthesising archaeological, numismatic, architectural, and oral sources to reassess the political and cultural status of historical Khyber critically. In particular, interrogates why successive empires may have preferred indirect governance through tribal intermediaries and endeavours to reposition Khyber not merely as a corridor of conquest, but as a frontier endowed with its historical agency, complexity, and systems of authority (Pieper, 2021, pp. 21-22).

#### **4.1.2 Importance of Archaeological Evidence in Reconstructing the Region's Complex History Beyond Textual Sources**

Archaeological evidence remains indispensable for reconstructing the historical trajectory of District Khyber, a region sharply distinguished from neighbouring areas such as Taxila or Swat by the near-absence of continuous written sources or monumental inscriptions (Rosenfield, 1999, pp. 44-46). In this context, the historical narrative of Khyber is fundamentally anchored in the material record, coins, ceramics, architectural fragments, sculptures, and religious objects, which together provide the primary means for documenting long-term economic structures, social transformations, and patterns of cultural interaction.

Significant finds, notably the recently discovered Gandhāran gold repoussé panel depicting the Buddha's Mahābhiniṣkramaṇa at Jamrud, illuminate a once-vibrant Buddhist artistic tradition within Khyber. Such discoveries not only fill critical gaps in the religious history of the region but also challenge longstanding scholarly omissions (Pieper, 2021, p. 155; Zahir, 2016, p. 15). Numismatic materials, spanning from Achaemenid and Indo-Greek issues to Kushan and Hindu Shahi coinages, offer not merely a relative chronological framework but also rich insights into Khyber's shifting political affiliations and its integration into wider South and Central-Asian economic spheres (Bopearachchi, 2007, pp. 298-302).

Architectural remains, ranging from stupas and monasteries to fortified settlements, further elucidate processes of urbanisation, state formation, and religious transformation (Olivieri, 1996, p. 32; Rosenfield, 1999, p. 78). While epigraphic finds are infrequent, their occasional discovery yields essential data on language, administration, and systems of patronage. In the absence of inscriptions, the typological and stylistic study of artefacts remains critical for establishing robust chronological and cultural frameworks (Falk, 2006, pp. 67-69).

Thus, within Khyber, archaeology is not simply supplementary to historical inquiry but is foundational, providing an evidence-driven corrective to narratives predominantly shaped by colonial or external viewpoints. This approach enables the integration of indigenous voices, oral traditions, and previously neglected historical trajectories into the broader discourse of South-Asian history (Zahir, 2016, pp. 2-3; Erdosy, 1995, p. 119). Ultimately, it is only through the systematic and critical analysis of material culture that Khyber's significance as a crossroads of civilisation can be comprehensively understood (Renfrew & Bahn, 2016, p. 132).

#### **4.1.3 Brief Historiography: Review of Previous Scholarship and Identification of Research Gaps**

As detailed in Chapter 2 ("Previous Studies and Explorations in Khyber"), the historiography of the region is characterised by early yet limited documentation provided by colonial-era travellers and antiquarians. Notable figures such as William Moorcroft, George Trebeck, Claude Auguste Court, and Alexander Burnes offered brief, often speculative accounts during the early nineteenth century, primarily focusing on prominent monuments like the Shpola and Ali Masjid stupas (Marshall, 1951, p. 9; Dani, 1969, pp. 40-42). While these travelogues introduced a preliminary archaeological awareness of the Khyber Pass, their observations remained superficial and were seldom followed by systematic scholarly investigation.

Despite the emergence of scientific archaeology in adjacent regions such as Taxila, Charsadda, and Swat, pioneered by Sir John Marshall, Mortimer Wheeler, and Ahmad Hasan Dani, District Khyber was notably excluded from institutional research priorities (Marshall, 1951, p. 12; Dani, 1969, p. 53). This marginalisation was compounded by Khyber's enduring reputation as a volatile tribal or military frontier, further discouraging sustained archaeological engagement and formal fieldwork.

Despite the formation of the Archaeological Survey of India and, later, the Department of Archaeology in Pakistan, District Khyber remained largely uninvestigated. Reports and observations by officials, including those from the Frontier Circle in the early twentieth century, did not lead to thorough excavations or systematic documentation of archaeological sites (Olivieri, 1996, p. 30). Consequently, the region still lacks published stratigraphic surveys and detailed excavations, leaving baseline data such as cultural sequences, chronological frameworks, and architectural typologies absent. This deficiency has fundamentally hindered a holistic understanding of the region's Buddhist, Kushan, and pre-Islamic cultural transitions.

The resulting academic neglect has led to Khyber being almost entirely omitted from syntheses of Gandhāran art and broader South-Asian historical narratives (Rosenfield, 1999, p. 19). Moreover, the lack of scholarly attention has exacerbated the risks of unrecorded site destruction, illicit excavations, and irreversible loss of cultural heritage.

In response to these critical lacunae, the present study employs new field investigations and an interdisciplinary methodological framework to reposition Khyber as a vital historical and cultural landscape within the broader Gandhāran and South-Asian context (Pieper, 2021, p. 10). By integrating fresh archaeological data with critical historiographical analysis, this research aims to restore Khyber to its rightful place in the region's cultural and historical discourse.

#### **4.1.4 Research Problems in Construction and the Absence of History and Methodological Framework: Focus on Coins, Material Culture, Inscriptions, Architecture, and Oral Traditions as Historical Sources**

The reconstruction of District Khyber's history is beset by several core research problems, chief among them the near-absence of sustained textual documentation, monumental inscriptions, and continuous institutional research. This lack of evidence has resulted in the marginalisation of Khyber within broader South and Central-Asian historiography, as well as persistent scholarly uncertainty regarding its cultural and political development (Rosenfield, 1999, pp. 44-46; Pieper, 2021, pp. 21-22).

Specific history-oriented problems addressed in this chapter include:



1. The predominance of material culture over written records complicates efforts to establish a coherent historical chronology and understand processes of state formation, religious transformation, and trade integration.
2. The fragmentary and often contextless nature of numismatic, architectural, and artefact discoveries poses significant challenges for cultural attribution and dating.
3. The underutilization of oral traditions and ethnographic accounts, which, despite their value, have rarely been systematically incorporated into the reconstruction of local history.

To address these challenges, this study adopts an interdisciplinary methodological framework. Stratigraphic analysis, typological classification, numismatic study, architectural survey, epigraphic analysis, and critical engagement with oral traditions are integrated to form a comprehensive evidentiary base (Renfrew & Bahn, 2016, pp. 118-122; Falk, 2006, p. 75). Coins are examined both as chronological markers and as indicators of economic and political affiliation (Bopearachchi, 2007, p. 299). Material culture, including ceramics, sculptures, and artefacts, is analysed using comparative typology and, where possible, scientific dating methods. Inscriptions and epigraphic fragments are contextualised through palaeographic study; where direct evidence is lacking, stylistic and iconographic analysis is employed.

Architectural remains, stupas, fortifications, and monastic complexes are mapped and interpreted about regional and supraregional architectural trends. Oral traditions and ethnographic accounts are critically assessed as sources of local historical memory, supplementing gaps left by the archaeological and written records.

By deploying this interdisciplinary methodology, the study can address longstanding historiographical gaps and challenge the prevailing narrative of Khyber's marginality, repositioning it as a region of substantial historical agency and cultural complexity.

#### **4.2 Prehistoric History: Early Human Presence and Symbolic Landscapes in Khyber**

The understanding of Khyber District's prehistoric past has been significantly advanced through recent systematic documentation and scientific investigation of archaeological sites, most notably the Nanawar Prehistoric Cave (KH-69) located in Mani Khel Dara, Tirah Valley. This site stands as an archaeological landmark for the region and provides critical insights into the earliest phases of human adaptation along the southern flanks

of the Hindu Kush (Fosse, 2005, p. 440). The geological complexity of Nanawar Cave, extending over 200+ meters and supporting specialised fauna, is paralleled by an equally intricate record of human occupation. Evidence includes dense concentrations of Palaeolithic and Mesolithic stone tools, hand axes, scrapers, and flint implements, clustered at the cave's entrances and main chambers, indicating long-term use by prehistoric hunter-gatherers for seasonal shelter, subsistence, and ritual activity.

Despite the absence of stratified prehistoric burials, a characteristic common to much of the northwestern sub-Himalayan region, the present researcher has synthesised surface assemblages and cave investigations to reconstruct diverse prehistoric lifeways. Oral traditions and the archaeological context surrounding Nanawar Cave suggest that it retained spiritual significance over multiple eras, including the Kushan period, when Buddhist practitioners may have repurposed the cave as a locus for meditation. The continued use of the cave's environs for non-Muslim burial into the historic period underscores a persistent layering of ritual landscapes and collective memory (Mukherjee, 1991, p. 45; Fosse, 2005, p. 440).

Further enrichment of this archaeological narrative comes from discoveries at Jamrud, where the Chottra Rock Engraving (KH-02) and Sher Bridge Petroglyphs (KH-03) display deeply incised motifs of archers, wild caprids, geometric forms, and handprints. These images, strategically distributed along ancient transit routes, most likely served as territorial markers or ritual sites, reflecting complex symbolic and social behaviours among early populations (Zahir, 2016, pp. 1-3). Similarly, the rock art at Lora Miana, with depictions of a human archer, jackal, and ibex, provides an important window into prehistoric artistic expression, social identity, and the intricate relationship between humans and their environment.

### **4.3 Protohistoric Transformation: The Gandhāra Grave Culture**

The earliest phases of human occupation in the Khyber district are attested by a rich record of lithic traditions, symbolic rock art, and cave sites, which together define the district's initial human presence. These prehistoric communities, characterised by seasonal movement and the repeated use of symbolic landscapes such as caves and engraved rocks, established the deep temporal roots of human adaptation in the region (Fosse, 2005, p. 440; Zahir, 2016, pp. 1-3; Soni & Soni, 2012, pp. 6-18).

As the Holocene progressed, new patterns of human settlement and technological development began to emerge. However, clear evidence for a distinct Chalcolithic or Bronze Age horizon in Khyber remains limited when compared to neighbouring regions such as the Indus Valley and northern Baluchistan (Kenoyer, 1998, pp. 162-164; Possehl, 2002, pp. 34, 133). In Khyber, the continuity and repurposing of symbolic sites, caves, and rock art into the Neolithic and later periods suggest the persistence of ritual practices, even as local communities became increasingly involved in early forms of agriculture, craft production, and trade. This cultural layering, visible in both the archaeological and ethnographic record, underpins the region's long-term historical development.

A profound transformation is marked during the early Iron Age, most vividly captured in the discoveries associated with the Gandhāra Grave Culture (GGC), a name given by Prof. Dr. Dani (Dani, 1992, p. 395) to the protohistoric cemeteries that were first noted in an area approximately matchly corresponding to ancient Gandhara, the easternmost satrapy or province of the Achaemenid Empire. Stacul (1987), however, prefers to refer to the sites as protohistoric or pre-Buddhist cemeteries (Young, 2002, pp. 647-648), which signifies a pivotal chapter in Khyber's protohistoric and early historic landscape. The monumental stone-lined cist grave uncovered at Shahkas in Jamrud, capped with a limestone slab and accompanied by an array of grave goods, provides compelling evidence for the emergence of new mortuary and social traditions that integrated Khyber with broader currents sweeping across the northwest of South Asia (Zahir, 2016, pp. 12-13).

The cremation deposits (See. 5.1.1.2), ceremonial vessels, spindle whorls, and stone beads found in these contexts attest not only to changing social and religious attitudes but also demonstrate that the people of Khyber were active participants in broader mortuary traditions of the early Iron Age. Unlike the preceding, more dispersed hunter-gatherer societies, these communities left material traces indicating growing social stratification, ritual investment, and regional connectivity. Ceramics and artefacts from Shahkas exhibit clear technological and stylistic affiliations with the celebrated GGC cemeteries of Swat and Dir. However, their presence south of the traditional GGC heartland extends the known distribution of this cultural complex and challenges earlier notions of rigid cultural boundaries between Khyber and the north.

Elsewhere in Khyber, the archaeological record demonstrates considerable diversity and complexity. At Omari Killi in Landi Kotal, painted ceramics and large storage jars reflect an environment of cultural borrowing and innovation, blending Harappan, GGC, and even older Baluchistan ceramic traditions. However, the absence of cist or cremation burials here suggests the persistence of distinct local practices, shaped by geography, ecology, or uneven cultural penetration. In the Bara region, the lack of protohistoric graves or diagnostic ceramics is itself significant, indicating ecological or cultural boundaries that limited the spread of GGC traditions within the district. This diversity underscores that Khyber's early history is best understood as a patchwork of social responses and historical experiences, rather than a single linear trajectory.

It is important to note that archaeological evidence from Landi Kotal's Omari Camp and adjacent shelters also contributes to this protohistoric narrative. Discoveries of painted ceramics, terracotta figurines, and a distinctive bronze antelope connect Khyber technologically and iconographically to both the Indus Valley and Central-Asian steppe traditions (Kenoyer, 1998, pp. 162-164; Possehl, 2002, pp. 34, 133). Although the archaeological landscape of Bara remains less explored, sites such as Bazar Zakhakhel and a series of caves and lithic scatters point to enduring human mobility, symbolic activity, and social complexity throughout the district.

Comparative analysis positions Khyber's protohistoric and early historical sequences in dialogue with the Soan Valley and Siwalik regions, whose Soanian lithic industries exhibit high variability, choppers, flake tools, and microliths, often found in unstratified contexts (Soni & Soni, 2012, pp. 6-18). Recent discoveries along the Satluj and Sirsa rivers reveal the persistence of such toolkits within post-urban Harappan environments, highlighting themes of technological conservatism, adaptation, and regional exchange echoed in Khyber's record (Soni & Soni, 2012, p. 13).

Despite persistent challenges, including a lack of stratified burials and a reliance on surface and open-air site data, the prehistoric and protohistoric landscapes of Khyber are characterised by the continuity and transformation of symbolic sites, caves, and rock art, which continued to acquire sacred and practical meanings well into the historic and Buddhist periods. Such cultural layering is now recognised as a central feature of the region's long-term development.

In sum, the cumulative archaeological evidence positions Khyber as a vibrant frontier of early human adaptation, technological innovation, and social complexity, contradicting earlier perceptions of the region as marginal or peripheral. Prospective multidisciplinary excavations at sites such as Nanawar Cave, in collaboration with the University of Peshawar and international partners, hold significant promise for refining chronological frameworks and paleoenvironmental reconstructions, embedding Khyber more fully within the comparative study of South and Central-Asian prehistory (Zahir, 2016, pp. 1-3; Fosse, 2005, p. 440; Soni & Soni, 2012, pp. 6-18).

Collectively, these developments illuminate a Khyber that was much more than a corridor for later conquerors and traders. Long before the emergence of historical states, the people of Khyber were agents of ritual innovation, technological diffusion, and population movement, shaping the region's social landscape and contributing to the formation of new cultural horizons in early South Asia (Zahir, 2016, pp. 12-13). This protohistoric foundation set the stage for subsequent waves of change, whether through the rise of urban centres, the advent of coinage and state administration, or the religious transformations that would later leave their imprint on Khyber's evolving material and spiritual worlds.

#### **4.4 The Achaemenian Encounter: Imperial Integration and Cultural Hybridity in Khyber**

The Achaemenid Empire marked a decisive shift in the district's historical trajectory. The integration of Khyber into the Persian imperial system is most vividly attested in Jamrud, where a series of numismatic discoveries at Ali Masjid and Sur Kamar, including gold darics and "King and Wreath" types securely attributable to Darius I and Artaxerxes II offer tangible proof of the district's economic and administrative connection to the Achaemenid world (Carradice, 1987, p. 24). These coins, frequently found in stratified association with pre-Alexandrian Greek and local ceramics, are not mere objects of trade but symbols of fiscal reform, satrapal authority, and standardised imperial administration.

Beyond numismatics, Jamrud yields further insight into Persian cultural presence with the extraordinary gold goblet from Begyari village, its dynamic gryphon motifs and courtly iconography directly echoing elite Achaemenid metalwork from Persepolis and Susa (Tilia, 1972; Boardman, 2000, pp. 174-175). The arrival of such luxury objects in

Khyber, far from the imperial heartland, underscores the deep entanglement of local elites in Persian courtly and ceremonial life. At the same time, their subtle stylistic echoes of earlier Mediterranean forms reveal the cosmopolitan currents flowing through the empire's eastern corridors.

The reach of Achaemenid material culture is further extended by discoveries in Bara, where gold vessels, a rhyton with ibex protome, and a dispersed hoard from Srawela all testify to the circulation of luxury goods, artistic motifs, and imperial iconography into the Tirah Valley. The Srawela assemblage, featuring vases, rhyta, animal figurines, and jewellery adorned with fluting, lozenge patterns, and granulation, mirrors the technical and artistic repertoire of Achaemenid royal tombs. However, their recovery in a frontier zone speaks to the adaptation of imperial models in diverse contexts (Curtis & Tallis, 2005, pp. 118-120). The Mundi Kas rhyton, with its garnet inlay and hallmark Achaemenid form, encapsulates this cross-cultural movement of objects and ideas.

However, the evidence is not uniform across the district. In Landi Kotal, the absence of authenticated Achaemenian artefacts is itself historically significant, suggesting either gaps in archaeological survey, a lighter imperial footprint, or distinct local dynamics. The uneven distribution of Achaemenid material thus prompts new questions about the mechanisms of imperial integration and the regional articulation of power, logistics, and cultural exchange.

These discoveries must also be viewed through the methodological challenges of the region. Many artefacts from Bara and parts of Jamrud lack a secure archaeological context due to looting or accidental discovery, complicating precise historical reconstruction. Nevertheless, comparative art history, typological analysis, and especially numismatic study enable the construction of a relative chronology and a mapping of imperial reach (Carradice, 1987, p. 24). While the absence of architectural remains, Aramaic epigraphy, or seals in Khyber contrasts with better-documented Persian centers like Taxila or Kandahār (Allchin, 1995, p. 131; Bernard, 1987, pp. 188-189), the district's assemblage reveals a pattern of selective adoption and creative fusion, a hallmark of frontier societies negotiating between imperial and indigenous traditions.

Indeed, Khyber's Achaemenid-period finds align with the wider Persian imperial zone extending from Gandhāra to Bactria and the Punjab, where hybrid Greco-Persian

sealings, administrative artefacts, and the spread of Kharoṣṭhī script from Aramaic reflect a web of cultural translation and local agency (Callieri, 1996). The presence of locally made seals and elite objects in Khyber speaks not only to the penetration of Persian authority but also to the ability of local actors to participate in and subtly reshape imperial culture.

In sum, the material record from Jamrud and Bara, juxtaposed with the negative evidence from Landi Kotal, positions Khyber at the intersection of Achaemenid governance, economic flows, and the circulation of luxury and prestige goods. The finds reveal a district not simply acted upon by empire, but actively engaged in processes of hybridisation, resistance, and adaptation. Looking ahead, only systematic excavation and the application of scientific analyses (metallurgical, residue, and isotopic studies) will fully clarify the nuances of Persian presence in Khyber and its legacy for the region's subsequent historical developments. Until then, the discoveries from this period stand as markers of both integration and creative negotiation, a testament to Khyber's enduring role as a vital frontier in the ancient world.

#### **4.5 Greek Corridors: Early Hellenic Presence and Networks in the Khyber**

The Persian imperial influence waned, and new horizons opened to the west. The Khyber region emerged as a significant stage for early Greek contact and connectivity, centuries before Alexander's celebrated campaigns. Nowhere is this more apparent than in Jamrud, where a diverse and meticulously documented assemblage of Greek coins, ranging from Archaic and Classical to early Hellenistic types, attests to longstanding networks of movement, trade, and symbolic exchange (Bopearachchi, 1991, p. 44).

The Jamrud coins, recovered independently across multiple sites near the Khyber Pass, include a rare silver stater of Siris (Thrace/Macedon, 5th c. BCE), Athenian tetradrachms and drachms bearing the iconic Athena/owl motif, and a Seleucid tetradrachm of Seleucus I Nicator depicting Zeus and Athena in a chariot drawn by elephants. The latter, with its fusion of Mediterranean and Asian iconography, vividly demonstrates the cultural adaptation and reach of Greek symbolism into the eastern Hellenistic world (Houghton & Lorber, 2002, pp. 33-34). The coins' technical precision, reflected in flan size, metrology, and die artistry, underscores their origin in major Mediterranean mints. At the same time, their persistence in Khyber reveals active

corridors of trade, military movement, and possible mercenary settlement, predating the Hellenistic monarchies of Bactria and India (SNG Copenhagen 31).

These finds gain added significance when placed within their broader cultural and historical context. Classical motifs, Athena, Heracles, and Zeus are statements of both civic identity and royal legitimacy, with the Seleucid use of elephants and anchor motifs further reflecting the adaptation of Greek visual language to the realities of the eastern satrapies. The resonance of such images with coin and art finds from Gandhāran sites like Taxila and Charsadda situates the Khyber Pass at the very heart of early Mediterranean and South-Asian interaction (Marshall, 1951, pp. 102-106; Allchin & Allchin, 1982, pp. 200-202).

Literary sources further support this material evidence: writers such as Megasthenes, cited in later Greek accounts, reported Greek-speaking communities and mercenary groups in Gandhara well before Alexander, with "Spartemes" possibly derived from Laconian resettlements under Achaemenid rule (McCrindle, 1877, p. 109; Karttunen, 1997, pp. 45-47). The Jamrud coin finds materially corroborate such textual traditions, indicating either episodic Greek settlement, continuous migration, or the employment of Greek soldiers by local or Persian elites. Their distribution beyond direct Achaemenid administrative centres signals the broader permeability of Khyber's frontiers and the cosmopolitan texture of its history.

Notably, the absence of comparable Greek finds in Landi Kotal and Bara, whether due to later site disturbance, survey bias, or genuine differences in contact, emphasises the micro-regional dynamics of ancient exchange. Such "negative evidence" is itself analytically valuable, reminding us that the Greek impact in Khyber, while real, was both focused and episodic, not uniformly distributed across the district.

In historical perspective, these coin finds are neither accidental losses nor mere curiosities. Their metrological and iconographic sophistication, and their recovery alongside Achaemenid and Mauryan material, underscore a pattern of deep economic, military, and symbolic integration between the Mediterranean and northwest South Asia well before the rise of the Hellenistic kingdoms. They reveal the permeability of ethnic and imperial boundaries and the early hybridisation of artistic and monetary forms that would become the hallmark of Gandhāran culture (Bopearachchi, 1991, p. 29; Mitchiner, 1975, pp. 98-100).



While the current Greek coin finds from Jamrud lack a full stratified archaeological context, their detailed typological and metrological analysis, corroborated by comparisons with major museum collections, provides a secure chronological and cultural anchor for understanding Khyber's place in early Hellenic-South-Asian interactions. These objects, and the networks they represent, testify to the cosmopolitan and connective history of the Khyber corridor at the dawn of the classical age. Ongoing and future excavations are essential for further clarifying the extent, character, and chronology of this Greek presence. However, the existing material already situates Khyber at the forefront of contemporary debates on early globalisation and cultural hybridisation.

#### **4.6 Forging Empires and Economies: The Pre-Mauryan and Mauryan Ages in Khyber**

As the cosmopolitan networks of the Achaemenian and early Greek eras receded, Khyber's history entered a critical phase marked by monetary innovation, economic transformation, and the first direct engagement with South Asia's imperial traditions. The Pre-Mauryan period (c. 600-322 BCE) emerges most strikingly from the discovery and scientific analysis of punch-marked coin hoards across Landi Kotal and Bara (Sharma, 1960, pp. 80-81). Cast copper coins along with punch marked coins are the earliest examples of coinage in India, archaeologist G. R. Sharma based on his analysis from Kausambi dates them to pre Punched Marked Coins (PMC) era between 855 and 815 BC on the basis of obtaining them from pre NBPW period (Sharma, 1960, pp. 80-81). These hoards, notably at Ash Khel, Kam Shilman, Alam Khel, and Mada Khel, decisively expand the known boundaries of India's earliest coinage, pushing the circulation of punch-marked karshapanas far into the northwest, well beyond the Magadhan core (Gupta, 1951, pp. 12-23; Cribb, 1983, pp. 96-100).

At Ash Khel, the typological variety and transitional forms of the coins, irregular silver planchets bearing five to ten distinct symbols, overstruck "series IV on III" types, and rare double-punched issues, highlight both the technological dynamism and the evolving economic interactions of the region (Gupta, 1951, p. 12; Tye, 2006, pp. 167-170). The Kam Shilman hoard further reveals this complexity: classic Magadhan "five-punch" coins are found alongside exceptionally rare overstrikes, suggesting a vibrant culture of monetary innovation and local revalidation (Hardaker, 2004, p. 183).

Equally remarkable is the Alam Khel hoard in Bara, featuring "bent bar" shatamanas, the earliest Indian silver coinage, closely modelled on Achaemenid siglos standards. These objects directly reflect the fiscal reforms and economic models of the Persian satrapies, illustrating how imperial policies were adapted and localised in frontier contexts (Cribb, 1983, p. 96; Handa, 2000, pp. 517-519). The discovery of fractional denominations (e.g., 1/16 or 1/32 shatamana), among the rarest in South Asia, further underscores the sophistication and deep integration of Khyber's early economy (Bopearachchi, 1998, p. 36).

The Mada Khel hoard, with Mauryan-type silver karshapanas, stamped with sun, cornucopia, and Magadhan symbols, often bearing banker's marks, signals both the extension of imperial monetary policy and the region's participation in the networks of official currency circulation (Gupta, 1951, pp. 23-24; Rajgor 540-545 var.). Notably, while no minting workshops or die production sites have yet been identified in Khyber, the diversity and number of punch-marked coins point to the existence of active and regionally distinct systems of coin use and validation.

Comparative patterns from Gandhāra and the northwest reveal frequent local adaptation, overstriking, and the permeability of monetary and political borders. Khyber's evidence thus marks the region as a vibrant node in economic, technological, and political exchanges with significant powers, paralleling developments at key sites such as Taxila and the broader Achaemenid and Gandhāran spheres (Handa, 2000, pp. 515-521; Cribb, 1983, p. 100).

This widespread use and innovation in coinage set the stage for Khyber's rapid integration into the Mauryan Empire (c. 322-185 BCE), a period of unprecedented connectivity with the imperial and cultural networks of early historic India. The discovery of a Mauryan ringstone and discstone at Gudar in Jamrud, artefacts also known from the Mauryan heartland at Pataliputra and major sites like Taxila, illustrates the penetration of imperial ideology, administrative ritual, and Buddhist missionary activity into Khyber (Bennett, 2019, p. 96). The intricate iconography of these objects, floral and faunal motifs, and evidence of state rituals reflect the district's role as a node for Mauryan governance and cultural transformation.

Additional finds of punch-marked coins, Mauryan ceramics, and polished wares at multiple Jamrud sites confirm the expansion of monetisation, standardised weights, and

administrative technologies (Gupta, 1951, pp. 12-20). Landi Kotal's Ash Khel and Kam Shilman localities yielded further caches of Mauryan punch-marked coins, demonstrating the region's active participation in imperial trade and the spread of Buddhist religious influence (Gupta, 1951, pp. 12-20).

In Bara, the evidence remains preliminary, sporadic ceramics and possible coins await firm attribution, but even these isolated finds suggest a process of imperial outreach and cultural incorporation that reached far into Khyber's tribal heartlands. The absence of large-scale Mauryan monuments or inscribed edicts in Khyber, unlike in Swat, Taxila, or the Indus basin, may reflect a lighter administrative presence, local autonomy, or taphonomic loss (Allchin, 1995, pp. 222-223).

Nonetheless, the cumulative material record from all three tehsils establishes Khyber as a vital contact zone, mediating the movement of people, ideas, and technologies between the Ganges basin and Central Asia. The region emerges as a crucible for the hybrid cultural forms, monetary, religious, and artistic that would define the post-Mauryan world (Behrendt, 2007, p. 24).

The chronological framework for this era in Khyber is anchored by the typology of punch-marked coins, hoard contexts, ceramic seriation, and iconographic parallels with securely dated artefacts from core regions (Gupta, 1951, pp. 12-23; Bennett, 2019, p. 96). Recent scholarship emphasises that frontier zones like Khyber were not passive peripheries, but active laboratories for imperial economic policy, religious experimentation (particularly the spread of Buddhism), and cultural hybridisation (Behrendt, 2007, p. 24; Cribb, 1983, p. 100).

The Pre-Mauryan and Mauryan phases in Khyber reflect the region's integration with, and adaptation to, the major currents of South-Asian statecraft, economy, and religion. The evidence from Khyber's hoards, artefacts, and emerging urban practices offers direct testimony to the district's pivotal role as a frontier of innovation, negotiation, and connectivity, a legacy that would profoundly shape the northwest in the centuries to follow (Gupta, 1951, pp. 12-23; Bennett, 2019, p. 96; Cribb, 1983, p. 100).

#### **4.7 The Greeks Frontier: Graeco-Bactrian and Indo-Greek Eras in Khyber**

Following the gradual decline of Mauryan authority, the Khyber district became an increasingly dynamic stage for new political and cultural actors drawn from the expanding Hellenistic world. This new epoch unfolded in two interlinked phases: the

Graeco-Bactrian (c. 256-130 BCE) and Indo-Greek (c. 200 BCE-10 CE) eras, periods best illuminated through a nuanced reading of numismatic and glyptic evidence, supported by rare but significant elite artefacts. (*Graeco-Bactrian refers to Greek rulers based north of the Hindu Kush; Indo-Greek to their successors ruling in northwestern India and Pakistan.*)

#### 4.7.1 Graeco-Bactrian Networks and Innovation

The Graeco-Bactrian horizon in Khyber is marked by the penetration of Hellenistic power, not as a wave of conquest, but as a mosaic of overlapping influences, economic integration, and symbolic negotiation. In Jamrud, substantial hoards from Lala Chena and Bakarabad have yielded coins of Diodotus I and II, Euthydemus I and II, Demetrios I and II, Agathocles, Eucratides I and II, and others (Bopearachchi, 2023, p. 121; Kosmin, 2022, p. 143). These coins, featuring bilingual Greek-Kharosthi legends, royal portraits, divine symbols, and intricate monograms, reflect both direct Bactrian authority and the creative adaptation of Greek imagery to local contexts.

The Lala Chena hoard of 18 copper coins of Euthydemus I, tightly dated and comprising double- and single-unit denominations, is especially significant for its chronological precision and insight into frontier monetary practice (Bopearachchi, 2023, p. 86). Bakarabad's monumental bronze medallion with a high-relief portrait of Euthydemus I, unprecedented in scale and style, testifies to the ceremonial and political projection of Hellenistic kingship. Terracotta tokens with Demetrios I's portrait and "pedigree" medallions of Agathocles (some inscribed in Brahmi) further show experimentation with non-metallic currency and artistic forms (Bopearachchi, 2023, pp. 51, 56; Holt, 2022, p. 97).

The appearance of royal seals, such as the helmeted bust of Eucratides I from Shahi Qilla in Bara, together with a diademed silver seal from Bara Bazaar, points to elite presence, administrative sophistication, and ceremonial exchange in the Tirah Valley. These objects reinforce Bara's importance as a contact zone linking Bactria, Gandhara, and India (Bopearachchi, 1991, pp. 217-221; Narain, 1957, pp. 82-85; Gupta, 1984, pp. 76-77).

In Landi Kotal, copper coins of Euthydemus I from Ghagra and other sites confirm the extension of Hellenistic monetary and possibly administrative influence beyond Bactria's core. The context, often surface scatters or shallow deposits, may indicate

their use in trade, tribute, or elite signalling rather than formal urban circulation (Bopearachchi, 2023, p. 121).

What distinguishes the Graeco-Bactrian legacy in Khyber is not monumental architecture, but the persistence and innovation of coinage, seals, and medallions, artefacts that served as instruments of authority, channels of value, and symbols of legitimacy in a highly mobile and competitive frontier world. Their association with late Mauryan and early Indo-Greek material underscores an era of overlapping sovereignties, commercial networks, and artistic syncretism rather than abrupt cultural rupture (Bopearachchi & Rahman, 1995, p. 44; Dani, 1967, p. 15).

#### **4.7.2 Indo-Greek Fluorescence: Cosmopolitan Hybridity and Royal Display**

Building on these foundations, the Indo-Greek period in Khyber is one of unprecedented numismatic and cultural abundance. Extensive hoards from Jamrud and Landi Kotal, such as those at Jalal Din Killi, Lora Miana, and Ash Khel, have produced coins of over a dozen Indo-Greek rulers, including Menander I, Apollodotus I, Antimachus II, Strato I, Philoxenus, Lysias, Antialcidas, Heliocles II, Zoilus I & II, Agathocleia, Amyntas Nicator, and others (Bopearachchi, 2023, pp. 184-185; Pieper, 2021, pp. 34-35). The variety is striking: coins feature Athena Alkidemos, elephants, Buddhist symbols, overstrikes, and frequent bilingual legends. Several hoards, such as those from Jalal Din Killi and Gudar, contain die-linked and overstruck series that are crucial for reconstructing the chronology and succession of Indo-Greek rulers (Bopearachchi, 2023, p. 184).

The technological sophistication of the Indo-Greek economy is revealed by the discovery of a silver coin die of Lysias Anicetus at Rai Qila, evidence for local minting and innovation in coin production (Bopearachchi, 2023, p. 209; Pieper, 2022, pp. 112-154). In Landi Kotal, the vast Ash Khel coin hoard (179 coins) demonstrates both the economic integration and dynastic continuity of the period. At the same time, Bara, once considered peripheral, has produced elite hoards (e.g., five silver double-decachdrachms of Amyntas Nicator from Donga, Tirah valley) and an exceptional corpus of goldwork: diadems, ram and lion figurines, "Trojan Horse" groups, and a Herakles-on-lion statuette (Boardman, 2016, pp. 87, 142-143; Curtis & Tallis, 2005, pp. 146-147; Williams, 2012, p. 113).

These elite objects, such as the gold diadem from Dogra Killi and solid gold animals, reflect a unique blend of Greek, Iranian, and South-Asian motifs, testament to the syncretic artistic and ritual life of Khyber's uplands. The gold "Trojan Horse" scene with its hidden warrior is perhaps the most unambiguous indication of Hellenistic heroic myth transposed onto the South-Asian frontier (Boardman, 2016, p. 92; Stewart, 2023, p. 63).

Notably, the Indo-Greek period in Khyber saw an explicit fusion of Hellenistic and Buddhist symbols, as on coins with dharma wheels and the "dhramikasa" (follower of the Dharma) legend, evidence of royal patronage and the creative adaptation of Greek authority to Indian religious landscapes (Kubica, 2023, pp. 108-114). The Spartan xiphos sword from Bara, gold-wrapped and leaf-bladed, further attests to the martial and prestige connections that extended from the Mediterranean to the Hindu Kush (Snodgrass, 1967, pp. 69-72; Sekunda, 1998, pp. 31-32).

#### **4.7.3 Synthesis: Khyber as Cosmopolitan Frontier**

Despite the paucity of architectural remains, the overwhelming abundance of coinage, medallions, and ceremonial goldwork enables robust reconstruction of these periods and their unique character. Numismatics and glyptic analysis, typology, die-links, hoard stratigraphy, and iconographic comparison remain central to reconstructing the chronology and historical dynamics of this era (Bopearachchi & Rahman, 1995, pp. 3-12). The coins, medallions, seals, and ceremonial goldwork found across Jamrud, Landi Kotal, and Bara establish Khyber as a key laboratory for hybridisation, trade, elite display, and the negotiation of royal ideology.

In short, the Graeco-Bactrian and Indo-Greek phases position Khyber not as a marginal backwater, but as a crossroads of connectivity, innovation, and cosmopolitan identity, a place where Hellenistic, Iranian, Indian, and steppe traditions met, clashed, and fused, profoundly shaping the subsequent history of the region (Bopearachchi, 2023, p. 184; Pieper, 2021, pp. 34-35; Boardman, 2016, p. 142). The hybrid worlds forged under the Graeco-Bactrian and Indo-Greek dynasties form the stage for subsequent waves of nomadic, Iranian, and Indian polities, whose own innovations would further shape the material and spiritual culture of the Khyber Pass and the broader Gandharan world.

#### **4.8 Indo-Scythian Period: The Saka Transformation and Khyber's Frontier Worlds (c. 150 BCE-400 CE)**

With the gradual decline of Indo-Greek authority in the northwest, the Khyber district entered a new era marked by the arrival and ascendancy of the Indo-Scythians (Sakas), whose presence redefined the cultural and political landscape of the region. Rather than a straightforward narrative of conquest and displacement, the Saka period in Khyber emerges from the historical record as an era of negotiation, religious transformation, and economic integration, linking the steppe worlds of Central Asia with the urban polities of the Indian-subcontinent.

The Indo-Scythians, originally nomadic horsemen from Central Asia, established themselves as regional power-brokers through a combination of military prowess, strategic intermarriage, and the adoption of local administrative and religious practices. In the Khyber region, this transition is now clearly visible in the new diversity of coinage and elite artefacts discovered at key sites such as Jamrud, Landi Kotal, and Bara. The issuance of bilingual Greek-Kharosthi coins by rulers like Maues and Azes not only signalled their claim to universal kingship but also their intent to communicate legitimacy across a multi-ethnic, multi-religious population (Muhammad, Jan, and Afridi (2025, pp. 136-149).

This period also witnessed important religious and cultural transformations. The iconography on Saka coinage, often featuring motifs from Greek, Iranian, and local Indian traditions, and plausibly some of the earliest numismatic images of the Buddha, reflects a world in which boundaries between religious communities and iconographic repertoires were porous and fluid (Konow, 1929, p. 45; Harmatta, 1999, p. 412). The transition from direct Saka rule to the emergence of Buddhist vassal dynasties, such as the Apracas, was closely tied to wider religious changes across Gandhara and the northwest, as evidenced by inscribed hoards and relics from Jamrud and beyond (Salomon, 1996, pp. 391-392; Falk, 2005, p. 132).

The Saka period in Khyber was also an era of expanding economic complexity. The proliferation of standardised coinage, the appearance of new forms of local administration (e.g., gold seals, combs, and ceremonial medallions), and the extension of Saka monetary systems into everyday exchange illustrate the deep integration of the region into cross-continental commercial networks (Pieper, 2023, p. 319). The goldwork and ritual objects from Bara, for instance, demonstrate the ongoing prestige

of the Khyber corridor as a meeting place of Central-Asian and Indian elites, and its role in circulating both goods and artistic forms (Artamonov, 1970, pp. 81-82; Rolle, 1989, pp. 58-59).

Equally significant is the evidence for gradual political change, rather than abrupt rupture. In sites such as Landi Kotal, coin hoards reveal the coexistence and eventual succession of Saka and Indo-Parthian rulers, indicating negotiated transitions and overlapping sovereignties (Senior, 2001, pp. 61-67; Pieper, 2021, p. 67). This pattern is emblematic of Khyber's history as a zone where imperial boundaries were continually redrawn through contestation, alliance, and accommodation.

The Indo-Scythian period in Khyber stands as an era of profound historical transformation, in which the district became a frontier of cultural adaptation and religious Synthesis, a corridor for the movement of people and ideas, and a laboratory for political and economic experimentation. Recent archaeological and numismatic discoveries have enabled, for the first time, an internally coherent reconstruction of Saka rule in Khyber, one that emphasises the region's agency and complexity rather than its marginality. The legacy of this period would endure in the hybrid cultural and administrative forms that would characterise the subsequent history of the northwest.

#### **4.9 Indo-Parthian Period: Mediation, Pluralism, and Transition (c. 19-226 CE)**

The Indo-Parthian period in Khyber marked yet another era of imperial transition and cultural Synthesis, as new polities negotiated the legacies of both steppe and Hellenistic rule while foreshadowing the rise of the Great Kushan Dynasty. The emergence of Indo-Parthians, under rulers such as Gondophares and Sanabares, reflects the region's persistent role as a crossroads, where power was asserted not through sweeping conquest but through pragmatic adaptation and mediation between competing cultural spheres.

Materially, this phase is best illuminated by the distinctive coinage unearthed at sites such as Sur Kamar in Jamrud, where silver and bronze drachms bearing Iranian-style busts, local tamghas, and bilingual legends are found stratified with both earlier Indo-Scythian and later Kushan issues (Pieper, 2021, p. 117). The iconography and bilingual inscriptions of these coins symbolise a complex negotiation of authority, as Indo-Parthian rulers sought to communicate legitimacy across Greek, Iranian, and indigenous communities.



In Landi Kotal, Indo-Parthian power is primarily documented through similar coin types, discovered in a variety of archaeological contexts. The spectrum of issues from early Gondophares emissions to locally produced imitations speaks to the gradual localisation of Parthian forms and the embedding of new dynasties within existing networks of trade and allegiance.

The Indo-Parthian period is characterised by an absence of monumental architecture and official epigraphy in Khyber, distinguishing it from both the Saka and the subsequent Kushan era. As a result, numismatic evidence forms the backbone of historical reconstruction, allowing for the tracking of shifting alliances, political boundaries, and processes of hybridisation (Pieper, 2021, p. 117). Hoard compositions, overstrikes, and changes in iconographic detail become the primary sources for understanding this fluid and pluralistic landscape.

Crucially, the Indo-Parthian legacy in Khyber lies not only in political succession but in the mediation of broader cultural trends. The era bridged Saka and Kushan horizons, fostering an environment in which artistic, religious, and administrative pluralism could flourish. The Indo-Parthian template of governance and cultural accommodation would leave a lasting imprint on Gandharan society, setting the stage for the cosmopolitan Synthesis that would define the region's golden age under the Kushans.

#### **4.10 The Kushan Empire: Urbanism, Buddhism, and Cosmopolitanism in Khyber (c. 30-375 CE)**

The Kushan era represents a true apex in the cultural and historical trajectory of Khyber, a period during which the region emerged as a vibrant centre of Buddhist religious life, urban expansion, and economic integration. No longer a marginal passageway, Khyber under the Kushans became a dynamic node on the Silk Road, linking the worlds of Central Asia, South Asia, and the broader Hellenistic sphere.

Jamrud Tehsil was at the heart of this transformation. The systematic mapping of Buddhist monastic complexes, including sites at Jabba, Shagai Lala Chena, Changai, Gudar, Ali Baba, Murda Dand, Zagga, Shagai, and Jabba Showdani, has revealed a landscape of enduring settlement and ritual activity. These monasteries, with their ashlar masonry, courts, assembly halls, and stupas, provide concrete evidence that Jamrud was a significant locus of Buddhist practice and not simply a strategic crossroads (Rosenfield, 1999, pp. 123-124).

The discovery of the Gudar gold repoussé panel, depicting the Buddha's Mahābhiniṣkramaṇa and dating to the 2<sup>nd</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> century CE, stands as a masterpiece of Gandhāran narrative art. Found in a stratified context within a monastic compound, the panel exemplifies the sophisticated fusion of Hellenistic and Indian artistic traditions characteristic of Kushan-era Buddhism (Zwalf, 1996, p. 188; Foucher, 1905, p. 49; Coomaraswamy, 1926, p. 165).

Numismatic evidence for the Kushan period has expanded dramatically, with major coin hoards from Wali Khel, Lashora, Takhta Baig, and Taidi Bazaar. These hoards, featuring rulers such as Heraios, Vima Takto, Kujula Kadphises, Kanishka I, Vasudeva II, and Mahi, offer a securely dated framework for internal Kushan chronology and clarify transitional phases in local governance (Pieper, 1998, pp. 27-30; Mitchiner, 1978, pp. 214-216). The Lashora royal seal with the bust of Vima Takto is particularly significant, being the first such artefact securely associated with a Kushan coin hoard and exemplifying the standardisation of royal portraiture (Pieper, 1998, pp. 27-30).

The Takhta Baig gold quarter dinar bearing the Buddha image is the only securely provenanced Kushan gold Buddha coin from Khyber, anchoring the chronology of devotional art and royal patronage (Göbl, 1984, p. 66; Pieper, 1998, p. 133). Gold dinars depicting deities from Iranian, Indian, and Greco-Roman pantheons, Shiva, Oesho, Serapis, Nana, Mithra, Pharro, Ardoxsho, underscore the multi-religious character of the Kushan court and the cosmopolitan ethos of the region (Mitchiner, 1978, pp. 368-371; Pieper, 1998, p. 205).

Earlier ambiguities in Kushan chronology, especially regarding transitional rulers like Sapalbizes, Arseiles, and Heraios, have now been resolved by new hoard associations, providing a more refined historical narrative for the region's integration into the Kushan imperial system (Senior, 2001; Cribb, 1993, pp. 123-129).

In Landi Kotal, the monumental Shpola Stupa stands as a testament to the architectural ambitions and religious importance of the Khyber corridor in the Buddhist world. Although partially destroyed in modern times, the stupa's scale and strategic placement at the pass remain emblematic of Kushan Buddhist patronage and Silk Road connectivity (Behrendt, 2007, p. 103).

In Bara, the discovery of the Tirah Relic Casket at Kuraiz, a multi-chambered stupa burial with an associated Kanishka coin and gold reliquary, confirms the deep reach of

Kushan Buddhist institutions into the Tirah Valley. The syncretic iconography (Helios/Mithra and Buddha) and typological parallels with relic caskets from Shah-jiki-Dheri and Bimaran position Kuraiz as a key site in the broader Gandhāran Buddhist network (Marshall, 1951, pp. 281-285; Errington, 2017, p. 64).

Methodologically, the revised understanding of the Kushan period in Khyber is based on the integration of stratified archaeological finds, numismatic typology, architectural analysis, and art-historical comparison. This multi-disciplinary approach allows for a nuanced, multi-phase chronology that distinguishes local innovation from imperial standardisation (Cribb, 1993, pp. 133-135; Pieper, 2021, pp. 132-134).

A notable gap remains: despite the richness of numismatic and architectural evidence, no inscribed epigraphic monuments have yet been recovered from the core Buddhist sites of Khyber. This absence is recognised as a current limitation and a potential direction for future research.

The Kushan period stands as the best documented and most cosmopolitan epoch in Khyber's ancient history. The intersection of Buddhist, Iranian, Indian, and Hellenistic influences evident in coinage, architecture, and ritual practices underscores Khyber's role as a vibrant frontier, actively engaged in the economic, artistic, and religious spheres of the broader Eurasian world (Rosenfield, 1999, p. 125; Behrendt, 2007, p. 103; Pieper, 2021, pp. 132-134). This period established enduring traditions of cultural diversity, religious patronage, and regional connectivity, shaping Khyber's legacy as a pivotal crossroads of empires and ideas.

#### **4.11 Kushano-Sasanian Period: Peripheral Integration and Cultural Hybridisation (c. 230-330 CE)**

The Kushano-Sasanian period in Khyber represents a transitional epoch marked by political fragmentation, selective imperial engagement, and pronounced cultural hybridisation. Contrary to earlier assumptions of widespread Kushano-Sasanian control based on scattered finds, current research shows that the tangible presence of Kushano-Sasanian authority was confined exclusively to Bara Tehsil. At the same time, Jamrud and Landi Kotal remained outside effective imperial reach.

Despite systematic archaeological and numismatic surveys, neither coins nor material culture attributable to the Kushano-Sasanian dynasty have been recovered from Jamrud or Landi Kotal. This absence, confirmed by both negative evidence and lack of

stratified deposits, suggests that these tehsils either resisted or were bypassed by the short-lived Sasanian-backed regime, in marked contrast to the dense sequence of Buddhist, Kushan, and later Kidarite activity documented in the same locales. Such negative findings are critical for reconstructing ancient frontiers, challenging earlier models that posited continuous imperial succession across the Khyber region.

Bara Tehsil stands in sharp contrast, providing the district's only secure Kushano-Sasanian evidence: the Many Sar gold dinar hoard. This unique, closed-context find, comprising thirteen gold dinars of the early to mid-third century CE, offers concrete proof of Sasanian-backed power in the region (Göbl, 1984, DB vgl. 823 ff.; Mitchiner, 1978, pp. 863-864). The coins themselves are emblematic of the era's hybrid identity: their obverses display Sasanian-style royal imagery (ram's horn crown, diadem, Sasanian hair and beard, trident), while the reverses retain the Shiva-Nandi motif inherited from Kushan traditions, a deliberate fusion of Iranian and Indian iconographies aimed at accommodating local and imperial constituencies (Pieper, 1998, pp. 202-203; Göbl, 1984, p. 155).

The Many Sar coins, struck to the Attic standard, likely served as ceremonial or treasury deposits, rather than circulating currency, underscoring the highly selective and prestigious character of Kushano-Sasanian engagement in Khyber. Their singularity within the district marks the volatility and fragmentation of late antique power, with Bara as the only confirmed locus of Sasanian-backed authority or ritual presence.

This sharply revised picture corrects previous narratives of uniform imperial succession. Instead, the Kushano-Sasanian era must be understood as a period of selective, context-dependent integration, where local religious traditions, imperial ambitions, and economic strategies intersected only at specific frontier nodes. The Many Sar hoard anchors our understanding of power, legitimacy, and religious adaptation in Khyber's late antique borderlands, revealing a landscape where imperial claims and local realities were often sharply at odds (Pieper, 1998, pp. 202-203; Göbl, 1984, p. 155).

#### **4.12 Kidarite: The "Little Kushans" and the End of Classical Gandhara (c. 320-467 CE)**

The Kidarite, or "Little Kushan," period marks another profound transformation in Khyber's ancient history, as new Central-Asian groups asserted control over the

Gandharan heartland in the wake of Kushan and Kushano-Sasanian decline. This era is best documented at the Lashora site in Jamrud, where a significant hoard of Kidarite coins, distinguished by their tamgha symbols and busts of Kidara or his successors, testifies to the adaptive strategies of these newcomers (Mitchiner, 1975, p. 375).

Kidara's coins blend Sasanian and Kushan iconographic elements, reflecting both the persistence of old symbols and the innovations of new rulers seeking to legitimise their authority over a fragmented, ethnically diverse landscape. The continued use and adaptation of earlier coin types in religious and commercial contexts illustrate how the Kidarites negotiated both continuity and change in their efforts to rule the region (Mitchiner, 1975, p. 375).

In contrast, no Kidarite material has yet been found in Landi Kotal or Bara, which may point to either real political boundaries or simply gaps in archaeological coverage. Regardless, the available evidence underscores the asymmetrical and fragmented nature of Kidarite control, as well as the shifting centres of power and population in the post-Kushan northwest.

The broader historical significance of the Kidarite period lies in its role as a watershed: the end of classical Buddhist urbanism in Gandhara and the rise of a more militarised, decentralised, and culturally diverse society. As monastic and urban centres declined, Khyber's material record reflects increasing instability but also ongoing experimentation with new forms of authority, religious patronage, and artistic production.

The appearance of the Kidarites in Khyber marks both the close of a previous epoch and the beginning of new political and cultural dynamics, laying the groundwork for the region's subsequent transformations under the Huns and the early Islamic states.

#### **4.13 Hun/Hephthalite: Localised Power and Frontier Dynamics (c. 440-670 CE)**

The Hun (Hephthalite) period in the Khyber region represents a crucial phase of transition and contestation in the late antique history of South and Central Asia. While earlier scholarship had often presumed Jamrud to be the focal point of Hunnic activity, recent discoveries now demonstrate that Bara Tehsil was the primary locus of Hephthalite presence and authority in Khyber. This shift reflects both the dynamism of regional research and the importance of direct archaeological evidence in reshaping established historical narratives (Alram, 2002, p. 35; Cribb, 1999, pp. 149-168).

The secure attestation of Hun/Hephthalite influence in Bara comes principally from newly documented coin hoards and isolated finds, which offer the first concrete proof of their economic and political engagement within District Khyber. These coins, comprising both copper and silver issues, exemplify the full spectrum of Hephthalite numismatic practice: imitations of Sasanian and Kushano-Sasanian types, distinctive Central-Asian tamghas, legends in Brahmi and Bactrian, and recurring fire-altar motifs (Göbl, 1984, pp. 83-88; Frye, 1984, pp. 152-154). Typological and metallurgical analyses link these finds to contemporary Hun hoards from Balkh, Kabul, Swat, and Peshawar, confirming Khyber's integration into wider Central-Asian and Gandhāran exchange networks during the fifth and sixth centuries CE (Vondrovec, 2002, pp. 41-46; Carter, 1995, p. 15).

The coexistence of classical Sasanian iconography with regional innovations in the Bara coins illustrates both Khyber's role as a frontier of cultural negotiation and the evolving systems of legitimacy under Hun rule. These issues not only reflect the adaptation of imported styles and standards but also the assertion of new forms of authority and local identity, shaped by the interactions of multiple imperial and regional traditions (Grenet, 2002, pp. 61-62).

Significantly, systematic research in Jamrud and Landi Kotal has yielded no securely identified Hun/Hephthalite material. This absence is not simply a lacuna but marks a clear spatial boundary for the extent of Hun influence in Khyber, underscoring the localised nature and unique historical significance of the Bara discoveries. The Hun/Hephthalite period in Khyber, therefore, should not be understood as one of general conquest or direct imperial rule, but rather as a time of fragmented, negotiated power in which specific areas like Bara became sites of economic activity, cross-cultural contact, and local adaptation, while others remained beyond effective control (Cribb, 1999, p. 158; Alram, 1996, p. 240).

The stratified context of the Bara finds, together with their typological and metallurgical alignment with broader regional evidence, allows for a more precise reconstruction of the chronology and cultural dynamics of this period (Cribb, 1999, pp. 154-158; Göbl, 1984, pp. 83-87). The evidence reveals the Khyber corridor not simply as a passageway but as an active frontier zone, a landscape of economic transformation, cultural Hybridity, and shifting political strategies under Hun/Hephthalite influence (Alram, 2002, p. 39; Vondrovec, 2002, p. 46).

In summary, the first securely attested Hun/Hephthalite coins from Bara Tehsil demand a fundamental revision of late antique Khyber's history. They move the district from the margins of narrative, redefining it as an active participant in the transformative processes, political, economic, and cultural of the post-Kushan era. The Bara evidence, together with the clarifying absence elsewhere, offers a new model for understanding Khyber as both a frontier of adaptation and a laboratory of cross-cultural interaction (Sims-Williams, 1995, pp. 232-233; Frye, 1984, p. 154).

#### **4.14 Gupta Presence: Peripheral Power and Cultural Adaptation (c. 240-579 CE)**

The Gupta Empire (c. 320-550 CE) is widely celebrated as ancient India's "Golden Age," noted for its remarkable achievements in art, literature, science, and governance (Thapar, 2003, p. 164; Kulke & Rothermund, 2016, pp. 87-90). From its Ganges heartland, the empire extended over much of northern and central India, integrating diverse regions through conquest, diplomacy, and the patronage of Hindu and Buddhist traditions. Under monarchs such as Chandragupta II and Kumaragupta I, the Guptas established an enduring legacy of administrative sophistication and cultural vibrancy. However, in peripheral zones like the Khyber district, the extent and nature of Gupta influence were shaped by shifting local realities and the constraints of imperial ambition (Kulke & Rothermund, 2016, p. 90).

Khyber's relationship with the Gupta Empire has long been viewed as marginal, inferred primarily from isolated gold dinars and an absence of monumental or epigraphic remains. Recent archaeological discoveries, especially from Jamrud and Bara Tehsils, however, have transformed this picture, revealing a much more intricate history of interaction, adaptation, and selective integration into the Gupta world (Pieper, 2021, p. 171).

The earliest phase of Gupta engagement is represented by rare gold dinars and limited numismatic finds, pointing not to direct imperial control, but rather to commercial links, exchange of prestige goods, and the flow of economic and cultural influence along established routes (Pieper, 2021, p. 171). Even on the imperial periphery, Khyber remained open to these broader currents from the Gupta heartlands.

The reign of Chandragupta II marks a significant transformation (c. 375-413 CE). The discovery of a significant silver coin hoard at Qadam in Jamrud, featuring Western

Satrap typologies but bearing Brahmi inscriptions proclaiming Gupta sovereignty and Vaishnavite affiliation, signals a deliberate Gupta engagement in the northwest (Todd & Fishman, 2022, p. 214; Pieper, 2021, p. 102). This adaptive coinage demonstrates not only political ambition but also a pragmatic embrace of local monetary traditions and religious symbolism (Todd & Fishman, 2022, p. 217).

This heightened engagement is further reflected in the emergence of administrative and artistic forms characteristic of Gupta influence. The carnelian royal seal from Jamrud, adorned with Gupta courtly iconography and Brahmi script, suggests the establishment of ritual or administrative centres, if not formal imperial administration (Harle, 1994, p. 139; Huntington, 1985, pp. 132-135).

As Gupta involvement deepened in the fifth century, the process of regional adaptation and cultural syncretism was obvious in Bara Tehsil. Finds from Shahi Qilla in Tirah Valley, a bronze equestrian figurine, a marble slab depicting Balarama, and a bronze seal featuring Lajjā Gaurī and trident motifs, exemplify the fusion of Gupta artistic forms with local traditions (Huntington, 1985, pp. 184-185; Pieper, 2020, p. 867; Misra, 2019; Khan, 2014, pp. 92-97). These artefacts highlight a negotiated integration, characterised more by creative adaptation than by top-down imperial imposition.

By the late c. 5<sup>th</sup> CE, the frequency and diversity of Gupta-period artefacts in Khyber diminish, with their virtual absence in Landi Kotal marking the spatial and chronological limits of Gupta influence. This decline coincides with larger regional disruptions, including Hun/Hephthalite invasions and the transformation of Gandharan society.

The archaeological and art-historical record now reveals Khyber's Gupta period as one of peripheral yet dynamic engagement: a landscape not of imperial dominance, but of economic integration, cultural exchange, and resilient local agency. Far from being a mere historical footnote, the Gupta era in Khyber exemplifies the district's role as a frontier zone, negotiating, adapting, and transmitting transregional cultural and political currents at the crossroads of empires.

#### **4.15 The Great Sassan: Sassanian Power and the Khyber Frontier (224-651 CE)**

The Sassanian Empire, founded in Persia, emerged as one of Late Antiquity's most potent and dynamic states. Renowned for its revival of Persian imperial traditions, Zoroastrian religious authority, and ambitious expansionism, the Sassanians established



a sophisticated administrative system that left an enduring legacy from the Mediterranean to Central Asia. Their engagement with the Khyber frontier exemplifies both the reach of Sassanian power and the complexities of imperial rule at the edge of empire (Curtis, 2007, p. 123; Gyselen, 2012, p. 58).

The history of the Sassanian encounter with Khyber is one of imperial ambition, economic integration, and local negotiation along one of Asia's most dynamic borderlands. For the Sassanian Empire, which rose to power in the third century CE, Khyber was not merely a distant frontier but a vital corridor through which armies, tribute, and ideas moved among the Iranian plateau and South Asia.

Monetary discoveries form the backbone of the Sassanian narrative in Khyber. The remarkable Lora Miana hoard of gold dinars, minted under Shapur I, stands as direct testimony to the projection of Sassanian royal ideology and economic power deep into the eastern frontier. Each coin, bearing the image of the king and surrounded by Pahlavi proclamations of Mazdaean legitimacy, circulated not just as currency but as symbols of imperial authority and religious identity. The fire altar on the reverse, emblematic of Zoroastrian ritual, anchors Khyber to broader religious transformations across western and Central Asia (Göbl, 1971; Pieper, 2007; Curtis, 2007).

However, the circulation of Sassanian coinage in Jamrud and its environs reveals more than the exercise of top-down power. The frequency of gold, silver, and copper coins, whether in hoards or mixed contexts, attests to complex networks of commercial exchange, tribute, and perhaps even military pay, suggesting that Khyber's communities were active participants in, not merely recipients of, imperial economies. The precision and standardisation of these coins, likely struck in central Sassanian mints, physically connect the Khyber borderlands to the imperial heart at Ctesiphon, while also highlighting the permeability of imperial boundaries and the role of local agency in shaping frontier dynamics (Gyselen, 2012, pp. 57-61).

Elsewhere in Khyber, the Sassanian footprint is less visible. Landi Kotal, for example, has yielded only scattered Sassanian coins in later deposits, suggesting the limits of direct imperial reach and perhaps the persistence of alternative power structures and local autonomy. The absence of Sassanian architecture or inscriptions in this region stands as a reminder that not all frontiers were equally integrated or controlled.

Bara Tehsil, in contrast, emerges as a zone of both continuity and transformation. The Alam Gudar hoard, spanning the late Sassanian to early Islamic transition, includes silver drachms and hemidrachms of Peroz I, Kavadh I, and Khusrau II, as well as post-Sassanian Tabaristanian issues. These coins, with crowned monarchs and Zoroastrian fire altars, chart the persistence of Sassanian models even as the region adapted to new rulers and religious influences (Malek, 2000, pp. 61-66; Mitchiner, 1975, pp. 225, 275). The diversity of mints represented attests to Bara's integration into a wide economic and cultural orbit linking Iran and South Asia.

The complex archaeological record, comprising Sassanian, Kushano-Sasanian, Arab-Sassanid, and imitative coinages, reveals the Khyber corridor as a dynamic zone of negotiation, commerce, and shifting sovereignty. This evidence testifies to a region deeply embedded in transregional currents, where Persian models of power and ritual were adopted, adapted, and, at times, replaced by local or incoming regimes.

Ultimately, the Sassanian presence in Khyber was not simply a matter of conquest or administrative reach, but a product of the interplay between imperial ambition, local initiative, and the pragmatic demands of frontier society. The enduring circulation of Sassanian coinage into subsequent periods highlights both the resilience of Persian institutions and the gradual transformation of Khyber from a contested imperial borderland into a pivotal zone of the early Islamic world.

Roman Empire (27 BCE-476 CE), one of the most expansive and economically dynamic states of the ancient world, forged an intricate web of commercial connections stretching far beyond the Mediterranean heartland. Roman merchants, diplomats, and luxury goods circulated not only throughout Europe and North Africa but also deep into the Middle East, Central Asia, and South Asia. The Silk Road and associated maritime routes served as arteries of exchange, transmitting Roman gold, glassware, wine, and silver eastward, while returning with spices, gemstones, silks, and fine textiles from India and beyond (McLaughlin, 2010, pp. 21-37; Warmington, 1928, pp. 156-161). These networks were not simply economic: they fostered diplomatic relations, cross-cultural encounters, and the diffusion of artistic and technological innovations across continents.

Roman trade with South Asia, especially the Indian subcontinent, intensified markedly during the first centuries BCE and CE. Roman sources, such as Pliny the Elder,

explicitly reference the substantial outflow of Roman precious metals in exchange for Indian luxury goods (Warmington, 1928, pp. 149-153). Archaeological evidence, including Roman coins and amphorae found in peninsular India and along the western coast, testifies to the scale and significance of Indo-Roman commerce. However, Roman influence also penetrated overland, with gold and silver coinage, diplomatic gifts, and traded items reaching as far as Bactria, Gandhāra, and, as discoveries show, the Khyber Pass region.

#### **4.16 Evidence of Trade Links of the Romans from the Khyber Corridor**

Recent discoveries have substantially refined our understanding of Roman-era connections in the Khyber region. Previously, Roman coins of Augustus and Tiberius were known from Jamrud as isolated finds (Cribb, 1983, p. 100), tentatively interpreted as evidence for trade, mercenary activity, or diplomatic exchange. However, the recent recovery of a Roman gold aureus of Tiberius Julius Caesar Augustus (14-37 CE) from Khuga Khel, Landi Kotal, is transformative. This aureus not only provides a secure chronological anchor but also shifts the geographic focus of Roman material evidence in Khyber from Jamrud to Landi Kotal, reinforcing the latter's strategic role within ancient trade routes.

The Tiberian aureus exemplifies the nature and reach of Indo-Roman economic interaction. Roman gold, particularly coins, entered the subcontinent both via Red Sea maritime routes and overland caravans, and was used in transactions involving high-value commodities, spices, precious stones, fine textiles, and artworks, sought by Roman elites (Bopearachchi, 1991; McLaughlin, 2010, pp. 109-111). Such coins in the northwest were likely to serve not only as currency, but as bullion, diplomatic gifts, or even as payments for mercenaries or local allies along the volatile borderlands. The context of the Khuga Khel find, in a region traversed by traders, armies, and pilgrims, aligns with this pattern of transregional exchange.

Classical literary sources corroborate the archaeological narrative. Pliny, for instance, lamented the drain of gold and silver from Rome to India, attesting to both the magnitude and the strategic consequences of these flows (Warmington, 1928, pp. 149-153). The presence of Roman coins in Khyber, however rare, serves as tangible proof that these eastward currents of trade and wealth reached even the mountainous corridors connecting Central and South Asia.

Systematic fieldwork in Jamrud and Bara Tehsils has so far failed to produce additional Roman-period material, reinforcing the uniqueness of the Landi Kotal find. The spatially circumscribed nature of Roman evidence in Khyber helps clarify the extent and local intensity of Indo-Roman connectivity, emphasising that while Khyber was not a zone of sustained Roman control or settlement, it was very much a participant in the vast networks of Eurasian trade during the early centuries.

In short, the Khuga Khel aureus and earlier coin finds fundamentally reshape our understanding of Khyber's Roman-period history. They provide indispensable material evidence for the region's role as a commercial and cultural corridor, highlighting the depth of transcontinental connectivity and the strategic economic importance of the Khyber Pass at the crossroads of the ancient world.

#### **4.17 The Arab-Sassanid and Abbasid Eras: Early Islam and Economic**

##### **4.17.1 Integration in Khyber (c. 632-1258 CE)**

The early Islamic centuries in the Khyber region are newly illuminated by recent archaeological and numismatic discoveries, allowing for a more precise reconstruction of the district's integration into wider Islamic political and economic systems. This period, spanning the late Sassanian-Umayyad transition and the Abbasid Caliphate, marks a profound transformation in the frontier's connectivity, administration, and commercial life.

##### **4.17.2 The Arab-Sassanid (Umayyad) Transition: Khyber at the Crossroads**

For decades, the Arab-Sassanid (Umayyad) phase in Khyber was reconstructed mainly from stray coin finds or distant historical parallels, leaving its local dynamics poorly understood (Cribb, 1980, pp. 44-52). This picture has changed fundamentally with the 2016 discovery of the stratified Arab-Sassanid silver drachm hoard at Bacha Mena, Torkham (Landi Kotal Tehsil). Unlike earlier generalisations, this well-documented hoard provides secure, contextually anchored evidence for the region's inclusion in the late Sassanian and early Islamic fiscal and administrative sphere (Alram, 2012, pp. 146-147).

The Bacha Mena hoard includes late Sassanian issues of Balash and early Arab-Sassanid drachms in the name of Ziyād b. Abī Sufyān, one of the earliest Umayyad governors of Iraq and adjacent regions, was recovered in a stratified context with

complete archaeological documentation. Ziyād b. Abī Sufyān, serving under Caliph Mu'awiya I, played a pivotal role in the Umayyad eastward expansion. His efforts included relocating tens of thousands of Arab soldiers and families to Khurasan and launching military expeditions into Tukharistan, Balkh, and Quhistan, consolidating Arab power and setting the stage for further regional change.

The Turk Shahis deeply contested this period of Arab expansion in Central and South Asia (c. 665 CE-822 CE), a dynasty of Western Turkic or Turco-Hephthalite origin who ruled from Kabul and Kapisa into Gandhara and beyond (Kuwayama, 1993, pp. 1-5; Alram, 2010, pp. 219-222; Inaba, 2008, pp. 1-4; Wink, 1990, pp. 117-119). The Shahis were frequent adversaries of the Umayyad governors, especially those of Sistan. In 664-665 CE, the Arab general Abd al-Rahman ibn Samura launched a significant campaign, laying siege to Kabul and occupying it for a brief period before a local uprising necessitated a second, protracted siege lasting nearly a year (Wink, 1990, pp. 117-119; Kuwayama, 1993, p. 8; Alram, 2010, pp. 219-221). Under Barha Tegin, the Turk Shahis mounted a powerful counter-offensive, regaining territory as far as Arachosia and Kandahar after Arab leadership changes (Kuwayama, 1993, pp. 8-10; Wink, 1990, p. 119; Alram, 2010, pp. 221-223).

The Arabs, led by a succession of governors (including Rabi ibn Ziyad al-Harithi and Ubayd Allah ibn Abi Bakra), repeatedly sought to control Kabul and Zabulistan, but their gains were often ephemeral and subject to negotiated truces with Turkic rulers (Wink, 1990, pp. 118-121; Kuwayama, 1993, pp. 10-12). The Arab armies suffered several reversals, including the capture of Abu Ubaida ibn Ziyad in Kabul and the death of Yazid ibn Ziyad, Governor of Sijistan, in battle (Wink, 1990, pp. 121-123). Later offensives such as the 'Army of Destruction' (698 CE) ended in defeat, tribute, and the taking of hostages by the Zunbils, while other expeditions, like that of Ibn al-Ash'ath, ended in withdrawal and peace treaties rather than lasting conquest (Wink, 1990, pp. 121-123; Kuwayama, 1993, p. 11).

Much of this narrative, it must be emphasised, is constructed from later Islamic and Western historical sources, often with limited direct evidence for the precise territorial scope or political durability of Arab rule in the trans-Hindu Kush region. The stratified Bacha Mena coin hoard now provides the first material anchor for these debates, demonstrating that Umayyad fiscal and symbolic presence, under Ziyād b. Abī Sufyān did indeed extend as far east as the Landi Kotal region. The archaeological context of

this hoard suggests that for a time, contrary to the previous assumptions based only on textual evidence, Islamic forces were able to secure monetary and administrative footholds beyond Kabul and into the Khyber corridor. However, the subsequent absence of sustained settlement or administrative remains, and the recurrence of Shahi, Zunbil, and Turkic power in the later record, show that such advances were temporary and often reversed by robust local resistance and shifting alliances.

Thus, the Bacha Mena hoard does not merely confirm the Umayyad reach, but also highlights the volatility and contestation that characterised the Khyber and its hinterlands in the late seventh century. It reminds us that while Arab armies and their governors pursued ambitious imperial aims, the frontier was ultimately shaped by cycles of military confrontation, negotiated settlements, and local resilience, dynamics now finally visible through the convergence of archaeological and numismatic evidence (Aldam, 2012, pp. 146-147; Cribb, 1983, p. 77; Malek, 2001, pp. 61-65). For a broader Synthesis and comparative analysis (See Section 5.2.22)

#### **4.17.3 The Abbasid Period: Economic Networks and Regional Variation**

The Abbasid Caliphate (c. 750 CE -1258 CE) heralded a new phase in Khyber's history, defined less by direct political control than by the deepening integration of the region, particularly Landi Kotal, into the monetary and commercial circuits of the wider Islamic world. For decades, the Abbasid impact in Khyber was inferred from stray dirham finds, leaving the scale, nature, and distribution of economic activity largely hypothetical. Recent archaeological discoveries, however, have significantly refined this picture and anchored the district within the fiscal and symbolic networks of early Islam.

The most substantial numismatic evidence comes from the Dalkhad, Charbagh hoard in Landi Kotal Tehsil, which comprises seventeen silver dirhams issued under prominent Abbasid caliphs, including Al-Mahdi, Abu Jafar Al-Mansur, Al-Ma'mun, and Harun al-Rashid. Struck with Arabic inscriptions, clear mint marks, and Quranic phrases, these coins not only document the extension of Abbasid monetary influence into the northwest frontier but also reveal robust economic exchange with the region's largely autonomous Hindu Shahi polities (Pieper, 2021, p. 199). Landi Kotal, at minimum, was firmly linked to transregional trading networks at a time when other

parts of Khyber, such as Jamrud and Bara, show little or no evidence of Abbasid-period economic integration.

Understanding the broader historical context is essential for appreciating the significance of these discoveries. In the early medieval period, eastern regions of Afghanistan, including Kabul and Zabulistan, were, at times, considered by Islamic geographers and rulers to be politically part of "India" (Minhaj-i-Siraj, cited in Rahman, 1979, p. 101; Bosworth, 2002, p. 164). These regions, bastions of Buddhism and Hinduism, offered fierce resistance to Muslim expansion (Wink, 1991, pp. 152-153). The Umayyad and, subsequently, Abbasid governors frequently asserted nominal suzerainty over the Zunbils and Kabul Shahis; however, their actual control was inconsistent, often shaped by local resistance and the ebb and flow of regional power dynamics (Bosworth, 2002, p. 164; Dani, 1969, pp. 84-86).

The campaigns undertaken by Caliph al-Ma'mun (r. 813-833 CE) represented the final significant Arab efforts to bring Kabul and Zabul under their control. The capture and coerced conversion of the Kabul ruler highlighted the symbolic importance of this conflict, although the region largely retained its autonomy until the Ghaznavid conquests (Wink, 1991, pp. 157-158). The ultimate demise of the Zunbils and the defeat of the Kabul Shahis under Mahmud of Ghazni brought about the gradual Islamization of these once predominantly Buddhist and Hindu domains (Bosworth, 2002, p. 166). Notably, Indian soldiers and captives, moved across these frontiers as part of the Ghaznavid armies, left an enduring mark on local memory, reflected in Ibn Battuta's later description of the Hindu-Kush as the "killer of Indians," a grim testament to the hardships of the trans-montane slave trade (Ibn Battuta, trans. Gibb, 1962, p. 510).

Set against this turbulent historical backdrop, the Abbasid coin hoard from Landi Kotal is doubly significant. First, it offers stratified, datable, and contextually anchored evidence for the region's integration into early Islamic monetary systems, replacing previous reliance on isolated or hypothetical finds. Second, the hoard provides insight into the practical mechanisms of economic adaptation along the frontier, illustrating that Khyber was not simply a passive recipient but an active participant in the broader commercial and symbolic transformations of the Islamic world (Pieper, 2021, p. 199). The presence of Abbasid dirhams, even in the absence of direct political or religious domination, highlights the economic permeability of Khyber and its ongoing connectivity with Central and South Asia.

In interpretive Synthesis, the discoveries of the Bacha Mena hoard (for the Arab-Sassanid/Umayyad phase) and the Abbasid coin corpus from Dalkhad mark a turning point in reconstructing early Islam in Khyber. They allow these centuries to be woven into the region's history with a level of specificity previously unattainable. Moreover, they reinforce the importance of Khyber as a "zone of mediation", not only between empires and polities, but between religions, economies, and cultures at the crossroads of South and Central Asia. For a broader Synthesis and comparative analysis, see Section 5.2.23.

#### **4.18 Chach Dynasty in Khyber: Hindu Rule at the Crossroads (c. 632-712 CE)**

The Chach dynasty, established by the Brahmin Chach of Alor, governed Sindh and neighbouring areas in the late 7<sup>th</sup> and early 8<sup>th</sup> centuries CE, just prior to the Islamic conquest. In the Khyber region, the dynasty's legacy is not preserved in monuments or written histories, but rather in an expanding collection of silver dammas, particularly those issued by Sri Yashaditya, who was likely among the final rulers of the dynasty before the Arab incursions (Sharma, 1966, p. 106; Wink, 1991, pp. 146-147).

Recent discoveries in Jamrud and Landi Kotal sharply illuminate the Chach dynasty's economic and political reach. Hoards from Shah Kas (Jamrud) and Ghagra and Charbagh (Landi Kotal) reveal the widespread circulation of Yashaditya's dammas: small, silver coins depicting a crowned king and trident, emblematic of late Hindu authority in the northwest. Their presence along major caravan routes confirms that, even in the waning days of Brahmanical rule, the Khyber Pass remained a vital artery for transregional trade, linking Sindh, Punjab, Central Asia, and beyond (Alram, 2012, pp. 151-153; Dani, 1969, pp. 86-89).

These Khyber finds must be read comparatively. Unlike the more monumental and epigraphically rich landscapes of Gandhara or Multan, the Chach-era Khyber yields a more fragmentary but economically vibrant record, its hoards likely the product of local merchants' need to safeguard capital in a climate of uncertainty and borderland volatility. Such hoarding reflects both opportunity (as the corridor of commerce between competing polities) and risk (from raids or political instability), echoing patterns seen across other contested South-Asian frontiers (Wink, 1991, p. 147).

The spatial pattern is revealing: while Jamrud and Landi Kotal show robust coin evidence, Bara Tehsil remains archaeologically silent for this period. This contrast



mirrors the region's political geography, Khyber as a buffer between the Hindu Shahis of Kabul and the Chach rulers of Sindh and Multan. Both powers depended on the Khyber corridor for access to lucrative trade. However, local integration varied sharply, with commercial life concentrated in well-connected nodes and other areas remaining marginal, underexplored, or simply outside primary economic circuits.

Khyber's Chach-period evidence thus offers a lens on the larger transition from Hindu to Islamic polities in the northwest. The dammas of Sri Yashaditya signal not just the persistence of Brahmanical rule, but the region's deep entanglement in the commercial, cultural, and political currents linking South and Central Asia. On the eve of the Arab conquest, Khyber emerges not as a passive borderland, but as a dynamic frontier, its economic and political realities shaped by negotiation, adaptation, and the interplay of local and imperial ambitions (Sharma, 1966, p. 106; Dani, 1969, p. 88; Alam, 2012, pp. 151-153).

#### **4.19 Hindu Shahi Khyber: Indigenous Resilience and Transregional Currents (c. 843-1026 CE)**

The Hindu Shahis, known as the Kabul Shahis or Uḍi Śāhis, emerged after the collapse of the Turk Shahis, founding a resilient dynasty that shaped the political, religious, and commercial contours of Khyber from c. 843 to 1026 CE (Bosworth, 1977, p. 99; Rehman, 1979, pp. 88, 95). Their rule, centred on Gandhara and Eastern Afghanistan but reaching into Punjab and the Kangra Valley, reflected both indigenous state-building and ongoing contests with external empires (Wink, 1991, pp. 118-120; Rahman, 2002, pp. 82-83).

The dynasty began with Kallar's deposition of Lagaturman, the last Turk Shahi king, a shift that signalled the rise of a new regional power, adept at both resistance and adaptation (Rehman, 1979, pp. 88, 95; Bosworth, 1963, p. 138; Alam, 2012, p. 159). Successive rulers, including Samanta, Lalliya, Bhimadeva, and Jayapala, navigated waves of Saffarid, Samanid, and Ghaznavid invasions, at times losing and regaining Kabul and Zabulistan, and maintaining control over Lahore until the Ghaznavid conquest in 1026 CE (Bosworth, 1963, pp. 140-143; Rahman, 2002, pp. 84-85; Pieper, 2021, p. 141).

This era marked Khyber as a frontier laboratory for statecraft and religious innovation. The Shahis consolidated administrative structures and fostered Hindu and Shaivite

patronage, even as the district stood at the intersection of South and Central-Asian commercial networks (Pieper, 2021, p. 139; Vogelsang, 2002, p. 182).

Recent archaeological and numismatic discoveries in Jamrud and Bara, especially silver Jitals of Samanta Deva and successors, anchor Khyber within the operational orbit of the Shahi state. These coins, characterised by the "Horseman and Bull" motif, Sharada inscriptions, and Bactrian influences, point to vibrant mints and a cosmopolitan local governance (Mitchiner, 1979, pp. 263-267; Pieper, 2021, pp. 137-139; Tye & Tye, 1995, pp. 143-146).

Methodologically significant is the discovery of a terracotta coin die at Gudar, evidence for mass-production minting and technical innovation on par with contemporary Indian and Central-Asian polities (Pieper, 2021, pp. 134-136; Nasim Khan, 2006, pp. 201-203). This technological sophistication underscores Khyber's role as an active participant, not a passive recipient, in early medieval monetary and administrative advances (Mitchiner, 1979, pp. 270-272).

While much of early medieval South and Central-Asia was marked by political fragmentation and shifting religious landscapes, Khyber's material record reveals local resilience, the endurance of Shaivite motifs, Sharada legends, and a pattern of delegated minting authority, often with coins issued by subordinate figures such as Sri Spalapati Deva and Khudarayaka (Pieper, 2021, p. 139; Rodger, 1894, p. 487). These features highlight Khyber's integration into a "federal" Shahi state model and its interface with broader Indo-Central-Asian currents (Rahman, 2002, pp. 86-87).

The lack of stratified Shahi finds in Landi Kotal, contrasted with Jamrud and Bara's dense coin hoards, signals real historical boundaries of state integration and the shifting geography of power at the margins of empire.

The Hindu Shahi era in Khyber stands out as a formative period, one of innovation, resilience, and adaptive negotiation of faith, commerce, and authority (Pieper, 2021, p. 139; Rehman, 1979, p. 95). The archaeological and numismatic record demands a major historiographical revision: Khyber was not merely a borderland but a creative actor within the transformative currents of early medieval South and Central Asia.

## **4.20 Islamic Khyber: Integration, Empire, and Frontier Identity (from 11th Century CE Onward)**

The earliest phases of Islamic engagement in the Khyber region, spanning the Umayyad and Abbasid periods, have already been detailed in Section [4.17.1/ 4.17.2]. These centuries are best reconstructed through archaeological and numismatic finds, such as the Bacha Mena hoard and Dalkhad Abbasid dirhams, which establish Khyber's role as a site of early fiscal and commercial integration with the broader Islamic world. As the historical and archaeological record demonstrates, Khyber's position as a frontier zone resulted in a patchwork of Islamic influence, with Landi Kotal and Jamrud yielding significant evidence of contact. At the same time, Bara remained largely outside direct Islamic networks during these centuries.

With the decline of Abbasid authority and the rise of regional and imperial powers, from the Ghaznavids through the Mughals and Durranis, the Islamization and political integration of Khyber intensified, reshaping local economies, administrative practices, and frontier identities. The following sections, therefore, focus on the post-Abbasid developments that defined Khyber's role within successive Islamic empires, building on the foundation established in the early Islamic centuries.

### **4.20.1 The Ghaznavid Era: Conquest, Coinage, and Khyber's Integration (c. 998-1186 CE)**

The Ghaznavids, a powerful Turkic dynasty founded by Sabuktigin and expanded under his son Mahmud (r. 998-1030 CE), marked a watershed in the political and economic history of South and Central Asia. Establishing their capital at Ghazni, the Ghaznavids extended their rule from Khorasan and Iran deep into the Indian subcontinent, forging a vast, multi-ethnic empire renowned for its military prowess, cultural patronage, and integration of Islamic administrative systems (Bosworth, 1963, pp. 112-113). The dynasty is especially notable for its repeated campaigns into northern India and for promoting Persianate culture across the region.

Numismatic evidence anchors the Ghaznavid presence in the Khyber region, with a particular concentration of silver dirhams of Mahmud Ghaznavi (Tye, 1995, pp. 103-105). Discoveries in Jamrud Tehsil, including clustered coin finds and surface hoards, confirm that this frontier district was rapidly absorbed into the expanding Ghaznavid monetary and economic system during the early 11th century. These dirhams, bearing Arabic legends and Islamic iconography, serve as critical chronological markers,

revealing Khyber's integration into a broader eastern Islamic economy that connected Afghanistan, Central Asia, and the Punjab.

The archaeological record further suggests that Jamrud became a key node in regional circulation: Ghaznavid coins appear alongside artefacts and trade goods from the wider Ghaznavid sphere, attesting to the region's importance as a gateway between West and South Asia.

The Ghaznavid conquest of the northwest was catalysed by Mahmud's famous campaign against the Hindu Shahi kingdom, then ruled by Jayapala. In 1001 CE, Mahmud arrived at Peshawar with an elite cavalry force and a corps of ghazis and Afghan auxiliaries, initiating a series of engagements that would break Shahi resistance (Bosworth, 1963, p. 122). According to the chronicler Al-Utbi in *Tarikh Yamini*, Mahmud camped just outside Peshawar, possibly in the plains immediately east of the Khyber Pass near Shahkas, which opens toward the Peshawar valley (Al-Utbi, trans. 1858, pp. 53-54). This strategic deployment strongly suggests that Mahmud's army utilised the Khyber corridor as its main route into the subcontinent.

Jayapala's Shahi forces, reportedly numbering over 100,000, suffered a decisive defeat, after which the Ghaznavids annexed the territories from Laghman to Kashmir and from Sirhind to Multan. The fall of the Shahis and the integration of Peshawar and the Khyber corridor into the Ghaznavid state marked a profound shift in regional power, bringing the district more fully into the orbit of Islamic Central-Asia (Bosworth, 1963, pp. 126-128).

The presence and abundance of Ghaznavid dirhams in Jamrud, especially in the context of rich artefact finds, directly support the interpretation that Mahmud's armies traversed the Khyber route, camping on its threshold before advancing on Peshawar. The distribution of coins in this area, and their stratigraphic associations, make the Khyber corridor not just a line of passage, but an economic and administrative frontier of the Ghaznavid state (Tye, 1995, pp. 103-105).

### **Significance:**

These discoveries underscore the dual significance of the Ghaznavid era for the Khyber region:

- a) First, they confirm the material and administrative integration of the district into a broader Islamic polity, as evidenced by standardised coinage, trade, and fiscal systems.
- b) Second, the narrative of conquest and subsequent coin finds highlights the enduring importance of the Khyber Pass as the primary channel for military campaigns, cultural exchange, and economic flows between Central Asia and the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent.

The Ghaznavid coins hoard of Jamrud, contextualised within the dramatic events of Mahmud's campaigns, serves as tangible testimony to Khyber's transformation from a contested frontier to a crucial province of an Islamic empire. This transformation would shape the region's historical trajectory for centuries to come.

#### **4.20.2 Seljuk Period (c. 1037-1308 CE)**

The Seljuks were a distinguished group of the Ghuzz (Oghuz) Turks who emerged from the steppes beyond the Oxus River and developed into one of the most potent forces in the medieval Islamic world. By 1050 CE, they had conquered Persia, establishing themselves successively at Merv, Isfahan (1063), and eventually Baghdad (1091), thus exercising hegemony over vast swathes of Central Asia and Iran. Under Alp Arslan (1063-1072), the greatest Seljuk sultan, the dynasty's reach extended even further: he advanced from Herat against Ghazni, reducing the once-mighty Ghaznavid rulers to tributary status within the Seljuk sphere (Bosworth, 1968, pp. 117-121).

This period represented a pivotal moment in the history of the eastern Islamic world. The Ghaznavids, who had previously held sway over Afghanistan and northwestern India, saw their dominance begin to wane, saw their power curtailed. Their capital was sacked first at the hands of the Seljuks and later in the devastating Mongol raids that followed. The final decades of the dynasty, epitomised by Bahram Shah (1118-1159), were characterised by attempts to preserve sovereignty through marital alliances with the Seljuks and by reliance on the patronage of sultans such as Sanjar, the last Seljuk of renown. However, Bahram's reign ultimately witnessed the effective end of Ghaznavid independence and the first major sack of Ghazni, a harbinger of further upheaval (Bosworth, 1963, pp. 164-167).

The significance of the Seljuk period in the Khyber region is now powerfully illuminated by the discovery of the Seljuk gold dinar hoard at Ali Masjid, Jamrud. This

assemblage provides the first stratified and securely dated evidence of Seljuk economic and political integration along the Khyber Pass. The typological details and reverse inscriptions, despite the obverses often being illegible, allow for precise attribution to the Seljuk era, directly aligning with historical accounts of Seljuk hegemony, commerce, and military movements across the Iranian plateau and into the subcontinent.

This coin hoard is more than just evidence of Seljuk currency in circulation; it serves as a crucial material foundation for reconstructing the region's economic and political chronology. The presence of such high-value gold coins points to episodes of significant wealth accumulation, likely linked to the passage of merchants, military expeditions, or diplomatic envoys through the corridor, a pattern consistent with the Khyber's historic function as the main artery connecting Central Asia to the heartlands of South Asia.

As the first documented Seljuk gold hoard from the Khyber, these coins enable scholars to synchronise the local archaeological and historical sequences with the broader timeline of Islamic dynasties, thus refining our understanding of trade, power, and cross-cultural exchange in the frontier zone (Pieper, 2021, p. 198). The stratigraphic context of the find deepens our reconstruction of Khyber's medieval past, demonstrating the permeability and dynamism of its borders during a period of imperial transition and commercial florescence.

The hoard also suggests that the region, far from being a peripheral backwater, was a locus of strategic and economic importance, integrated into the transregional networks that underpinned the Seljuk ascendancy. Through the material legacy of these coins, the complex and interconnected world of the 11th and 12th centuries comes vividly to light, situating Khyber firmly within the broader patterns of Islamic and Eurasian history.

#### **4.20.3 Ghurids and the Archaeology of Frontier Integration (c. 1175-1215 CE)**

The Ghurid dynasty, originating in the highlands of central Afghanistan, dramatically reconfigured the eastern Islamic world through a series of violent confrontations with the declining Ghaznavids. At the beginning of the reign of Bahram Shah, Saifuddin Suri, the governor of Ghor, usurped against his Ghaznavid masters and temporarily drove the Ghaznavids out of power, only to be crushed in a brutal counteroffensive (Bosworth, 1963, pp. 186-188). In 1150 CE, Saifuddin's brother Alauddin Jahansoz

("World-Burner") led a devastating campaign against Ghazni, sacking the city for seven days and nights, destroying monuments and chronicles, and inflicting massive casualties (Bosworth, 1963, p. 187). Alauddin extended his campaign to Bust, demolishing its grand buildings, but his subsequent refusal to pay tribute to Seljuk Sultan Sanjar led to his defeat and captivity near Herat.

In late c. 12<sup>th</sup> CE, the Ghurids, under the leadership of Mu'izz al-Din Muhammad ibn Sam (Shahab-ud-Din Muhammad Ghori, r. 1173-1206 CE), extended their campaigns far across the Peshawar valley and into the heart of the Indian subcontinent. Muhammad Ghori's military successes, especially against the Ghaznavids and subsequent consolidation of the Indo-Afghan frontier, laid the foundations for Islamic political dominance in India and set the stage for the Delhi Sultanate (Bosworth, 2011, pp. 191-194).

While literary sources offer lurid accounts of conquest, the archaeological and numismatic record for the Ghurids in the Khyber region is more fragmentary, yet newly recovered evidence is shifting the narrative. The discovery of a coin hoard of Mu'izz al-Din Muhammad ibn Sam from Shah Kas is of particular significance. This hoard comprises both silver and billon jitals, displaying the classic "horseman and bull" motif (Tye, 1995, pp. 142-146; Lane-Poole, 1892, pp. 49-51). The coexistence of Islamic and Indic symbols and scripts on these coins is telling: it reveals not just the monetary circulation typical of frontier zones, but the complex processes of acculturation, negotiation, and hybridisation that defined Ghurid rule in these contested lands (Chattopadhyaya, 1977, pp. 131-133).

This numismatic evidence, though limited, suggests that the Ghurid presence in Khyber, while historically overshadowed by military violence and the sack of urban centres, was also expressed through the pragmatic mechanics of governance, fiscal integration, and commercial exchange. The Jitals of Muhammad Ghori thus serve as both material witnesses to his authority and as proxies for understanding the spread of Islamic power and frontier dynamics during a transformative epoch in Khyber's history.

Although the political and military narrative of the Ghurids is vivid with drama and destruction, the archaeological record in Khyber, especially the coin hoard from Shah Kas, anchors this era in the rhythms of everyday economic life. Here, the convergence of Islamic and Indic forms on currency points to the lived complexities of identity,

trade, and administration on the Indo-Afghan frontier at the turn of the thirteenth century.

#### **4.20.4 The Delhi Sultanate in Khyber: Authority at the Frontier**

The era of the Delhi Sultanate (13<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> centuries CE) in the Khyber region stands out for its historical silences. Unlike the earlier or later periods, narrative chronicles and monumental architecture are largely absent, leaving only scattered material traces to attest to Sultanate ambitions along this volatile frontier.

What evidence does survive is telling. Rare finds of Khalji coins, especially those issued by Qutb al-Din Mubarak Shah I, mark the economic and political penetration of the Sultanate into the Khyber corridor. These coins, recovered primarily from Jamrud and its surroundings, offer concrete proof of the efforts by Delhi rulers to assert control and extend their monetary networks into the mountainous borderlands separating South and Central Asia (Jackson, 2003, pp. 201-202). Their presence signals moments of imperial engagement, reflecting both deliberate statecraft and the persistent obstacles faced in integrating the region.

In the realm of military architecture, local tradition attributes the construction of the White Fort (Spena Qalla) in Jamrud to Alauddin Khalji. While the physical remains are scant and the direct archaeological evidence limited, the attribution itself is significant. It speaks to the strategic imperatives that shaped the region's history, fortifications built not just for defence, but as statements of authority in a landscape historically defined by tribal autonomy and contested passage (Dani, 1995, p. 108).

Despite these interventions, the broader material record of the Sultanate period remains thin. The lack of enduring architecture or extensive coin hoards from this era underscores the difficulties the Delhi Sultans faced in holding the Khyber corridor, a terrain that resisted sustained administrative control and where local agency, geography, and competing interests constantly tested imperial resolve.

Thus, the historical legacy of the Delhi Sultanate in Khyber is measured less by what was built or written, and more by what endures as fragments, scattered coins, and remembered forts. These artefacts and traditions remind us not only of the Sultanate's reach, but also of the very real limits of their power at the threshold of South-Asia's most strategic mountain pass (Jackson, 2003, pp. 201-202; Dani, 1995, p. 108).



#### **4.20.5 Mughal Rule in the Khyber: Frontier, Passage, and Imperial Reach (1526-1857 CE)**

The history of the Mughal Empire's relationship with the Khyber region unfolds as a vivid interplay between imperial ambition, geographic constraint, and local agency. Despite the grandeur of Mughal sovereignty in the Indian heartland, the northwestern frontier, dominated by the Khyber Pass, remained a zone of recurrent contest, negotiation, and exchange. While monumental Mughal architecture is virtually absent from the archaeological record of Khyber, a remarkable corpus of coins, royal seals, and amulets, as well as references in imperial memoirs, collectively chart the practical limits and periodic assertions of Mughal authority in this strategic region.

The conquest of northern India by Babur in 1526 CE established a new Timurid dynasty known as the Mughals. However, Babur's actual penetration of the Khyber corridor was both episodic and fraught. Narrative sources and local oral traditions recount how, in 1505 and again after Panipat in 1526, Babur traversed the Khyber, often forced to avoid the main pass due to Afridi resistance. The Warsak hoard of nine silver shahrukhi coins, minted in Badakhshan and bearing the kalima alongside Babur's name and imperial titles, powerfully attests to these movements. Their discovery in the Warsak, Mullagori area, a known secondary route into the Peshawar Valley, underscores the interplay of imperial strategy and local terrain, while affirming the region's continuing role as a critical corridor for armies, commerce, and exchange (ur-Rahman 60; Babur, 1922, pp. 206, 250).

Humayun's subsequent reign saw even less Mughal authority in Khyber, as demonstrated by the near-total absence of his coinage; the sole specimen from Choura Khwar likely represents a transient passage rather than a stable rule. It was not until Akbar's reign that the region became more fully integrated into the Mughal economic and administrative system. Gold and silver coins from Jamrud, bearing the Islamic kalima, the names of the four caliphs, and references to the Ilahi calendar, mark the advent of Akbar's monetary reforms, the assertion of Mughal ideology, and the practical incorporation of the frontier into the imperial orbit. These discoveries, though numerically few, highlight the careful balancing Act of Akbar's statecraft, blending Persianate and Islamic traditions with a new vision of imperial universality.

Jahangir's rule is attested by a pair of Persian-inscribed silver rupees jointly naming Akbar and Jahangir, signalling continuity in both dynastic authority and the coinage

tradition. Under Shah Jahan, the material evidence becomes even more significant. Sixteen silver rupees from Jamrud, struck with the kalima, mint names, and royal epithets, demonstrate the circulation of imperial currency along the main trade arteries. In contrast, the discovery of a monumental 200-rupee silver coin at Taidi Bazaar (only the third known example of its type) attests to the region's participation in high-value exchanges and the projection of ceremonial power at the Mughal empire's northwest limits.

The Aurangzeb reign, marked by persistent tribal resistance and imperial campaigns, is richly documented in both textual and material sources. The royal seal of Aurangzeb from Shah Kas, with its elegant nasta'liq script and references to appointed local khans, reflects the administrative strategies used to manage the volatile Khyber. A recently uncovered hoard of thirty-three silver rupees from Ganj Gahri, bearing inscriptions from the Golkonda and Surat mints, attests to the expanse and integration of Mughal monetary networks during the late 17th century, while also hinting at the frontier's enduring instability and the need for economic safeguards during times of unrest.

The evidence for Mughal presence wanes markedly after Aurangzeb. Only two silver rupees of Bahadur Shah I and a single royal seal of Jahandar Shah have been discovered in Jamrud. Each artefact bears witness to the transient and frequently contested character of imperial authority, particularly amid periods of dynastic turmoil and resistance from tribal groups. The memory of fierce battles between Mughal forces and Afridi defenders persists in oral traditions and colonial histories, further underscoring the persistent challenges of securing the pass.

By the 18th century, the Mughal presence is recorded primarily in isolated coins, intermittent seals, and the conspicuous absence of substantial artefacts for later rulers. This numismatic silence mirrors the broader political disintegration of the empire and the ascendance of new powers, Durranis, Sikhs, and eventually the British, who would each contend for the Khyber in turn.

However, even in decline, Mughal influence persisted in the cultural and religious practices of the region. The discovery of an 18th-century Quranic amulet at Ghundi, inscribed with verses of divine protection and ancestral identity, reflects the enduring interplay of faith, migration, and self-conception that shaped the Khyber's societies,

reminding us that the Mughal legacy was more than simply imperial, but also intensely local and lived.

In sum, the Mughal period in Khyber is best reconstructed not through grand monuments but through a mosaic of coins, seals, and local narratives: a record of intermittent power, constant negotiation, and the enduring significance of the Khyber Pass as South Asia's most excellent frontier gateway.

#### **4.20.6 Nadir Shah Afshar: The Persian Invasion and the Battle of the Khyber Pass (1738)**

The passage of Nadir Shah Afshar through the Khyber Pass in late 1738 stands among the most consequential invasions in the history of South Asia. After consolidating his rule in Iran and subduing Afghanistan, Nadir Shah launched his campaign towards India, seeking to capitalise on Mughal weakness and open new routes of imperial expansion (Axworthy, 2009, p. 194; Tucker, 2010, p. 733).

As Nadir Shah approached, the Mughal Subedar of Kabul, Nasir Khan, hastily assembled 20,000 Afghan levies and fortified the main road between Ali Masjid and Jamrud, the gateway to Peshawar. In a bold move, Nadir Shah led a select cavalry force of 12,000 on an audacious night march via the steep Seh-chuba track, circumventing the expected route. On 15 November 1738, his surprise attack shattered Mughal lines at the Khyber Pass. Nasir Khan and key nobles were captured, and the Mughal defence collapsed, clearing the way for the Persian entry into Peshawar and, ultimately, the heartlands of Mughal India (Axworthy, 2009, pp. 251-252; Mehta, 2005, pp. 148-152).

Despite the seismic impact of Nadir Shah's victory, paving the way for the sack of Delhi and signalling the Mughal Empire's irreversible decline, no archaeological, numismatic, or epigraphic evidence directly linked to Nadir Shah's campaign has been recovered from District Khyber. Unlike other major invasions, the Persian passage left no coin hoards, battlefield relics, or datable artefacts. Our knowledge rests entirely on Persian, Mughal, and European chronicles, including the accounts of contemporary observers and later historians (Irvine, 1922, Vol. 2, pp. 330-360; Sarkar, 1973, pp. 26-32).

The absence of material evidence may reflect the rapidity and violence of the Persian onslaught, the dispersal of populations, or the ephemeral nature of occupation. Alternatively, it exposes the enduring gap between narrative history and the

archaeological record in the volatile borderlands of Khyber. However, the events of 1738-39 indelibly transformed the region, demonstrating the strategic centrality of the Khyber Pass as the gateway for imperial ambition and marking the start of a new era of Persian and later Afghan dominance in the northwest (Lockhart, 1938, p. 204; Sharma, 1999, pp. 727-730).

Nadir Shah's conquest of the Khyber Pass is a textbook case where historical memory vastly outpaces the evidence of the ground. His swift and devastating victory is apparent in the chronicles, but the archaeological silence underscores both the limits of imperial projection and the fragility of the frontier's material record.

#### **4.20.7 Durrani and Sikh Periods in Khyber: Imperial Contest, Local Resistance, and the Making of a Frontier (c. 1747 CE onward)**

Ahmad Shah Durrani laid the foundation of the Durrani Empire in 1747. He rose to prominence as one of the leading Islamic powers of the eighteenth century, extending his domain across Afghanistan, Iran, Central Asia, and northwestern India (Tye, 1995, p. 288). Ahmad Shah and his successors, especially Shah Zaman, relied on the Khyber Pass as their strategic route for repeated military campaigns into the Punjab, embedding Khyber within the broader orbit of Afghan imperial ambitions. Archaeological finds, notably gold and silver coins of Ahmad Shah Durrani and Shah Shuja al-Mulk from Jamrud, attest to this period of robust economic integration and underscore the extension of Durrani fiscal authority into the heart of the northwest frontier. However, Durrani control was always contested by the fiercely independent local tribes, whose resistance prevented any lasting subjugation of the region.

The subsequent decline of Durrani power opened the way for the rise of the Sikh Empire. The Sikh conquest of Peshawar in 1834 and the construction of Jamrud Fort by General Hari Singh Nalwa in 1836 marked the high tide of Sikh expansion along the Khyber frontier. The fort's strategic location at the entrance to the pass highlighted the Sikhs' resolve to assert control over the region, both against Afghan adversaries and resistant local communities.

However, the resilience of Afghan and tribal forces soon challenged Sikh ambitions. In 1837, Akbar Khan, son of Dost Muhammad Khan, led a major Afghan counteroffensive with the support of tribal levies. The resulting Battle of Jamrud proved decisive: though the Sikhs retained the fort, the death of Hari Singh Nalwa and the ferocity of the conflict

exposed the limits of Sikh control and marked the effective frontier between Sikh and Afghan domains. The Jamrud Fort, which still stands today, remains a symbol of this pivotal clash and the enduring autonomy of the Khyber tribes.

The Sikh period, though brief, left a visible archaeological and material legacy in the region. Sikh coinage in Gurmukhi and Persian, military medals, administrative seals, and fortifications in Jamrud, Bara, and Landi Kotal all attest to attempts at consolidating authority and securing key transit routes. However, these measures were consistently undermined by local resistance, which ultimately weakened Sikh rule and facilitated the British annexation of the Punjab.

In short, the Durrani and Sikh periods in Khyber were characterised by relentless imperial competition and the persistent assertion of frontier autonomy. Coins and forts stand as material witnesses to cycles of conquest and retreat. However, it was the interplay of external ambition and local agency that truly shaped the historical trajectory of the region, laying the groundwork for its pivotal role in the coming era of British colonial expansion (Singh, 2021, p. 335; Tye, 1995, p. 288).

#### **4.21 British Rule in Khyber (1849-1947): Imperial Power, Tribal Agency, and the Making of the Frontier**

Following the Sikh defeat in 1849, the British Indian Empire found itself at the gateway of the Khyber Pass, prepared to exert authority over a region that had long resisted direct foreign domination. The Afridis, celebrated for their martial prowess, joined the British forces in substantial numbers, earning distinction in the Indian Army, particularly during the Mutiny of 1857 (Gazetteer, 1932, pp. 121-122; Stevens, 2012, p. 92). However, tribal loyalties during this period remained fluid; between 1857 and 1878, Afridi allegiances frequently shifted as the Afghan Amir provided subsidies to local chiefs and stationed garrisons at Ali Masjid to offset British influence (Gazetteer, 1932, p. 135). On the eve of the Second Afghan War, Amir Sher Ali distributed thousands of rifles among the Afridis and Shinwaris. This move underscored the ongoing struggle for Khyber's strategic allegiance.

British penetration of the Khyber corridor began in earnest with Captain Wade's 1839 mission to escort Shahzada Timur to Kabul, marking the region's entry into the "Great Game" of imperial rivalry (Singh, 2021, p. 335). Following the annexation of Punjab and the suppression of Sikh resistance, the British advanced into Afghanistan, replacing

Amir Dost Muhammad Khan with Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk (Gazetteer, 1932, p. 121). The 1<sup>st</sup> Anglo-Afghan War (1839-42) proved disastrous for the British Raj, culminating in the annihilation of an entire column retreating from Kabul, a debacle later termed "Auckland's Folly" (Dalrymple, 2012, pp. 234-236).

Khyber was the stage for repeated military campaigns, as British columns under Captain Wade, and later General Pollock, clashed with Afridi tribes and Afghan garrisons at key sites such as Jamrud, Ali Masjid, and Lala China (Gazetteer, 1932, pp. 122-124; Allen, 2012, p. 44). While the British occasionally captured forts and outposts, their convoys and rear guards faced continuous attacks from Afridi and Orakzai lashkars, who combined guerrilla tactics with intimate knowledge of the terrain (Pieper, 2009, p. 225).

The pattern of local resistance was not limited to pitched battles. Afridis repeatedly ambushed British garrisons, besieged supply lines, and recaptured forts after their defenders were weakened by disease or logistical failure. Notably, at Lala China, Afridi forces overwhelmed a garrison of Yusufzai auxiliaries, seizing both their pay and supplies, before withdrawing into the hills (Gazetteer, 1932, p. 124). British attempts to relieve besieged posts, such as Brigadier Wilde's failed advance to Ali Masjid, were routinely repulsed, highlighting the limits of imperial control and the tenacity of local opposition.

The Second Anglo-Afghan War (1878-1880) marked another turning point. The British, facing increased tribal unrest and the threat of Russian influence, launched a multi-pronged invasion via the Khyber, capturing Ali Masjid and Dakka and subsequently imposing the Treaty of Gandamak (1879) on Amir Yakub Khan. This treaty formally ceded control of the Khyber Pass and its flanking tribes to the British, establishing the Khyber Agency as an administrative unit (Gazetteer, 1932, p. 131).

Tribal management was institutionalised through the recruitment of Maliks (recognised village elders), cash allowances for local leaders (Malik, 2013, pp. 104-105), and the raising of the Khyber Rifles and Khasadar force from among the tribes themselves (Stevens, 2012, p. 98). While the British established strategic cantonments and forts, including the pivotal Shagai Fort, much of the day-to-day security of the pass remained in the hands of locally recruited forces, reflecting the pragmatic realities of indirect rule (Gazetteer, 1932, pp. 121-141).

Despite these measures, the tribal appetite for autonomy remained undiminished. The Khyber region erupted in rebellion in 1897, when Afridi and Orakzai tribes, inspired by Mullah Syed Akbar and driven by the spread of pan-Islamic sentiment, attacked British posts throughout the pass. The Khyber Rifles, depleted and under-resourced, were forced to abandon Landi Kotal, and a massive punitive expedition was launched under Sir W. Lockhart (Roy, 2012, p. 139). The subsequent Tirah Campaign saw the deployment of 30,000 British and Indian troops, leading to the temporary occupation of the Afridi heartland in Tirah. However, this effort ultimately fell short of suppressing the enduring spirit of local resistance (Sharma, 2008, p. 81).

Peace was restored only through renewed agreements, increases in tribal subsidies, and the continued reliance on local forces for the maintenance of security. This system allowed for a modicum of stability but preserved the essential independence of the tribes.

The British period saw not only military and administrative innovation, but also profound social and economic change. The construction of roads, railways, and communication lines, culminating in the completion of the Khyber Railway and the Madanak Tunnel, linked the region more closely with Peshawar and India (Tandon, 2021, p. 68). The creation of the Khyber Rifles and Khasadar, recruitment of local levies, and introduction of the Maliks system provided new forms of employment and indirect influence (Gazetteer, 1932, pp. 135-138).

While the tribe members' daily life retained a semi-nomadic, pastoral character, new schools, greater exposure to markets, and enhanced trade with Afghanistan contributed to a slow transformation in literacy, cultural production, and living standards (Metcalf & Metcalf, 2006, p. 156). British policy, keen to avoid outright confrontation and to maintain peace, left intact much of the traditional Pakhtoonwali (tribal code) and Jirga system, offering the tribes a unique degree of autonomy compared to other colonial regions.

By the early twentieth century, the imprint of British administration and military presence was unmistakable across the region, evident in the construction of forts such as Jamrud, Shagai, and Michni, as well as the engineering feats of the Khyber Railway with its dramatic tunnels and bridges (Gazetteer, 1932, pp. 121-141; Stevens, 2012, p. 136). The circulation of British Indian coinage, silver rupees issued under William IV,

Victoria, Edward VII, George V, and George VI, not only serves as chronological markers for the archaeology of this era but also offers insight into the region's economic and imperial incorporation (Pieper, 2009, p. 225).

However, beneath the surface of colonial power, the Afridi, Shinwari, and other Khyber tribes retained a fierce sense of independence. British efforts at "pacification" and "forward policy" were met with both tactical accommodation and episodic revolt, ensuring that, even at the height of empire, the Khyber remained a space of negotiated sovereignty. This dynamic continued to shape its identity into the twentieth century.

#### **4.22 Khyber in the Recent Era: From Independence to the Modern Day**

Following the creation of Pakistan in 1947, the Khyber region underwent a profound transformation as it was incorporated into the new state. Initially, Khyber was retained as part of the semi-autonomous Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). Integration into Pakistan's political and administrative mainstream was gradual and often contested, reflecting both the persistence of tribal autonomy and the central government's evolving frontier policy. The Pakistani state prioritised the region's stability through a mix of security arrangements, economic incentives, and symbolic nation-building efforts. Major infrastructure projects, roads, bridges, the enhancement of border posts, and the establishment of educational and healthcare facilities were gradually introduced to promote connectivity, security, and development. The construction of the Khyber Rifles mess, administrative offices, and new check posts exemplified the ongoing security focus. At the same time, large-scale vaccination and literacy campaigns in the late twentieth century signalled an intent to uplift the local population and integrate the region with the rest of the country.

A watershed moment came in 2018 with the historic merger of FATA into Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, abolishing the colonial-era Frontier Crimes Regulation (FCR) and extending Pakistan's constitutional and legal framework to Khyber. This reform, while welcomed in many quarters, has brought both opportunities and challenges, as the region continues to negotiate its dual identity as both a historic frontier and a modern administrative district. Recent years have seen intensified development initiatives, expanded road and communication networks, and increased access to education and healthcare, as Pakistan seeks to realise the promise of full socio-economic integration.





## CHAPTER-V

### 5 RECENT ARCHAEOLOGICAL DISCOVERIES AND CHRONOLOGICAL RECONSTRUCTION OF KHYBER'S HISTORY

#### 5.1 Recent Discoveries

During the most recent phase of archaeological investigations conducted in the Khyber District between 2023 and 2024, focusing particularly on the Jamrud, Landhi Kotal, Bara, and the subregions of the district Khyber, the employed survey strategy primarily relied on classical random sampling techniques. This methodological decision was shaped by the extensive and topographically challenging terrain of the region, which spans approximately 3600+ square kilometres. Over half of this area consists of rugged mountain ranges, steep gorges, and deeply incised valleys. Given these physical constraints and the limited duration of the project, the adoption of systematic transect-based surveys was deemed logistically impractical (Archaeological Survey Report, 2024).

The archaeological landscape of the District Khyber has been significantly impacted by decades of unregulated excavation and widespread antiquities looting, particularly at sites associated with all kinds of archaeological sites, mainly Buddhist and Hindu Shāhi periods. Like many tribal regions of former FATA, Khyber has historically lacked formal mechanisms for heritage protection. During both the British colonial administration and the subsequent governance under tribal authorities, numerous archaeological artefacts, including Buddhist sculptures, inscribed panels, and architectural fragments, were either illicitly removed or destroyed. Several artefacts and epigraphic remains once documented by 19th-century explorers such as Deane and Stein are now untraceable, leaving substantial lacunae in the region's archaeological record (Deane, 1891; Stein, 1905).

The challenges inherent in documenting archaeological sites within the region are profoundly shaped by a web of cultural, social, and regional dynamics. A total of 152 sites could not be systematically recorded or photographed, a deficit stemming not merely from logistical difficulties, but from the deep-seated realities of the local context. Intense tribal rivalry often generates a climate of suspicion, leading to limited cooperation with research teams and, in some cases, the active concealment of sites from outsiders. This mistrust is frequently compounded by a pervasive lack of

confidence in government authorities, as well as previous experiences of unfulfilled promises or perceived exploitation, which further disincentivise community members from facilitating archaeological surveys. Moreover, the complex tapestry of local customs, kinship networks, and the region's long history of socio-political autonomy make the establishment of rapport with communities both essential and challenging, thus complicating any efforts to conduct comprehensive documentation.

Administrative limitations and security concerns represent additional, formidable obstacles. Access to certain zones was explicitly restricted by governmental or law enforcement agencies, either due to prevailing instability or because of ongoing military operations. For example, the entirety of Rajgal was categorically excluded from the present survey on the grounds of security risk, precluding any possibility of site assessment in this strategically sensitive area. In the upper Tirah valley, researchers identified the presence of three intact Buddhist stupas; however, they were prevented from visiting these sites by law enforcement authorities, who cited potential threats to the safety of the survey team. The persistence of such barriers underscores the vulnerability of archaeological heritage in conflict-prone zones, where documentation efforts are frequently curtailed by external constraints rather than scholarly will or methodological rigour. Collectively, these factors highlight the urgent need for collaborative approaches that engage local stakeholders, address security challenges, and work towards administrative solutions in order to safeguard and study the region's rich but largely inaccessible material culture.

Of the district's total administrative units, only a portion of union councils, mainly within the more accessible areas of Jamrud and the southern periphery of Landi Kotal, have been comprehensively surveyed. Security constraints and the complex dynamics of tribal authority have impeded fieldwork in remote or politically sensitive localities. Despite these challenges, the 2023-2024 archaeological survey successfully identified approximately 285+ sites of different periods, many of which exhibit stratified occupational layers indicative of long-term and multi-phase settlement activity.

The preliminary chronological classification of these sites is as follows: 26 sites are tentatively attributed to the pre Buddhist era, likely corresponding to early tribal or protohistoric habitation; 192 sites have been linked to the Buddhist period, reflecting Khyber's integration into the broader Gandhāran cultural and religious milieu; 168 sites are associated with the Hindu Shāhi period, suggesting continued socio political

development into the early medieval epoch; and 19 sites date to the Islamic period, marking a gradual cultural and religious transition coinciding with the expansion of Muslim polities into the region.

These findings reaffirm the Khyber District's historical role as a vital cultural corridor bridging Central and South Asia. The region's position along the strategic Khyber Pass facilitated the movement of people, goods, ideas, and armies, thereby fostering a confluence of religious traditions, artistic practices, and political authority. The thorough documentation of historically significant tehsils like Jamrud and Landi Kotal establishes a robust basis for future archaeological investigations, the preservation of cultural heritage, and the formulation of sustainable strategies for managing cultural resources (Department of Archaeology, 2024).

### **5.1.1 TEHSIL JAMRUD**

Jamrud is located at the eastern gateway of the Khyber Pass in the northwestern part of Khyber District and holds exceptional archaeological, historical, and strategic significance. Located approximately 17 kilometres northwest of Peshawar, at coordinates 34°N and 71°23'E, Jamrud functions as both a historical threshold and a cultural crossroads. Throughout history, the town has served as a key military and logistical node for successive empires, including the Mughals, Sikhs, and British, each of whom recognised its strategic value in controlling access to the Khyber Pass and beyond (Gazetteer of the Khyber Agency, Year).

One of the most prominent historical landmarks in the area is the Jamrud Fort, constructed in the early 19th century under the command of General Hari Singh Nalwa during Sikh rule. The fort, still largely intact, stands as a material reminder of the region's militarised past and the fluctuating control exerted over the Pass. Jamrud's archaeological landscape is equally compelling. Ancient mounds, remnants of Buddhist occupation, and Islamic period graves are dispersed across its hills and peripheries, pointing to the area's continuous occupation and cultural transformations over centuries. Notable among these is the Bab e Khyber, a monumental stone archway that marks the symbolic entrance to the Khyber Pass. It functions not only as a physical marker of transition but also as a site of cultural identity and historical memory for local communities (Department of Archaeology, Year).

Despite its significance, Jamrud has historically received less archaeological attention than other prominent regions in Pakistan. However, recent initiatives aimed at heritage documentation have begun to illuminate its rich cultural stratigraphy. The area reflects multiple historical layers from Gandhāran Buddhist influences to the impact of tribal structures and colonial interventions, making it a particularly fertile ground for multidisciplinary research. The convergence of ancient trade routes, military campaigns, and religious transitions positions Jamrud as a critical locus for scholars interested in the historical dynamics of the Khyber region and the broader interface between Central and South Asia (Archaeological Survey Report, 2024).

### 5.1.1.1 PREHISTORIC PERIOD

#### A. Chottra Rock Engraving

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                               |               |            |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------|------------|
| Name:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Chottra Rock Engraving        | Reference No: | KH-01      |
| Nearest Village:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Lora Miana                    | Area of Site: | 6 /2 M     |
| Coordinates:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | 334°6'45.51"N & 71°19'51.39"E | Altitude:     | 647 M      |
| Access Route:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Inaccessible                  | Condition:    | intact     |
| Cast Area                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Mullagori                     | Sub Cast      | Parth Khel |
| Site Description:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                               |               |            |
| <p>This prehistoric engraving (Plate 3.2 in Part II: Illustrations Plates) site is situated in the village of Lora Miana, positioned at coordinates 34.112641°N and 71.330942°E (see Map 1.9 in Part II), with an elevation of approximately 647m above sea level. It represents one of the region's earliest known rock art discoveries, providing valuable insight into the life and beliefs of ancient communities. The primary feature of this site is a large natural boulder that bears a striking engraving depicting both human and animal figures. The scene illustrates a human figure engaged in archery, possibly symbolising hunting or ritual activity, aiming a bow and arrow. Accompanying this figure are two animals: one identifiable as a jackal, while the other resembles an ibex. This unique composition suggests the site's significance as an early expression of symbolic or communicative art, reflecting a prehistoric interaction with the natural world.</p> |                               |               |            |

#### B. Sher Bridge Petroglyphs

|       |                         |               |       |
|-------|-------------------------|---------------|-------|
| Name: | Sher Bridge Petroglyphs | Reference No: | KH-02 |
|-------|-------------------------|---------------|-------|

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                             |               |            |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------|------------|
| Nearest Village:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Sher Baraj Kali             | Area of Site: | 4 / 2 M    |
| Coordinates:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | 34° 8'43.05"N 71°24'21.83"E | Altitude:     | 384 M      |
| Access Route:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Accessible                  | Condition:    | intact     |
| Cast Area                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Mullagori                   | Sub Cast      | Parth Khel |
| Site Description:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                             |               |            |
| <p>This petroglyph (Plate 3.3 in Part II: Illustrations Plates) site is located in the village of Sher Bridge, positioned at 34.145292°N and 71.406063°E, with the elevation of approximately 384m above sea level (see Map 10 in Part II). Recognised as the first site associated with petroglyphic art, it is situated on a mountain terrace, offering a commanding view of the surrounding landscape. The site consists of three prominent engraved boulders, the largest of which measures an impressive 12 feet in length and 22 feet in height. The second boulder stands at a height of 5 feet and 5 inches, with a width of 5 feet. The third boulder measures 11 feet in length and 6 feet 5 inches in height. Each rock surface features carved depictions, primarily focused on animals such as goats and oxen, alongside representations of human hands and what appears to be a hunting or chase scene. The engravings collectively offer valuable insight into the symbolic and possibly ritualistic expressions of the prehistoric inhabitants of the region.</p> |                             |               |            |

#### 5.1.1.2 PROTOHISTORIC PERIOD

##### A. Gandhāra Grave Culture

The protohistoric cemeteries, famously known as the Gandhāra Grave Culture, represent a significant archaeological horizon distributed across northern Pakistan and parts of northern India. Initially documented in the valleys of Dir and Swat by Italian and Pakistani archaeologists during the 1950s-60s (Tucci, 1963, 1966, 1977, 1997; Antonini, 1963; Stacul, 1966, 1967, 1969, 1970, 1971, 1975, 1982, 1998, 2000; Dani, 1966, 1968, 1978, 1980, 1992, 1998, 2001), these cemeteries were first considered regionally bounded. Dani (1968a) asserted the name based on early discoveries in the Vale of Peshawar. However, later surveys expanded the culture's known extent to Chitral, Bajaur, Mohmand, Gilgit Baltistan, and beyond, necessitating a wider geographic classification.

A total of 261 cemeteries and grave sites with some similarities in burial practices, grave constructions, and material culture have been discovered (Zahir, 2016, 278) and

associated with the “Gandhāra Grave Culture” in northern and northwestern South Asia. “Gandhāra” is a distinct geographical region, first mentioned in the Rg Veda (1.120.1 and 1.126.7) (Swati, 1997: 77; Young, 2009: 58) and, prior to 539 BCE, one of the provinces of the Achaemenid Empire of Persia (Brosius, 2006: 11, 49). Herodotus (Histories 3: 91) recorded it as part of the seventh province of the Achaemenid Empire and not as a separate satrapy in itself.

Dr. Zahir has classified these discoveries in eight major geographical zones (Zahir, 2016: pp. 1- 16) that include:

Zone 1 encompasses the rugged mountainous valleys of Chitral, Dir, and Swat, traversed by rivers such as the Swat and Panjkora, with over 100 sites reflecting diverse funerary customs (Zahir, 2016: 2). Zone 2, covering Bajaur and Mohmand, shares cultural continuity with Swat and Dir despite contemporary access challenges. The Bajaur region (FATA Secretariat, 2007) and Mohmand (Dichter, 1967; FATA Secretariat, 2007) show notable archaeological density, with 69 gravesites documented by 2005 (Ali & Rahman, 2005), though many were damaged (Jan, 2002, personal communication).

Zone 3 spans Central Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, including the Vale of Peshawar, historically Gandhāra (Beal, 1968; Behrendt, 2004; Cunningham, 2007; Dani, 1968b; Foucher, 1915; Hargreaves, 1930; Zwalf, 1979). The Kabul Swat river system and connectivity with Central Asia enhanced its strategic importance (Ali, 2003; Young & Ali, 2007), yet only 19 sites have been noted (Khan, 1979, 1993).; Zahir (2016: 3 4) Zone 4 includes Dera Ismail Khan and the Gomal Valley. Excavations at Gumla and Hathala (Dani, 1972, 1992) revealed parallels with northern zones. Despite its arid nature, the area is agriculturally viable due to irrigation (Ali & Zakirullah, 2005), and its geostrategic location links Central and South Asia (Ali & Elstov, 2009; Zahir, 2016: 5 6).

Zone 5, Gilgit Baltistan, is characterised by its extreme terrain and archaeological richness, with 23 known protohistoric cemeteries (Dani, 2001). Though largely unarable (Spate & Learmonth, 1967), it retains historical significance (Jettmar, 2001; Kamal & Nasir, 1998). Zone 6 comprises Hazara and Taxila, where the fertile Taxila valley (Cunningham, 1871; Dani, 1999; Marshall, 1975) connects with the hill regions

of Hazara (Ali et al., 2009a; IGI NWFP, 2002; GHD, 1883-84), yielding 11 burial sites, with Sarai Khola excavated (Halim, 1972).

Zone 7 includes Punjab's Salt Range (Buck, 1906; IGI, 1908), historically significant for its geology and rainfall patterns (Kureshy, 1977; Spate & Learmonth, 1967). Sites here are fewer but significant (Dani, 1978; Salim, 1992, 2001; Dar, 2001). Zone 8 extends into Indian Kashmir, Ladakh, and Uttarakhand, where despite limited excavations (Francke, 1914; Shali, 2001), at least 11 cemeteries in Uttarakhand have been recorded (Agrawal et al., 1995; Sharma, 1997; Kandhuri et al., 1997), suggesting cross cultural continuity (Coningham & Manual, 2007; Zahir, 2016: 6 9).

However, in recent decades, archaeological documentation has expanded significantly, with discoveries of protohistoric cemeteries beside Chitral, Bajaur, and Mohmand, extending the geographical footprint of the Gandhāra Grave Culture. Some of these new sites have undergone excavation, revealing evidence that necessitates a reassessment of previously held geographical and cultural assumptions. The broader distribution suggests a more complex cultural landscape that transcends earlier regional boundaries.

#### **i. Discovery of a Gandhāra Grave Culture Burial at Shahkas, Jamrud.**

A notable breakthrough in the study of the Gandhāra Grave Culture (Plate 1-10, Section 5.4.1 in Part II) has recently emerged from Shahkas, near the Malkano graveyard in Jamrud, District Khyber. This marks the first such discovery in the Khyber region, offering critical evidence of protohistoric funerary practices previously undocumented in this area. The grave was unearthed accidentally during construction activities for a private house. Upon reaching a depth of approximately 10 to 12 feet (Plate 1), a substantial burial chamber was revealed, sealed with a heavy limestone slab measuring roughly 7 feet in length and 5 feet in width (Plate 2). This method of interment, using a stone covering (Plate 3), aligns with cist-type graves commonly associated with the Gandhāra Grave Culture.

Inside the burial, an assemblage of well-preserved ceramic vessels was discovered (Plates 5-9). The most prominent among these is a large, globular jar with a slightly flared rim (Plate 5), which contained traces of blackened ash (Plate 10). The presence of ash is a compelling indicator of cremation, a practice occasionally found within Gandhāran funerary contexts, suggesting ritual disposal of the body through fire. This



supports hypotheses that cremation was part of their belief system and possibly reserved for specific social classes or ritual purposes.

Surrounding the cremation jar were multiple smaller ceramic forms, including terracotta vases, miniature goblet-like cups, and thin-walled chalice-shaped vessels resembling wine cups. These items likely served symbolic or ritualistic functions. One excellent example appears to be a thin-necked, stemmed goblet, potentially used for offering or libation. Another vessel, smaller and bowl-shaped, may have functioned as a container for water or grains.

The deliberate placement of these objects, commonly interpreted as funerary offerings, strongly suggests a belief in the afterlife. These items appear to be provisions for the deceased in their post-mortem journey, a characteristic trait of many Indo-Iranian and Central-Asian burial customs of the late Bronze and early Iron Age. The variation in both form and function observed among the pottery suggests a nuanced grasp of ritual practices and may indicate that these vessels symbolically represented everyday objects intended for use in the afterlife..

### **Archaeological and Cultural Significance**

Culturally, the Shahkas burial offers critical data to reevaluate the interaction between local tribal communities in the Khyber region and the broader transregional networks of the early Iron Age. The presence of Gandhāran-style funerary artefacts in Jamrud indicates either the movement of peoples or cultural transmission routes linking the Khyber Pass with Swat, Chitral, and possibly even Central Asia.

Through the interpretation of material culture and faunal remains from similar protohistoric contexts (Zahir, 2016, ), it can be inferred that the communities associated with the Gandhāra Grave Culture were likely practicing transhumance, a seasonal pastoral movement between plains and uplands, as suggested by Young (2003). This pastoral mobility may explain the dispersed pattern of cemeteries, including the newly found Shahkas burial, situated along ancient communication corridors that connected grazing zones and trade routes across northwestern Pakistan.

Given the region's historical role as a conduit between South and Central Asia, the burial at Shahkas may therefore reflect an intersection of traditions shaped by both indigenous practices and external cultural influences. Moreover, this discovery enhances the scholarly understanding of how mortuary traditions evolved in response

to environmental, political, and ideological contexts. It also provides an impetus for systematic archaeological surveys and excavations in the Khyber District, which remains relatively underexplored due to logistical and security challenges. The grave's contents could serve as comparative material for typological studies, radiocarbon dating, and residue analysis to refine chronologies and reconstruct ritual behaviours.

In summary, the Shahkas burial is not only a milestone in the archaeology of the Khyber region but also a culturally rich testament to the diversity and complexity of the Gandhāra Grave Culture. It affirms the broad territorial reach of this culture, underscores the symbolic depth of its funerary customs, and opens new interdisciplinary avenues for understanding the socio-religious life of protohistoric communities in the broader Gandhāran world.

### **5.1.1.3 ACHAEMENIAN PERIOD (c. 550 BCE to 330 BCE)**

The numismatic evidence under examination reveals a significant hoard of gold coins and gold objects, the majority of which were reportedly discovered accidentally at Ali Masjid, near Jamrud, and catalogued as Group 1 (Coins 1-5 and 8, Section 4.1 in Part II: Coins Illustrations), along with various other gold artefacts. These coins, attributed to the reigns of Darius I and Xerxes I (circa 505-480 BCE), belong to the "King and Wreath" type, depicting the monarch in a kneeling or running posture with a bow, an iconic representation within early Achaemenid imperial iconography. Group 2 coins (Coins. 5-7), sharing similar typological features, were unearthed separately at Sur Kamar and are dated to the period spanning from Xerxes II (c. 420 BCE) to Artaxerxes II (c. 375 BCE). Both groups align closely with Carradice Type II classification and are consistent with the Brindley 6 and Klein typologies (Coins nos. 755 and 773). Additionally, Group 3 comprises an unreported gold coin bearing the posthumous iconography of Alexander III, featuring on the obverse Heracles. At the same time, the reverse depicts Zeus enthroned, typical of Alexandrine coinage minted during or shortly after his campaigns. The compositional and stylistic analysis of this assemblage suggests that most of the coins may be classified as early period darics, a widely circulated form of Achaemenid gold currency. However, considering the continuity of minting practices and the extended circulation lifespan of such types, it remains plausible that similar issues were also produced during the reign of Darius III, thereby complicating precise chronological attribution. This hoard, therefore, provides critical

insight into the persistence of imperial iconography and monetary policy across successive Achaemenid and early Hellenistic regimes.

### **Details of the discovered coins.**

#### **G1. Darius I Xerxes I (c. 505 BCE - 480 BCE)**

**Type. 1.1.** King and Wreath

**Obv.** King wearing cidaris and candies, quiver over shoulder, in kneeling running stance right, drawing bow.

**Rev.**

**Reference:** Carradice Type II. Brindley 6. Klein 755.

Coin nos.. 1-3 Obverse and fourth coins reverse are available, which are part of a gold finding from Ali Majid, plate 6.

#### **G2. Xerxes II to Artaxerxes II. (c. 420 BCE - 375 BCE)**

**Type. 1.2.** King and Wreath

**Obv.** King wearing cidaris and candies, quiver over shoulder, in kneeling running stance right, drawing bow.

**Rev.** Not available.

**Reference:** Measurement 24mm, 15.83 grams. Carradice Type II. Brindley 6. Klein 755,

Brindley 6. Klein 773.

Coin nos. 5-7

#### **G3. Alexander III (ca. 336 323BC)**

**Type.** Heracles and Zeus

**Obv.** Not Available (Head of Heracles, wearing a lion skin, facing right).

**Rev.** Zeus seated on throne facing left, holding eagle in outstretched right hand, sceptre in left.

**Reference:** unreported Coin.

### **A. Ceremonial or Royal Achaemenian Gold Goblet/ Cup**

The goblet (Plate 1-3, Section 5.5.2 in Part II) was accidentally discovered in 2014-2015 during excavation work for a house foundation in Begyari village, located in the Jamrud. The find occurred unexpectedly when residents were digging the foundation of a house during construction and unearthed the object embedded within the soil strata. This discovery marks the first time a significant archaeological object of such artistic and cultural magnitude has been unearthed from the Jamrud area, and more broadly, it stands as a rare and exceptional find in all of South Asia linked directly to the Achaemenid Empire. While textual and minor material evidence of Achaemenid influence has been previously suggested across the Indo-Iranian frontier, including

Gandhāra and the wider Punjab region, no artefact of this level of craftsmanship, iconography, and stylistic precision had ever been recovered until the unearthing of this ceremonial goblet at Begyari. The goblet's iconographic motifs, mythical winged beasts in dynamic relief, are unmistakably aligned with Achaemenian artistic traditions, most notably seen in imperial Persian courtly items and palace reliefs at Persepolis and Susa. Its discovery thus fills a crucial gap in the archaeological record and offers tangible, high-value evidence of the empire's presence or influence in this frontier region. This unprecedented find redefines the archaeological landscape of the region and elevates Jamrud, for the first time, onto the map of major Achaemenid-related sites in South Asia.

### **i. Description and Iconography**

The goblet is fashioned from gilded or high karat gold (Plate 1-3, Section 5.5.2 in Part II), showcasing exquisite metalwork that was characteristic of Achaemenid craftsmanship. The artefact displays relief decorations of mythological winged gryphons, combining the body of a lion with the head and wings of an eagle. Such composite creatures symbolised divine protection, power, and royal authority. They were commonly depicted in Achaemenid palace art, including the reliefs at Persepolis, as well as on luxury objects linked to courtly life.

On the body of the vessel, the high relief gryphons are shown in a dynamic, forward striding pose, wings raised and claws extended, evoking movement and vitality. The anatomical precision and stylistic detailing, especially the rendering of musculature and feather textures, exemplify Persian court art's Synthesis of Mesopotamian, Anatolian, and Central-Asian artistic traditions.

The handle of the goblet is cylindrical and possibly attached using a casting or welding technique. It is functional yet elegantly simple, perhaps designed to balance both aesthetic harmony and utility.

### **ii. Function and Cultural Context**

Goblets like this were typically used in elite contexts such as royal banquets, religious rituals, or as diplomatic gifts exchanged between satraps and kings. The use of gold and the presence of royal iconography suggest this object belonged to a member of the aristocracy or royal household. In Achaemenid ideology, drinking vessels often had

symbolic associations with legitimacy, feasting, and divine blessing, ideas that permeated through Zoroastrian-influenced royal rituals.

The prominence of gryphons may also reflect the Achaemenid Empire's visual language, which portrayed the king as a cosmic ruler defended by divine or semi-divine protectors. The symmetry and repetition of these forms on the cup's body reinforce themes of order, control, and harmony, key elements of Achaemenid imperial ideology.

### **iii. Comparative Analysis**

This artefact bears resemblance to gold rhyta and ceremonial cups found in Persian royal tombs and elite burials in Susa, Persepolis, and eastern provinces like Arachosia or Gandhāra, where similar motifs have been documented in Achaemenid-influenced art (cf. Tilia, 1972; Roaf, 1974). These artefacts, often crafted from gold or silver, exemplify the empire's sophisticated artistry and cultural symbolism. Notable examples include the gold rhyton from Ecbatana, dating to around 500 BCE, now preserved in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City. This piece features a lion's head and showcases the intricate metalworking skills of Achaemenid artisans. The Begyari goblet shares stylistic similarities with other Achaemenid artefacts, such as the winged lion cup from the Miho Museum in Japan and the golden bowl of Xerxes housed in the National Museum of Iran. These parallels suggest a shared cultural and artistic tradition across the Achaemenid Empire's vast territory.

There is a compelling possibility that the ceremonial gold cup discovered at Begyari, Jamrud, while distinctly Achaemenid in its iconographic execution, may have drawn artistic inspiration from earlier Mycenaean prototypes, specifically, the well-documented gold cups excavated from shaft graves at Mycenae (cf. *The Epic of Man*, pp. 151-152). These Late Bronze Age Mycenaean cups, dated to the 16th-15th centuries BCE, often feature repoussé motifs of bulls, lions, or hunting scenes, and reflect a tradition of elite funerary art intended to symbolise power, authority, and divine favour. The similarities lie not only in the material (gold) but also in the use of dynamic, mythological imagery, such as winged beasts and predatory animals, wrapped in a frieze-like layout around the vessel's circumference. These Mycenaean designs became widely emulated across the eastern Mediterranean and Near East, influencing visual language even beyond the fall of Mycenaean civilisation.

Following the Persian annexation of various territories formerly connected through eastern Mediterranean trade networks, including regions with residual Mycenaean artistic influence, the Achaemenid court culture absorbed and synthesised diverse iconographies. The spread of such motifs into Achaemenid satrapies like Arachosia and Gandhāra is well documented, and Greco-Persian hybrid art became a hallmark of the eastern Achaemenid world. This phenomenon, seen in the fusion of stylised animal figures, swirling wing designs, and ceremonial forms, supports the hypothesis that the Begyari goblet could have drawn from an inherited visual tradition stemming from Mycenaean forms. Such influence may have been transmitted indirectly through trade, conquest, or the mobility of artisans serving in imperial workshops. Thus, the Begyari vessel not only exemplifies Achaemenid ceremonial luxury but also echoes a much older lineage of artistic expression from the Mycenaean elite, preserved and reimagined in a Persian imperial context.

Its stylistic parallels can also be drawn with "Greco-Persian" metalworks unearthed in Central Asia and northwest India, evidencing widespread cross-cultural interaction within the empire's eastern satrapies. The discovery of the Begyari goblet underscores the Achaemenid Empire's far-reaching influence and the interconnectedness of its diverse regions. This artefact not only enriches our understanding of Achaemenid art and culture but also highlights the importance of continued archaeological exploration in uncovering the complexities of ancient civilisations.

Three elements, however, point to definitive Achaemenid influence:

1. A silver bent bar punch-marked coinage resembling late Achaemenid types appeared in Taxila (D. W. MacDowall & M. Taddei, p. 203; Marshall, 1951, I, p. 103). It influenced Indian coinage systems and endured even into the late 3rd century BCE (Allchin, 1995, p. 131; Cribb, 1983; Bernard, 1987, pp. 188-189).
2. The spread of Aramaic at Taxila, Kandahār, and Hadda contributed to the development of Kharoṣṭhī script from Aramaic (Greenfield, 1985, p. 705). The grammatical term *lipi* (writing) in Panini's Sanskrit confirms Iranian linguistic influence (Fussman, 1988-89, p. 513).
3. Locally made "Greco Persian" seals, combining imperial Achaemenid motifs with regional symbols like the zebu and swastika, indicate hybrid administrative practices (Callieri, 1996).

#### **5.1.1.4 ANCIENT GREEK PERIOD (c. 8th century BCE to the 6th BCE)**

##### **A. Archaic Greeks Coins from Khyber Pass (Jamrud - Landi Kotal)**

A series of ancient Greek coins, recovered independently by treasure hunters from multiple sites in the Jamrud and Landi Kotal areas near the Khyber Pass, offers compelling evidence for extensive cultural and economic links between the wider Hellenic world and the ancient region of Gandhara. Although these coins do not constitute a formal hoard, their widespread presence across the region indicates the existence of ancient trade and migration routes that predate both the arrival of Alexander the Great and the subsequent expansion of the Seleucid Empire.

Typologically, the assemblage is notably diverse. Among the earliest is a silver stater from Siris in the Thraco-Macedonian region, dating to the 5th century BCE (Coin 1, Section 4.3.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins). This coin features the ithyphallic satyr and nymph motif on its obverse, an image deeply embedded in Dionysiac iconography and characteristic of early Greek coinage from Lete (Smith Group 2; Peykov A0070; AMNG III/2, 11). Several classical Athenian coins (Coins 3-4, Section 4.3.1 in Part II) are also represented, including both tetradrachms and drachms struck between 454 and 404 BCE, each bearing the iconic helmeted bust of Athena on the obverse and reverse features, owl standing beside an olive sprig within an incuse square (see Kroll 8). Later issues in the assemblage include a tetradrachm of Alexander III, notable for its obverse depicting the head of Heracles wearing a lion skin, and its reverse showing Zeus enthroned, holding an eagle and sceptre, accompanied by the royal inscription and mint control symbols, (See, Coin 5, Section 4.3.1 in Part II, SNG Saroglos 635). Of particular significance is a Seleucid tetradrachm (See, Coin 6, Section 4.3.1) issued under Seleucus I Nicator, featuring on the obverse a laureate Zeus, and the reverse, Athena wielding a spear while riding in a chariot drawn by elephants, an apparent reference to the Hellenistic East and the Seleucid interaction with the Indian-subcontinent (HGC 4, 1597).

In terms of minting techniques, all coins in this group are struck specimens, their flan sizes and weights conforming closely to the respective standards of their issuing authorities. The Athenian tetradrachms average 25-27mm in diameter and weigh between 16.8g and 17.3g, consistent with the Attic standard (Carradice & Price, 1988).

The Seleucid and Macedonian coins similarly demonstrate the technical proficiency typical of their periods, with detailed iconography and clear legends.

Historically, the appearance of such Greek coinage in the Khyber region corroborates literary testimony regarding early Greek settlements and mercenary activity in the Achaemenid eastern satrapies. Megasthenes, writing in the early Hellenistic period, refers to a nation he names the "Spartemes," a people who, both in appearance and military practices, resembled the Greeks and who opposed Alexander's forces in Gandhara. The similarity of this name to that of the Spartans, who were famously conquered and enslaved by Xerxes during the Greco-Persian Wars and are said to have been resettled in the east has prompted some scholars to suggest the possibility of a Greek, perhaps specifically Laconian, diaspora into northern Afghanistan and neighboring areas during the fifth century BCE (McCrindle, 1877; Karttunen, 1997). It is proposed that over time, these Greek communities may have migrated further into Gandhara and surrounding territories, utilising the Khyber Pass as a route for both migration and trade. This movement could account for the eventual discovery of such coins in the region's archaeological record.

The interpretive significance of these finds lies in their confirmation of enduring, pre-Alexandrian Greek presence and influence in the region, as well as their testimony to the integration of Gandhara and surrounding areas into Mediterranean-Asian trade networks. Their typology, iconography, and metrology reinforce conclusions drawn from earlier archaeological and textual studies, supporting the view that the Khyber Pass functioned not only as a military and political frontier but also as a vibrant corridor for cultural and commercial exchange well before the Hellenistic age (Bopearachchi, 1991; Mitchiner, 1975). The discoveries thus provide material evidence in favour of long-distance interactions and the cosmopolitan character of ancient Gandhara.

#### **5.1.1.5 MAURYAN PERIOD (c. 322 BCE to 185 BCE)**

##### **A. Mauryan ringtone from Gudar village, Jamrud.**

Ringstones are small, intricately carved, doughnut-shaped objects from early Indian art, distinguished by their decorated upper surfaces and a central void encircled by miniature reliefs of nude female figures and plants (Lerner & Kossak, 1991, pp.48-49). Dating to the Mauryan period (3<sup>rd</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup> century BCE), they are believed to have served a symbolic or ritual purpose, possibly linked to fertility cults or goddess worship. Their



sophisticated carving style shows affinities with Near Eastern seals and early Greek mold-made ceramics, highlighting cross-cultural artistic influences. Ringstones are significant for understanding early Indian religious imagery, miniature craftsmanship, and the evolution of related objects such as discstones (Lerner & Kossak, 1991, pp.48-49).

The Mauryan ringtone (Plate 1-3, Section 5.7.1 in Part II) a small yet finely crafted artefact made from stone, measuring approximately 3 to 4 inches (76 to 102 mm) in diameter. It features a distinctive "doughnut" shape with a central perforation, which differentiates it from other similar artefacts. The obverse is plain, while the top side is intricately carved with relief patterns. These patterns are meticulously designed, often containing multiple zones of decoration surrounding the central hole (Bennett, 2017, p. 95). The stone is finely polished, demonstrating the high craftsmanship characteristic of Mauryan art.

The relief carving features elaborate designs that include multiple zones, each depicting different themes. One of the key features is a series of circular figures within two decorated borders, a sequence that shows a detailed narrative depiction (Gupta, 1980, p. 137). These figures are carved with exceptional precision and demonstrate the technical expertise of the artisans of the Mauryan period.

#### **i. Iconography, Symbolism, and Inscriptions**

The outermost decorative zone of the ringtone contains several animals and figures arranged in a dynamic sequence. The carvings depict a rich variety of scenes that may reflect symbolic meanings tied to nature, fertility, and power. In the first circular zone, there is a depiction of an elephant eating from a palm or banana tree, symbolising strength and prosperity (Bennett, 2019, p. 104). This is followed by a leopard or tiger attempting to catch a jumping rabbit or fox, symbolising the predatory and life-cycle dynamics of nature.

Other figures in this sequence include a walking elephant eating, a standing vulture, a standing eagle, and a walking monkey holding a sword, each representing different aspects of the natural and supernatural world (Lerner & Kossak, 1991, p. 50). A monkey fighting a human figure with a shield, with the human attempting to strike the monkey with a broad club-like weapon, suggests a dynamic of conflict between the animal

kingdom and human strength, possibly signifying the struggle for power or control over nature (Siudmak, 2016, p. 12).

The scene continues with another elephant, depicted holding a tree branch in its trunk, followed by a wild figure trying to capture a swan or duck, perhaps symbolising untamed forces attempting to dominate the natural world (Bennett, 2019, p. 97). The final part of this sequence shows an elephant drinking from a pond, with a human figure swimming in the water. The flowing water symbolises the cyclical nature of life, perhaps alluding to purity, regeneration, and the relationship between humans and nature (Gupta, 1980, p. 139).

The third circle within the ringstone's decorative borders consists of geometric designs, which appear to be motifs reflecting order, symmetry, and perhaps cosmic harmony. These designs may have symbolic connections to the cyclical nature of time or the universe, representing the eternal cycle of creation and destruction (Bennett, 2017, p. 95).

The outermost border is delineated with a delicate rope pattern, adding to the visual depth and intricacy of the object. The final round edges serve to frame the detailed relief and emphasise the circular shape of the artefact, drawing attention to the central hole as a focal point.

## **ii. Cultural and Historical Context**

The Mauryan ringstone was created during the Mauryan Empire (c. 322-185 BCE), a period known for its monumental achievements in art, architecture, and statecraft. Chandragupta Maurya founded the empire, and later expanded it under his grandson, Ashoka. The cultural and artistic expressions during this period were heavily influenced by Buddhist ideologies, with the Mauryan state supporting the growth of Buddhism and promoting its visual representations (Gupta, 1980, p. 137).

The ringstone's intricate designs suggest that it may have been a religious or ritual object, potentially linked to fertility or meditation practices. The representations of animals, divine figures, and human interactions are common in ancient Indian art, where they often symbolise various aspects of life, death, and regeneration (Bennett, 2017, p. 96). The association with trees and water further emphasises the connection

between nature and spiritual purity, which was central to the religious practices of the time.

The purpose of the ringstone remains enigmatic. Some scholars have proposed that it may have been used in rituals, perhaps to promote fertility or as a symbolic tool for meditation (Bennett, 2019, p. 104). Other theories suggest that it might have functioned as a mould for jewellery, specifically in the creation of metal foil (Gupta, 1980, p. 139).

The ringstone's discovery in areas such as Taxila and Patna, as well as its distribution along the Grand Trunk Road, indicates its potential use in urban centres and its significance in the broader Mauryan territory (Lerner & Kossak, 1991, p. 51). The recent discovery of a similar object in Thailand in 2014, presumed to be imported from India, further supports the idea that such artefacts were not only important within India but were also traded or disseminated across regions in South and Southeast Asia (Bennett, 2019, p. 97).

### **iii. Comparative Analysis with the Mauryan Discstone**

The Mauryan Discstone, although similar in form, differs significantly from the ringstone in both design and purpose. The discstone is typically flat on top, with a plain circular centre, lacking the central perforation seen in the ringstone. The decoration on the discstone tends to be simpler, often featuring plant-based motifs without the intricate human and animal figures seen on the ringstone (Siudmak, 2016, p. 15). This suggests that the discstone may have had a more utilitarian purpose, possibly related to symbolic representation rather than serving as a focal point for ritual or religious practices (Bennett, 2017, p. 95).

The ringstone's detailed and dynamic narrative scenes, featuring animals, divine figures, and human interactions, set it apart from the more abstract geometric designs on the discstone. The ringstone's elaborate and sequential narrative elements suggest that it may have held a more specific religious or symbolic function, possibly connected to fertility, cosmology, or the cycles of life (Bennett, 2019, p. 104).

### **B. Circular Engraved Ringstone from Gudar Village, Jamrud.**

The artefact has been discovered from the same spot and location, from where the ringstone (Plate 1-2, Section 5.7.2 in Part II) was found. It is a circular disk-shaped object, seemingly crafted in redstone. It measures 5x6 centimetres, 1.0 centimetres in

thickness. It features a symmetrical form with neatly rounded edges and a flat, undecorated reverse bearing scratches, abrasions, and minor chipping consistent with age, handling, or environmental conditions.

The obverse face presents an intricately carved decorative arrangement executed in precise low relief. Dominating this side is a central circular boss, distinctly raised and framed by an incised boundary. Radiating from this central element are six elongated triangular rays, forming a six-pointed star pattern that serves as the compositional framework. Each ray tapers uniformly toward the artefact's rim, standing out clearly against a finely stippled recessed background, thus enhancing visual contrast and relief clarity.

Placed symmetrically within the interstices created by the radiating rays are distinct figurative and vegetal motifs. Prominently displayed at opposite ends along the vertical axis of the artefact are two anthropomorphic female figures, stylised and frontally depicted, suggestive of fertility goddesses due to their clearly emphasised feminine attributes, broad hips, and pronounced outlines, typically symbolic of fertility and abundance within various ancient cultures.

In the remaining quadrants, two winged equine figures are positioned opposite one another. Each horse is carefully rendered in profile, with depicted wings extended upward and outward, suggesting motion or symbolic significance possibly associated with mythology or ritual contexts. These winged horses evoke mythological imagery commonly found in ancient Indo-Iranian and Central-Asian iconographic traditions (Francfort, 2005).

Alternating with the horses are two stylised palm trees or date palms, symmetrically arranged opposite each other. Each palm is represented with a clear trunk and symmetrically arranged fronds radiating outward, suggestive of vegetation symbolism often linked to prosperity, fertility, and life-sustaining forces within ancient agricultural societies.

Culturally and chronologically, the presence of fertility goddesses, winged horses, and palm motifs indicates iconographic resonances with known decorative and symbolic traditions of ancient Central and South-Asian regions, including Gandhāran, Indo-Iranian, or broader regional iconographies that spanned from late antiquity through early medieval periods (Behrendt, 2007; Boardman, 1994; Srinivasan, 2016). Such

motifs frequently convey religious, cosmological, or ceremonial meanings, implying the artefact may have held ritualistic or protective significance within its original cultural context (Eliade, 1991; Insoll, 2004).

#### **5.1.1.6 GRAECO-BACTRIAN PERIOD (c. 256 BC - c. 120 BC)**

##### **A. Bactrian Kingdom Coins from Khyber**

The Graeco-Bactrian Kingdom, which emerged after Diodotus I's secession from the Seleucid Empire around 250 BCE, played a crucial role in shaping the early cultural milieu of the northwestern Indian subcontinent (Bopearachchi, 2023, p. 44; Holt, 2022, p. 97; Lerner, 2021, p. 210). Its royal lineage, including figures such as Diodotus I and II, Euthydemus I and II, Demetrios I and II, Agathocles, Pantaleon, Antimachus I and II, Eucratides I and II, Plato, Heliocles I, and Queen Agathokleia, extended Greek rule, urban development, and a monetary economy into the frontier regions that today encompass the Khyber District (Bopearachchi, 2002, p. 86; Kosmin, 2022, p. 143; Holt, 2022, p. 115). Recent archaeological discoveries, especially extensive coin hoards from Jamrud, Landi Kotal, and Bara tehsil, have provided physical evidence of nearly the entire sequence of Graeco-Bactrian rulers in this region. The survival and variety of these coins, silver tetradrachms, square bronzes, and rare gold staters, offer secure chronological markers for dating cultural phases and settlement horizons within District Khyber. These finds enable archaeologists to identify periods of Hellenistic presence, local interactions, and the integration of Greek economic systems with indigenous traditions (Bopearachchi & Rahman, 1995; Dani, 1967).

The decline of the Graeco-Bactrian realm (c. 130 BCE) precipitated the rise of the Indo-Greek kingdoms, whose rulers, such as Apollodotus I, Menander I, Strato I/II, Antialcidas, Hippostratos, Philoxenus, Amyntas, Polyxenos, Demetrios III, Dionysios, and others, shifted the focus of Hellenistic rule into the subcontinent (Bopearachchi, 2023, p. 121; Singh, 2021, p. 227; Carter, 2022, p. 45). Remarkably, the archaeological record of District Khyber preserves coinage from almost every known Indo-Greek king and queen, demonstrating sustained political and commercial connectivity with the Hellenistic world and with ancient India and Central Asia (Bopearachchi, 2023, p. 184; Khan & Thomas, 2022, p. 92; Reddy, 2021, p. 318). These coins, often featuring bilingual inscriptions and syncretic iconography (Greek gods, Buddhist symbols, Indian deities), document not just trade and administration, but a unique local fusion of

cultures.

The discovery of these coins in District Khyber provides a powerful tool for establishing relative and absolute chronologies for settlement layers and cultural change in the region (Bopearachchi, 1991; Senior, 2001; MacDowall, 1968). The presence of rare types and complete dynastic series from earliest to latest rulers enables the fine-grained dating of archaeological contexts, often more reliably than ceramic typologies or architectural remains, thus anchoring the cultural history of Khyber within the broader Indo-Greek world

The significant concentration of Graeco-Bactrian and Indo-Greek coins found in the Khyber District, particularly in areas such as Jamrud, Landi Kotal, and Bara, highlights the region's function as a significant corridor for exchange and a centre of political authority. These hoards serve not only as direct evidence for the historical presence of these kingdoms but also as primary data for reconstructing cultural chronology and economic patterns. The stratigraphic recovery of coins, sometimes from secure archaeological layers, allows for the precise dating of occupational sequences, the identification of periods of urban prosperity or decline, and the mapping of shifting cultural  
frontiers.

Significantly, the coinage demonstrates the extent to which Hellenistic systems of governance and trade were adopted and adapted by local communities, highlighting District Khyber as both a recipient and transmitter of transregional influences. Thus, numismatic discoveries form the backbone of the region's historical reconstruction, enabling researchers to contextualise other categories of material culture (architecture, pottery, inscriptions) within a securely anchored chronological framework (Khan, 2020; Bopearachchi & Rahman, 1995; Dani, 1967).

#### **i. Diodotos I (c. 250-230 BCE)**

Diodotus I Soter, initially a Seleucid satrap, became the founder of the independent Greco-Bactrian Kingdom around 255-245 BCE, establishing a powerful and prosperous state in Central Asia (Holt, 1999, pp. 24-29; Tarn, 1938, p. 73). His reign marked a peaceful transition from Seleucid rule, and his coinage, especially the gold staters and silver tetradrachms with Zeus imagery, symbolised both Hellenistic kingship and Bactrian autonomy (Bopearachchi, 2005, p. 349; Holt, 1999, pp. 87-101).

Diodotus successfully repelled a Parthian invasion, followed by his namesake son, Diodotus II, after his demise around 235 BCE (Jakobsson, 2021, pp. 499-509).

**Coins:**

**Type. Bust of King and Zeus (Gold Stater).**

**Obv.** Bust of Diodotos facing right.

**Rev.** Zeus standing left, hurling thunderbolt, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΔΙΟΔΟΤΟΥ (*of King Diodotos*).

**Reference:** (Coin 1, Section 4.3.2.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins, MAC 2947.

**ii. Diodotos II (c. 230-225 BCE)**

Diodotus II Theos, the son of Diodotus I, succeeded as king of Bactria around 235 BCE and ruled until about 225 BCE. Initially a co-regent with his father, he ultimately asserted his authority by allying with the Parthians against Seleucid attempts at reconquest, a significant reversal of his father's Seleucid-aligned policy (Holt, 1999, pp. 58-63; Tarn, 1938, pp. 73-74). Diodotus II's reign saw continued monetary innovation and increased use of coinage, both in precious metals and in bronze, reflecting the growing monetisation of Bactria (Holt, 1999, pp. 87-101; Boppearachchi, 2005, p. 349). His rule ended violently when he was overthrown and killed by Euthydemus I, ushering in a new dynasty in Bactria (Holt, 1999, pp. 105-106).

**Coins:**

**Type. Bust of King and Zeus (Gold Stater).**

**Obv.** Bust of Diodotos facing right.

**Rev.** Zeus standing left, hurling thunderbolt, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΔΙΟΔΟΤΟΥ (*of King Diodotos*).

**Reference:** MAC 2947.

**Coin Nos.** Plate 1, Section 4.3.2.2 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**iii. Euthydemus I (c. 230-220 BCE)**

Euthydemus I (reigned c. 224-195 BCE) stands out as a pivotal figure in Greco-Bactrian history, not only for founding the Euthydemid dynasty but also for his resilient defence against Seleucid aggression and his dynamic political and military activities across Central Asia. Originally from Ionia, he usurped the throne from Diodotus II and rapidly consolidated his power, extending Bactrian influence into Sogdia and initiating significant fortification projects such as the Derbent Wall to protect against nomadic incursions (Glenn, 2020, pp. 6, 41-42; Stančo, 2021, pp. 262-265).

His reign is most famously marked by his successful resistance to the Seleucid king Antiochus III, enduring a protracted siege of Bactra before negotiating a diplomatic settlement that recognised his legitimacy and led to a dynastic marriage alliance (Polybius 11.34; Holt, 1999, pp. 131-132). Euthydemus also innovated in coinage, producing large volumes of gold, silver, and bronze coins that exhibit a striking evolution from idealised to veristic royal portraiture, reflecting both his ageing and a broader trend toward realism in Hellenistic art (Glenn, 2020, pp. 32-34, 71-75; Kritt, 2001, p. 75). The Heracles reverse on his coinage signifies his alignment with both local traditions and the wider Hellenistic iconography.

Euthydemus' rule ended around 195 BCE, succeeded by his son Demetrius I, who would further expand Bactrian authority into South Asia. Later historical and numismatic research has highlighted the long-lasting legacy of his reign, as evidenced by the continued imitation of his coins by successor states and even nomadic groups in Central Asia (Lyonnet, 2021, pp. 324-326; Glenn, 2020, p. 83). His reign marks a pivotal period in the evolution of the Greco-Bactrian kingdom, exemplifying the cosmopolitan character of Hellenistic governance in Central Asia as well as the endurance of Greek states amidst both internal challenges and external pressures.

### **Coins:**

#### **Type. 1.1. Bust of King/ Prancing Horse (Doule Unit)**

**Obv.** Head of Herakles facing right, within dotted border.

**Rev..** Horse prancing right with Greek legend ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΕΥΘΥΔΗΜΟΥ at the top and bottom of the coin.

**Reference:** Bopearachchi 22A. HGC 12, 53; Kritt B3-A; SNG ANS 173-4.

**Coin No.** Plates 1-2, Section 4.3.2.1 in Part II: Illustrations.

#### **Type. 1.2. Bust of King/ Prancing Horse (Unit)**

**Obv.** Head of Herakles facing right, within dotted border.

**Rev..** Horse prancing right with Greek legend ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΕΥΘΥΔΗΜΟΥ at the top and bottom of the coin.

**Reference:** Bopearachchi 22A. HGC 12, 53; Kritt B3-A; SNG ANS 173-4.

**Coin No.** Plates 3-5, Section 4.3.2.1 in Part II: Illustrations.

### **iv. Euthydemus I Coins Hoard from Lala Chena, Jamrud**

A remarkable numismatic discovery was made in 2023 from Lala Chena in the Jamrud region of District Khyber: a hoard consisting of 18 copper coins of Euthydemus I, the Graeco-Bactrian ruler (reigned c. 230-200 BCE). The coins are circular and can be



categorised into two denominations: Coins 1-16 are double units, while Coins 17-18 represent single unit denominations. This discovery is of immense scholarly value, as it marks the first recorded hoard of Graeco-Bactrian coins from the Landi Kotal region, expanding the known geographical distribution of early Hellenistic coin circulation in the northwestern frontier of the Indian subcontinent.

This newly reported hoard contrasts with earlier major finds in the region, most notably the Bara Hoard, documented by Osmund Bopearachchi in 2002. The Bara Hoard was discovered in June 1998 near Peshawar, and contained a nearly complete assemblage of 362 coins from the Indo-Greek and Indo-Scythian periods, including 355 tetradrachms, six drachms, and one bronze coin, dating predominantly to the 1st century BCE. The Bara Hoard encompassed 161 distinct varieties, showcasing an extensive typological and chronological range through its variations in kingship, iconography, legend, monograms, and control marks (Bopearachchi, 2002, 19).

Unlike the Bara Hoard, which spans a broad temporal and dynastic spectrum, the Lala Chena Hoard is narrowly confined to the reign of Euthydemus I, thereby providing a focused insight into the monetary practices and political influence of early Graeco-Bactrian authority in the tribal areas adjacent to the historic Khyber Pass. The presence of both double- and single-unit copper denominations within this hoard suggests a structured economic system with regulated coinage standards under Euthydemus I. Such localised finds substantiate the theory of extended Greek economic penetration into areas beyond Bactria proper, and into the peripheries of South Asia.

This hoard will substantially enhance the body of scholarship on Graeco-Bactrian coinage and is likely to inform broader debates on transregional trade, Hellenistic influence in Central and Indo-Pak sub-continent, and the numismatic heritage of the Indo-Iranian frontier. Thorough documentation and comparative study of this hoard, alongside earlier discoveries such as the Bara Hoard, will be crucial for piecing together the economic and political framework of the region during the Hellenistic period.

### **Coins:**

#### **Type 1. Bust of King/ Prancing Horse (Double Unit)**

**Obv.** Head of Herakles facing right, within dotted border.

**Rev.** Horse prancing right with Greek legend ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΕΥΘΥΔΗΜΟΥ at the top and bottom of the coin.

**Reference:** Bopearachchi 22A. HGC 12, 53; Kritt B3 A; SNG ANS 173 4.

**Coin No.** Plate 1-16, Section 4.3.2.3.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type 2. Bust of King/ Prancing Horse (Unit)**

**Obv.** Head of Herakles facing right, within dotted border.

**Rev.** Horse prancing right with Greek legend ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΕΥΘΥΔΗΜΟΥ at the top and bottom of the coin.

**Reference:** Bopearachchi 22A. HGC 12, 53; Kritt B3 A; SNG ANS 173 4.

**Coin No.** Plate 17-18, Section 4.3.2.3.1 in Part II: Illustrations.

**v. Euthydemos I Medallion from Bakarabad, Jamrud.**

The large bronze medallion (see Plate 1, Section 4.3.2.3.2 in Part II: Illustrations Coins) discovered at Bakarabad, Jamrud, is of considerable archaeological significance, being the first of its kind. The medallion closely resembles, in presentation, the portraiture of the Graeco-Bactrian king Euthydemos I, and represents a substantial departure from the more commonly encountered numismatic finds, such as the gold (AE) 20-stater of Eucratides I. Distinct from the typical coinage of its era, this artefact displays a high-relief, sculptural portrait of a male figure who, based on numismatic comparisons, can be identified as Euthydemos I, a notable Graeco-Bactrian king.

The medallion is circular, with a diameter that considerably exceeds typical coinage, thus emphasising its unique status, possibly as an honorific or ceremonial object rather than circulating currency. The obverse of the medallion (Plate 1) displays a deeply modelled portrait in the round, executed in high relief. The male figure is depicted with a prominent, curly beard and thick, textured hair. The facial features, though somewhat abraded due to corrosion and post-depositional wear, remain robust: the nose is broad, the lips full, and the brow pronounced. The bust is draped, with garment folds indicated by shallow incised lines, and the right shoulder is adorned with what appears to be a fibula or garment clasp, an element characteristic of Hellenistic attire.

The stylistic treatment of the portrait closely parallels that seen on smaller copper coins of Euthydemos I (Bopearachchi 22A. HGC 12, 53; Kritt B3-A; SNG ANS 173-4), especially in the depiction of the hair, beard, and profile orientation. However, the medallion's use of three-dimensional relief distinguishes it markedly from the flatter, lower-relief dies typical of circulating coins, suggesting either a commemorative function or possible use as a parade or presentation piece. The reverse (Plate: 2) is hollowed out, presumably to facilitate casting or mounting; it shows no figural or

inscriptional detail, further reinforcing the notion of its function as a medallion rather than a die.

No legends, inscriptions, or symbols are visible on the surviving surfaces, which precludes a direct textual identification. Nevertheless, the iconography, coupled with the artefact's remarkable size and form, indicates a clear association with the iconographic program of Hellenistic royal portraiture, designed to project both authority and divinity. The prominence given to the facial features and attire, particularly the beard and himation, suggests an emphasis on the idealised image of kingship, blending local and Greek artistic traditions.

The Bakarabad medallion stands as a unique example of Graeco-Bactrian material culture, illustrating the adaptation and monumentalization of royal portraiture in a region deeply influenced by Hellenistic artistic norms. Its unprecedented size and form raise intriguing questions regarding its function, possibly as a votive offering, a ceremonial badge of office, or a monumental reference piece intended for display within a public or religious context. Further metallurgical and contextual analysis may clarify its precise role within the broader framework of Indo-Greek and Graeco-Bactrian ceremonial and visual culture.

#### **vi. Demetrios I (c. 200-185 BCE)**

Demetrius I, known as "the Unconquered," laid down the foundation of the Indo-Greek kingdom and expanded Greco-Bactrian rule deep into the Indian subcontinent after succeeding Euthydemus I. His coins, notable for depicting the king with an elephant scalp headdress and featuring Hellenistic symbols such as Heracles and the elephant, reflect both military conquest and cultural adaptation. Demetrius's coinage circulated widely in Gandhara and Taxila, marking early technological advances in Indo-Greek minting, and his reign set the template for subsequent Indo-Greek rulers (Bopearachchi, 2023, p. 51; Wang & Bracey, 2023, p. 117; Phang et al., 2016, p. 239). For a comprehensive account of this ruler's historical context, see Chapter IV: "History and Archaeology of Khyber".

#### **Coins:**

##### **Type 1. Bust of king/ Herakles (Silver tetradrachm)**

**Obv.** Diademed head of king facing right, wearing elephant scalp head-dress.

**Rev.** Nude Herakles standing facing, holding club and lion skin in left hand and crowning himself with his right hand, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΔΗΜΗΤΡΙΟΥ

monogram in the lower left field.

**Coin No.** Plate 1, Section 4.3.2.4 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type. 2. Bust of king/ Herakles (Silver tetradrachm)**

**Obv.** Diademed head of king facing right, wearing elephant scalp head-dress.

**Rev.** Nude Herakles standing facing, holding club and lion skin in left hand and crowning himself with his right hand, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΔΗΜΗΤΡΙΟΥ monogram in the lower left field.

**Coin No.** Plate 2, Section 4.3.2.4 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type 3. Bust of king/ Herakles (Silver drachm)**

**Obv.** Diademed head of king facing right, wearing elephant scalp head-dress.

**Rev.** Nude Herakles standing facing, holding club and lion skin in left hand and crowning himself with his right hand, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΔΗΜΗΤΡΙΟΥ monogram in the lower left field.

**Coin No.** Plate 3, Section 4.3.2.4 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type. 4. Herakles/ Artemis (Copper dichalkon, double unit)**

**Obv.** Head of Herakles facing right, club over his shoulder.

**Rev..** Artemis standing facing, holding bow in left hand, drawing an arrow from quiver on back with right hand, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΔΗΜΗΤΡΙΟΥ, monogram in lower right field.

**Coin No.** Plate 4-6, Section 4.3.2.4 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type. 5. Elephant Head/ Caduceus (Copper tri-chalkon, triple unit)**

**Obv.** Elephant head right, trunk raised, and bell around neck.

**Rev.** Caduceus, monogram at left, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΔΗΜΗΤΡΙΟΥ.

**Coin No.** Plate 7, Section 4.3.2.4 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type. 6. Bust of king/ Herakles (Terracotta)**

**Obv.** Diademed head of king facing right, wearing elephant scalp head-dress.

**Rev.** Zeus to the left.

**Coin No.** Plate 7, Section 4.3.2.4 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

This terracotta specimen is notable for its apparent resemblance to coinage, yet its fabrication in terracotta marks a significant departure from the conventional metal-based traditions of ancient monetisation. Terracotta coins or tokens are scarce in the numismatic record and are not typical of official currency systems in the ancient world. The presence of a Demetrius I bust on the obverse and a seated Zeus on the reverse suggests that it may have served as a token, ceremonial issue, or possibly as a trial piece (*pièce de fabrication*), rather than as currency for daily transactions.

Such objects may have functioned as votive offerings, temple tokens, or commemorative pieces, possibly produced for ritual or local administrative purposes where precious metals were either scarce or unnecessary. Alternatively, this could represent a form of local imitation or an educational tool for apprentices in the art of

coin production. The uniqueness of this specimen invites further comparative study with similar finds in South and Central Asia, where non-metallic coin-like objects occasionally appear in archaeological contexts.

### **vii. Euthydemus II (c. 185-180 BCE)**

Euthydemus II, who reigned around 185-180 BCE, represents the last of the Euthydemid line to rule the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom. As the son of Demetrius I and a Seleucid princess (daughter of Antiochus III), Euthydemus II's brief reign is primarily known through his coinage, which is notable for depicting him as a youthful ruler, suggesting that he either ascended the throne at a very young age or possibly served as a junior co-ruler alongside his father (Tarn, 1938, p. 211; Bopearachchi, 1991, pp. 80-82). The rare use of nickel alloys in some of his coins is a distinctive feature of his monetary output and also links his chronology closely with Agathocles, although their exact political relationship remains a subject of scholarly debate (Bopearachchi, 1991, p. 81; Glenn, 2020, p. 54).

The iconography on Euthydemus II's silver coins, especially the standing Heracles holding a club on the reverse, demonstrates a continuity of Hellenistic royal imagery and symbolism seen throughout the dynasty, reaffirming the legitimacy and divine favour claimed by Greco-Bactrian kings (Glenn, 2020, p. 55). Some researchers, such as Lucas Christopoulos, have speculated on broader cultural connections for the Euthydemid lineage, including potential relations with figures like King Xiutu of Gansu, suggesting wider Hellenistic links across Central Asia (Christopoulos, 2021, pp. 68-112).

#### **Coins:**

##### **Type. Bust of King/ Standing Figure.**

**Obv.** Diademed head of king facing right, pearled border around with Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΕΥΘΥΔΗΜΟΥ.

**Rev.** King is walking to the left, holding a spear with his right hand.

**Reference:** Un-reported Coin.

**Coin Nos.** Plate 7, Section 4.3.2.5 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

### **viii. Pantaleon (c. 185-180 BCE)**

Pantaleon, an early Indo-Greek king and probable brother or subking to Demetrius I, is notable for introducing the world's first cupro-nickel coinage, demonstrating advanced

metallurgical knowledge possibly linked to Chinese technology. His rare coin issues from Khyber include the earliest Greek-Indian bilingual bronzes, often depicting local motifs like Lakshmi, indicating efforts to appeal to native populations in Arachosia and Gandhara. Pantaleon's brief and experimental reign marks a pivotal phase in the evolution of Indo-Greek numismatics (Bopearachchi, 2023, p. 62; Holt, 2012, p. 45; Stoneman, 2019, p. 385). For a comprehensive account of this ruler's historical context, see Chapter IV: "History and Archaeology of Khyber."

### **Coins:**

#### **Type. Deity/ Lion (AE square 1.5 karshapana)**

**Obv.** Female deity moving left, holding a flower, Brahmi legend: Rajane Patalevasa.

**Rev.** Lion standing right, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΠΑΝΤΑΛΕΟΝΤΟΣ.

**Coin Nos.** Plate 1, Section 4.3.2.6 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

### **ix. Agathocles (c. 185-170 BCE)**

Agathocles Dicaeus, ruling in the early 2nd century BCE, is distinguished by his innovative coinage, which pioneered bilingual inscriptions in Greek and Kharoshthi, and depicted a wide array of Hellenistic, Buddhist, and Hindu deities. His issues from Khyber include commemorative "pedigree coins" for earlier rulers, as well as the world's first cupro-nickel coins, reflecting both advanced metallurgical techniques and a cosmopolitan policy of religious tolerance. Agathocles's numismatic legacy is central for understanding Indo-Greek cultural Synthesis and the history of Brahmi script decipherment (Bopearachchi, 2023, p. 56; Holt, 2012, p. 88; Stoneman, 2019, p. 390). For a comprehensive account of this ruler's historical context, see Chapter IV: "History and Archaeology of Khyber."

#### **Type 1. Pedigree Coin/ Medal**

**Obv.** Diademed head of king facing right, pearled border around, Greek legend: ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΥ ΤΟΥ ΦΙΛΙΠΠΟΥ.

**Rev.** Hercules strangling the Nemean Lion to the right; club below the feet with the Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΟΝΤΟΣ ΔΙΚΑΙΟΥ ΑΓΑΘΟΚΛΕΟΥΣ.

**Reference:** This is the first known specimen of a coin or medallion of this pedigree to be reported.

**Coin nos.** Plate 1, Section 4.3.2.7 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

#### **Type. 2. Dionysos/ Panther (Nickel dichalkon or double unit)**

**Obv.** Laureate head of Dionysos facing right.

**Rev.** Panther standing right with raised paw, grape vine before, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΑΓΑΘΟΚΛΕΟΥΣ.

**Coin nos.** Plates 2-7, Section 4.3.2.7 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type. 3. Female Deity/ Lion (AE double karshapana)**

**Obv.** Female deity moving left, holding a flower, Brahmi legend: *Rajane Agathukleyasasa*.

**Rev.** Lion standing right, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΑΓΑΘΟΚΛΕΟΥΣ.

**Coin nos.** Plate 8-9, Section 4.3.2.7 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type. 4. Dionysos/ Panther (AE double karshapana)**

**Obv.** Diademed head of king facing right.

**Rev.** Zeus standing facing, holding sceptre with his left hand and holding Hecate bearing flaming torches in his right hand, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΑΓΑΘΟΚΛΕΟΥΣ, monogram in lower left field.

**Coin nos.** Plate 10, Section 4.3.2.7 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**x. Antimachus I (c. 174-165 BCE)**

Antimachus I, who styled himself "Theos" ("the God"), ruled over Bactria and possibly Arachosia, and was among the first Hellenistic monarchs to claim divinity on his coinage. His silver and bronze coins feature the Macedonian kausia and Poseidon, as well as elephants and Nike, reflecting both Greek royal ideology and Indian influences in his territory. Antimachus's commemorative issues and adoption of divine titles signal the emergence of a royal state cult in the region, while discoveries from Khyber underscore his impact on Indo-Greek monetary and cultural exchange (Holt, 1999, p. 143; Bopearachchi, 2023, p. 64; Tarn, 1951, p. 148). For a comprehensive account of this ruler's historical context, see Chapter IV: "History and Archaeology of Khyber."

**Coins:**

**Type. Bust of king/ Poseidon (Silver drachm)**

**Obv.** Diademed head of king facing right, wearing *kausia*, with a pearled border around.

**Rev.** Poseidon standing facing, holding trident with his right hand and palm branch in his left arm, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΘΕΟΥ ΑΝΤΙΜΑΧΟΥ, monogram in lower right field.

**Coin nos.** Plate 1, Section 4.3.2.8 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**xi. Demetrios II (c. 175-170 BCE)**

Demetrius II, a little-known Indo-Greek king and possible Euthydemid, ruled briefly in Bactria and perhaps parts of northwestern India, but his precise chronology and territorial scope remain debated. His silver tetradrachms feature the diademed portrait

and standing Athena, but lack bilingual inscriptions, suggesting limited Indian authority and a focus on traditional Hellenistic motifs. The scarcity and varied style of his coinage, along with references in classical sources, highlight the political instability and dynastic fragmentation that followed the death of Demetrius I (Bopearachchi, 1991, p. 194; Tarn, 1938, p. 217; Wilson, 2014, p. 8). For a comprehensive account of this ruler's historical context, see Chapter IV: "History and Archaeology of Khyber."

**Coins:**

**Type. Bust of King/ Athena (Silver Tetradrachm)**

**Obv.** Diademed bust of the king facing right, bead and reel border around.

**Rev.** Athena standing facing, holding shield in left hand, spear in right, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΔΗΜΗΤΡΙΟΥ, monogram in lower left field.

**Coin nos.** Plate 1, Section 4.3.2.9 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**xii. Eucratides I (c. 171-145 BCE)**

Eucratides I, also known as "the Great," was one of the most prominent Greco-Bactrian kings, seizing power through a coup d'état against the Euthydemid dynasty. His reign marked an era of military ambition, minting the largest gold coin of antiquity and striking vast, high-quality bilingual coinage found across Bactria and northern India. Eucratides' campaigns extended Greek influence deep into the northwest Indian subcontinent, consolidating new territorial frontiers and founding cities such as Eucratideia (Tarn, 1938, pp. 196-197; Wünsch, 2021, p. 119; Boardman, 2015, p. 166). His coins are distinguished by their rich iconography, including helmeted portraits and depictions of the Dioscuri, as well as Greek and Kharoshthi legends reflecting both Hellenistic and local traditions. The tumultuous end of his reign, marked by his assassination, probably by a family member, signalled the beginning of internal dynastic strife and the eventual decline of Greek rule north of the Hindu Kush. For a fuller account of Eucratides' political and historical impact, see Chapter IV: "History and Archaeology of Khyber."

**Coins:**

**Type 1. Bust of king/ Dioscuri (Gold Stater)**

**Obv.** Helmeted and diademed bust of the king facing right, bead and reel border around,

The helmet was plumed and decorated with the ear and horn of a bull.

**Rev.** Dioscuri riding horses prancing right, carrying spears and palms. Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΕΥΚΡΑΤΙΔΟΥ (of Great King Eucratides)



**Coin nos.** Plate 1, Section 4.3.2.10 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type. 2. Bust of king/ Dioscuri (Silver tetradrachm)**

**Obv.** Helmeted and diademed bust of king facing right, bead and reel border around, the helmet plumed and decorated with the ear and horn of a bull.

**Rev.** Dioscuri riding horses prancing right, carrying spears and palms. Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ ΕΥΚΡΑΤΙΔΟΥ (of Great King Eucratides)

**Coin nos.** Plate 2, Section 4.3.2.10 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type. 2. Bust of king/ Dioscuri (Silver drachm)**

**Obv.** Helmeted and diademed bust of the king facing right, bead and reel border around,

The helmet was plumed and decorated with the ear and horn of a bull.

**Rev.** Dioscuri riding horses prancing right, carrying spears and palms. Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ ΕΥΚΡΑΤΙΔΟΥ (of Great King Eucratides)

**Coin nos.** Plate 3-4, Section 4.3.2.10 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type 3. Bust of king/ Dioscuri (Silver drachm)**

**Obv.** Helmeted and diademed bust of the king facing right, bead and reel border around,

The helmet was plumed and decorated with the ear and horn of a bull.

**Rev.** Dioscuri riding horses prancing right, carrying spears and palms. Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΕΥΚΡΑΤΙΔΟΥ (of Great King Eucratides)

**Coin nos.** Plate 5, Section 4.3.2.10 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type 4. Bust of king/ Dioscuri (Silver tetradrachm)**

**Obv.** Helmeted and diademed bust of the king facing right, bead and reel border around,

the helmet plumed and decorated with the ear and horn of a bull.

**Rev.** Dioscuri riding horses prancing right facing, carrying spears and palms. Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ ΕΥΚΡΑΤΙΔΟΥ (of Great King Eucratides)

**Coin nos.** Plate 6, Section 4.3.2.10 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type 5. Bust of king/ Caps (Silver drachm)**

**Obv.** Diademed bust of the king facing right, dotted border around.

**Rev..** Caps and palms of the Dioscuri, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΕΥΚΡΑΤΙΔΟΥ (*of King Eucratides*).

**Coin nos.** Plate 7-9, Section 4.3.2.10 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type. 6. Bust of king/ Dioscuri (AE 16-units)**

**Obv.** Helmeted and diademed bust of king facing right, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ ΕΥΚΡΑΤΙΔΟΥ (of Great King Eucratides).

**Rev.** Dioscuri mounted on a horse prancing right, holding spears and palms, Kharoshthi legend: maharajasa / evkratidasa (of King Eucratides).

**Coin nos.** Plate 10, Section 4.3.2.10 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type. 7. Bust of king/ Dioscuri (AE quadruple)**

**Obv.** Helmeted and diademed bust of king facing right, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ ΕΥΚΡΑΤΙΔΟΥ (of Great King Eucratides).

**Rev.** Dioscuri mounted on a horse prancing right, holding spears and palms, Kharoshthi legend: maharajasa / evukratidasa (of King Eucratides).

**Type.** Plate 11-16, Section 4.3.2.10 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

### **xiii. Plato (c. 145-140 BCE)**

Plato Epiphanes, who ruled briefly in Bactria or the Paropamisadae during the mid-second century BCE, stands as a lesser-known figure among the Greco-Bactrian kings. His coinage provides the primary evidence for his reign and identity, with numismatic analysis suggesting he was likely a brother or close relative of the prominent Eucratides the Great, due to similarities in style and iconography (McEvelley, 2002, p. 554; Puri, 2000, p. 114). Notably, his coins frequently depict Helios riding a four-horse chariot, and bear the legend "Basileos Epiphanous Platonos," meaning "of God-manifest King Plato," highlighting his Hellenistic claim to divinity and royal legitimacy.

Several of Plato's coins are marked with what may be Yavana era dates, such as MZ (47) and MN (48), which, if correctly interpreted, place his reign around 140-138 BCE. This chronology is reinforced by the absence of his coins in the archaeological layers at Ai Khanoum, a city destroyed during Eucratides' rule, further supporting numismatist Bopearachchi's dating of Plato to 145-140 BCE (Bopearachchi, as cited in McEvelley, 2002, p. 554; see also Puri, 2000, p. 115).

Plato's brief tenure reflects the fragmentation and dynastic strife that characterised Bactria after the death of Eucratides the Great, when several claimants issued coinage in limited territories. His unique iconography, such as the crested Bactrian helmet adorned with bull's horn and ear, demonstrates the blend of Greek and Central-Asian influences in royal self-presentation during this period (McEvelley, 2002, pp. 554-555). Despite his short reign, Plato's coins provide valuable insights into the tumultuous succession politics and the persistence of Hellenistic culture in late Bactria.

#### **Coins:**

##### **Type. Bust of king/ Helios (Attic Silver Tetradrachm)**

**Obv.** Diademed bust of the king facing right, bead and reel border around.

**Rev.** Helios, radiate, standing in quadriga facing, holding spear, Greek legend:

ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΕΠΙΦΑΝΟΥΣ // ΠΛΑΤΩΝΟΣ.

**Reference:** MIG 198a, Bop 1A.

**Coin nos,** Plate 1-2, Section 4.3.2.12 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

#### **xiv. Eucratides II (c. 145-140 BCE)**

Eucratides II, a Greco-Bactrian king of the 2nd century BCE, is best known as the probable son and short-lived successor of the powerful Eucratides I. His reign represents a period of dynastic turbulence and violent transition, as classical sources, particularly Justin, relate that Eucratides II murdered his father and claimed the throne, only to meet a rapid downfall amidst ongoing civil conflict (Justin, 41.6; Tarn, 1938, p. 353). Numismatic evidence shows that, during his time as either co-regent or sole ruler, Eucratides II issued silver tetradrachms bearing his diademed portrait and the standing figure of Apollo on the reverse, with some coins adopting the title "Soter" ("Saviour") to reinforce his legitimacy and Hellenistic royal ideology (McEvilley, 2002, p. 554).

##### **Coins:**

##### **Type. Bust of king/ Caps (Silver drachm)**

**Obv.** Diademed bust of the king facing right, dotted border around.

**Rev.** Nude Apollo standing facing, holding an arrow in his right hand, a bow in his left, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ // ΕΥΚΡΑΤΙΔΟΥ.

**Coin nos.** Plates 1-2, Section 4.3.2.13 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

#### **xv. Heliocles I (c. 145-130 BCE)**

Heliocles I, who reigned circa 145-130 BCE, is often considered the last true Greco-Bactrian king before the fall of Bactria to the invading Yuezhi nomads. His reign marked the end of Hellenistic authority in the region, as internal instability, sparked by the assassination of Eucratides and subsequent civil unrest, left the kingdom vulnerable to external threats (Tarn, 1938, pp. 334-336; McEvilley, 2002, p. 548). During his rule, Heliocles I assumed the epithet "Dikaios" ("the Just") on his coinage, which often depicted him wearing a diadem or military attire and featured Zeus on the reverse, a standard iconography of Greek kingship in Central Asia (Bopearachchi, 1991, pp. 128-129).

The Yuezhi invasion around 130 BCE brought about the collapse of Greek power in Bactria, yet archaeological and numismatic evidence shows that Hellenistic urban life and agricultural systems persisted in the region even after the conquest. The conquerors not only adapted Greek coin types, particularly those of Heliocles I, but also continued minting in a similar style, demonstrating the lasting cultural influence of Hellenistic traditions in Central Asia (Puri, 2000, p. 106; Tarn, 1938, p. 337). Notably, coins of Heliocles I have been found both with his sole portrait and in joint issues with

Eucratides II, suggesting possible co-rule or a period of dynastic conflict prior to the final downfall.

Modern research further confirms that the Yuezhi takeover did not result in a total societal breakdown; instead, elements of Greek administration and iconography persisted for decades, visible in local coinage and city structures (Bopearachchi, 1991, p. 130; Puri, 2000, p. 108). Thus, the reign of Heliocles I represents both the political end of the Greco-Bactrian dynasty and the beginning of a new era in which Hellenistic and nomadic cultures intertwined.

#### **Coins:**

##### **Type. Bust of king/ Zeus (Silver tetradrachm)**

**Obv.** Diademed bust of the king facing right, bead and reel border around.

**Rev.** Zeus standing facing, holding thunderbolt in right hand, spear in left, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ / ΔΙΚΑΙΟΥ / ΗΛΙΟΚΛΕΟΥΣ (of King Heliocles, the Just).

**Coin nos.** Plates 1, Section 4.3.2.14 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

#### **5.1.1.7 INDO-GREEKS PERIOD (c. 200 BC-10 AD)**

##### **A. Indo-Greek Kingdom Coins from Khyber**

##### **i. Apollodotus I (c. 180 BCE-160 BCE or c. 174 BCE-165 BCE)**

Apollodotus I, known as "the Saviour," was the first Indo-Greek king to rule exclusively in India, with a realm extending from Taxila through Punjab and Sindh. His prolific coinage is distinguished by bilingual Greek-Kharosthi legends and the prominent use of religious and local symbols such as the elephant and zebu bull, reflecting Buddhist and Hindu associations. Apollodotus's silver and bronze issues reveal innovative standards and widespread economic influence, and his coins are key to tracing the southern limits of Indo-Greek expansion (Bopearachchi, 1991, p. 189; Tarn, 1938, p. 213; Foucher, 1919, Plate I). For a comprehensive account of this ruler's historical context, see Chapter IV: "History and Archaeology of Khyber."

#### **Coins:**

##### **Type 1. Bust of King/ Athena (Silver Tetradrachm)**

**Obv.** Diademed bust of the king facing right, bead and reel border around.

**Rev.** Athena seated left, leaning on shield with left arm and holding Nike in outstretched right hand, monogram below, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΑΠΟΛΛΟΔΟΤΟΥ.

**Coin nos.** Plate 1, Section 4.3.3.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type. 2. Elephant/ Bull (Silver Attic weight hemidrachm)**

**Obv.** Elephant walking right, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΑΠΟΛΛΟΔΟΤΟΥ ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ.

**Rev.** Humped bull walking right, Kharoshthi legend: *maharajasa apaladatasa tratarasa*.

**Coin nos.** Plate 2, Section 4.3.3.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type. 3. Elephant/ Bull (Silver Attic weight hemidrachm)**

**Obv.** Elephant walking right, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΑΠΟΛΛΟΔΟΤΟΥ ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ.

**Rev.** Humped bull walking right, Kharoshthi legend: *maharajasa apaladatasa tratarasa*.

**Coin nos.** Plates 3-7, Section 4.3.3.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type. 4. Elephant/ Bull (Silver Attic weight hemidrachm)**

**Obv.** Apollo standing facing, holding an arrow in his right hand and a bow in his left, monogram at left, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΑΠΟΛΛΟΔΟΤΟΥ ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ.

**Rev.** Tripod within dotted border, monogram at left, Kharoshthi legend on three sides: *maharajasa apaladatasa tratarasa*.

**Coin nos.** Plates 8-16, Section 4.3.3.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**ii. Antimachus II (c. 174 BCE-165 BCE)**

Antimachus II, known as "the Victorious," ruled a substantial Indo-Greek territory from the Hindu Kush to the Punjab and likely succeeded his father Antimachus I. His abundant bilingual coinage is marked by the absence of portraiture, instead featuring Nike and a horseman motif, reflecting the Indian numismatic style and his royal epithet. The typology and monograms of his coins suggest continuity with earlier Indo-Greek traditions while also alluding to political rivalry with Eucratides I and expanding Greek-Indian cultural integration (Bopearachchi, 1991, p. 197; Rea et al., 1994, p. 265; Tarn, 1966, p. 227). For a comprehensive account of this ruler's historical context, see Chapter IV: "History and Archaeology of Khyber."

**Coins:****Type. 1. Nike/ Horseman (Silver drachm)**

**Obv.** Winged Nike standing left, holding wreath and palm, monogram left, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΝΙΚΗΦΟΡΟΥ ΑΝΤΙΜΑΧΟΥ.

**Rev.** Horseman (king? note the diadem ends) galloping right, Kharoshthi legend: *Maharajasa Jayadharasa Amtimakhasa*

**Coin nos.** Plates 1-2, Section 4.3.3.2 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type. 2. Aegis/ Wreath and Palm (AE double or hemi-obol)**

**Obv.** Aegis, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΝΙΚΗΦΟΡΟΥ ΑΝΤΙΜΑΧΟΥ

**Rev.** Wreath and palm, Kharoshthi legend: *Maharajasa Jayadharasa. Amtimakhasa.*  
**Coin nos.** Plates 3, Section 4.3.3.2 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

### iii. Menander I (c. 165-130 BCE)

Menander I, known in Indian tradition as Milinda, is regarded as the most illustrious of the Indo-Greek kings and the most powerful among the Yavana kings (Maity, 1970, p. 4-5), with his reign representing both the zenith of Greek authority in northwestern India and a distinguished period of cultural Synthesis and prosperity. Numismatic evidence attests to the vast reach of his dominion from the Kabul River in the west to the Ravi River in the east and the durability of his rule, as his silver and bronze coins are among the most abundant and widely circulated of the entire Indo-Greek era (Bopearachchi, 1991, pp. 60-73; Errington, Cribb, & Claringbull, 1992, pp. 122-126; Tarn, 1951, pp. 226-230). Menander's coins are notable for their refined Hellenistic portraiture and bilingual legends, often featuring Greek deities. One of them is Athena Alkidemos on the reverse, a motif that became emblematic for later Indo-Greek monarchs. Several types incorporate Indian religious symbols, including the Buddhist Dharmachakra, underscoring Menander's close association with Buddhism.

His patronage of Buddhism is further reflected in the *Milinda Panha*, a foundational Buddhist text that presents him as a philosopher-king in dialogue with the monk Nāgasena. While the historicity of his conversion remains debated, the proliferation of Buddhist iconography on subsequent Indo-Greek coinages attests to his legacy in promoting Greco-Buddhist syncretism (McEvelley, 2002, p. 378; Kubica, 2023, pp. 103-105). Menander's death is shrouded in legend: Buddhist tradition claims he abdicated to pursue spiritual enlightenment, while classical sources (e.g., Plutarch) state his ashes were distributed among various cities and enshrined in stupas, a practice reminiscent of the Buddha himself (Tarn, 1951, p. 226).

Menander's prolific coinage not only signified political authority and commercial vitality but also encapsulated the complex interplay of Hellenistic and local religious traditions in the region, a key theme explored in Chapter IV of this thesis. The Menander era thus exemplifies the role of numismatics in tracing cultural exchange, political legitimacy, and religious transformation along the Indo-Greek frontier.

### Coins:

#### Type 1. Bust of King/ Athena (India Standard, Tetradrachm)

**Obv.** Diademed, bare-headed bust of king right, discontinuous Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ / ΜΕΝΑΝΔΡΟΥ.

**Rev..** Seen from behind, Athena Alkidemos standing left, holding a horizontal shield on outstretched left arm, hurling a thunderbolt with right hand, monograms at left and right, discontinuous Kharoshthi legend: *maharajasa tratarasa / menamdrasa*.

**Reference:** MIG 214c, Bop 12A.

**Coin nos.** Plates 1-3, Section 4.3.3.3 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type. 2. Bust of Athena/ Owl (India Standard, drachm)**

**Obv.** Helmeted bust of Athena right, continuous Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ ΜΕΝΑΝΔΡΟΥ.

**Rev.** Owl standing three-quarters right, monogram at right, Kharoshthi legend: *maharajasa tratarasa menamdrasa*.

**Reference:** MIG 213b, Bop 2C.

**Coin nos.** Plates 4, Section 4.3.3.3 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type 3. Bust of king/ Athena (India Standard, drachm)**

**Obv.** Diademed, bare-headed bust of king right, discontinuous Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ / ΜΕΝΑΝΔΡΟΥ.

**Rev..** Seen from behind, Athena Alkidemos standing left, holding a horizontal shield on outstretched left arm, hurling a thunderbolt with right hand, monograms at left and right, discontinuous Kharoshthi legend: *maharajasa tratarasa / menamdrasa*.

**Reference:** MIG 219b, Bop 8A.

**Coin nos.** Plates 5-13, Section 4.3.3.3 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type. 4. Bust of king/ Athena (India Standard, drachm)**

**Obv.** Diademed, bare-headed bust of king right, discontinuous Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ / ΜΕΝΑΝΔΡΟΥ.

**Rev..** Seen from behind, Athena Alkidemos standing left, holding a horizontal shield on outstretched left arm, hurling a thunderbolt with right hand, monograms at left and right, discontinuous Kharoshthi legend: *maharajasa tratarasa / menamdrasa*.

**Reference:** MIG 219b, Bop 8A.

**Coin nos.** Plates 14-19, Section 4.3.3.3 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type. 5. Bust of king/ Athena (India Standard, drachm)**

**Obv.** Diademed, bare-headed bust of king left, discontinuous Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ / ΜΕΝΑΝΔΡΟΥ.

**Rev..** Seen from behind, Athena Alkidemos standing right, holding shield on outstretched left arm, hurling thunderbolt with right hand, monograms at left and right, discontinuous Kharoshthi legend: *maharajasa tratarasa / menamdrasa*.

**Reference:** MIG 221b, Bop 6A.

**Coin nos.** Plates 20-21, Section 4.3.3.3 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type. 6. Bust of king/ Athena (Bronze Quadruple)**

**Obv.** Diademed, bare-headed bust of king left, seen from behind, holding spear in right hand, Greek legend on three sides: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ / ΜΕΝΑΝΔΡΟΥ.

**Rev..** Seen from in front, Athena Alkidemos standing right, holding aegis on

outstretched left arm, hurling thunderbolt with right hand, monogram at right, Kharoshthi legend on three sides: *maharajasa tratarasa / menamdrasa*.

**Reference:** MIG 237b, Bop 21A.

**Coin nos.** Plates 22-23, Section 4.3.3.3 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type. 7. Bust of Athena/ Owl (Bronze Double)**

**Obv.** Helmeted bust of Athena right, continuous Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ ΜΕΝΑΝΔΡΟΥ.

**Rev.** Owl standing three-quarters right, monogram at right, Kharoshthi legend: *maharajasa tratarasa menamdrasa*.

**Reference:** MIG 237b, Bop 21A.

**Coin nos.** Plates 24, Section 4.3.3.3 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type. 8. Bust of Athena/ Nike (Bronze Double)**

**Obv.** Helmeted bust of Athena right, Greek legend on three sides: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ ΜΕΝΑΝΔΡΟΥ.

**Rev.** Seen from behind, Athena Alkidemos standing left, holding a horizontal shield on outstretched left arm, hurling thunderbolt with right hand, monogram at right, Kharoshthi legend on three sides: *maharajasa tratarasa menamdrasa*.

**Reference:** MIG 239b, Bop 23C.

**Coin nos.** Plates 25-26, Section 4.3.3.3 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type. 9. Bull Head/ Tripod (Bronze Octuple)**

**Obv.** Head of bull facing, Greek legend on three sides: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ ΜΕΝΑΝΔΡΟΥ.

**Rev.** Tripod, monogram at left, Kharoshthi legend on three sides: *maharajasa tratarasa menamdrasa*.

**Reference:** MIG 233a, Bop 29A.

**Coin nos.** Plates 27-31, Section 4.3.3.3 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type. 10. Elephant Head/ Club (Bronze Single unit)**

**Obv.** Elephant head three-quarters right, Greek legend on three sides: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ ΜΕΝΑΝΔΡΟΥ.

**Rev.** Club, monogram at right, Kharoshthi legend on three sides: *maharajasa tratarasa menamdrasa*.

**Reference:** MIG 240h, Bop 28D.

**Coin nos.** Plates 32-40, Section 4.3.3.3 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**a. Menander Coin Hoard from Jalal Din Killi, Jamrud.**

**G1. Antimachus I**

**Type. Bust of king/ Poseidon (Attic Silver tetradrachm)**

**Obv.** Diademed head of king facing right, wearing kausia, with a pearled border around.

**Rev.** Poseidon standing facing, holding trident with his right hand and palm branch in his left arm, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΘΕΟΥ ΑΝΤΙΜΑΧΟΥ, monogram in lower right field.



**Coin Nos.** Plates 1-3, Section 4.3.3.3.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

## **G2. Apollodotus I**

**Type. Elephant/ Bull (Indian Standard, Silver Drachm)**

**Obv.** Elephant walking right, Greek legend on three sides: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ

ΑΠΟΛΛΟΔΟΤΟΥ ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ, monogram below.

**Rev.** Humped bull standing right, Kharoshthi legend on three sides: *maharajasa apaladatasā tratarasa*.

**Reference:** BOP.47 pl. 12/47 - GC.7591 var. - Mit.207 h - BMC. - ANS.331.

**Coin Nos.** Plates 2-9, Section 4.3.3.3.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

## **G3. Antimachus II**

**Type. Nike/ Horseman (Indian Standard Silver Drachm)**

**Obv.** Winged Nike standing left, holding wreath and palm, monogram left, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΝΙΚΗΦΟΡΟΥ ΑΝΤΙΜΑΧΟΥ.

**Rev.** Horseman (king? note the diadem ends) galloping right, Kharoshthi legend: *Maharajasa jayadharasa Amtimakhasa*.

**Reference:**

**Coin Nos.** Plates 10-25, Section 4.3.3.3.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

## **G4. Menander I**

**Type 1. Bust of King/ Athena (India Standard, Tetradrachm)**

**Obv.** Diademed, bare-headed bust of king right, discontinuous Greek legend:

ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ / ΜΕΝΑΝΔΡΟΥ.

**Rev.** Seen from behind, Athena Alkidemos standing left, holding a horizontal shield on outstretched left arm, hurling a thunderbolt with right hand, monograms at left and right, discontinuous Kharoshthi legend: *maharajasa tratarasa / menamdrasa*.

**Reference:** MIG 214c, Bop 12A.

**Coin Nos.** Plates 26-28, Section 4.3.3.3.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type 2. Bust of King/ Athena (India Standard, Tetradrachm)**

**Obv.** Helmeted bust of king right, discontinuous Greek legend:

ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ / ΜΕΝΑΝΔΡΟΥ.

**Rev.** Seen from behind, Athena Alkidemos standing left, holding a horizontal shield on outstretched left arm, hurling a thunderbolt with right hand, monograms at left and right, discontinuous Kharoshthi legend: *maharajasa tratarasa / menamdrasa*.

**Reference:** MIG 217f, Bop 15B.

**Coin Nos.** Plates 29-30, Section 4.3.3.3.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type 3. Bust of King/ Athena (India Standard, Tetradrachm)**

**Obv.** Diademed, bare-headed bust of king left, discontinuous Greek legend:

ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ / ΜΕΝΑΝΔΡΟΥ.

**Rev.** Seen from behind, Athena Alkidemos standing left, holding a horizontal shield on outstretched left arm, hurling a thunderbolt with right hand, monograms at left and right, discontinuous Kharoshthi legend: *maharajasa tratarasa / menamdrasa*.

**Reference:** MIG 225f, Bop 9C.

**Coin Nos.** Plate 31, Section 4.3.3.3.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type 4. Bust of king/ Athena (India Standard, Silver drachm)**

**Obv.** Diademed, bare-headed bust of king left, discontinuous Greek legend:

ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ / ΜΕΝΑΝΔΡΟΥ.

**Rev.** Seen from behind, Athena Alkidemos standing left, holding a horizontal shield on outstretched left arm, hurling a thunderbolt with right hand, monograms at left and right, discontinuous Kharoshthi legend: *maharajasa tratarasa / menamdrasa*.

**Reference:** MIG 215f, Bop 13O.

**Coin Nos.** Plates 32-79, Section 4.3.3.3.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type 5. Bust of king/ Athena (India Standard, Silver drachm)**

**Obv.** Helmeted bust of king right, discontinuous Greek legend:

ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ / ΜΕΝΑΝΔΡΟΥ.

**Rev.** Seen from behind, Athena Alkidemos standing left, holding a horizontal shield on outstretched left arm, hurling a thunderbolt with right hand, monograms at left and right, discontinuous Kharoshthi legend: *maharajasa tratarasa / menamdrasa*.

**Reference:** MIG 218c, Bop 16I.

**Coin Nos.** Plate 30, Section 4.3.3.3.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**iv. Zoilus I (c. 130 BCE - 120 BCE)**

Zoilus I Dicaeus ("the Just") stands out in the numismatic history of the Indo-Greek dynasty for both the iconography and inscriptions featured on his coinage, which underscore his claims to justice and religious legitimacy. His silver coins typically display the Greek legend "ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΔΙΚΑΙΟΥ ΖΩΙΛΑΟΥ" ("Of King Zoilus the Just") on the obverse. At the same time, the reverse features Herakles with a wreath, a motif likely adopted to emphasise both Greek heroism and royal authority (Bopearachchi, 1991, pp. 123-125). Remarkably, Zoilus was the first Indo-Greek king to use the Kharosthi legend "Maharajasa Dhramikasa Jhoilasa," or "Of the Great King Zoilus, Follower of the Dharma," linking his rule directly to Buddhist patronage (Senior, 1998, p. 60; Kubica, 2023, p. 112). This dual representation on coins reflects an overt strategy to legitimise his authority among both Greek and local populations.

Further, Zoilus' Indian-standard bronzes are innovative in combining Heraclean symbolism, such as the club and lion skin, with a Scythian recurve bow, encircled in a victory wreath. This imagery is widely interpreted as indicating both an alliance or cultural contact with steppe peoples such as the Scythians or Yuezhi, and the increasing hybridisation of Greco-Indian and steppe traditions in the late Hellenistic period (Errington, Cribb, & Claringbull, 1992, p. 135; Kubica, 2023, pp. 113-114). Notably, Zoilus' coins are sometimes found overstruck by Menander I, suggesting their near-contemporary rivalry or even military conflict, as further discussed by Senior and

MacDonald (1998, p. 61). The square format of his bronzes, coupled with bilingual inscriptions and unique motifs, illustrates the adaptive and syncretic qualities of Indo-Greek rule in an era of political upheaval and shifting alliances.

### **Coins:**

#### **Type. Hercules/ Wreath (Bronze Quadruple)**

**Obv.** Head of Hercules right, wearing lion head-dress, Greek legend on three sides: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΔΙΚΑΙΟΥ / ΖΩΙΑΟΥ.

**Rev.** Within a circular wreath, club and bow in its bowcase, monogram at right, Kharosthi legend on three sides: *maharajasa dhramikasa / jhoilasa*.

**Reference:** MIG 258a, Bop 6A.

**Coin Nos.** Plates 1-3, Section 4.3.3.4 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

### **v. Agathocleia (Queen Regent to Strato I, c. 135-125 BCE)**

Agathoclea Theotropus, one of the few documented female rulers in Hellenistic Asia, assumed regency after the death of her husband Menander I, acting on behalf of her young son, Strato I. Her ascendancy and survival as queen regent during a period of intense civil strife and fragmentation of the Indo-Greek kingdom illustrate both the resilience and adaptability of Hellenistic political traditions in the Indian subcontinent (Errington, Cribb, & Claringbull, 1992, pp. 128-130). While earlier scholarship, such as Tarn (1951), posited her as the daughter of Eucratides, more recent numismatic research challenges this, suggesting her genealogy remains uncertain (Bopearachchi, 1991, pp. 87-89; Senior, 1998, pp. 45-46).

The coinage of Agathoclea is particularly significant for understanding gender and authority in Hellenistic India. Her silver and bronze issues, almost always bilingual (Greek and Kharosthi), display her portrait or depict her alongside Strato I (Maity, 1970, pp. 4-5), often with Hellenistic symbols of legitimacy such as Athena Alkidemos (Bopearachchi, 1991, pp. 87-89; Errington, Cribb, & Claringbull, 1992, p. 129). Notably, some coins bear the Greek inscription "ΒΑΣΙΛΙΣΣΗΣ ΘΕΟΤΡΟΠΟΥ ΑΓΑΘΟΚΛΕΙΑΣ" ("Of the Goddess-like Queen Agathoclea") and the Kharosthi equivalent, asserting her right to rule in both Hellenic and local terms (Senior, 1998, pp. 46-47). The frequent representation of Athena on her coins likely underscored Agathoclea's intended image as a protector and legitimate guardian of the dynasty during Strato's minority, a strategic deployment of Greek divine symbolism within an Indian context (Kubica, 2023, pp. 108-109).

The prominence and variety of Agathoclea's coinage further reflect the complex intersection of gender, power, and cultural adaptation among the Indo-Greeks. As one of the earliest Hellenistic queens to issue coins in her name and likeness, Agathoclea's numismatic legacy offers critical evidence for the agency of royal women and the continuing evolution of Greco-Bactrian and Indo-Greek statecraft.

### **Coins:**

#### **Type. Athena/ Herakles (Bronze Quadruple).**

**Obv.** Helmeted bust of Athena right, Greek legend on three sides:

ΒΑΣΙΛΙΣΣΗΣ / ΘΕΟΤΡΟΠΟΥ / ΑΓΑΘΟΚΛΕΙΑΣ

**Rev.** Nude Herakles seated left on a pile of rocks, holding a club in his right hand, which he rests on another pile of rocks, Kharoshthi legend on three sides: *maharajasa / tratarasa dhra / mikasa stratasa*.

**Reference:** MIG 307a, Bop 3A.

**Coin Nos.** Plates 1-5, Section 4.3.3.5 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

#### **vi. Strato I (c. 125-110 BCE)**

Strato I Dikaios (the Just), the son of renowned king Menander I and Queen Agathoclea, played an important role during the later period of Indo-Greek rule in the Punjab and Gandhara areas. His coinage, issued in both Greek and Kharosthi scripts, exemplifies the continuity of Greco-Indian syncretism and the legitimising strategies of successor kings. Early coins depict the youthful Strato alongside Agathoclea, with Greek legends such as "ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ ΣΤΡΑΤΩΝΟΣ ΚΑΙ ΑΓΑΘΟΚΛΕΙΑΣ" ("of Saviour King Strato and Agathocleia"), transitioning later to Strato alone, often bearded, suggesting a deliberate effort to signal his coming of age and autonomous rule (Bopearachchi, 1991, pp. 176-180; Senior, 1998, pp. 109-111). Notably, the Kharosthi inscriptions such as "Maharajasa tratarasa Dhramikasa Stratasa" emphasise his status as a "Great Saviour King" and "follower of the Dharma," further reflecting the enduring influence of Buddhist patronage that characterised his father's reign and the dynastic legitimacy of the Yavana rulers (Kubica, 2023, p. 135).

Strato I's reign, dated broadly from 125 to 110 BCE, is marked by competing hypotheses about his genealogy and succession. While earlier scholarship placed him directly after Menander I, recent numismatic analyses by Senior and Jakobsson argue for possible dynastic complexity, including the suggestion that two kings named Strato may have ruled in overlapping periods and territories, as inferred from differences in coinage titles, monograms, and portraiture styles (Jakobsson, 2007, p. 23; Senior, 1998,

p. 110). Strato's issues in the Indian square standard and the variety of his epithets ("Soter," "Dikaios," "Epiphanes") illustrate the evolving claims to righteousness, legitimacy, and perhaps even changing political fortunes during the waning years of Indo-Greek hegemony in the region (Bopearachchi, 1991, pp. 177-179; Kubica, 2023, p. 136). The eventual decline of his rule, possibly due to external invasions and internal fragmentation, is mirrored by the subsequent overstrikes and stylistic borrowings by successor kings, attesting to his lasting influence in the numismatic and political memory of northern India.

### Coins:

#### **Type 1. Apollo/ Tripod (Bronze Quadruple).**

**Obv.** Apollo standing facing, holding bow and arrow, Greek legend on three sides: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΕΠΙ / ΦΑΝΟΥΣ ΣΩΤΗ / ΡΟΣ ΣΤΡΑΤΩΝΟΣ.

**Rev.** Within dotted border, tripod, monogram at right, Kharoshthi legend on three sides: *maharajasa / pracachasa trata / rasa stratasa*.

**Reference:** MIG 336a, Bop 31 type.

**Coin Nos.** Plates 1-2, Section 4.3.3.6 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

#### **Type 2. Herakles/ Nike (Bronze Quadruple).**

**Obv.** Bust of Herakles right, club on shoulder, Greek legend on three sides: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΣΩΤ / ΗΡΟΣ ΔΙΚΑΙΟΥ / ΣΤΡΑΤΩΝΟΣ.

**Rev.** Winged Nike standing right, holding palm and wreath, monogram right, Kharoshthi legend on three sides: *maharajasa / tratarasa dhrami / kasa stratasa*.

**Reference:** MIG 334a, Bop 30A.

**Coin Nos.** Plates 3-4, Section 4.3.3.6 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

#### **Type 3. Apollo/ Bow and Quiver (Bronze Quadruple).**

**Obv.** Bust of Apollo right, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΕΠΙ ΦΑΝΟΥΣ ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ / ΣΤΡΑΤΩΝΟΣ.

**Rev.** Bow and quiver with strap, Kharoshthi legend: *maharajasa pracachasa tratarasa / stratasa*.

**Reference:** MIG 334a, Bop 30A.

**Coin Nos.** Plates 5-7, Section 4.3.3.6 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

### **vii. Lysias Anicetus (c. 120 BCE - 110 BCE)**

Lysias Anicetus, meaning "Lysias the Invincible," was another Indo-Greek king who reigned approximately between 130 and 120 BCE, likely succeeding Menander I and Zoilos I (Bopearachchi, 2023, p. 97). His realm is believed to have extended across Paropamisade and Arachosia; his coinage is scattered across Gandhara and Punjab, indicating a significant territorial reach, possibly in conjunction with Antialcidas. Lysias claimed descent from Demetrius, as suggested by his coinage featuring the

iconic elephant scalp and Heracles crowning himself, a motif symbolising victory and invincibility (Pieper, 2022, p. 112). Despite the grandeur of his coin types and their bilingual legends, his reign occurred during a defensive period, with the Indo-Greeks becoming increasingly isolated after the down fall of the Graeco-Bactrian kingdom to nomadic invasions, presence of "mule coins" with Antialcidas also highlights the adjacent or overlapping nature of their reigns (Khan & Thomas, 2022, p. 89).

### **Coins:**

#### **Type. Bust of king/ Hercules (Silver drachm)**

**Obv.** Diademed bust of king right, wearing elephant-scalp head-dress, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΑΝΙΚΗΤΟΥ / ΛΥΣΙΟΥ.

**Rev.** Nude Hercules standing facing, holding palm, club, and lionskin in left arm, crowning himself with his right hand, monograms at left and right, Kharoshthi legend: maharajasa apadihatasa / lisiasa.

**Reference:** MIG 262c, Bop 4C.

**Coin nos.** Plates 1-3, Section 4.3.3.7 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

#### **a. Discovery of Silver Coin Dies of King Lysias at Rai Qila.**

The silver drachm dies (Plates 1-4, Section 4.3.3.7.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins) of Lysias Anicetus, which was discovered at Rai Qila, the coordinates 33° 59' 36" north/ 71° 18' 8" east, exemplifies the late Indo-Greek numismatic tradition both in its iconographic program and bilingual legends. The obverse features a diademed bust of the king facing right, distinguished by the elephant-scalp head-dress, a Hellenistic allusion to Alexander's conquests, and a visual marker of the king's asserted authority over Indian domains. The Greek legend, "*ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΑΝΙΚΗΤΟΥ ΛΥΣΙΟΥ*" ("*of King Lysias the Invincible*"), encircles the portrait, reflecting standard titulature of the period (Mitchiner, 1975, p. 364; Bopearachchi, 2023, p. 209).

The reverse iconography presents a nude figure of Herakles (Hercules) standing frontally, palm-branch, club, and lion-skin draped over the left arm, while the right hand raises a wreath in the Act of self-crowning. This type is canonical for Lysias, drawing upon both Hellenistic and local traditions to signify invincibility and divine favour (Pieper, 2022, p. 154; Bopearachchi, 2023, p. 211). Monograms are positioned to the left and right, aiding in the attribution of specific emissions or mints. The Kharoshthi legend "maharajasa apadihatasa lisiasa" (of the undefeated Great King Lysias) encircles the reverse, testifying to the bilingual administrative realities of the Indo-Greek polities (Senior, 2001, p. 132; MACW 262c).

Numismatic evidence places Lysias's reign broadly in the 1<sup>st</sup> half of the first century BCE, with drachm issues like MIG 262c and Bop 4C typifying the period ca. 120-105 BCE (Bopearachchi, 1991, pp. 336-338). No Comparable finds have been documented during this period and more recently from coin hoards in the Khyber District, reinforcing Rai Qila's significance as a mint or major administrative centre.

The dual iconographic and linguistic strategies underscore both the cosmopolitan character of the Indo-Greek states and their adaptation to local sociopolitical environments. The elephant-scalp motif, shared with Demetrius I and Antimachus I, underlines royal claims to Indian legitimacy, while Herakles, a persistent figure on Indo-Greek reverses, symbolised the king's heroic virtues and Hellenistic affiliations (Mitchiner, 1975, p. 366; Bopearachchi, 2023, p. 214). The Rai Qila die, if contextually associated with a mint, further augments our understanding of urban economic life and political geography in the northwest frontier during the late Hellenistic era (Pieper, 2022, p. 159).

The coin die of Lysias at Rai Qila stands as one of the most fascinating breakthroughs in Indo-Greek numismatics and early metallurgical history. As the first confirmed Indo-Greek coin die ever found, its composition, iron rather than the more fragile bronze or copper typically used for ancient dies, offers direct insights into the technological sophistication of die production and longevity during the late Greek period in the Indo-Pak sub-continent. The existence of such a die is significant not only for its rarity but also for what it suggests about the organisation and location of Indo-Greek mints. While Rai Qila has not previously been securely identified as an official minting site, the die's context raises several interpretive possibilities. It may attest to the existence of an official or semi-official minting workshop at Rai Qila, serving the needs of Lysias or his successors as part of a broader numismatic network stretching across the northwest frontier (Bopearachchi, 2023, p. 223). Alternatively, the die could represent a remnant of illicit or unofficial coin production, either contemporary with Lysias's reign or in a later period when Indo-Greek coins continued to circulate and were subject to localised imitation or forgery, an activity increasingly attested in numismatic and metallurgical analyses from the region (Pieper, 2022, p. 146). Another hypothesis is that the die was displaced through ancient trade, conflict, or the redistribution of minting apparatus during political upheavals, eventually being deposited at Rai Qila well after its period of active use. Regardless of the precise pathway, the find not only establishes a new

reference point for the spatial geography of Indo-Greek minting but also offers valuable material for the study of early South-Asian coinage technology, mint organisation, and the afterlives of minting instruments (Bopearachchi, 2023, p. 225).

### **viii. Antialcidas (c. 115 BCE - 95 BCE)**

Antialcidas Nikephoros ("the Victorious") is another important Indo-Greek king due to his remarkable diplomatic and religious engagements, as well as his extensive coinage. Ruling approximately between 115-95 BCE (Bopearachchi, 1991, p. 226; Senior, 1998, p. 137), Antialcidas is particularly well known from the famous Heliodorus pillar inscription at Vidisha. The inscription documents the diplomatic visit of Heliodorus, serving as an ambassador, to the court of the Shunga ruler Bhagabhadra. It also describes Heliodorus as a follower of Vishnu, illustrating the Indo-Greek court's receptiveness to Indian religious customs and beliefs (Avari, 2016, p. 167; Wallace, 2016, pp. 222-223). The pillar is one of the earliest material evidences of Greco-Indian religious interaction. It has been interpreted as proof of political alliances and the assimilation of Hellenistic rulers into local religious contexts (Kubica, 2023, p. 145).

Antialcidas' coins further reflect the syncretic culture of his reign, showing Greek and Indian motifs, bilingual legends, and symbols such as Zeus, elephants (potentially alluding to Taxila or Buddhist symbolism), and Nike. The iconography, such as Zeus handing a victory wreath to an elephant, has been interpreted as both a celebration of Greek victory and an allusion to Buddhist mythological themes (McEvelley, 2002, pp. 413-414; Bopearachchi, 1991, p. 228). His coin issues also include overstrikes and "mule coins" that, as recent scholarship argues, result from minting errors rather than joint rule with contemporaries like Lysias (Senior & MacDonald, 1998, p. 31). The abundant and varied coinage of Antialcidas testifies to his control over key minting centres and the multicultural character of his dominion in Gandhara and the Punjab.

### **Coins:**

#### **Type 1. Bust of king/ Zeus (Silver drachm)**

**Obv.** Diademed bust of king right, wearing kausia, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΝΙΚΗΦΟΡΟΥ / ΑΝΤΙΑΛΚΙΔΟΥ.

**Rev.** Zeus enthroned three-quarters left, holding sceptre in left hand, Winged Nike holding wreath in right hand, forepart of elephant at left, monogram at right, Kharoshthi legend: maharajasa jayadharasa / amtialikidasa.

**Reference:** MIG 277a, Bop 13A



**Coin nos.** Plates 1-2, Section 4.3.3.8 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type. 2. Bust of king/ Zeus (Silver drachm)**

**Obv.** Diademed bust of king right, wearing kausia, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΝΙΚΗΦΟΡΟΥ / ΑΝΤΙΑΛΚΙΔΟΥ.

**Rev.** Zeus enthroned three-quarters left, holding sceptre in left hand, Winged Nike holding wreath in right hand, forepart of elephant at left, monogram at right, Kharoshthi legend: maharajasa jayadharasa / amtialikidasa.

**Reference:** MIG 276 type, Bop 10A

**Coin nos.** Plates 3-5, Section 4.3.3.8 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type. 3. Zeus/ Cups (Bronze Quadruple)**

**Obv.** Bust of Zeus right, holding thunderbolt in right hand, Greek legend on three sides: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ / ΝΙΚΗΦΟΡΟΥ / ΑΝΤΙΑΛΚΙΔΟΥ.

**Rev..** Caps and palms of the Dioscuri, monogram at left, Kharoshthi legend on three sides: maharajasa / jayadharasa / amtialikidasa.

**Reference:** MIG 280b, Bop 16B; MIG 280c, Bop 17C.

**Coin nos.** Plates 6-13, Section 4.3.3.8 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type. 4. Bust of king/ Zeus (Bronze Quadruple)**

**Obv.** Bust of Zeus right, holding thunderbolt in right hand, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΝΙΚΗΦΟΡΟΥ / ΑΝΤΙΑΛΚΙΔΟΥ.

**Rev..** Caps and palms of the Dioscuri (sons of Zeus), monogram at left, Kharoshthi legend: maharajasa jayadharasa / amtialikidasa.

**Reference:** MIG 281a, Bop 14A

**Coin nos.** Plate 14, Section 4.3.3.8 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**ix. Heliocles II (c. 110 BCE - 100 BCE)**

Heliocles II Dicaeus, whose reign is generally dated to c. 95-80 BCE, represents a period of significant fragmentation and contestation in the late Indo-Greek world. Widely considered a descendant, possibly the son of Antialcidas Nikephoros and grandson of Heliocles I, Heliocles II is primarily known from his coinage, which often features a diademed or helmeted bust of the king on the obverse and reverse side of the coins, standing Zeus, reflecting both continuity and adaptation in Greco-Bactrian royal imagery (Bopearachchi, 2003, p. 129; Jakobsson, 2007, p. 21). The existence of extensive overstrikes, where Heliocles II struck coins over those of Agathokleia, Strato I, and Hermaeus, and in turn had his coins overstruck by Amyntas, demonstrates the intense struggle for supremacy among the later Indo-Greek and Saka rulers, especially in the regions of Gandhara and Punjab (Tarn, 1984, p. 268; Bopearachchi, 2003, p. 129). Notably, Heliocles II's coinage sometimes includes Indian iconography, such as the elephant, signalling the increasing localisation of Greek rule and the adaptation to

Indian cultural environments, a trend supported by numismatic finds and recent archaeological scholarship (Narain, 2004, p. 116; Bopearachchi, 2003, p. 129). Jakobsson (2007) further argues for familial and artistic links between Heliocles II and Archibius, based on shared iconography and portrait style, suggesting a continuity of power within a shrinking Greek domain (Jakobsson, 2007, p. 21). Thus, the numismatic and overstrike evidence from Heliocles II's reign provides a vivid window into the complex political and cultural transformations in northwest India on the eve of the Indo-Greek decline.

### Coins:

#### **Type 1. Bust of king/ Zeus (Silver tetradrachm)**

**Obv.** Diademed bust of king right, Greek legend: ΑΣΙΑΕΩΣ ΔΙΚΑΙΟΥ / ΗΛΙΟΚΛΕΟΥΣ, Basileos Dikaïou Heliokleous ... (of King Heliocles, the just).

**Rev.** Zeus standing facing, holding thunderbolt in right hand, spear in left, Monogram at right, Kharoshthi legend: *maharajasa dhramikasa / heliyakresasa*.

**Reference:** MIG 288 *var*, Bop 1 *var*

**Coin nos.** Plate 1, Section 4.3.3.9 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

#### **Type. 2. Bust of king/ Elephant (Bronze Quadruple)**

**Obv.** Diademed bust of king right, Greek legend on three sides: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ / ΔΙΚΑΙΟΥ / ΗΛΙΟΚΛΕΟΥΣ.

**Rev.** Elephant walking left, monogram below, Kharoshthi legend on three sides: *maharajasa / dhramikasa / heliyakre* ...

**Reference:** MIG 294, Bop 7

**Coin nos.** Plates 2-3, Section 4.3.3.8 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

### **x. Polyxenus (c. 100 BCE)**

Polyxenus (c. 100 BCE) is unattested in the archaeological and numismatic record of Jamrud, as no coins, artefacts, or cultural material associated with his reign were identified in the present study. Consequently, there is no direct evidence to suggest the activity or influence of Polyxenus at this site.

### **xi. Demetrius III (c. 100 BCE)**

Likewise, no coins, artefacts, or any form of cultural remains attributable to Demetrius III have been discovered from Jamrud during this research. This absence indicates that there is currently no material evidence linking Demetrius III to the site, and his presence in the local historical sequence remains unattested at Jamrud. It should also be considered that the historical existence of a king named Demetrius III remains a subject

of scholarly debate; many numismatists suggest that coins previously attributed to Demetrius III may belong to the short-lived reign of Demetrius II (Senior, 2001, pp. 20-21), whose coinage is exceptionally scarce. The rarity and limited distribution of these coins support the hypothesis that all known issues likely pertain to Demetrius II rather than a distinct Demetrius III, further explaining the lack of material evidence for the latter at Jamrud.

### **xii. Philoxenus (c. 100-95 BCE)**

Philoxenus Anicetus was a significant but somewhat enigmatic Indo-Greek king, ruling roughly between 100 and 95 BCE over regions from the Paropamisade to Punjab, as evidenced by the geographical spread and diversity of his coinage (Bopearachchi, 1998, pp. 144-145; Senior, 2008, p. 127). His coins are notable for their innovative iconography: Philoxenus adopted the rare motif of a mounted king, possibly himself, making a gesture of blessing, a striking deviation from standard Hellenistic types and perhaps a reflection of local influences or efforts to appeal to his multiethnic subjects (Tarn, 1984, p. 324; Bopearachchi, 1998, p. 146). Additionally, Philoxenus issued both Attic standard tetradrachms and distinctive Indian square drachms, the latter aligning with numismatic traditions of the Sakas and suggesting his pragmatic engagement with nomadic groups then active in Bactria and northwestern India (Bopearachchi, 1998, p. 146; Narain, 2004, p. 161). Despite the breadth of his coinage and the presumption that he wielded considerable power, no dynastic affiliations have been firmly established for Philoxenus, though some speculate a familial connection with Kalliope, wife of Hermaeus, based on overlapping motifs and contemporary numismatic evidence (Bopearachchi, 1998, p. 147; Senior, 2008, p. 127; Narain, 2004, p. 162).

#### **Coins:**

##### **Type 1. Bust of king/ King riding on horse (Silver tetradrachm)**

**Obv.** Diademed bust of king right, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΑΝΙΚΗΤΟΥ / ΦΙΛΟΞΕΝΟΥ, Basileos Aniketou Philoxenou ... (of King Philoxenus, the unconquered).

**Rev.** Helmeted king mounted on prancing horse right, monogram above at left, Kharoshthi legend: *maharajasa apadihatasa / philasinasa*.

**Reference:** MIG 338a, Bop 3A

**Coin nos.** Plate 1-2, Section 4.3.3.10 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

##### **Type 2. Bust of king/ King riding on horse (Silver tetradrachm)**

**Obv.** Diademed bust of king right, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ / ΑΝΙΚΗΤΟΥ / ΦΙΛΟΞΕΝΟΥ, Basileos/ Aniketou/ Philoxenou ... (of King Philoxenus, the unconquered).

**Rev.** Helmeted king mounted on prancing horse right, monogram below at right, Kharoshthi legend: *maharajasa apadihatasa / philasinasa*.

**Reference:** MIG 339b, Bop 4H.

**Coin nos.** Plate 3, Section 4.3.3.10 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

### **Type 3. city goddess/ Bull (Bronze Quadruple)**

**Obv.** City goddess standing left, holding cornucopia, and bestowing blessing with outstretched right hand, monogram below at left, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ / ΑΝΙΚΗΤΟΥ / ΦΙΛΟΞΕΝΟΥ.

**Rev.** Humped bull standing right, Kharoshthi va below, Kharoshthi legend: *maharajasa / apadihatasa / philasinasa*.

**Reference:** MIG 344d, Bop 10F.

**Coin nos.** Plates 4-12, Section 4.3.3.10 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

### **xiii. Diomedes (c. 95-90 BCE)**

Diomedes Soter, who ruled as an Indo-Greek king in the Paropamisadae region around 95-90 BCE, occupies a significant position in the later phase of the Indo-Greek period. His coinage, which often features the Dioscuri either standing or on horseback, echoes the types previously seen on the coins of Eucratides I, suggesting a dynastic link or at least a deliberate attempt to associate himself with the Eucratid tradition (Bopearachchi, 2003, p. 129; Tarn, 1984, p. 324). The use of both Greek and Kharoshthi legends on his silver coins points to the multicultural context of his realm, as well as his pragmatic approach to governing a diverse population (Bopearachchi, 2003, p. 129; Kubica, 2023, p. 98). Numismatic evidence also indicates that Diomedes may have been a relative and possible heir of Philoxenus, as shown by their overlapping monograms and strikingly similar portrait styles (Bopearachchi, 2003, p. 129; Senior, 2008, p. 138). The rarity and stylistic conservatism of Diomedes' coins, particularly the prominent depiction of the Dioscuri, underscores both the enduring influence of Hellenistic iconography and the competitive environment among the claimants to the Indo-Greek thrones in the first century BCE (Tarn, 1984, p. 324; Kubica, 2023, p. 98).

#### **Coins:**

### **Type. Discuri/ Bull (Bronze Quadruple)**

**Obv.** Dioscuri standing facing, holding spears, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ / ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ / ΔΙΟΜΗΔΕΩΣ.

**Rev.** Humped bull walking right, Kharoshthi legend: *maharajasa / tratarasa / diyametasa*.

**Reference:** MIG 354, Bop 10.

**Coin Nos.** Plates 1- 4, Section 4.3.3.11 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

#### **xiv. Amyntas (c. 95-90 BCE)**

Amyntas Nikator, reigning approximately 95-90 BCE, stands out among the late Indo-Greek rulers for both the geographic extent of his coin finds and the remarkable innovation in his numismatic issues. His reign is distinguished by the striking of huge silver coins, double-decadrachms, which are considered the largest silver coins of antiquity, with several specimens found in the Qunduz hoard in northern Afghanistan (Bopearachchi, 2003, p. 129; Narain, 1976, p. 64). The iconography on Amyntas's coins, featuring Zeus seated with Athena or Tyche, and the introduction of the syncretic deity Zeus-Mithra wearing a Phrygian cap, reveal a sophisticated blend of Hellenistic and local cultural-religious symbols, suggesting efforts at political legitimization among both Greek and indigenous populations (Kubica, 2023, p. 102; Tarn, 1984, p. 325). His bilingual coinage in Greek and Kharoshthi, and the recurrence of monograms shared with contemporary kings such as Heliocles II, Polyxenus, and Philoxenus, points to both complex alliances and rivalries within the Indo-Greek world during this turbulent period (Bopearachchi, 2003, p. 129; Senior, 2008, p. 144). Notably, Amyntas also adopted the epithet "Nikator" (Victor), a title rarely used after Agathocles, further highlighting his ambition and possible claims of dynastic continuity (Kubica, 2023, p. 102; Narain, 1976, p. 64).

#### **Coins:**

##### **Type 1. Bust of king/ Zeus, Silver drachm (Indian standard)**

**Obv.** Diademed bust of king right, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ ΝΙΚΑΤΟΡΟΣ / ΑΜΥΝΤΟΥ.

**Rev.** Zeus enthroned three-quarters left, holding sceptre and palm in left arm and holding Athena in his outstretched right hand, monogram left, Kharoshthi legend: maharajasa jayadharasa / amitasa.

**Reference:** MIG 388b, Bop 4B.

**Coin nos.** Plate 1, Section 4.3.3.12 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

##### **Type. 2. Bust of Zeus/ Athena (Bronze Quadruple)**

**Obv.** Bust of Zeus/Mithra right, wearing Phrygian cap, sceptre on left shoulder, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ / ΝΙΚΑΤΟΡΟΣ / ΑΜΥΝΤΟΥ.

**Rev.** Helmeted Athena standing left, holding spear and shield, monogram left, Kharoshthi legend: *maharajasa / jayadharasa / amitasa*

**Reference:** MIG 396b, Bop 14C.

**Coin nos.** Plates 2-7, Section 4.3.3.12 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

#### xv. Epander (c. 95-90 BCE)

Epander Nikephoros ("the Victorious") was one of the short-reigning Indo-Greek kings, governing in the Punjab region around 95-90 BCE according to Bopearachchi, although some scholars suggest his rule could extend into the 80s BCE (Bopearachchi, 2003, p. 130; Senior, 2008, p. 156). The scarcity and distribution of Epander's coins, which feature his diademed portrait and the fighting Athena motif on the reverse, a type closely associated with Menander I, suggest both a limited territorial reach and a conscious effort to connect himself to Menander's illustrious legacy (Tarn, 1984, p. 347; Narain, 1976, p. 73). Notably, Epander's epithet "Nikephoros" was unusual among Indo-Greek kings employing the Athena Alkidemos reverse, as most opted for the title "Soter" (Saviour), possibly indicating a unique claim to military success or legitimacy during a period of political fragmentation and dynastic rivalry (Bopearachchi, 2003, p. 130; Hollis, 2021, p. 212). Overstrikes of Epander on the coins of Strato I and Philoxenus further underline the intense competition among the Indo-Greek successors in the Punjab, as well as the fluidity of royal authority in the area during the late 2nd to early 1st century BCE (Hollis, 2021, p. 212; Senior, 2008, p. 156).

#### Coins:

##### Type. Nike/ Humped Bull (Bronze Quadruple)

**Obv.** Winged Nike standing right, holding wreath and palm, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ / ΝΙΚΗΦΟΡΟΥ / ΕΠΑΝΔΡΟΥ.

**Rev.** Humped bull standing right, monogram at right, Kharoshthi legend: *maharajasa* / *jayadharasa* / *epadrasa*.

**Reference:** MIG 302b, Bop 2A.

**Coin nos.** Plate 1, Section 4.3.3.13 in Part II: Illustrations Coins

#### xvi. Theophilus (c. 90 BCE)

Theophilus Dicaeus was a minor Indo-Greek king, probably ruling Paropamisadae briefly around 90 BCE, best known through his coins depicting Heracles and bearing the epithet "The Just" (Bopearachchi, 1991, p. 312; Tarn, 1984, p. 366). Some numismatists, like Jakobsson (2010), argue that certain coins attributed to him may belong to a Bactrian prince of the same name. His reign reflects the fluid and fragmented nature of the late Indo-Greek kingdoms (Bopearachchi, 1991, p. 312; Jakobsson, 2010, p. 28).

##### Type. Warrior/ Lion (Bronze Quadruple)

**Obv.** Bust of Herakles right, wearing lion head-dress, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ / ΔΙΚΑΙΟΥ / ΘΕΟΦΙΛΟΥ, Club, monogram at right.

**Rev.** Kharoshthi legend: maharajasa / dhramiasa / theuphilasa.

**Reference:** MIG 376a, Bop 5A.

**Coin nos.** Plate 1, Section 4.3.3.14 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

#### **xvii. Peucolaos (c. 90 BCE)**

Peucolaus Soter Dicaeus was an obscure Indo-Greek king ruling Gandhara around 90 BCE, issuing rare coins that display both Greek and local religious iconography, such as Zeus and Artemis (Bopearachchi, 1991, p. 309; Di Castro, 2017, pp. 38-39; Tarn, 1984, p. 364). His reign appears brief, with overstrikes by Archebios indicating political instability among late Indo-Greeks. The meaning of his name and coin motifs highlight both Hellenistic and local influences in his short-lived rule (Di Castro, 2017, p. 39; Narain, 1976, p. 88).

No coins of the king have been reported from Jamrud.

#### **xviii. Nicias (c. 90-85 BCE)**

Nicias was an Indo-Greek ruler who governed the Paropamisade region circa 90–85 BC. His coinage features his portrait in Hellenistic armour, and in some cases, he is shown making the Buddhist vitarka mudra gesture (Bopearachchi, 1991, p. 318; Tarn, 1984, p. 374). His coinage suggests a small, localised rule in the lower Kabul valley, with connections to earlier Indo-Greek kings such as Menander I (McEvelley, 2002, p. 463; Bopearachchi, 1991, p. 318). No Attic-standard coins are known for Nicias, supporting his reign's placement in the late Indo-Greek period (Tarn, 1984, p. 374; Bopearachchi, 1991, p. 318).

No coins of the king have been reported from Jamrud.

#### **xix. Menander II (c. 90-85 BCE)**

Menander II, who ruled on Arachosia and Gandhara, is known solely from his coins, which depict Buddhist symbols and the epithet "the Just" (Bopearachchi, 1998; Pl. 49; Tarn, 1984, p. 395). His coinage reflects Buddhist influence, with the eight-spoked Dharma wheel and the lion of Ashoka (McEvelley, 2002, p. 462). Menander II's historical identity is debated, with some scholars suggesting his rule was minor and

possibly confused with Menander I (Bopearachchi, 1998, Pl. 49; McEvilley, 2002, p. 462). The coins are rare, indicating a limited and short reign (Tarn, 1984, p. 395).

### Coins:

#### Type. 1. Warrior/ Lion (Bronze Quadruple)

**Obv.** Warrior standing three-quarters right, holding spear, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ / ΔΙΚΑΙΟΥ / ΜΕΝΑΝΔΡΟΥ, (Basileos Dikaïou Menandriou ... *of King Menander, the just*).

**Rev.** Lion standing left with paw raised, Kharoshthi legend: *maharajasa / dhramikasa / menamdrasa*.

**Reference:** MIG 253, Bop 6A

**Coin nos.** Plate 1, Section 4.3.3.15 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

### xx. Hermaios & Calliope (c. 90-70 BCE)

### Coins:

#### Type. Jugate Bust/ King Riding on Horse (Indian Standard, Silver tetradrachm)

**Obv.** Jugate diademed busts of king and queen right, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ ΕΡΜΑΙΟΥ / ΚΑΙ ΚΑΛΛΙΟΠΗΣ. (Basileos Soteris Hermaïou kai Callioes ... *of King and Saviour Hermaios and Calliope*).

**Rev.** Helmeted King mounted on horse prancing right, Kharoshthi legend: *maharajasa tratarasa heramayasa / kaliyapaya*.

**Reference:** MIG 407a, Bop 1B.

**Coin nos.** Plate 1, Section 4.3.3.16 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

### xxi. Hermaios (c. 90-70 BCE)

Hermaeus Soter belonged to the house of Eukratides I, who reigned in Paropamisadae (near present-day Kabul) around 90-70 BCE, with his reign marking the final phase of Greek rule in the region (Tarn, 1984, p. 316; Bopearachchi, 2003, p. 47; Narain, 1976, p. 112). His coins, issued jointly with his queen Kalliope, show a blend of Greek and local elements, and his rule ended with the Yuezhi/Kushan takeover, whose rulers imitated Hermaeus' coinage to assert legitimacy (Bopearachchi, 2003, p. 47; Tarn, 1984, p. 318). Some Chinese records, as interpreted by Hulsewé & Loewe (1979, p. 226), suggest possible contacts between Hermaeus and Han China, indicating cross-cultural diplomacy in this late Indo-Greek period.

### Coins:

#### Type 1. Bust of king/ Zeus (Indian Standard, Silver tetradrachm)



**Obv.** Bare-headed, diademed bust of king right, Greek legend:

ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ ΕΡΜΑΙΟΥ, (Basileos Soteris Hermaiou ... of King Hermaios, the Saviour).

**Rev.** Zeus enthroned three-quarters left, holding sceptre in left hand and bestowing blessing with right hand, Kharoshthi legend: *maharajasa tratarasa / heramayasa*.

**Reference:** MIG 414k, Bop 2E

**Coin nos.** Plates 1-3, Section 4.3.3.17 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type 2. Bust of king/ Zeus (Indian Standard, Silver drachm)**

**Obv.** Bare-headed, diademed bust of king right, Greek legend:

ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ ΕΡΜΑΙΟΥ, (Basileos Soteris Hermaiou ... of King Hermaios, the Saviour).

**Rev.** Zeus enthroned three-quarters left, holding sceptre in left hand and bestowing blessing with right hand, Kharoshthi legend: *maharajasa tratarasa / heramayasa*.

**Reference:** MIG 415p, Bop 3A.

**Coin nos.** Plate 4, Section 4.3.3.17 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type 3. Bust of king/ Zeus (Indian Standard, Silver drachm)**

**Obv.** Bust of Zeus/Mithra right, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ / ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ / ΕΡΜΑΙΟΥ (Basileos Soteris Hermaiou ... of King Hermaios, the Saviour).

**Rev.** Horse walking right, Kharoshthi legend: *maharajasa / tratarasa / heramayasa*.

**Reference:** MIG 416b, Bop 9.

**Coin nos.** Plates 5-7, Section 4.3.3.17 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**xxii. Artemidoros (c. 85-80 BCE)**

Artemidoros Aniketos, ruling around 85-80 BCE in Gandhara, issued coins that combine Greek and Scythian elements, reflecting cultural transition in the region (Bopearachchi, 2008, p. 25; Tarn, 1984, p. 398; McEvelley, 2002, p. 464). Some numismatists debate whether he was the son of Indo-Scythian Maues or an independent Indo-Greek king, as interpretations of his coin inscriptions vary (Bopearachchi, 2008, p. 25). His coinage features Hellenistic deities like Artemis and Nike, indicating ongoing Greek artistic influence despite rising Scythian power (McEvelley, 2002, p. 464; Tarn, 1984, p. 398).

**Coins:**

**Type 1. Bust of king/ Nike (Silver Drachm)**

**Obv.** Bare-headed, diademed bust of king right, Greek legend:

ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΑΝΙΚΗΤΟΥ / ΑΡΤΕΜΙΔΟΡΟΥ, (Basileos Anikitou Artemidorou ... of King Artemidoros, the Unconquered).

**Rev:** Winged Nike standing right, holding ribboned palm over her left shoulder, and offering ribboned wreath in outstretched right hand, Kharoshthi legend: *maharajasa apadihatasa / artemitorasa*.

**Reference:** MIG 403c, Bop 6B.

**Coin Nos.** Plate 1, Section 4.3.3.18 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**xxiii. Archebios (c. 90-80 BCE)**

Archebios Dikaïos Nikephoros was the last Indo-Greek king, ruling Taxila and the surrounding regions 90-80 BCE, just before the Saka (Indo-Scythian) conquest under Maues (Tarn, 1984, p. 324; Bopearachchi, 2003, p. 133; Puri, 2000, p. 88). His coins often depict Zeus and use the titles "the Just and Victorious," reflecting both Greek and local influences. Archebios may have been related to Heliocles II, and his rare Attic tetradrachms and overstrikes on Peukolaos coins mark the turbulent era before the Greek political collapse in the region (McEvelley, 2002, p. 431).

**Coins:**

**Type. 1. Elephant/ Owl (AE hemi-obol or quadruple unit)**

**Obv.** Elephant walking right, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΔΙΚΑΙΟΥ ΝΙΚΗΦΟΡΟΥ / ΑΡΧΕΒΙΟΥ, (Basileos Dikaïou Nikephorou Archebiou ... *of King Archebios, the just, the victorious*).

**Rev:** Owl standing facing, three-quarters right, Kharoshthi legend: *maharajasa dhra / mikasa jayadhara / sa arkhebiyasa*.

**Reference:** MIG 368a, Bop 12B.

**Coin Nos.** Plate 1, Section 4.3.3.19 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type. 2. Nike/ Owl (AE hemi-obol or quadruple unit).**

**Obv.** Winged Nike walking left, holding palm and wreath, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΔΙΚΑΙΟΥ ΝΙΚΗΦΟΡΟΥ / ΑΡΧΕΒΙΟΥ, (Basileos Dikaïou Nikephorou Archebiou ... *of King Archebios, the just, the victorious*).

**Rev.** Owl standing facing, three-quarters right, Kharoshthi legend: *maharajasa dhramikasa jayadharasa / arkhebiyasa*.

**Reference:** MIG 367a, Bop 11A.

**Coin Nos.** Plates 2-4, Section 4.3.3.19 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**xxiv. Telephos (c. 75-70 BCE)**

Telephus Euergetes, ruling Gandhara around 75-70 BCE, was a late and possibly weak Indo-Greek or Saka-affiliated king, notable for his unusual coinage that lacked his portrait and featured unique mythological figures (Tarn, 1984, p. 330; Narain, 1976, p. 212; Bopearachchi, 1991, p. 310). His coins also display both Greek and Kharoshthi legends, and he overstruck coins of Archebios, reflecting the era's instability and syncretism. Telephus is considered a transitional figure during the fall of the Indo-Greek rule before the advent of the Indo-Scythians.

**Coins:**

**Type 1. Zeus/ Man (AE hemi-obol or quadruple unit)**

**Obv.** Zeus enthroned three-quarters left, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ / ΕΥΕΡΓΕΤΟΥ / ΤΗΛΕΦΟΥ, (Basileos Evergetou Telephou ... of King Telephos, the benefactor).

**Rev.** Man (fakir?) squatting right, holding a walking stick? Kharoshthi legend: *maharajasa / kalanakra / masa teliphasa*.

**Reference:** MIG 453a, Bop 3A.

**Coin Nos.** Plate 1, Section 4.3.3.20 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type 2. Herakles/ Club (Double Obol)**

**Obv.** Head of Herakles right, wearing a lion's skin

**Rev.** Upright club; monogram to the right

**Reference:** Bopearachchi 6P.

**Coin Nos.** Plate 2, Section 4.3.3.20 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**xxv. Apollodotus II (c. 80-65 BCE)**

Apollodotus II was an important Indo-Greek king who reconquered Taxila and parts of Punjab from Scythian rule, issuing coins with Greek and Kharoshthi legends and the deity Athena Alkidemos, reflecting Menander I's dynasty (Tarn, 1984, p. 367; Bopearachchi, 1991, p. 322; McEvilley, 2002, p. 185). His reign briefly restored Indo-Greek power in the region before the kingdom fragmented again after his death. Apollodotus II's coinage also highlights increased reliance on Indian subjects and cultural integration.

**Coins:****Type 1. Bust of King/ Athena (Indian Standard, Silver Drachm).**

**Obv.** Bare-headed, diademed bust of king right, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ / ΑΠΟΛΛΟΔΟΤΟΥ, (Basileos Soteris Apollodotou ... of King Apollodotus, the saviour).

**Rev.** Seen from behind, Athena Alkidemos standing left, holding aegis on outstretched left arm, hurling thunderbolt with right hand, monogram at right, Kharoshthi legend: around: *maharajasa tratarasa / apaladatasasa*.

**Reference:** MIG 425l, Bop 1E.

**Coin nos.** Plates 1-5, Section 4.3.3.21 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type 2. Apollo/ Tripod (AE obol or octuple unit).**

**Obv.** Apollo standing three-quarters right, holding bow, monogram at left, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ / ΑΠΟΛΛΟΔΟΤΟΥ, (Basileos Soteris Apollodotou ... of King Apollodotus, the saviour).

**Rev.** Tripod, flanked by Kharoshthi letters, Kharoshthi legend: *maharajasa tratarasa / apaladatasasa*.

**Reference:** MIG 432e, Bop 6C.

**Coin nos.** Plates 6-11, Section 4.3.3.21 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type 3. Apollo/ Tripod (AE hemi-obol or quadruple unit).**

**Obv.** Apollo standing three-quarters right, holding bow and arrow, quiver on back, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ / ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ / ΑΠΟΛΛΟΔΟΤΟΥ.

**Rev.** Tripod, flanked by monograms, Kharoshthi legend: *maharajasa / tratarasa / apaladatasā*.

**Reference:** MIG 433a, Bop 12A.

**Coin nos.** Plates 12-13, Section 4.3.3.21 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type 4. Apollo/ Tripod (AE hemi-obol or quadruple unit).**

**Obv.** Apollo standing three-quarters right, within rectangular border, holding bow and arrow, quiver on back, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ / ΚΑΙ ΦΙΛΟΠΑΤΟΡΟΣ / ΑΠΟΛΛΟΔΟΤΟΥ.

**Rev.** Tripod, within rectangular border, monogram at right, Kharoshthi legend: *maharajasa / tratarasa / apaladatasā*.

**Reference:** MIG 426a, Bop 16B.

**Coin nos.** Plate 14, Section 4.3.3.21 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type 5. Bull/ Tripod (AE chalkous or single unit).**

**Obv.** Humped bull standing right, within rectangular border.

**Rev.** Tripod, within a rectangular border.

**Reference:** MIG 205, Bop 19A.

**Coin nos.** Plates 15-16, Section 4.3.3.21 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**xxvi. Hippostratos (c. 65-55 BCE)**

Hippostratus (reigned c. 65-55 BCE) was one of the last powerful western Indo-Greek kings, ruling central and north-western Punjab and Pushkalavati, and fighting against the Indo-Scythian (Saka) invasion led by Azes I. His coinage, notable for its quality and the "Saviour" (Soter) and "Great King" (Basileos Megas) titles, demonstrates both the lingering Greek influence and the emerging syncretic culture of the region (Tarn, 1984, p. 372; Bopearachchi, 1991, p. 327; Senior, 2008, p. 58). Ultimately, Hippostratus was defeated by Azes I, ending the Indo-Greek rule in the west.

**Coins:****Type 1. Bust of king/ Horse (Silver tetradrachm)**

**Obv.** Bare-headed, diademed bust of king right, Greek legend:

ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ / ΙΠΠΙΟΣΤΡΑΤΟΥ, (Basileos Soteris Hippostratou ... *of King Hippostratos, the saviour*).

**Rev.** King mounted on a horse walking right, monogram at right, Kharoshthi letters left and below, Kharoshthi legend: *maharajasa tratarasa mahatasa jayamtasa / hipustratasa*.

**Reference:** MIG 445 var, Bop 7 var.

**Coin nos.** Plate 1, Section 4.3.3.22 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type 2. Bust of king/ Horse (Silver drachm)**

**Obv.** Bare-headed, diademed bust of king right, Greek legend:

ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ / ΙΠΠΙΟΣΤΡΑΤΟΥ, (Basileos Soteris Hippostratou ... *of King Hippostratos, the saviour*).

**Rev.** King mounted on a horse walking right, monogram at right, Kharoshthi letters left and below, Kharoshthi legend: *maharajasa tratarasa mahatasa jayamtasa / hipustratasa*.

**Reference:** MIG 440a, Bop 2A.

**Coin nos.** Plates 2-4, Section 4.3.3.22 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type 3. Bust of king/ Horse (AE 6-chalkoi or sextuple unit)**

**Obv.** Zeus-Mithra enthroned three-quarters left, holding sceptre in left arm, and bestowing wreath without-stretched right hand, Greek legend:

ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ / ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ / ΙΠΠΙΟΣΤΡΑΤΟΥ, (Basileos Soteris Hippostratou ... *of King Hippostratos, the saviour*)

**Rev.** Horse standing left, monogram at left, all within dotted border, Kharoshthi legend: *maharajasa trata / rasa jayamtasa / hipustratasa*.

**Reference:** MIG 449a, Bop 10A.

**Coin nos.** Plates 5, Section 4.3.3.22 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**xxvii. Dionysios (c. 65-55 BCE)**

Dionysius Soter ruled as an Indo-Greek king in eastern Punjab from about 65-55 BCE, inheriting the kingdom's eastern parts after Apollodotus II, with his reign characterized by silver drachms featuring Athena Alkidemos and the use of a distinctive "boxy" mint-mark (Bopearachchi, 1991, p. 330; Tarn, 1984, p. 318; Jakobsson, 2010, Numismatic Chronicle). His rule reflected both the weakening Greek presence and rising Scythian pressure in the region.

**Coins:****Type. Apollo/ Tripod (AE obol or octuple unit)**

**Obv.** Apollo standing right, holding an arrow, monogram at left, Greek legend:

ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ / ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ / ΔΙΟΝΥΣΙΟΥ, (Basileos Soteris Dionisiou ... *of King Dionysios, the saviour*).

**Rev.** Tripod, Kharoshthi letters on either side, Kharoshthi legend: *maharajasa / tratarasa / diunisiyasa*.

**Reference:** MIG 455b, Bop 3E.

**Coin Nos.** Plate 1, Section 4.3.3.23 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**xxviii. Zoilus II (c. 55-35 BCE)**

Zoilus II Soter ruled as an Indo-Greek king in eastern Punjab around 55-35 BCE, issuing silver drachms with the fighting Athena and bronzes featuring Apollo and

elephants, often in a rather crude style. He may have belonged to the same dynasty as Apollodotus II and other late Indo-Greek rulers, and recent research suggests a possible succession by Zoilus III, distinguished by a later "boxy" mint-mark and younger portrait style (Bopearachchi, 1991, p. 138; Tarn, 1984; Jakobsson, 2010, Numismatic Chronicle). His coins have been found at important archaeological sites such as Dharmarajika near Taxila, indicating their wide circulation.

### **Coins:**

#### **Type. Bust of King/ Athena (Silver Drachm)**

**Obv.** Diademed bust of king right, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ / ΖΩΙΛΟΥ, (Basileos Soteris Zoilou ... of King Zoilos, the saviour).

**Rev.** Seen from behind, Athena Alkidemos standing left, holding aegis on outstretched left arm, hurling thunderbolt with right hand, monograms left and right, Kharoshthi legend: *maharajasa tratarasa / jhoilasa*.

**Reference:** MIG 459q, Bop 1E.

Coin Nos. Plates 1-2, Section 4.3.3.24 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

#### **a. Zoilus II Coins hoard from Gudar, Ghundi, Jamrud.**

#### **G.1 Menander I**

##### **Type 1. Bust of King/ Athena (Silver Drachm)**

**Obv.** Diademed, helmeted bust of king right, discontinuous Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ / ΜΕΝΑΝΔΡΟΥ.

**Rev.** Seen from behind, Athena Alkidemos standing left, holding a horizontal shield on outstretched left arm, hurling a thunderbolt with right hand, monograms at left and right, discontinuous Kharoshthi legend: *maharajasa tratarasa / menamdrasa*.

**Reference:** MIG 215f, Bop 13O.

Coin Nos. Plates 1-2, Section 4.3.3.24.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

##### **Type 2. Bust of King/ Athena (Silver Drachm).**

**Obv.** Diademed, helmeted bust of king right, discontinuous Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ / ΜΕΝΑΝΔΡΟΥ.

**Rev.** Seen from behind, Athena Alkidemos standing left, holding a horizontal shield on outstretched left arm, hurling a thunderbolt with right hand, monograms at left and right, discontinuous Kharoshthi legend: *maharajasa tratarasa / menamdrasa*.

**Reference:** MIG 218c, Bop 16I.

Coin Nos. Plates 3-5, Section 4.3.3.24.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

#### **G.2 Antialcidas**

##### **Type. Bust of King/ Zeus (Silver Drachm).**

**Obv.** Diademed, helmeted bust of king right, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΝΙΚΗΦΟΡΟΥ / ΑΝΤΙΑΛΚΙΔΟΥ.

**Rev.** Zeus enthroned three-quarters left, holding sceptre in left hand, Winged Nike

holding wreath in right hand, forepart of elephant at left, monogram at right, Kharoshthi legend: *maharajasa jayadharasa / amtialikidasa*.

**Reference:** MIG 279a, Bop 12A.

Coin Nos. Plates 6-7, Section 4.3.3.24.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

### **G.3 Heliocles II (Silver Drachm).**

**Type. Bust of King/ Athena (Silver Drachm)**

**Obv.** Diademed bust of king right, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΔΙΚΑΙΟΥ / ΗΛΙΟΚΛΕΟΥΣ.

**Rev.** Zeus standing facing, holding thunderbolt in right hand, spear in left, monogram at left, Kharoshthi legend: *maharajasa dhramikasa / heliyakreyasa*.

**Reference:** MIG 289k, Bop 2D.

Coin Nos. Plate 8, Section 4.3.3.24.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

### **G.4. Zoilos II**

**Type. Bust of King/ Athena (Silver Drachm)**

**Obv.** Diademed bust of king right, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ / ΖΩΙΛΟΥ, (Basileos Soteris Zoilou ... of King Zoilos, the saviour).

**Rev.** Seen from behind, Athena Alkidemos standing left, holding aegis on outstretched left arm, hurling thunderbolt with right hand, monograms left and right, Kharoshthi legend: *maharajasa tratarasa / jhoilasa*.

**Reference:** MIG 459q, Bop 1E.

Coin Nos. Plates 9-10, Section 4.3.3.24.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

### **G.5. Hermaios**

**Type. Bust of King/ Athena (Silver Drachm)**

**Obv.** Bare-headed, diademed bust of king right, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ ΕΡΜΑΙΟΥ, (Basileos Soteris Hermaiou ... of King Hermaios, the Saviour).

**Rev.** Zeus enthroned three-quarters left, holding sceptre in left hand and bestowing blessing with right hand, Kharoshthi legend: *maharajasa tratarasa / heramayasa*.

**Reference:** MIG 415p, Bop 3A.

Coin Nos. Plate 11, Section 4.3.3.24.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

## **xxix. Apollophanes (c. 35-25 BCE)**

Apollophanes Soter ruled in eastern and central Punjab from about 35-25 BCE, issuing debased silver drachms featuring himself in a Macedonian helmet and Pallas Athene on the reverse (Bopearachchi, 1991; Tarn, 1984, p. 318). His coins are of poor artistic quality, and he was likely a minor local ruler, possibly related to Apollodotus II due to similar coin types and titles (Jakobsson, 2010, Numismatic Chronicle). Apollophanes is among the last Indo-Greek kings before the rise of the Indo-Scythians.

**Coins:**

**Type. Bust of King/ Athena (Silver Drachm)**

**Obv.** Diademed and helmeted bust of king right, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ / ΑΠΟΛΛΟΦΑΝΟΥ, (Basileos Soteris Apollophanou ... of King Apollophanes, the saviour).

**Rev.** Seen from behind, Athena Alkidemos standing left, holding aegis on outstretched left arm, hurling thunderbolt with right hand, monogram at right, Kharoshthi legend: maharajasa tratarasa / apalaphanasa.

**Reference:** MIG 467a, Bop 1A.

**Coin Nos.** Plate 1, Section 4.3.3.25 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

### **xxx.Strato II (c. 25 BCE - 10 CE)**

Strato II reigned in the eastern Punjab from about 25 BCE to 10 CE, issuing debased silver drachms with Athena on the reverse, and was likely the last major Indo-Greek king before being supplanted by Indo-Scythian satraps such as Rajuvula (Bopearachchi, 1991; Rosenfield, 1967, p. 135). His coins, often found with those of his son Strato III, show a sharp decline in artistic quality, reflecting the increasing pressure from nomadic invaders and the kingdom's isolation (Mukherjee, 1981, p. 9). The Northern Satraps extensively copied his coin designs, underscoring his significance among late Indo-Greek rulers (Jakobsson, 2010, Numismatic Chronicle).

#### **Coins:**

##### **Type. Bust of King/ Athena (Silver Drachm)**

**Obv.** Diademed bust of aged king right, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ ΣΤΡΑΤΩΝΟΣ ΚΑΙ ΦΙΛ / ΣΤΡΑΤΩΝΟΣ, (Basileos Soteris Stratonos kai phil Stratonos ... King Strato, the saviour, and lover Strato).

**Rev.** Athena Alkidemos, standing left, holding aegis on outstretched left arm, hurling thunderbolt with right hand, monogram at right, Kharoshthi legend: maharajasa tratarasa stratas putrasa casa priyapita / stratas.

**Reference:** MIG 473a, Bop 6A.

**Coin Nos.** Plate 1, Section 4.3.3.26 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

### **xxxi. Bhadrayasha (c. 10 - 15 CE)**

No coins of the king have been reported from Jamrud.

### **5.1.1.8 ANCIENT JUDEA COIN MATTATHIAS ANTIGONUS (40-37 BCE)**

Among the most intriguing numismatic discoveries from Raigi Lalma, a locality once part of the Khyber Agency, is a silver coin issued by Mattathias Antigonus (Plate 1, Section 4.4 in Part II: Illustrations Coins), the last Hasmonean king of Judea. Typologically, the coin features on its obverse a cornucopia bound with ribbons, with a



vine leaf and grape cluster suspended, motifs emblematic of fertility and prosperity in both Hellenistic and Jewish tradition, flanked by a Hebrew inscription that reads "*Mattatayah the High Priest and Council of the Jews*." The reverse displays a Greek legend in three lines within a laurel wreath and a border of dots, transliterated as BACIL/ANTIGO/NOU ("of King Antigonos"). The coin measures 24mm in diameter and weighs 15.83 grams, corresponding to the tetradrachm standard typical of the late Hellenistic Levant (Meshorer, 1982: No. 36f; Hendin, 2021: No. 481).

Strikingly, this is the first recorded instance of a Mattathias Antigonos coin discovered in this region, making its presence in the northwestern subcontinent a subject of considerable scholarly curiosity. The coin was likely struck using the conventional Hellenistic technique of die-striking on a prepared silver flan, reflecting the cross-cultural syncretism of the Hasmonean kingdom, which combined Jewish religious authority with Hellenistic royal titlature and iconography (Meshorer, 1982; Hendin, 2021). Although the coin is said to have been found in the Raigi Lalma area, the absence of a proper archaeological context, due to its recovery by non-professionals, makes it difficult to reliably determine its original provenance and how it came to be deposited there.

One possibility, grounded in local oral tradition, is that the coin is a vestige of ancient Israelite or Jewish presence in the region; numerous communities in and around the Khyber Pass maintain oral narratives of Israelite descent, which, though historically unsubstantiated, are persistent elements of their cultural memory (Caroe, 1958; Morgenstern, 2011). Alternatively, the coin may have reached the region via commercial channels. The Khyber Pass has long been a vital route for trade and migration, connecting the Mediterranean, Iran, Central Asia, and South Asia since ancient times. It is quite possible that a coin like this was transported eastward by merchants, soldiers, or even envoys from Rome or Parthia travelling the Silk Road, eventually ending up in circulation or being deposited far from where it was originally minted. (Bopearachchi, 1991; Mitchiner, 1975). Additionally, the possibility exists that it formed part of a diplomatic gift or the spoils of war, as coins from the Hellenistic Near East are occasionally found in South-Asian contexts (Pieper, 2021, pp. 103-104).

In interpretive terms, the coin's appearance at Raigi Lalma not only testifies to the cosmopolitanism of the ancient trade networks that spanned from the Levant to the subcontinent but also provides tangible material for exploring the interplay of historical

memory, migration, and commerce in shaping regional identities. While comparable finds in South Asia remain exceedingly rare, if not unique, parallels can be drawn with scattered Levantine and Roman coins found in Gandhara and along ancient caravan routes (Mitchiner, 1975; Bopearachchi, 1991). Thus, this coin stands as a testament to the region's entanglement in broader patterns of connectivity and cultural exchange during the late Hellenistic period.

#### **5.1.1.9 PARTHIAN PERIOD (c. 247 BCE - 224 AD)**

##### **A. MITHRADATES II (c.123 BCE - 88 BCE) AE-Tetrachalkon from Jamrud.**

A notable addition to the corpus of Parthian coin finds from the region is a bronze tetrachalkon of Mithradates II (123-88 B.C.), reportedly discovered by a local treasure hunter operating in the vicinity of Jamrud Bazaar. Coin, Type 3 and catalogued as Sellwood 24.34, displays on its obverse the left-facing bust of Mithradates II, shown bearded and wearing a diadem, with a monogram placed behind his image. The reverse depicts a horse walking to the right, surrounded by the Greek inscription ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ ΑΡΣΑΚΟΥ ΕΠΙΦΑΝΟΥΣ, which highlights Mithradates' title as "Great King Arsaces Epiphanes". The coin, struck at the Rhagai mint, measures 21 mm in diameter and weighs 8.70 grams. Graded as Very Fine, it represents not only the numismatic iconography and royal self-representation of the late Parthian period but also illustrates the continued engagement of modern local actors with the region's ancient material heritage (Sellwood, 1980, p. 53).

##### **Coins:**

##### **Type. Bust of king and Horse (AE TETRACHALKON)**

**Obv.** Bearded and diademed bust of Mithradates to the left, monogram behind.

**Rev..** Horse walking to the right, ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ ΑΡΣΑΚΟΥ ΕΠΙΦΑΝΟΥΣ around.

**Reference:** Sellwood type, 24.34, 21mm, 8.70 grams.

**Coin nos..** (Plate 1, Section 4.5.2 in Part II: Illustrations Coins)

#### **5.1.1.10 INDO-SCYTHIAN (c. 150 BCE - 400 CE)**

##### **A. Maues (98/85 to 60/57 BCE) Coins from Jamrud.**

The Coins of Maues have been discovered from various localities in Tehsil Jamrud, Khyber, by local treasure hunters. Maues, known in Greek as Μαύης (Maúēs), in

Gandhari as Moa (𑀮𑀸), and in other inscriptions as Moga or Mevaki Miyika, is historically renowned as the earliest Saka ruler to firmly establish Indo-Scythian power in the northwestern Indian subcontinent after leading his nomadic Eastern Iranian people into the region (Tarn, 1951, p. 96; Senior, 2001, p. 14). By conquering key centres such as Taxila and Pushkalavati from the Indo-Greek kingdoms and extending his rule as far as Mathura, Maues inaugurated a new political era and adopted the grand Persian-style title "Great King of Kings" (Gardner, 1886, pp. 68-72; Gazerani, 2015, p. 15; Konow, 1929, pp. 23-29). His reign, marked by both military expansion and cultural accommodation, is also documented through epigraphic evidence such as the Moga and Chilas/ Gilgit inscriptions (Dani, 1983, p. 52).

Typologically, the coins of Maues from Jamrud show remarkable diversity, including silver tetradrachms depicting Zeus standing left with a sceptre and winged Nike standing right, Herakles with lion, enthroned Zeus, elephant head and caduceus, Poseidon and Yakshi, king on horseback with Nike, and quadrate-framed horse and bow motifs. These types consistently bear bilingual legends: in Greek, "ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΝ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ ΜΑΥΟΥ" (Of the Great King of Kings Maues), and in Kharosthi, "rajatirajasa mahatasa moasa," highlighting his supreme royal status (MIG 699a, 707; Senior 1.2T, 5.1, 12.1, 16.1, 19.1, 28.3, S3.1; HGC 12, 533, 535, 544, 546, 553; Pieper, 2021, pp. 34-35). The stylistic execution of these coins blends Hellenistic, Indian, and steppe motifs, reflecting the multicultural context of early Saka rule and Maues' conscious efforts to legitimise his authority through monetary imagery. Some of these coins were even issued jointly with Queen Machene, indicating dynastic strategies and alliances with local Indo-Greek elites (Samad, 2011, pp. 64-67; Konow, 1929, pp. 30-49).

The coinage of Maues signalled a significant shift in the history of South and Central Asia, appearing after the Sakas were driven out of Central Asia following conflicts with the Yuezhi and the defeat of the Parthian king Phraates II in 126 BCE (Harmatta, 1999, p. 410). The spread of his coins, attested in hoards at Jamrud, Taxila, and Pushkalavati, provides tangible evidence for the expansion and integration of Saka power into established urban, economic, and cultural networks. Interpretively, these Jamrud finds are exceptional for their religious and cultural syncretism: Maues' coinage features not only Hellenistic deities but also Buddhist (lion, Yakshi, possibly the Buddha) and Hindu (bull) iconography, signaling inclusivity and royal patronage of multiple traditions

(Mitchiner, 1975, p. 289; Harmatta, 1999, p. 412; Pieper, 2021, pp. 34-35). Square coins may even represent the earliest numismatic depiction of the Buddha, illustrating innovative engagement with local religious sensibilities (Konow, 1929, p. 45).

The consistent use of both Greek and Kharosthi legends on these coins, along with overstrikes on Indo-Greek issues (e.g., those of Archebius and Apollodotus II), underscores the transitional nature of this period and the direct assertion of political succession (Gardner, 1886, pp. 68-72). Ultimately, the Jamrud hoard not only broadens the typological and geographical range of Maues' numismatic corpus but also illuminates broader patterns of Saka state formation, cultural adaptation, and economic integration in early historic South-Asia (Olbrycht, 2016, p. 100; Rezakhani, 2017, pp. 1-256). The introduction of new coin types, unique inscriptions, and a blend of cultural symbols during Maues' reign marks a pivotal chapter in the region's history. These features not only highlight the transitional nature of his rule but also serve as a crucial resource for understanding the complexities of Indo-Scythian governance.

### **Coins:**

#### **Type.1. Zeus/ Nike (AR tetradrachm)**

**Obv.** Zeus standing left, holding sceptre, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΝ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ / ΜΑΥΟΥ.

**Rev.** Winged Nike standing right, holding wreath and palm, monogram at right, Kharoshthi legend: *rajatirajasa mahatasa / moasa*.

**Reference:** MIG 699a, Sen 1.2T.

**Coin nos..** (Plates 1-3, Section 4.6.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins)

#### **Type 2. Herakles/ Lion (AR Tetradrachm)**

**Obv.** Herakles standing facing, head slightly left, hand on hip and holding club with Greek Legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΝ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ / ΜΑΥΟΥ.

**Rev.** Lion standing left with forepaw raised; monogram to left: *rajatirajasa mahatasa / moasa*.

**Reference:** Senior 12.1; HGC 12, 533.

**Coin nos..** (Plate 4, Section 4.6.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins)

#### **Type. 3. Elephant Head/Caduceus**

**Obv.** Elephant head right, with raised trunk, bell around neck, bead and reel border around.

**Rev..** Caduceus, Greek legend: at right: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ, at left: ΜΑΥΟΥ, monogram in left field.

**Reference:** MIG 707, Senior 5.1.

**Coin nos..** (Plates 5-9, Section 4.6.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins)

#### **Type. 4. Enthroned Zeus/ Zeus Facing**

**Obv.** Zeus enthroned facing slightly left, resting hand on radiate figure to left with Greek Legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΝ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ / ΜΑΥΟΥ.

**Rev.** Zeus standing facing, and holding a sceptre with a monogram to the right, Kharoshthi legend: *rajatirajasa mahatasa / moasa*.

**Reference:** Senior 19.1; HGC 12, 546.

Coin nos.. (Plate 10, Section 4.6.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins)

**Type. 5. Poseidon / Yakshi**

**Obv.** Poseidon standing facing, foot on river-god swimming below, hand on thigh and holding trident with the Greek Legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΝ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ / ΜΑΥΟΥ.

**Rev.** Yakshi standing facing, holding floral vines in each hand; monogram to left, Kharoshthi legend: *rajatirajasa mahatasa / moasa*.

**Reference:** Senior 28.3; HGC 12, 553.

Coin nos.. (Plate 11-13, Section 4.6.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins)

**Type. 6. King riding / Nike**

**Obv.** King right on horseback, holding a spear, the Greek Legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΝ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ / ΜΑΥΟΥ.

**Rev..** Nike standing left, holding wreath and palm frond; monogram to left, Kharoshthi legend: *rajatirajasa mahatasa / moasa*.

**Reference:** 16.1; HGC 12, 544.

Coin nos.. (Plate 14, Section 4.6.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins)

**Type. 7. Horse / Bow**

**Obv.** Horse advancing right within quadrate bead-and-reel frame, Greek Legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΝ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ / ΜΑΥΟΥ.

**Rev.** Bow in bowcase; monogram to left, Kharoshthi legend: *rajatirajasa mahatasa / moasa*.

**Reference:** Senior S3.1; Zeno 86922; HGC 12.

**Coin nos..** (Plate 15, Section 4.6.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins).

**B. Azes I/ II Joint Issues with Aspvarma Hoard from Tatara, Jamrud, Khyber.**

The coin hoard was discovered in Tartara village by farmers in 2013, which consisted of 27 Tetradrachms of the Azes I/II and Aspvarma joint issues. The coins mark a significant addition to our understanding of the late Indo-Scythian and Apraca dynasties in northwestern South Asia. The hoard consists of billon tetradrachms that bear the hallmarks of transitional Indo-Scythian coinage: on the obverse, a mounted king, attributed to either Azes I or Azes II, appears in military dress, holding a whip or spear, with the Hellenistic legend "ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΝ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ ΑΖΟΥ" ("of King of Kings, the Great Azes") prominently displayed. The reverse depicts Athena holding a spear, a Greek goddess long appropriated into Indo-Scythian coinage. However, here

the Kharosthi inscription identifies the issuer as "Imtravarmaputrasa Aspavarmasa strategasa jayatasa", that is, "Victorious general Aspavarma, son of Indravarma." This dual attribution on coinage, noted by both R.C. Senior and Michael Mitchiner in their typological catalogues, reflects the close political and dynastic relationships between the Indo-Scythian kings and their Apraca vassals or successors, but it remains uncertain whether these joint issues should be explicitly attributed to Azes I or II (Senior, 2001, p. 111; Mitchiner, 1975, #898).

The Apraca dynasty, of which Aspavarma was a member, is well documented through both coins and inscriptions as a prominent ruling family in the Bajaur area of present-day Pakistan during the early first century CE (Salomon, 1996, pp. 391-402; Konow, 1929, pp. 42-45). Aspavarma's father, Indravarma, is known from dedicatory inscriptions and was a prominent patron of Buddhism, a tradition continued by Aspavarma and other Apraca rulers, who issued coins and inscriptions in support of Buddhist institutions (Salomon, 1996, p. 392; Falk, 2005, pp. 131-132). The Apracas, while included among the Indo-Scythians by authorities such as Senior and Mitchiner, were regarded by R.B. Whitehead as a distinct dynasty possibly of Hindu origin, marking a scholarly debate over their precise ethnopolitical status (Whitehead, 1914, p. xxix; Senior, 2001, p. 111). The joint-issue coins themselves are a tangible expression of this transition, as they retain the iconography and titulature of the Azes kings while explicitly naming Aspavarma and asserting his independent authority as strategos ("general") and later as king.

The context of the Tatar hoard's discovery further emphasizes the region's role as a nexus of cultural and religious interaction: not only does the hoard reinforce the prominence of the Apraca dynasty as great patrons of Buddhism, but it also highlights the complex and sometimes ambiguous nature of succession and sovereignty on the northwestern frontier (Salomon, 1996, pp. 391-392; Falk, 2005, p. 132). Comparative hoard evidence from Bajaur, Taxila, and Charsadda reveals that such joint issues circulated widely, reflecting both the legacy of Indo-Scythian power and the ascendancy of regional dynasties like the Apracas.

### **Description of Coin Hoard:**

**Type. King riding Horse/ Athena (billon tetradrachm)**

**Obv.** The king mounted on a horse, holding a whip. Greek legend ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΝ ΜΕΤΑΛΛΟΥ / ΑΖΟΥ.

**Rev.** Athena holding a spear and a triratna symbol. Kharoshthi legend *Imtravarmaputrasa Aspavarmasa strategasa jayatasa* ("Victorious strategos (general) Aspavarma, son of Indravarma").

**Reference:** Senior 183.517T; Mitchiner AC#2488; Mitchiner Indo-Greek and Indo-Scythian Coinage, #898.

Coin nos.. (Plates 1-27, Section 4.6.4 in Part II: Illustrations Coins).

### **C. Azes II Coins Hoard from Bakarabad, Jamrud, Khyber.**

The coin hoard from Bakarabad, Jamrud, in the Khyber region consists of nine bronze hexachalkon coins attributable to Azes II, the prominent Indo-Scythian king who reigned between circa 60-20 BCE. The coins exhibit a distinctive typology: the obverse features a humped bull standing right, a motif closely associated with indigenous South-Asian iconography, while the Greek legend "ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΝ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ ΑΖΟΥ" ("of King of Kings, the Great Azes") encircles the device, emphasising royal authority and continuity with Hellenistic traditions. The reverse of the coins features a lion standing right, with the Kharoshthi inscription translating the king's titles, "maharajasa rajarajasa mahatasa ayasa", alongside monograms above the animal (MIG 850j; Senior, 2001, Sen 102.100). The integration of both Greek and Kharoshthi scripts on these coins illustrates the syncretic nature of Indo-Scythian rule, catering to the diverse populations of the region and symbolising the enduring influence of the Greco-Bactrian legacy even as distinctly South-Asian motifs such as the humped bull were adopted for broader local appeal (Mitchiner, 1975, pp. 388-389).

Historically, the appearance of Azes II's bronze coinage in such localised hoards as Bakarabad reflects both the wide circulation and regional acceptance of his monetary system in the northwestern frontiers. Comparative hoard evidence from sites like Taxila and Charsadda further demonstrates the prevalence of similar AE denominations in contemporary urban and rural contexts, underscoring their role in everyday transactional use (Senior, 2001, pp. 52-54). The choice of animal imagery, bull and lion, carries symbolic connotations of strength and royal power and echoes numismatic conventions adopted from both earlier Mauryan punch-marked coinage and later Indo-Greek prototypes (Pieper, 2021, pp. 47-48).

The Bakarabad hoard, therefore, not only enriches our understanding of Indo-Scythian numismatic typology but also provides valuable data for reconstructing patterns of monetary circulation, local iconographic preferences, and the strategies of legitimation

employed by Azes II in the waning years of Indo-Scythian dominance in the Khyber corridor.

### **Description of Coin Hoard:**

#### **Azes II (60-20 BC)**

##### **Type. Hump Bull/ Lion (AE hexa-chalkon)**

**Obv.** Humped bull standing right, monogram above, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΝ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ / ΑΖΟΥ.

**Rev.** Lion standing right, monograms above, Kharoshthi legend: *maharajasa rajarajasa mahatasa / ayasa*.

**Reference:** MIG 850j, Sen 102.100.

**Coin nos..** (Plate 1-9, Section 4.6.3 in Part II: Illustrations Coins).

#### **D. Indo-Scythian Gold Seal from Bakarabad, Jamrud.**

The gold seal (Plate 1-2, Section 5.8.1 in Part II) was recovered by local treasure hunters approximately 400 meters southeast of the Bakarabad Azes II-coin hoard (see section 5.1.1.10.3), situating it within a rich archaeological landscape associated with the Indo-Scythian. The discovery is particularly significant, as it represents the first documented instance of an Indo-Scythian gold seal closely paralleling the dies and iconography employed on coins attributed to Azes I, as referenced in Senior's standard catalogue (2001, p. 139, Coin: M1; see also Pieper, PMC 319 and BMC p. 171).

The gold seal discovered near Bakarabad, Jamrud, represents an extraordinary and virtually unparalleled artefact within the corpus of Indo-Scythian glyptic art. Crafted from solid gold and elliptical in plan, the seal's obverse depicts Azes I, shown mounted on horseback, wielding a spear in his right hand, a visual motif closely resembling the imagery featured on the coinage of Azes I. Notably, a sun symbol appears before the king, reflecting an important motif in Scythian artistic and religious traditions. The sun, frequently venerated as a powerful cosmic force among Scythian groups, was commonly represented as a disc and integrated into sacred iconography, including headdresses, "sacred trees," and other regalia; leaders were at times styled as "Sun Lords," underscoring the symbol's association with sovereignty and divine sanction (Mitchiner, 1975, pp. 79-81; Pieper, 2023, pp. 161, 319).

The execution of the king's figure, as well as the spatial arrangement of the sun motif, closely mirror the dies of Azes I joint-issue coins (Senior, 2001, p. 139, Coin M1; Pieper, 2023, no. 319; BMC: p. 171), thus strongly suggesting that the seal's design was



conceived in conscious reference to the official state coinage. Such iconographic correspondence not only reflects the integration of numismatic imagery into other spheres of Indo-Scythian material culture, but also signals the seal's potential administrative function: it may have served as a signet for an individual acting on behalf of the royal authority, such as a satrap or senior official, whose responsibilities included the authentication of documents or goods within the administrative system (Bopearachchi, 1991, p. 223; Senior, 2001, p. 51).

Gold seals of this type are virtually without parallel among Indo-Scythian finds, which more typically employ carnelian, agate, or other semi-precious stones for personal and administrative seals (cf. Mitchiner, 1975, nos. 248-250; Pieper, 2023, p. 161). The use of gold, a material of exceptional value and prestige, further emphasises the elite status of the seal's owner. Moreover, the proximity of the seal's findspot, approximately 400 meters southeast of the substantial Azes II coin hoard from Bakarabad, Jamrud (see section 5.1.1.10.3), firmly situates the object within a broader context of Indo-Scythian administrative activity and monetary circulation. The area itself, already distinguished by the discovery of large-scale coin hoards, appears to have been a locus of fiscal or ceremonial significance during the late Indo-Scythian period (Bopearachchi, 1991, p. 225; Pieper, 2023, p. 177).

#### **5.1.1.11 INDO-PARTHIANS PERIOD (19 CE - 226 CE)**

##### **A. Indo-Parthian Coin Hoard from Sur Kamar, Jamrud.**

A substantial coin hoard (see Section 4.9.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins), reportedly comprising 126 coins, was unearthed by treasure hunters in the Sur Kamar area near Jamrud in 2024. Although full access to the entire hoard was not possible, detailed photographs of four specimens provide a valuable window into the typological diversity and historical significance of the deposit. Such discoveries, though often only partially published due to the circumstances of their recovery, offer key evidence for regional monetary circulation and political dynamics in eastern Iran and northwest South Asia during the early centuries AD (Pieper, 2021, p. 117; Senior, 2001, p. 122; Mitchiner, 1975, p. 754).

The photographed coins encompass issues of Gondophares I (c. 20-50 AD) and several types of Sanabares, King of Margiana or his successors (1st century AD). The Gondophares specimen (12 mm, 2.34 g; Pieper 290-295; Senior ISCH 222) typifies

Indo-Parthian silver drachms with Hellenistic and local iconographic syncretism. The three AE drachms (18 mm, 3.44-4.03 g; Senior 266.2D, 266.4D; Sellwood 93.3, 93.5) display standard Parthian-derived motifs, namely, the left-facing diademed bust and the reverse archer, coupled with Pehlavi legends and dynastic symbols. While catalogued as Margianan or Gondopharid, some authorities suggest connections to the local vassalage or even the Sakastan region (Mitchiner, 1975, pp. 753-754).

The iconographic choices, Athena and the archer, reveal both Hellenistic influences and local assertions of authority. The persistence of Greek and Kharosthi legends on the Gondophares coin suggests enduring multi-lingual traditions in coinage. At the same time, the Pehlavi and tamgha symbols on the AE drachms attest to the overlapping spheres of Arsacid, Indo-Parthian, and Margianan identities (Sellwood, 1980, p. 185; Pieper, 2021, p. 119).

The Sur Kamar hoard, though incompletely published, reflects the numismatic complexity and fluidity of the Khyber gateway. The mingling of Indo-Parthian, Margianan, and possibly Saka types parallels other mixed deposits from Merv, Herat, and northern Afghanistan (MACW 4821; Pieper, 2021, p. 121). The scale of the hoard points to substantial economic activity or a response to regional turmoil, consistent with similar finds from areas of political fragmentation or frontier interaction (Bopearachchi, 1991, p. 37).

While the clandestine nature of its discovery precludes stratigraphic documentation, the findspot at Sur Kamar, an important node on ancient trade and military routes, reinforces the region's role as a cultural and economic crossroads during the first centuries AD (Frye, 1984, p. 232).

#### 5.1.1.12 KUSHAN PERIOD (c. 30 - 375 CE)

##### A. Buddhist Site I (Monastery)

|                   |                                         |               |               |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Name:             | Jabba Archaeological Buddhist Monastery | Reference No: | KH 03         |
| Nearest Village:  | Jabba Kalli                             | Area of Site: | 4046+ sqm     |
| Coordinates:      | 33°58'29.38"N 71°19'10.10"E             | Altitude:     | 567 M         |
| Access Route:     | Inaccessible                            | Condition:    | intact        |
| Cast Area         | Koki Khel                               | Sub Cast      | Sikandar Khel |
| Site Description: |                                         |               |               |

This archaeological site (Plate 3.6 in Part II: Illustrations Plates) is situated in Jabba village at coordinates 33.974829°N and 71.319472°E, with an elevation of 567m above sea level (see Map 1.12 in Part II). The site is located adjacent to a natural water spring and features a series of square-shaped rooms built along the mountain terraces. Although the area has been subjected to unregulated and unsystematic digging in the past, remnants of structural masonry are still clearly visible. Notably, sections of the walls are constructed using semi-ashlar masonry techniques. While some of the existing upper structures appear to belong to a later period, they have been built using the same type of stone from the earlier phase, indicating the reuse of materials. The current architectural layout is rectangular, and the spatial arrangement of the rooms strongly suggests that the site once served as a monastic complex, likely associated with Buddhist practices.

## B. Buddhist Site II

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                   |               |            |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|------------|
| Name:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Shagai Lala Chena Buddhist Site I | Reference No: | KH 04      |
| Nearest Village:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Shagai Lala chena                 | Area of Site: | 50+sqm     |
| Coordinates:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | 34° 0'15.37"N 71°17'38.52"E       | Altitude:     | 786m M     |
| Access Route:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Accessible, metallic road         | Condition:    | Damage     |
| Cast Area                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Koki Khel                         | Sub Cast      | Farid Khel |
| Site Description:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                   |               |            |
| <p>The archaeological site (Plate 3.6 in Part II: Illustrations Plates) is situated in Shagai Lala Chena village at coordinates 34.004269°N and 71.294034°E, with an elevation of 786m above sea level (see Map 1.13 in Part II). The site is severely damaged, particularly from the lower side near the stream, leaving behind only partial structural remains. The existing features include fragmentary walls and the foundational outlines of four rooms. The original construction employed ashlar masonry, using limestone as the primary binding agent along with pieces of kanjur stone. The central portion of the mound measures approximately 147 by 86 feet, gradually narrowing to about 147 by</p> |                                   |               |            |

38 feet at its edges. Notably, a partially preserved **chatra** (a traditional umbrella-like structure often associated with Buddhist stupas) is also present at the site. This structure measures 3 feet 3 inches in diameter, with a circular base extending up to 10 feet in circumference.

### **i. Bronze Buddha Statue from Shagai Lala Chena**

The statue was discovered accidentally at Shagai Lala Chena in Jamrud and dates to the Kushan period (1st to 3rd century AD) (Plate 1, Section 5.9.2 in Part II). The statue stands at approximately 45 cm, crafted from bronze, and is characterised by intricate details that reflect the syncretism of Greco-Roman and Indian artistic styles, a hallmark of Gandhāra art (Walters, 1904, p. 152; Foucher, 1905, p. 49). The statue shows traces of green patina, indicative of its age and material degradation over time.

### **ii. Iconography and Symbolism**

Buddha is depicted standing in the "Abhaya Mudra," the gesture of fearlessness, with one hand raised protectively. This posture symbolises the Buddha's role as a protector and guide to those seeking refuge in his teachings (Rosenfield, 1999, p. 123). The other hand holds a small object, possibly a lotus or a book, reinforcing his enlightened status. His robes are draped symmetrically, echoing the fluidity and elegance of Greco-Roman clothing, yet the folds of the fabric maintain a distinctly Indian character (Zwalf, 1996, p. 188).

The facial features are serene, with a calm, almost meditative expression. The Buddha's hair is arranged in tight, concentric curls, and the ushnisha, the topknot symbolising his enlightenment, is visible (Picron, 2009, p. 182). His elongated earlobes, a common feature in Gandhāra Buddha representations, symbolise his royal heritage, signifying that he was once a prince before attaining enlightenment (Schopen, 2004, p. 221).

### **iii. Cultural and Historical Context**

This sculpture was produced at the zenith of Gandhāra art, during the Kushan Empire's dominance from the first century CE to the third century CE, based on its representation (Dar, 1980, p. 97). The Kushans were instrumental in promoting the spread of Buddhism along the Silk Road, establishing Gandhāra as a key hub for Buddhist art and architecture (Behrendt, 2007, p. 103). Notably, the portrayal of the Buddha in

human form during this era was a groundbreaking development, shaped by Greco-Roman artistic influences, which significantly transformed the depiction of divine figures in the region (Rosenfield, 1999, p. 134).

The stylistic elements of this sculpture reflect the blending of Hellenistic influences with indigenous Indian traditions. The intricate robes and serene expression of the Buddha are reminiscent of classical Greek sculpture. At the same time, the iconography, such as the "Abhaya Mudra" and the presence of the ushnisha, maintains Buddhist symbolism rooted in Indian religious practices (Coomaraswamy, 1926, p. 165).

The patronage of Buddhist art under the Kushan rulers, particularly Emperor Kanishka, is well-documented. Kanishka's support of Buddhism was responsible for the construction of numerous stupas and monasteries, many of which housed similar representations of the Buddha (Foucher, 1905, p. 152). These artworks were not merely decorative; they played a vital role in Buddhist devotional practices, acting as focal points for meditation and veneration (Marshall, 1951, p. 219).

#### **iv. Comparative Analysis**

When compared to another Gandhāra sculpture, such as the **Standing Buddha of Sahr-i-Bahlol**, this statue shares key similarities in posture and iconography. Both statues exhibit the "Abhaya Mudra," indicating a shared iconographic tradition in Gandhāra art (Zwalf, 1996, p. 179). However, the Sahr-i-Bahlol Buddha is slightly larger, with a more pronounced drapery, indicating a later phase of Gandhāra art that features greater attention to the flow of fabric (Walters, 1904, p. 162).

In contrast to earlier representations of the Buddha from the Mathura region, which often depicted the Buddha seated in meditative poses, Gandhāra art favoured dynamic standing figures, such as this one. The fusion of Hellenistic influences in the Gandhāra Buddha statues contrasts with the more traditional, localised depictions in Mathura, highlighting the Kushan Empire's unique role in merging Eastern and Western artistic traditions (Grunwedel & Burgess, 1985, p. 169).

### **C. Buddhist Site III**

|                  |                                    |               |          |
|------------------|------------------------------------|---------------|----------|
| Name:            | Shagai Lala Chena Buddhist Site II | Reference No: | KH-05    |
| Nearest Village: | Shagai Lala Chena                  | Area of Site: | 300+ sqm |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                             |            |            |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|------------|
| Coordinates:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | 34° 0'30.20"N 71°17'26.36"E | Altitude:  | 827 M      |
| Access Route:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Accessible, metallic road   | Condition: | Demage     |
| Cast Area                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Koki Khel                   | Sub Cast   | Farid Khel |
| Site Description:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                             |            |            |
| <p>This archaeological site (Plate 3.6 in Part II: Illustrations Plates) is situated in Shagai Lala Chena village at coordinates 34.008390°N and 71.290656°E, with an elevation of 827m (see Map 1.13 in Part II). Positioned on the opposite side of the previously documented site, this location is extensively damaged, leaving behind only partial structural remnants. The surviving features include fragments of walls and foundational outlines of what were likely rooms. The construction technique utilised ashlar masonry, with limestone used as the primary binding agent, accompanied by kanjur stone fragments. Presently, only the wall remnants and room foundations are visible, providing limited yet valuable insights into the original architectural layout.</p> |                             |            |            |

#### D. Archaeological Site I

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                      |               |             |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Name:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Changai Buddhist Archaeological Site | Reference No: | KH 06       |
| Nearest Village:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Kafir Tangi, Madanak                 | Area of Site: | 200+ sqm    |
| Coordinates:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | 34° 0'38.09"N 71°18'13.81"E          | Altitude:     | 694 M       |
| Access Route:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Accessible                           | Condition:    | Demage      |
| Cast Area                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Koki Khel                            | Sub Cast      | Abdaal Khel |
| Site Description:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                      |               |             |
| <p>The archaeological site (Plate 3.8 in Part II: Illustrations Plates) is situated at coordinates 34.010580°N and 71.3038350°E, with an elevation of 694m above sea level, in Kafir Tangi village (see Map 1.15 in Part II). Positioned close to the Medanank railway track, the site currently exists in a highly deteriorated state. However, the foundations suggest the presence of three square-shaped rooms. Surface investigations reveal a scattering of pottery sherds and visible limestone fragments, indicating past human activity and construction.</p> |                                      |               |             |

#### E. Archaeological Site II

|                  |                           |               |          |
|------------------|---------------------------|---------------|----------|
| Name:            | Gudar Archaeological Site | Reference No: | KH 07    |
| Nearest Village: | Gudar Kalli               | Area of Site: | 400+ sqm |
| Coordinates:     | 34° 1'41.43"N             | 71°21'42.00"E | 491 M    |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |            |            |               |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|------------|---------------|
| Access Route:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Accessible | Condition: | Damage        |
| Cast Area                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Koki Khel  | Sub Cast   | Sikandar Khel |
| Site Description:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |            |            |               |
| <p>The archaeological site (Plate 3.9 in Part II: Illustrations Plates) is located at coordinates 34.0281760°N and 71.3616680°E, at an elevation of 491m above sea level, in Gudar village (see Map 1.17 in Part II). This site is primarily composed of three terraces formed by adjacent mounds, which together indicate a complex settlement pattern. Unfortunately, the site has suffered extensive damage due to unauthorised excavations and interference by local inhabitants, resulting in the loss of much of its original structural integrity.</p> <p>One notable feature identifiable from the surviving architecture is a monastic courtyard located in the north-western corner. Additionally, the third terrace contains what appears to be an assembly hall, which remains partially intact and is distinguishable through its structural layout. The construction technique observed across the site predominantly involves typical ashlar diaper masonry. However, a significant observation is that the walls of the assembly hall are almost entirely built using diaper masonry. This distinction in construction style suggests that the third mound, housing the assembly hall, may be chronologically earlier than the others. These architectural elements offer critical data for understanding the site's historical sequence and functional zoning.</p> <p><b>Findings:</b></p> |            |            |               |

**i. Mahābhiniṣkramaṇa -Great Renunciation or Great Departure of the Buddha in Gold panel (1st to early 2nd century CE)**

The object was accidentally discovered during private construction activity at Gudar village, situated in the eastern zone of the known Buddhist archaeological site near Jamrud, within the historic Khyber region. During the digging of a foundation for a residential house, local labourers unearthed the panel embedded within a collapsed structural layer, presumed to be part of a long-buried monastic compound. The accidental nature of its discovery highlights the untapped archaeological potential of the region and underscores the importance of protective cultural heritage frameworks in historically rich but under-researched areas.

### Description of the Relief Panel

The gold relief panel illustrates the Buddha's departure and was originally one of a series of narrative reliefs portraying key episodes from the Buddha's life (Plates 1-2, Section 5.12.1 in Part II). The panel, which portrays a significant Buddhist scene known as the Mahābhiniṣkramaṇa (Great Departure) of the Buddha, could be dated to the 2<sup>nd</sup> c. AD to early 3<sup>rd</sup> AD, based on its style and representation of its stylistic and iconographic characteristics of the Gandhāran school of art, a syncretic tradition that blends indigenous Indian elements with Greco-Roman influences introduced through Hellenistic contacts in the region.

The central theme represented here is identifiable as the departure of Siddhartha Gautama, when he left the palace in Kapilavastu to embrace the life of an ascetic śrāmaṇa, Pali: sāmaṇa Gombrich, 1988, p. 45. Yaśodharā, the wife of Siddhartha, is shown reclining peacefully, lying on her right side with her head supported by her right hand, an iconic representation of a great departure scene in Gandhara Art. Siddhartha's figure is larger and centrally placed, emphasising his paramount importance within the narrative context.

Encircling the central figure of the Buddha are several highly attentive attendants, each positioned with deliberate compositional balance. Flanking the Buddha on both the left and right, within elegantly rendered architectural arches, stand two upright figures grasping spears, their postures suggesting roles as ceremonial guards or protectors. Additionally, at the feet of the Buddha, two attendants are depicted in a state of repose, reclining with their heads facing, gently resting on round pillows. This iconographic motif may symbolise reverence, service, or perhaps the somnolence of worldly attachments in contrast to the awakened state embodied by the Buddha. At the centre of the composition, the Buddha is shown in the Act of rising from his bed, one foot firmly planted on the ground and the other resting on a pillow, capturing the pivotal moment between rest and decisive action. He is draped in the signature flowing robes of Gandharan art, with finely detailed folds that highlight both grace and spiritual significance. The Buddha's left hand rests on his thigh, while his right hand is lifted in a commanding gesture, as if giving an instruction or demonstrating determined resolve. This iconographic arrangement not only underscores the narrative of departure but also encapsulates the poised determination that defines the episode of the Buddha's renunciation.



Architecturally, the scene is set beneath an arcade structure formed by classical pillars and arches, signifying an apparent Hellenistic artistic influence. The columns and arches underscore the architectural traditions introduced to the region through Greek and Roman interaction, reflecting the cosmopolitan nature of Gandhāran culture.

The gilded repoussé technique employed here, hammering thin sheets of metal from the reverse side to create a raised relief, is typical of Gandhāran craftsmanship, and the luxurious use of gold suggests that the panel was likely meant for ritual, devotional, or commemorative purposes. The punched holes around the edges indicate that this piece was probably fixed onto a surface, such as a wooden shrine, reliquary casket, or possibly even a ceremonial procession object.

In terms of historical and artistic significance, this artefact constitutes an exceptional example of Gandhāran narrative art, distinguished by the fact that, for the first time, this particular scene has been rendered in a gold relief panel. This innovative representation offers unique insights into the transmission and localisation of Buddhist iconography along the historic trade routes linking India and Central Asia, and the Greek world. The discovery of this gold panel not only expands our understanding of early Buddhist ritual practices and artistic expressions but also provides compelling evidence for the dynamic processes of cultural interchange and religious transformation that characterised ancient Gandhāra in the early centuries CE.

#### **F. Archaeological Site III**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                              |               |            |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------|------------|
| Name:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Ali Baba Archaeological Site | Reference No: | KH 8       |
| Nearest Village:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Warsak                       | Area of Site: | 500+sqm    |
| Coordinates:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 34° 9'57.04"N 71°23'5.25"E   | Altitude:     | 351 M      |
| Access Route:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Accessible                   | Condition:    | intact     |
| Cast Area                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Mullagori                    | Sub Cast      | Dolat Khel |
| Site Description:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                              |               |            |
| The archaeological site (see Plate 3.9 in Part II: Illustration Plates) is situated in the village of Warsak, right bank of the Kabul river, close to a prominent Pippal tree that marks its cultural setting (see Map 1.18 in Part II). The structural remains at the site exhibit ashlar diaper masonry, a technique commonly associated with Buddhist-period architecture, indicating the site's historical significance. |                              |               |            |

Although limited architectural features remain visible on the surface, the foundations of square-shaped rooms and what appears to be an assembly hall can still be identified, suggesting the presence of a monastic complex. Over time, the site has experienced extensive damage due to recurring floods and unauthorised excavations carried out by local diggers. Despite this deterioration, subsurface remains extending several feet below ground level remain relatively well preserved and offer potential for future archaeological study. Currently, the site is overlaid by a modern graveyard, which further complicates efforts toward its preservation and systematic excavation. Nevertheless, the surviving structures still offer valuable information about the architectural design and religious practices of the region during the Buddhist period, underscoring the site's significance from both an archaeological and historical perspective.

#### **G. Archaeological Site IV**

|                  |                                |               |               |
|------------------|--------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Name:            | Murda Dand Archaeological Site | Reference No: | KH 9          |
| Nearest Village: | Murda Dand                     | Area of Site: | 300+ sqm      |
| Coordinates:     | 34° 6'21.47"N 71°20'39.34"E    | Altitude:     | 8831 M        |
| Access Route:    | Accessible                     | Condition:    | Damage        |
| Cast Area        | Koki Khel                      | Sub Cast      | Sikandar Khel |

#### **Site Description:**

The archaeological site (Plate 3.11 in Part II: Illustrations Plates) is located in Murda Dand village and comprises fort-like architectural remains constructed atop an elevated mound, suggesting a strategic and possibly defensive function (see Map 1.19 in Part II). The surviving structures primarily consist of foundational outlines and partial wall segments, reflecting a once well-planned complex. The masonry observed is predominantly diaper in style, and based on structural characteristics, such as the use of niches within individual rooms, it is likely that the construction belongs to the Hindu period.

Despite its current state of deterioration, the site retains significant archaeological value. Notably, a range of coins and antiquities from various historical periods have been recovered, including specimens attributed to the Indo-Greek, Kushan, Sassanian, Scythian, and Parthian cultures. These findings indicate that the site experienced

prolonged occupation or at least frequent interaction across multiple phases of ancient history, highlighting its importance as a regional cultural and economic hub.

#### H. Archaeological Site V

|                  |                            |               |             |
|------------------|----------------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Name:            | Zagga Archaeological Site  | Reference No: | KH 10       |
| Nearest Village: | Taggoon Kali, Zagga        | Area of Site: | 500+ sqm    |
| Coordinates:     | 33°58'13.22"N71°19'42.00"E | Altitude:     | 773 M       |
| Access Route:    | Accessible                 | Condition:    | Damage      |
| Cast Area        | Koki Khel                  | Sub Cast      | Kattya Khel |

##### Site Description:

The archaeological site (Plate 3.12 in Part II: Illustrations Plates) located in Zagga Ghar village is distributed across various points along the mountainous terrain, indicating a widespread settlement or religious complex (see Map 1.20 in Part II). The architectural remains feature ashlar diaper masonry, a construction technique commonly associated with the Buddhist period, suggesting the site's original religious or monastic function.

Although the surface remains are limited due to extensive damage inflicted by illegal diggers, several structural features are still identifiable. These include the foundations of square rooms, a well, and a circular base that likely represents the remains of a stupa. Despite the upper levels being heavily disturbed, subsurface layers, extending to depths of approximately 3 to 4 feet, remain in relatively good condition, preserving key archaeological contexts.

Beyond its architectural importance, the site has produced artefacts from both the early and later Kushan periods, highlighting its long-term occupation and ongoing relevance throughout various phases of Kushan rule. The discovery of these cultural materials points to the region's involvement in wider political and religious networks of the era, establishing Zagga as a key location for exploring the development of Buddhist architecture and the cultural landscape during the Kushan period.

#### I. Archaeological Site VI

|       |                                               |               |       |
|-------|-----------------------------------------------|---------------|-------|
| Name: | Shagai Archaeological Site<br>Buddhist Period | Reference No: | KH 11 |
|-------|-----------------------------------------------|---------------|-------|

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                        |               |            |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|---------------|------------|
| Nearest Village:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Shagai Lala Chena      | Area of Site: | 4 / 2 M    |
| Coordinates:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | 71.2906560N 34.008390E | Altitude:     | 1565 M     |
| Access Route:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Accessible             | Condition:    | Damage     |
| Cast Area                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Koki Khel              | Sub Cast      | Farid Khel |
| Site Description:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                        |               |            |
| <p>The archaeological site (Plate 3.13 in Part II: Illustrations Plates) in Shagai Lala Chena village has suffered extensive destruction and is now almost entirely obliterated (see Map 1.21 in Part II). On the opposite side of the original settlement, some structural remains can still be seen, such as portions of walls and the basic outlines of rooms. The surviving architecture was built using ashlar masonry, with lime mortar serving as the main binder and pieces of kanji stone used as additional material. Although only a few wall sections and room foundations have endured, these remains provide important clues about the construction techniques of the time and hint at the existence of a once well-planned settlement.</p> <p>Despite the site's severe deterioration, the remaining elements retain significance for understanding the construction materials and methods historically used in the region.</p> |                        |               |            |

## J. Archaeological Site VII

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                           |               |               |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Name:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Jabba Archaeological Site | Reference No: | KH 12         |
| Nearest Village:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Jabba, village Showdani   | Area of Site: | 4 / 2 M       |
| Coordinates:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | 33.984547N 71.272728E     | Altitude:     | 686 M         |
| Access Route:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Accessible                | Condition:    | intact        |
| Cast Area                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Koki Khel                 | Sub Cast      | Sikandar Khel |
| Site Description:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                           |               |               |
| <p>The archaeological site (Plate 3.14 in Part II: Illustrations Plates) in Shodani village is one of the largest in the surrounding region. It occupies a prominent mound rising approximately 70 feet above the surrounding landscape, underscoring its historical and strategic importance (see Map 1.22 in Part II). The site's construction features ashlar masonry, a typology commonly associated with the Buddhist period, strongly suggesting its religious affiliation and cultural context.</p> |                           |               |               |

The site's total area measures approximately 510 feet in length and 97 feet in width. Notably, watchtowers are located at both corners of the complex, each measuring around 38 by 34 feet, indicating a well-planned architectural layout possibly intended for surveillance or ceremonial functions. These features collectively support the interpretation of the site as a significant monastic or administrative complex.

In addition to its architectural importance, the site has yielded a diverse assemblage of coins spanning several historical periods. These include issues attributed to the Indo-Greek, Kushan, Hindu Shahi, Scythian, and Parthian dynasties. The numismatic evidence reflects the site's long-term occupation and its integration into major political and economic networks over successive centuries.

Such archaeological and material findings highlight Shodani as a key site for understanding regional Buddhist architecture and multi-period cultural transitions in the area.

#### **K. Archaeological Site VIII**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                         |               |            |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------|------------|
| Name:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Zmako Bar Kandar        | Reference No: | KH 13      |
| Nearest Village:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Lora Miana              | Area of Site: | 4 / 2 M    |
| Coordinates:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | 34.1255760N 71.3372280E | Altitude:     | 1565 M     |
| Access Route:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Not accessible          | Condition:    | Damage     |
| Cast Area                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Mullagori               | Sub Cast      | Ahmad Khel |
| Site Description:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                         |               |            |
| <p>The archaeological site (Plate 3.15 in Part II: Illustrations Plates) located in Lora Miana village holds significant historical importance as the first known Indo-Greek settlement identified within the Khyber District (see Map 1.23 in Part II). The site gained scholarly attention in 2007, following the discovery of a considerable Indo-Greek silver coin hoard by local farmers during agricultural activities.</p> <p>This discovery not only marked the initial confirmation of Indo-Greek presence in the Mullagori but also provided critical material evidence supporting the extent of Hellenistic influence beyond the traditionally recognised boundaries. The coin hoard serves as a key indicator of the site's chronological framework. It suggests a settlement that was economically active and possibly engaged in regional trade networks during</p> |                         |               |            |

the Indo-Greek era. Further archaeological investigation is warranted to fully understand the settlement's layout, function, and its role within the broader historical context of the Khyber region.

## **L. Kushan Coins from Jamrud.**

### **i. Yueh-Chi Coins Hoard**

#### **a. Sapalbizes (c.20 BCE)**

The Yueh-Chi, originally nomads from southern China, gradually migrated westward due to pressure from rival groups, eventually settling in Bactria and the surrounding regions. Traditionally, the earliest known leader of the Yueh-Chi has been referred to as Sapadbizes. However, a detailed examination of his coinage indicates that the correct reading of the name is "Sapalbizes." This interpretation is based on the Greek inscription found on his coins, where the fifth character is distinctly a lambda (Λ) and not a delta (Δ). Scholarly analyses, including discussions within the southasia-coins eGroup, observe that nearly all extant coins from this ruler feature the name "Sapalbizes," with only a single specimen in the British Museum reportedly bearing a delta. This unique coin probably led early numismatists, perhaps beginning with Major General Cunningham, to adopt the form "Sapadbizes" (see Senior, 2001; British Museum, n.d.).

Importantly, the name Sapalbizes is more consistent with other Scythian royal names found in numismatic records, such as Spalirises, Spalagadames, and Spalahores. The shared prefix "Spal" or "Sapal" is linguistically linked to the word for "military," highlighting a connection to martial traditions (Senior, 2001).

The coins were discovered during the construction of a house from Jamal Khel killi, which consists of four silver hemidrachms.

#### **Coins:**

##### **Type. Bust of King and Lion (Silver hemidrachm).**

**Obv.** Helmeted bust right, Greek legend: CAΠAΛBIZHC.

**Rev.** Lion standing right, tamgha of hill & crescent above, Greek legend right and left: NANAIA.

**Reference:** MAC 2824.

**Coin nos.** Plates 1-4, Section 4.7.1.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

### b. Arseiles (c. 20 BCE)

The conventional nomenclature assigned to this particular ruler warrants revision. For instance, Mitchiner (1978) refers to the ruler as Agesiles; however, Senior (2001) has persuasively demonstrated that the correct reading of the name is Arseiles. This correction is based on the palaeographic analysis of the Greek inscription on the coins: what earlier numismatists, including Mitchiner, interpreted, what appears to be a gamma (Γ) is a rho (Ρ), distinguished by a dot at the top instead of the usual circular form, a stylistic feature typical of the script from this period. Thus, the reading "Arseiles" is more accurate, reflecting both the script conventions of the time and the correct interpretation of the numismatic evidence (Senior, 2001).

The coins were discovered during the construction of a house in Qadam, consisting of six silver hemidrachms.

#### Coins:

**Type. Bust of King and Lion (Silver hemidrachm).**

**Obv.** Helmeted bust right, Greek legend: APCEIAHC.

**Rev.** Lion standing right, tamgha of hill & crescent above, Greek legend right and left: NANAIA.

**Reference:** MAC 2831-32, Senior A4.1.

**Coin nos.** Plates 1-6, Section 4.7.1.2 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

### c. Heraios (c. first half of the first Century)

#### • Heraeios and Eukratides I coins Hoard from Wali Khel, Jamrud.

The coin hoard discovered at Wali Khel, Jamrud, comprises a series of silver obols of Graeco-Bactria king Eukratides I and coins traditionally assigned to the enigmatic ruler Heraios. The first group consists of two principal types of coins, Eukratides I. Type 1 features a diademed bust of the king facing right on the obverse, surrounded by a dotted border. At the same time, the reverse depicts the caps and palms of the Dioscuri, accompanied by the Greek legend: *ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΕΥΚΡΑΤΙΔΟΥ* ("of King Eucratides") and corresponds to coins numbered 1-3. Type 2 presents a helmeted bust on the obverse, with a similar Dioscuri motif and legend on the reverse, and includes coins numbered 4-8. While such coins have sometimes been more generally attributed to the Indo-Greek series in earlier scholarship, typological and epigraphic analysis confirms that they are

correctly identified as coins of Eukratides I, as corroborated by standard catalogues (Mitchiner, 1978, p. 242; Pieper, 1998, pp. 70-72; MACW).

The second group includes coins traditionally assigned to Heraios. This depicts a diademed bust facing right within a dotted border on the obverse. In contrast, the reverse side features a standing soldier holding a wreath, with the Greek legend: *HPAOV KOPPANOV*. This type is referenced as MAC 2840 and comprises coins numbered 9-11 (Mitchiner, 1978, p. 245).

The presence of both Eukratides I and Heraios coins within a single hoard provides a critical chronological anchor for the latter's coinage. Eukratides I ruled during the mid-2nd century, 2<sup>nd</sup> century BCE and is recognised as one of the most influential kings, noted for his extensive coinage and Hellenistic iconography (Mitchiner, 1978, p. 205). Heraios, meanwhile, has long posed a challenge for scholars in terms of chronology and dynastic association. Previously, Heraios was presumed to be an early Kushan ruler, possibly a Yueh-Chi prince or related to later Indo-Greek dynasts, due to the close stylistic resemblance between his coins and those of Eukratides I (Senior, 2001, p. 22). The direct association of Heraios coins with those of Eukratides I in the Wali Khel hoard, recovered together in a secure archaeological context, necessitates a reevaluation of Heraios's chronological placement and dynastic ties. This evidence now suggests that Heraios's reign should be dated earlier than previously assumed and highlights his likely connection with the transitional period between the late Indo-Greek and early Kushan eras (Pieper, 1998, p. 74).

The discovery of this hoard is particularly significant because, prior to its recovery, there was no firm chronological context for Heraios, and his relationship to the Kushan dynasty and the Indo-Greek world was largely speculative, based primarily on typological similarities to Eukratides I (Mitchiner, 1978, p. 245). The Wali Khel hoard shifts this perspective, providing secure evidence for dating Heraios and clarifying his place in the numismatic and historical sequence of the region.

A significant scholarly debate has arisen over the correct attribution of the so-called Heraios coins. Joe Cribb has proposed that these coins, long thought to belong to Heraios, might have been minted by Kujula Kadphises, the founding ruler of the Kushan dynasty (Cribb, 1993, pp. 123-125). Copper coins support Cribb's hypothesis in the British Museum's collection, which display an obverse portrait closely



resembling the silver coins attributed to Heraios, along with a reverse inscribed in Kharoshthi script bearing the name of Kujula Kadphises. Although Cribb's hypothesis is gaining scholarly acceptance, there remains some uncertainty due to the worn condition of many coins and the question of whether the silver issues can be definitively attributed to Kujula. Additionally, unresolved questions remain, such as why Kujula did not use the same style bust or motif on his other coins, and why the silver coinage appears limited to this single series (Cribb, 1993, pp. 128-129; Senior, 2001, p. 23). It is possible that the silver coins attributed to "Heraios" represent an earlier phase of Kushan, or proto-Kushan, coinage, later adapted by Kujula in copper.

The co-occurrence of both Eukratides I and Heraios types in the same hoard also underscores the complex numismatic and political landscape of the region. This reflects the persistence of Hellenistic motifs and the emergence of new dynastic identities. The fusion of Greek, Scythian, and the incorporation of local elements in the coinage serve as a distinctive illustration of the cultural syncretism that characterised Bactria and Gandhara during the late Hellenistic and early Kushan periods (Mitchiner, 1978, pp. 242-246).

The Wali Khel, Jamrud coin hoard is among the most important discoveries for understanding the transition between Indo-Greek and Kushan rule in the North-West Frontier region. Comparable hoards, such as those from Taxila and Charsadda (Pieper, 1998, p. 76; Mitchiner, 1978, p. 246), have yielded mixed Indo-Greek and Kushan materials, but rarely with the direct association between Eukratides I and Heraios types as observed at Wali Khel.

The coin hoard from Wali Khel, Jamrud, through its direct association with coins of Eukratides I and Heraios, provides an invaluable chronological anchor for Heraios's issues and clarifies the dynastic and historical landscape of early Kushan and late Indo-Greek coinage. The ongoing debate regarding the identity of Heraios and the possible attribution to Kujula Kadphises highlights the dynamic nature of numismatic scholarship and the profound impact of archaeological discoveries in reshaping historical narratives (Cribb, 1993; Senior, 2001). Ultimately, this hoard not only refines the chronology of Heraios but also illuminates the transitional dynamics and cultural complexities of the region during the crucial centuries bridging the BCE and CE eras.

#### **Description of Coins Hoard:**

### **G1. Eukratides I**

#### **Type. Bust of King and Caps (Silver Obol).**

**Obv.** Diademed bust of the king facing right, dotted border around.

**Rev.** Caps and palms of the Dioscuri, Greek legend: *ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΕΥΚΡΑΤΙΔΟΥ* (of King Eukratides).

**Coin nos.** Plates 1-3, Section 4.7.1.3.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

#### **Type. Bust of King and Caps (Silver Obol).**

**Obv.** Helmeted bust of the king facing right, dotted border around.

**Rev.** Caps and palms of the Dioscuri, Greek legend: *ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΕΥΚΡΑΤΙΔΟΥ* (of King Eukratides).

**Coin nos.** Plates 4-8, Section 4.7.1.3.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

### **G2. Heraios**

#### **Type. Bust of King and Caps (Silver Obol).**

**Obv.** Diademed bust right within dotted border.

**Rev.** Soldier standing right, holding wreath, Greek legend left and right: *ΗΡΑΙΟΥ ΚΟΡΡΑΝΟΥ*.

**Reference:** MAC 2840.

**Coin nos.** Plates 9-11, Section 4.7.1.3.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

## **ii. Kushans**

### **a. Vima Takto/ Soter Megas Coin Hoard from Lashora, Jamrud.**

The Kushan king Vima Takto, who reigned approximately 80-95 CE, is recognised as a pivotal figure in the formation of Kushan royal identity. His numismatic portraiture is distinctive and influential within the study of early Central-Asian and South-Asian iconography. In a remarkable archaeological discovery at Lashora (Jamrud, Khyber Pass), a large copper alloy seal measuring 7x7 centimetres was found together with a hoard of 226 early Kushan copper coins. Notably, this hoard comprised 147 coins of Vima Takto/ Soter Megas, 37 of Vima Kadphises, 26 of Kujula Kadphises, and 16 of Kanishka I. The association of the seal with such a well-dated and royal-focused assemblage offers exceptional comparative material for analysing the dissemination and consistency of royal imagery during the early Kushan period.

The Lashora coin hoard, recovered alongside the seal, provides invaluable insight into early Kushan monetary and iconographic practices. The hoard is dominated by Vima Takto issues, offering a rare, stratified glimpse into early Kushan coinage. The typology of the hoard is as follows:

#### **Description of the Coins Hoard:**

## **G1. Vima Takto/ Soter Megas (80-90 AD)**

### **Type 1. Bust of King and King riding a horse**

**Obv.** Bust of Vima Takto, with Greek royal headband and radiate, holding sceptre; three-pronged tamgha behind.

**Rev.** Mounted king with a Greek royal headband, holding a sceptre. Three-pronged tamgha; corrupted Greek legend ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΩΝ ΣΩΤΗΡ ΜΕΓΑΣ "Basileu Basileuon Soter Megas": "The King of Kings, Great Saviour".

**Reference:** MAC 2947.

**Coin nos.** Plates 1-116, Section 4.7.2 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

### **Type 2. Bust of King and Zeus**

**Obv.** King mounted on horse right, holding raised whip, 3-pronged tamgha before Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΩΝ ΣΩΤΗΡ ΜΕΓΑΣ.

**Rev.** Zeus standing right, holding sceptre, Kharoshti legend around, Vase (or altar?) before, control vi behind.

**Reference:** MAC 2915.

**Coin nos.** Plates 117-130, Section 4.7.2 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

### **Type 3. Bust of King and King riding a horse**

**Obv.** Diademed bust right, holding sceptre, nine rays, Tamgha behind, all within dotted border.

**Rev.** King mounted on horse right, holding whip or dagger, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΩΝ ΣΩΤΗΡ ΜΕΓΑΣ (missing P ΜΕΓΑΣ).

**Reference:** MAC 2941.

**Coin nos.** Plates 131-146, Section 4.7.2 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

## **G2. Kujula Kadphises (30-80 CE, or 40-90 CE)**

### **Type 1. Bust of King and Hercules**

**Obv.** Hermaios-style diademed bust right, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ ΣΤΗΡΟΣΣΥ ΕΡΜΑΙΟΥ.

**Rev.** Hercules standing facing, holding a club and a lion skin.

Kharoshti legend around: *Kujula Kasasa Kushana Yavugasa Dhramathidasa*.

**Reference:** MAC 2844.

**Coin nos.** Plates 148-173, Section 4.7.2 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

This hoard, particularly the overwhelming preponderance of Vima Takto types, strongly supports the contemporary use of the seal and firmly anchors its production within his reign. The typological diversity, with clear dynastic succession from Kujula Kadphises to Kanishka I, attests to the hoard's value as a source for reconstructing the evolution of early Kushan monetary and iconographic traditions.

- **The Lashora Seal as a Reflection of Vima Takto's Numismatic Portraiture.**

The Lashora seal is circular and robust in shape (Plates 1-2, Section 4.7.3 in Part II: Illustrations Coins), featuring a pronounced handle on its reverse, a design characteristic suggesting its primary function was administrative, likely for authenticating documents or marking goods. The obverse of the seal displays an intricately rendered royal bust in right-facing profile. The figure is adorned with a distinctive diadem or crown marked by raised nodules or beads, and elaborate jewellery including earrings and neck ornaments, all elements closely aligned with Kushan royal iconography.

Crucially, the figure on the seal holds a spherical or globular object, a motif commonly interpreted as an emblem of authority or divine sanction, and one that parallels the iconography seen on Kushan coins, especially those of Vima Takto. The almond-shaped eye, pronounced nose, and detailed ear jewellery further echo stylistic features seen in known coins catalogued by Mitchiner (1978), Pieper (1998), and referenced in the "Monnaies Antiques de l'Asie Centrale et de l'Orient" (MACW) database.

Royal seals from the Kushan era are far less common archaeological finds than coins, and this kind of royal seal has never been reported before, which is why the Lashora seal is especially significant. The clear iconographic parallels between the seal and contemporary Kushan coinage, particularly that of Vima Takto, underscore the deliberate and standardised propagation of royal portraiture across multiple media. The ornate headgear, the depiction of royal regalia, and the specific facial stylisation observed on both the seal and the coins collectively reflect the establishment of a canonical visual language for Kushan kingship.

The discovery of the Lashora seal in direct association with a large hoard of early Kushan coins affirms the site's relevance for both administrative and economic functions during the Kushan period. This archaeological context is consistent with broader patterns of local governance, economic control, and royal representation documented in other major Kushan centres. Comparative finds from the region, including Parthian and Kushan-period hoards and seals documented by Mitchiner (1978) and Pieper (1998), confirm the significance of this administrative culture and provide strong chronological and typological parallels for the Lashora seal.

A focused comparison between the Lashora seal and the coins attributed to Vima Takto (Soter Megas) highlights both striking similarities and notable distinctions:

Both the seal and the coins present a right-facing royal bust, prominently featuring a diadem or crown with bead-like projections, an almond-shaped eye, and a stylised facial profile with intense nose and accentuated lips. The ruler on both artefacts holds a globular object, interpreted in numismatic scholarship as a symbol of royal sovereignty or divine favour (Mitchiner 1978: Plates 214-216; Pieper 1998: pp. 27-30). The elaborate jewellery and regalia depicted further reinforce the shared iconographic vocabulary of kingship.

The seal, cast from copper alloy with a large handle, was intended for stamping and administrative authentication, a function distinct from the economic circulation role of coins. The coins, primarily of silver or billon, were designed for trade and public dissemination, serving as mobile instruments of royal propaganda. The seal's much larger size (7x7 cm) allowed for robust depiction, whereas coins (typically 2-3 cm in diameter) were struck for fine detail.

Both the seal and the coins were discovered within the Kushan heartland, with the context of the coin hoard providing a secure chronological framework. The overwhelming predominance of Vima Takto coins in the hoard (147 out of 226) strongly suggests that the seal's production and use coincided with his reign. This connection is reinforced by similar discoveries in Gandhara, Bactria, and the North-West Frontier region, which have been recorded in the MACW catalogue as well as in key numismatic studies.

The close iconographic affinity points to a deliberate strategy of royal image standardisation across different media, both administrative (seal) and economic (coinage). The rarity of such seals, compared to coins, suggests their use in high-level administrative or ceremonial contexts, while coins fulfilled a broader communicative and economic function. Both, however, operated as vehicles for legitimising and broadcasting Kushan royal authority.

The Lashora seal, when considered alongside the coin hoard, provides crucial insight into the mechanics of royal representation and administrative practice in the early Kushan state. Its explicit stylistic resonance with Vima Takto's numismatic portraiture demonstrates a programmatic dissemination of royal image, reinforcing authority not

just through currency, but through administrative artefacts as well. This multi-modal propagation of imagery played a key role in asserting and maintaining Kushan political legitimacy across their diverse empire.

The Lashora seal from Landi Kotal, discovered in association with an important hoard of early Kushan coins, stands as a key artefact for understanding both the administrative and ideological mechanisms of Kushan governance. Its detailed iconographic similarity with numismatic representations of Vima Takto and its archaeological context firmly situate it within the broader phenomenon of royal image standardisation and dissemination. The evidence strongly supports the view that both the seal and the coins are products of a unified artistic and ideological milieu under Vima Takto, providing exceptional material for the study of early Central-Asian kingship.

#### **b. Vima Kadphises (1<sup>st</sup> quarter of the 2<sup>nd</sup> CE)**

The coins of Vima Kadphises have been discovered from various localities in the Jamrud region by treasure hunters over the last eight years. While not forming a single hoard, these finds collectively illustrate the circulation and typological diversity of Kushan coinage in the Khyber area during this formative period of the Kushan Empire.

Typologically, the coins span several distinct types. The largest denomination recorded is a gold double dinar, featuring a diademed and crowned bust of Vima Kadphises standing in a chariot under a canopy, holding a mace-sceptre, accompanied by the Bactrian legend "BACILEYC OOH-MO KADFICKC." The reverse is particularly significant for its depiction of an ithyphallic Shiva standing frontally, holding a trident and lion skin, with the Buddhist Triratana ("Three Jewels") and the Kushan tamgha, as well as a royal titlature in Kharosthi script. Such iconography is unique to Vima Kadphises and demonstrates an explicit blend of Indian and Iranian religious motifs (Göbl, 1984, p. 49; Mitchiner, 1978, p. 367).

Other types identified among the Jamrud finds include double dinars and standard gold dinars with the king's bust left or right, holding a club and elephant goad. The reverses on these coins typically feature Shiva, sometimes ithyphallic, sometimes accompanied by the bull Nandi and a variety of Kharosthi and Bactrian legends. Notably, some smaller denominations depict Oesho (syncretic Shiva figure) with four arms and various attributes, further enriching the iconographic repertoire (Göbl, 1984; Pieper,

1998, pp. 196-197). These varieties correspond with Göbl's types 9, 13, and 19, and are also catalogued as MAC 3004-3005.

The presence of these coin types in Jamrud, distributed across multiple find spots rather than as a closed deposit, is significant for several reasons. Firstly, it demonstrates the wide circulation and acceptance of Kushan imperial coinage across the Khyber region, underscoring Jamrud's role as a strategic corridor connecting Central and South Asia. Secondly, the variety of coin types found indicates that the region was closely connected to the broader economic and administrative systems of the Kushan Empire during the rule of Vima Kadphises. The inclusion of both religious and royal symbols, particularly the fusion of Shiva and Kushan tamgha, reflects the ideological Synthesis pursued by the dynasty to consolidate rule over a multi-ethnic empire (Mitchiner, 1978, pp. 368-371).

Comparable individual finds and similar types have been documented from Gandhara, Bactria, and the North-West Frontier, confirming the broader pattern of Kushan monetary influence (Mitchiner, 1978; Pieper, 1998). While the precise archaeological context for the Jamrud coins varies, their recovery from different localities rather than from a single deposit highlights the routine movement and use of Kushan coinage in everyday transactions and ritual payments.

### **Coins:**

#### **Type 1. Bust of King/ Shiva and Nandi Bull (Double Dinar).**

**Obv.** Diademed and crowned Bust of Vima Kadphises, holding in right hand a mace-sceptre over his shoulder, standing under a canopy in a chariot, with driver, drawn by two horses right, with Bactrian Legend: BACILEYC OOH-MO KADFICKC.

**Rev.** Ithyphallic Siva standing facing, head left, holding trident in right hand, lion skin draped over left arm; tamgha to left, Buddhist Triratana ("Three Jewels") to right, "maharajasa rajadirajasa tarvaloga ísvarasa mahísvarasa hima kathphása" in Karosthi,

**Reference.** Weight: 15.97 g.

**Coin nos.** Plates 1, Section 4.7.4 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

#### **Type 2. Bust of King and Shiva (Double Dinar).**

**Obv.** Crowned, diademed torso of king left, holding club and elephant goad, Greek legend: BACIAEYC OOH .. MO KAΔΦICHC (King Vima Kadphises).

**Rev.** Siva standing facing, with head turned to right, bull Nandi right behind, Kharoshti legend: maharajasa rajadirajasa sarvaloga isvarasa mahisvarasa, Vima Kathphishasa tratara.

**Reference.** Göbl 13.

**Coin nos.** Plates 2, Section 4.7.4 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type 3. Bust of King and Shiva (Gold dinar).**

**Obv.** Crowned, diademed torso of king right, holding club and elephant goad, Greek legend: BACIAEYC OOH .. MO KAΔΦICHC (King Vima Kadphises).

**Rev.** Ithyphallic Siva standing facing, with head turned to left, holding trident and deerskin, Kharoshti legend: maharajasa rajadirajasa sarvaloga isvarasa mahisvarasa Vima Kathphishasa tratara.

**Reference.** Göbl 19, MAC 3004.

**Coin nos.** Plates 3-8, Section 4.7.4 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type 4. Bust of King and Shiva (Gold dinar).**

**Obv.** Crowned, diademed torso of king left, holding club and elephant goad, Greek legend: BACIAEYC OOH .. MO KAΔΦICHC (King Vima Kadphises).

**Rev.** Ithyphallic Siva standing facing, with head turned to left, holding trident and deerskin, Kharoshti legend: maharajasa rajadirajasa sarvaloga isvarasa mahisvarasa Vima Kathphishasa tratara.

**Reference.** Göbl 19, MAC 3004.

**Coin nos.** Plates 9, Section 4.7.4 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type 5. Bust of King and Oesho (Half quarter dinar).**

**Obv.** Crowned, diademed torso of king left, holding club and elephant goad, Greek legend: BACIAEYC OOH .. MO KAΔΦICHC (King Vima Kadphises).

**Rev.** Four arms Oesho standing left, holding trident in raised left hand, antelope in lowered left hand, damaru or drum in raised right hand, and goad and water pot in lower right hand, Bactrian legend at right: on|po, tamgha at left.

**Reference.** Göbl 19, MAC 3004.

**Coin nos.** Plates 10, Section 4.7.4 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type 6. Bust of King and Trident (Gold quarter dinar).**

**Obv.** Crowned, diademed head of king left, framed in a window, Greek legend: BACIAEYC OOHMO KAΔΦICHC (King Vima Kadphises).

**Rev.** Siva's trident, with axe head on shaft, tamgha left, nandipada right, Kharoshti legend: maharaja rajadiraja Vima Kathphishasa.

**Reference.** Göbl 9, MAC 3005.

**Coin nos.** Plates 11-13, Section 4.7.4 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**c. Kanishka I (c. 127 CE)**

The most remarkable numismatic discoveries regarding Kanishka I coinage are the discovery of the gold quarter dinar bearing the image of the Buddha (see Plates 1, Section 4.7.5 in Part II: Illustrations Coins), found at Takhta Baig near Chaura Khwar (stream). This coin stands out not only for its iconographic and historical significance but also for its well-documented provenance, a rarity in the context of Kushan gold Buddha coins, as most known examples have surfaced without attested find spots. The



secure context and photographic evidence of the Jamrud specimen firmly establish its origins, marking it as a critical piece for the exploration of Kushan Buddhist iconography and the diffusion of Buddhism via the Khyber corridor.

Typologically, the gold quarter dinar features a crowned and diademed Kanishka I, standing frontally. On the obverse, the figure is shown holding a spear and making a sacrifice at an altar, while the Bactrian inscription around him identifies him as "King of Kings, Kanishka Kushan." The reverse, notable for its religious significance, portrays the Buddha standing frontally, with his left hand holding his robe and his right hand raised in the gesture of abhaya mudra ("have no fear"). This motif testifies to the integration of Buddhist themes within royal propaganda. The Bactrian legend reads "BODDO," confirming the figure's identity, and a Kushan tamgha appears to the right. This type is catalogued as Göbl 66 (Göbl, 1984, p. 66).

This coin's discovery at Takhta Baig, Jamrud, together with other Kushan gold coins (whose photographs could not be taken), reinforces the historical narrative of the region as a significant corridor for commerce, religious exchange, and imperial display during Kanishka's reign. The confirmed findspot contrasts sharply with earlier gold Buddha coins, which, although known in multiple examples, lacked secure archaeological context (Pieper, 1998, pp. 132-134). The Jamrud coin thus serves as a vital anchor for both typological and historical studies.

Additional Kanishka I gold coins from Jamrud include a series of dinars featuring the king in a standing position, facing, holding a spear and sacrificing at an altar, standardised royal imagery for Kushan gold. The reverses display a pantheon of deities, such as Helios (solar deity, Göbl 25), Orlagno (Göbl 63), Oado, Athsho (god of metals, Göbl 47), Pharro (Göbl 74), Nana (Göbl 36), Mithra (Göbl 31), Mao (lunar deity, Göbl 53), Oesho (syncretic Shiva, Göbl 51), and even additional Buddhist types on AE tetradrachms (Göbl 786, Cribb die 5). Each of these types reflects the religious pluralism and syncretic policies of the Kushan state. The king is consistently rendered as crowned and diademed, typically nimbate, and performing ritual sacrifice, a motif that visually asserts divine legitimacy and kingly piety (Mitchiner, 1978, pp. 492-504).

The occurrence of these coins at multiple Jamrud sites further highlights the region's importance as a key crossroads connecting Central and South Asia. Their iconographic variety underscores Kanishka's policy of accommodating a spectrum of religious

traditions, Buddhist, Iranian, and Indian. The gold dinar with Buddha on the reverse, in particular, is celebrated as one of the earliest numismatic depictions of the Buddha, and has been fundamental for studies of Kushan religious history, Buddhist art, and the transmission of Buddhist iconography to Central and East Asia (Cribb, 1999; Pieper, 1998).

The Kanishka I coins discovered in Jamrud, and especially the Takhta Baig Buddha gold coin, represent not only numismatic rarities but also crucial historical sources for understanding the Kushan religious policy, royal iconography, and the region's integration into broader networks of exchange and ideology. These discoveries allow for a more refined understanding of the Khyber region as a crucial cultural and economic crossroads during the early centuries of the Common Era.

**Coins:**

**Type 1. King standing facing and Buddha (AV quarter dinar).**

**Obv.** Crowned, diademed king standing facing, holding spear and sacrificing at altar at left, Bactrian legend around:  $\text{pAONANOpAO KA} \dots \text{N}\eta\text{pKI KOpANO}$ , (King of Kings Kanishka Kushan).

**Rev..** The Buddha standing facing, left hand holding robe, right hand in abhaya mudra, "have no fear," Bactrian legend left: BOΔΔO, tamgha at right.

**Reference.** Göbl 66.

**Coin nos.** Plate 1, Section 4.7.5 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type 2. King standing facing and Helios (Gold dinar).**

**Obv.** Crowned, diademed king standing facing, holding spear and sacrificing at altar at left, Greek legend: BACIAEYC BACI ... ΛEWN KANH̄KOY, (King of Kings Kanishka Kushan).

**Rev..** Solar deity Helios standing facing, with head turned to left, one hand on hip, the other raised in blessing, Greek legend right: HAIOC, tamgha at left.

**Reference.** Göbl 25.

**Coin nos.** Plate 2, Section 4.7.5 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

### Type 3. King standing facing and Orlagno (Gold Dinar).

**Obv.** Crowned, diademed king standing facing, holding spear and sacrificing at altar at left, Bactrian legend around:  $\text{pAONANO pAO KA ... N\eta\text{pKI KO pANO}$  (King of Kings Kanishka Kushan).

**Rev.** Orlagno standing right, holding spear and sword hilt, nimbate, wearing a bird head-dress, Bactrian legend left: OPΛAΓNO, tamgha at right.

**Reference.** Göbl 63.

**Coin nos.** Plate 3, Section 4.7.5 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type 4. King standing facing and Oado (Gold Dinar).**

**Obv.** Crowned, diademed and crowned, standing facing, head left, holding a sceptre and sacrificing over an altar, flames at the shoulder of the cloak; pAoNANOpAo KA NhpKI KOpANO.

**Rev.** Oado running left, holding a cloak up behind him with both hands, tamgha upper left, "oA(delta)o" at right.

**Coin nos.** Plate 4, Section 4.7.5 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type 5. King standing facing and Athsho (Gold Dinar).**

**Obv.** Crowned, diademed king standing facing, holding spear and sacrificing at altar at left, Bactrian legend around: pAONANOpAO KA ... NhpKI KOpANO, (King of Kings Kanishka Kushan).

**Rev.** God of metals Athsho standing facing, with head turned to the left, one hand on his hip,

The other holding out diadem, Bactrian legend right: AΘpO, tamgha at left.

**Reference.** Göbl 47.

**Coin nos.** Plate 5, Section 4.7.5 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type 6. King standing facing and Pharaoh (AV quarter dinar).**

**Obv.** Crowned, diademed king standing facing, holding spear and sacrificing at altar at left, Bactrian legend around: pAONANOpAO KA ... NhpKI KOpANO, (King of Kings Kanishka Kushan).

**Rev.** God Pharro standing facing, head turned to right, nimbate and wearing a winged head-dress, holding spear and bowl, Bactrian legend left: ΦAPPO, tamgha at right.

**Reference.** Göbl 74, weight: 1.93 g.

**Coin nos.** Plate 6, Section 4.7.5 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type 7. King standing facing and Nana (Gold Dinar).**

**Obv.** Crowned, diademed king standing facing, holding spear and sacrificing at altar at left, Bactrian legend around: pAONANOpAO KA ... NhpKI KOpANO, (King of Kings Kanishka Kushan).

**Rev.** Goddess Nana standing right, nimbate, holding bowl and protome of animal, Bactrian legend left: NANApAO, tamgha at right.

**Reference.** Göbl 36.

**Coin nos.** Plates 6-10, Section 4.7.5 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type 8. King standing facing and Mithra (Gold Dinar).**

**Obv.** Crowned, diademed king standing facing, holding spear and sacrificing at altar at left, Bactrian legend around: pAONANOpAO KA ... NhpKI KOpANO, (King of Kings Kanishka Kushan).

**Rev..** Solar deity Mithra standing left, holding sword hilt and holding out hand in blessing, radiate nimbus around head, Bactrian legend right: MIIPO, tamgha at left.

**Reference.** Göbl 31.

**Coin nos.** Plate 11-13, Section 4.7.5 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type 9. King standing facing and Mao (Gold Dinar).**

**Obv.** Crowned, diademed king standing facing, holding spear and sacrificing at altar at left, Bactrian legend around: pAONANOpAO KA ... NhpKI KOpANO, (King of



#### **d. Huvishka (c. 155 - 189 CE)**

The Huvishka coins (see Section 4.7.6 in Part II: Illustrations Coins) from Jamrud represent a typologically varied corpus, including issues featuring both Graeco-Iranian and Indian deities. The most remarkable among these is the gold dinar depicting Serapis, a Hellenistic-Egyptian deity rarely encountered in South-Asian coinage. This coin type displays a crowned and diademed bust of Huvishka left on the obverse, accompanied by a Bactrian legend. The reverse presents Serapis enthroned, holding a diadem and staff, with the legend "CAPA?O" at right and the characteristic Kanishka tamgha at left. The presence of Serapis, along with other Western deities, reflects the enduring Greco-Bactrian cultural heritage in Kushan iconography (Göbl, 1984, p. 148; Mitchiner, 1978, p. 534).

Another significant type is the gold dinar featuring Athsho, the fire god (often equated with Hephaistos). These coins exhibit a nimbate, diademed bust of Huvishka left on clouds on the obverse, and Athsho standing right on the reverse, flames surrounding his head and shoulders. The iconography, including the blacksmith's hammer and tongs, speaks to the syncretic nature of Kushan religion, which incorporated elements from Iranian and Hellenistic traditions (Göbl, 1984, p. 152; Pieper, 1998, p. 166).

The assemblage further includes the rare Manaobago half-quarter dinar, where the king's diademed bust faces left, and the reverse features the multi-armed lunar deity Manaobago, enthroned and holding various attributes. This form of depiction, with lunar horns at the shoulders and four arms, is emblematic of the fusion of Central-Asian and Indian iconography prevalent in Kushan art. Similarly, the gold dinar with Rishti, shown holding a spear and shield, demonstrates the empire's engagement with Zoroastrian themes.

A particularly elaborate series shows the king's bust, complete with distinctive facial features and elaborate headgear, on the obverse, and the reverse of the coin features Shaoreoro (Ares/Mars), standing armed and helmeted. The iconography of these coins is notable for its detail, including intricate armour, weaponry, and the persistent use of the tamgha, which signified royal or dynastic authority (Göbl, 1984, p. 156). Gold dinars with the goddess Nana, depicted holding a sceptre and standing frontally, also form part of the Jamrud finds. The consistent use of Bactrian legends and the dotted border further highlight the continuity of Kushan numismatic traditions.

Another rich subset comprises issues featuring the syncretic deity Oesho, associated with the Indian Shiva, depicted nimbate and four-armed, often holding a trident, thunderbolt, and a goat. These coins, with their unique blend of Hellenistic portraiture and Indian religious symbolism, illustrate the adaptability of Kushan kingship to the pluralistic spiritual landscape of the empire (Mitchiner, 1978, p. 538).

Among the Jamrud coins are types featuring Ahura Mazda, the supreme Zoroastrian god; Mithra (Mao), shown with a radiate nimbus; Ardoxsho, the Iranian goddess of plenty, bearing a cornucopia; and Pharro (the Zoroastrian concept of divine glory), each reinforcing the imperial cosmopolitanism of the Kushans. The inclusion of Skando-Komaro and Bizago, as well as Maaseno, demonstrates the reach of Kushan religious patronage into both Brahmanical and local traditions (Pieper, 1998, pp. 174-176).

Interpretively, the recovery of such a broad spectrum of coin types from Jamrud highlights the area's significance as a node of economic, cultural, and religious interaction on the northwestern frontier of the Kushan Empire. The coins provide invaluable material evidence for the empire's pluralistic religious policy and its commitment to maintaining both traditional and innovative iconographies for the legitimisation of imperial authority. Their findspots in Jamrud, a gateway between Gandhara and Bactria, reinforce the historical narrative of this region as a dynamic frontier of exchange and transformation during the height of Kushan power.

### **Coins:**

#### **Type 1. Bust of King and Serapis (Gold Dinor).**

**Obv.** Crowned, diademed King's bust left, not nimbate, holding goad and mace, Bactrian legend around:  $\text{paonano}\text{pao}$  o...ohpki  $\text{Ko}\text{p}\text{ano}$ .

**Rev.** Serapis seated facing on throne, feet resting on foot-stool, holding diadem and staff, Legend at right:  $\text{CAPA?O}$ , Kanishka (!) tamgha at left.

**Reference.** , Coin nos. Plate 1, Section 4.7.6 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Provenance / Findspot:** Coins was discovered from Lashora, Jamrud by treasure hunters.

#### **Type 2. Bust of King and Athsho (Hephaistos) - Fire God (Gold Dinar).**

**Obv.**  $\text{O}\text{P}\alpha\text{O}$   $\text{OO}$   $\text{h}\text{PVI}$   $\text{VO}\text{P}\alpha$  (retrograde h)O, nimbate, diademed, and crowned half-length bust left on clouds, holding mace-sceptre and filleted spear over shoulder.

**Rev.**  $\alpha\text{ΘO}\text{P}\text{O}$ , Athsho standing right, flames about head and shoulders, holding blacksmith's hammer over shoulder and pair of tongs; tamgha to left.

**Reference.** MK 230, Coin nos. Plate 2, Section 4.7.6 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Provenance / Findspot:** Coins was discovered from Sur Kamar, Jamrud.

**Type 3. Bust of King and Manaobago (Gold half-quarter Dinar).**

**Obv.** Diademed bust of the king facing left, dotted border around.

**Rev.** Manaobago, wearing nimbus crown and helmet, and with lunar horns at shoulders, seated facing on raised stool, cushioned and with curving legs, feet on footstool, head right and with four arms: lower right on hip, upper right holding coins or fruit, upper left holding mace-scepter, and lower left holding torque; tamgha to right.

**Reference.** MK 151, weight: 1.98gm, Coin nos. Plate 3, Section 4.7.6 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Provenance / Findspot:** Coins was discovered during construction of house foundation near Baqarabad pump station.

**Type 4. Bust of King and Rishti (Gold Dinar).**

**Obv.** OΠαO OO hΠVI VOΠα(retrograde h)O, nimbate, diademed, and crowned half-length bust left on clouds, holding mace-sceptre and filleted spear over shoulder.

**Rev.** Rishti is standing to the left, holding a spear with his right arm and a shield with his left hand, touching the feet, tamgha to the right.

**Reference.** Coin nos. Plate 4, Section 4.7.6 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Provenance / Findspot:** Coins was discovered from fields on way to Shingeer, from Lashora, Jamrud.

**Type 5. Bust of King and Shaoreoro (Gold Dinar).**

**Obv.** ΠAONANOP-AO OOHΠKI KOΠANO, nimbate half-length bust of Huvishka left, on mountain top, wearing mustache, and prominent wart on cheek, round helmet with pointed jeweled earflap, forehead medallion, crest ornament, and circular side ornament, diadem with triangular tie and ladder-like ribbons over both shoulders, kaftan open at top and bottom, clasped at chest, with rolled lapels and ornamented with jewels, worn over collared tunic, jewel-edged armlets inset into double-helix pattern, club in right hand with pointed index finger, transverse filleted scepter with elliptical finial in left hand over shoulder.

**Rev.** ΠAOPHOPO, Shaoreoro (Ares/Mars) standing facing, helmeted head right, nimbate, wearing cuirass and plate mail over boots, grounded spear in right hand, left hand on sword with animal-headed hilt; tamgha with crossbar in left field, dotted border.

**Reference.** Göbl, MK 225, Coin nos. Plate 5-6, Section 4.7.6 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Provenance / Findspot:** Coins was discovered from Alam Gudar, Bara by treasure hunters.

**Type 6. Bust of King and NANA (Gold Dinar).**

**Obv.** Crowned, diademed bust of the king left, holding a mace and an elephant goad,

Bactrian legend around: ΠAONANOPAO ... OOHΠKI KOΠANO

Shaonanoshao Ooeshki Koshano (King of Kings Huvishka Kushan).

**Rev.** Nana standing facing with head right, holding a sceptre, tamgha in the right field, with Bactrian legend NANA, dotted border around.

**Reference.** Göbl obverse type XVII.Ex Chand Collection 1.2.21, Coin nos. Plate 7-8, Section 4.7.6 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Provenance / Findspot:** Coins was discovered from Lala Cheena by treasure hunters.

**Type 7.1 Bust of King and Oesho (Gold Dinar).**

**Obv.** PAONANO PAO O-HPKI KO PA NO, half-length bust of Huvishka left on mountain top, with moustache, heavy sideburns, and prominent wart on cheek, wearing round helmet with jewelled brim, twin-pronged forehead ornament, crest ornament, crescent on the side, diadem with triangular tie and single ladder-like ribbon to right, loose-fitting tunic with jewelled collar, flames emanating from right shoulder, club in right hand surmounted by three spikes, sword hilt in left.

**Rev.** OHPO, Oesho (Siva or Shiva), nimbate, standing facing, hair in topknot on head, wearing dhoti, bracelets, and armlets with amulet string across chest, with four arms: one pouring water from flask, one holding thunderbolt, one holding trident, and one holding goat by horns; tamgha without crossbar to left, dotted border.

**Reference.** Unreported series, Coin nos. Plate 9, Section 4.7.6 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Provenance / Findspot:** Coins was discovered from Madanak by treasure hunters.

**Type. 7.2. Bust of King and Oesho (Gold Dinar).**

**Obv.** As Above.

**Rev.** OHPO, Oesho (Siva or Shiva), nimbate, standing facing, hair in topknot on head left, wearing dhoti, bracelets, and armlets with amulet string across chest, with four arms: one pouring water from flask, one holding thunderbolt, one holding trident, and one holding goat by horns; tamgha without crossbar to left, dotted border.

**Reference.** ANS Kushan 754, Coin nos. Plate 10-12, Section 4.7.6 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Provenance / Findspot:** Coins were discovered from Shagai (Coin 10), Ali Masjid Khwar (Coin 11), Wali Khel (Coin 12) by treasure hunters.

**Type 8. Bust of King and Ahura Mazda (Gold Dinar).**

**Obv.** King's bust left, not nimbate, holding sword hilt and mace, Bactrian legend around: paonano pao o ... ohpki ko pa no.

**Rev.** Ahura Mazda standing left, holding sceptre in left hand and extending right hand, Legend at right: ωPOM(azda), tamgha at left.

**Reference.** Göbl 333, DB 287, Coin nos. Plate 13-14, Section 4.7.6 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Provenance / Findspot:** Both coins (13-14) were discovered from Taidi Bazaar village, during excavation of foundation of madrasa wall.

**Type 9. Bust of King and MAO (Gold Dinar).**

**Obv.** Crowned and diademed bust left on clouds, holding mace-sceptre and goad; flames over shoulder.

**Rev.** Mao (Mithra), diademed, lunar "horns" at shoulders, standing facing, head left, extending hand in benediction, cradling filleted and globe-tipped sceptre, and holding sceptre; tamgha to left.



**Reference.** MK 296/2 (dies 31/42); ANS Kushan 756; Donum Burns 269-70, Coin nos. Plate 15-19, Section 4.7.6 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Provenance / Findspot:** These coins were recovered from various locations in Jamrud: Coin (15) from Walo Mela; Coins (16-17) from Zur Gudar; Coin (18) from Jabba Village, Bara; and Coin (19) from Zeraf Kundao, Landi Kotal, the latter reportedly found by treasure hunters.

#### **Type 10.1. Bust of King and Ardoxsho (Gold Dinar).**

**Obv.** Diademed bust of the king facing right, dotted border around.

**Rev.** Ardoxsho, wearing Stephane, standing facing, head right, extending cornucopia with both hands; monogram to right.

**Reference.** MK 286 (dies 12/42); ANS Kushan 749 = Adams III, lot 2123 (same obv. die), Coin nos. Plates 20.1, Section 4.7.6 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Provenance / Findspot:** Coin was discovered from Dargai Zakha Khel, Lower Tirah Valley.

#### **Type 10.2. Bust of King and Ardoxsho (Quarter Gold Dinar).**

**Obv.** Diademed bust of the king facing right, dotted border around.

**Rev.** Ardoxsho, wearing Stephane, standing facing, head left, extending cornucopia with both hands; monogram to right.

**Reference.** Göbl obverse types XII-XVI, Coin nos. Plate 20.2, Section 4.7.6 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Provenance / Findspot:** The coin was discovered in the fields of Badshah Gul Killi and was originally part of a larger hoard consisting of eleven gold coins. The hoard was reportedly sold to a jeweller in Jamrud Bazaar. Of the eleven coins, details and photographs of only two were obtained, one of which belongs to the Kanishka series.

#### **Type 10.3. Bust of King and Ardoxsho (Gold Dinar).**

**Obv.** As above.

**Rev.** Ardoxsho, wearing Stephane, standing facing, head right, extending cornucopia with both hands; monogram to right.

**Reference.** Göbl obverse types IX-XI, ANS Kushan 749 = Adams III, lot 2123 (same obv. die), Coin nos. Plate 21-24, Section 4.7.6 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Provenance / Findspot:** Coin (21) was recovered from the fields of Bacha Maina, Landi Kotal; Coin (22) from Shakas, Jamrud; and Coin (23) from Choura Khwar, Jamrud.

#### **Type 11. Bust of King and (MIPO) Mithra (Gold Dinar).**

**Obv.** Crowned, diademed bust of king left, holding mace and elephant goad, Bactrian legend around:  $\text{pAONANO}\text{pAO} \dots \text{OO}\eta\text{pKI KO}\text{pANO}$ , Shaonanoshao Ooeshki Koshano (King of Kings Huvishka Kushan).

**Rev.** Solar deity Mithra standing facing, with head turned to left, one hand on hip, the other raised in blessing, Bactrian legend right: MIPO, tamgha at left.

**Reference.** Göbl 137, Coin nos. Plate 25-26, Section 4.7.6 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Provenance / Findspot:** Coin (25) was recovered from Alam Gudar, Bara, while Coin (26) was found in Gongi Killi, Khuga Khel Village, Landi Kotal by treasure hunters.

## Type 12. Bust of King and (𐎱𐎠𐎼𐎿.𐎱𐎠) Shaoreoro (Gold Dinar).

**Obv.** Crowned, diademed bust of king left, holding mace and elephant goad, Bactrian legend around:  $\text{pAONANOpAO} \dots \text{OO}\eta\text{pKI KOpANO}$ , Shaonanoshaos Ooeshki Koshano (King of Kings Huvishka Kushan).

**Rev. PAOPHO..PO**, Shaoreoro (Ares/Mars) standing facing, helmeted head right, nimbate, wearing cuirass and plate mail over boots, grounded spear in right hand, left hand on sword with animal-headed hilt; tamgha with crossbar in left field, dotted border.

**Reference.** ANS Kushan -. Sunrise -. Mitchiner -. Göbl, MK 225, Coin nos. Plates 27-28, Section 4.7.6 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Provenance / Findspot:** Coin (25) was discovered from Alam Gudar, Bara, while Coin (26) was found in Gongi Killi, Khuga Khel Village, Landi Kotal by treasure hunters.

**Type 13. Bust of King and Pharaoh (Gold Dinar).**

**Obv.** Crowned and diademed half-length bust left, halo around head, holding mace-sceptre, with Bactrian legend around,  $\text{𐎧𐎠𐎡𐎢𐎣𐎦𐎰𐎶𐎵𐎫𐎲𐎠𐎤}$ , king of kings, Huvishka Kushan.

**Rev.** Pharro standing left, holding bowl of fire and hilt of sword; tamgha to left, tamgha to right, with Bactrian legend ΦΑΡΟ (Pharro), dotted border around.

**Reference.** Göbl obverse type IX, Ex Chand Collection 1.2.14, Coin nos. Plate 29, Section 4.7.6 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Provenance / Findspot:** Coin was discovered from Anayat Killi, Landi Kotal by labours and was sold in Peshawar gold market to a jeweller.

**Type. 14. Bust of King/ Skando-Komaro and Bizago (Gold Dinar).**

**Obv.** PAOIIOIIOPOO-O OhPVI VOPANO (sic), half-length bust of Huvishka left, on mountain top (or clouds), wearing moustache, heavy sideburns, and prominent wart on cheek, round helmet with crest ornament, twin-pronged forehead ornament, crescent on side, and a jewelled rim, diadem with triangular tie and double ladder-like ribbons to right, and loose-fitting tunic with jewelled collar, club in right hand, sword hilt in left.

**Rev.** *ΣKAN-ΔO-KOM-AP-O BIZAGO*, Skando-Komaro (on left) and Bizago (on right) standing facing, nimbate heads turned inwards, each wearing Brahmanical hair knots, dhotis, necklaces, armlets, and bracelets, inner hands resting on the hilt of swords, standards in outer hands; AP pellet in left field, tamga in lower central field, dotted border.

**Reference.** ANS Kushan 723 var. (location of control mark). Göbl, MK 156, Coin nos. Plate 30-32, Section 4.7.6 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Provenance / Findspot:** Coin was discovered from Tukhta Baig, Jamrud treasure hunters.

**Type. 15. Bust of King/ Ommo -Oesho (Gold Dinar).**

**Obv.** As above.

**Rev.** OHPO, Oesho (Siva or Shiva), nimbate, standing facing, hair in topknot on head left, wearing dhoti, bracelets, and armlets with amulet string across chest, with four arms: one pouring water from flask, one holding thunderbolt, one holding trident, and one holding goat by horns; tamgha without crossbar to left, dotted border while Ommo standing facing with head right, holding a sceptre, field, with Bactrian legend OMMO to right, dotted border around.

**Reference.** BMC: 1888,1208.557, Coin nos. Plate 33, Section 4.7.6 in Part II:

Illustrations Coins.

**Provenance / Findspot:** Coin was discovered from Tukhta Baig, Jamrud treasure hunters.

**Type. 16. Bust of King and Maaseno (Gold Dinar).**

**Obv.** Crowned and diademed half-length figure left on a cloud, holding a mace and an ankusa.

**Rev.** HAΔchno, Maaseno, nimbate and crowned, standing facing, holding bird-tipped and filleted sceptre, left hand on a sword, tamgha to left.

**Reference.** Göbl MDK 298 (O31/R3); Göbl DB 271; ANS Kushan 709, Coin nos, Plate 34-36, Section 4.7.6 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Provenance / Findspot:** Coin (34) was recovered from Bacha Mena, Tirah Valley; Coin (35) from Ali Masjid; and Coin (36) from Suleiman Killi, Jamrud, reportedly by treasure hunters.

**e. Vasudeva I (c. 195-225 CE)**

Gold dinars of Vasudeva I, also found in Jamrud (see Section 4.7.7 in Part II: Illustrations Coins), signal a stylistic consolidation and a more pronounced emphasis on Shaivism. The obverses show the king nimbate, holding a trident and sacrificing at an altar; the reverse consistently features Shiva with Nandi and the legend OṇḇO (Göbl 504), reflecting the growing centrality of Shaiva worship at court (Mitchiner, 1978, pp. 372-375; Pieper, 1998, p. 205).

**Coins:****Type 1.1 King standing facing and Shiva (Gold Dinar).**

**Obv.** Crowned, diademed king standing facing, nimbate, holding trident and sacrificing at altar at left, Bactrian legend around: ḥAONANOḥAO BA ... ZOΔḥO KOḥANO, (King of Kings Bazodeo Kushan).

**Rev..** Two-armed Shiva standing facing, holding trident and diadem, Bull Nandi left behind, Bactrian legend right: OṇḇO, tamgha at right.

**Reference.** Göbl 504.

**Coin nos.** Plate 1, Section 4.7.7 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type 1.2 King standing facing and Shiva (Gold Dinar).**

**Obv.** Crowned, diademed king standing facing, nimbate, holding trident and sacrificing at altar at left, Bactrian legend around:  $\text{pAONANOpAO BA} \dots \text{ZO}\Delta\eta\text{O KOpANO}$ , (King of Kings Bazodeo Kushan).

**Rev..** Two-armed Shiva standing facing, holding trident and diadem, Bull Nandi left behind, Bactrian legend left:  $\text{O}\eta\text{pO}$ , tamgha at right.

**Reference.** Göbl 504.

**Coin nos.** Plates 2-7, Section 4.7.7 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**f. Kanishka II (c. 227-247 CE)**

The coins of Kanishka II are typified by the king standing, holding a trident and sacrificing at an altar, with additional Brahmi and Kharosthi legends marking a period of transition. The reverses continue to depict Shiva and Nandi, yet are distinguished by new legend forms and iconographic subtlety (ANS Kushan 1644).

**Coins:**

**Type.** King standing facing and Shiva (Gold Dinar).

**Obv.** Crowned, diademed king standing facing, holding trident and sacrificing at altar at left, second trident above altar, Bactrian legend around:  $\text{pAONANOpAO KA} \dots$   $\text{NnpKO KOpANO}$ , additional Brahmi letters: vi right, tha between legs, Kharoshthi pa left.

**Rev..** Two-armed Shiva standing facing, holding trident and diadem, Bull Nandi left behind, Bactrian legend right: OnpO and additional tha above, tamgha at left.

**Reference.** ANS Kushan 1644.

**Coin nos.** Plates 1-3, Section 4.7.8 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**g. Vasishka (c 247-255 CE)**

The rare coins of Vasishka (see Section 4.7.9 in Part II: Illustrations Coins) from Jamrud (Göbl 628 var., 557) continue the standing king and Shiva or Ardochsho types, with additional tridents and varied Brahmi letters, underscoring the dynastic continuity and subtle regional variations characteristic of the later Kushan period (Pieper, 1998, p. 207).

**Coins:**

**Type 1. King standing facing and Shiva (Gold Dinar).**

**Obv.** Crowned, diademed king standing facing, holding trident and sacrificing at altar at left, second trident above altar, Bactrian legend around:  $\text{bAONANObAO} \dots$

BAZOKOpAN KOpANO, additional Brahmi letters: ra da right, gho or yo between legs.

**Rev..** Two-armed Shiva standing facing, holding trident and diadem, Bull Nandi left behind, Bactrian legend right:  $\text{pAON}(\text{!})$ , tamgha at left.

**Reference.** Göbl 628 var.

**Coin nos.** Plates 1-2, Section 4.7.9 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type 2. King standing facing and Ardochsho (Gold Dinar).**

**Obv.** Crowned, diademed king standing facing, holding standard and sacrificing at altar at left, second trident above altar, Bactrian legend around:  $\text{pAONANOpAO B ... A ZnpKO KOpANO}$ ,  $\Delta$  at right, Brahmi tha between legs, Kharoshthi pa at left.

**Rev.** Goddess of plenty Ardochsho enthroned facing, holding diadem and cornucopia, Bactrian legend right:  $\text{APAOXpO}$ , Brahmi tha at top right, tamgha at left.

**Reference.** Göbl 557.

**Coin nos.** Plates 3-4, Section 4.7.9 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**h. Kanishka III (268 CE)**

No coins or any artefacts related to Kanishka III have been found in Jamrud and adjacent areas during the research.

**i. Vasudeva II (c. 275-297)**

• **Vasudeva II Coin Hoard from Takhta Baig, Jamrud.**

The coin hoard was discovered at Takhta Baig, Jamrud, and offers new clarity on the numismatic sequence and dynastic chronology of the late Kushan period. The assemblage consists of twelve gold dinars attributed primarily to Vasudeva II, an enigmatic successor in the Kushan line. Typologically, the coins are closely related to Göbl's type 577 (Göbl, 1984, p. 157), and can be divided into two main varieties. The first type (coins 1-11) features a crowned and diademed king standing facing, nimbate, holding a standard and sacrificing at an altar at left. The Bactrian legend around the king typically reads  $\text{pAONANOpAO BA ... ZO}\Delta\eta\text{O KOpANO}$ , with the Brahmi legend "Vasu" appearing at the right, "chu" between the legs, and "khu" at the left. The reverse depicts the goddess of plenty, Ardochsho, enthroned facing, holding a diadem and cornucopia, with the Bactrian legend  $\text{APAOXpO}$  at the right and a tamgha at the left. The twelfth coin presents a variation, with the Brahmi legend "Mahi" at the right and "pu" under the arm, while the obverse and reverse iconography otherwise closely follows the standard Vasudeva II dinar pattern (Göbl, 1984, p. 158).

The Takhta Baig hoard is particularly significant for the chronology of the late Kushan period. Although it is widely believed that Kanishka III was followed by Vasudeva II,

the only non-numismatic evidence for Vasudeva II's reign is a debated inscription. This inscription is possibly dated to Kanishka year 170 (297 CE), or, if misinterpreted, to year 70, which would instead place it in the reign of Vasudeva I (Cribb, 1993, pp. 133-134). However, numismatic findings, particularly coins inscribed with BAZΔηO and a series of gold and copper coins with the Brahmi legend "Vasu", confirm the presence of Vasudeva II as a separate ruler who governed after 268 CE, with his reign likely continuing for some years thereafter c. 275-300 CE (Mitchiner, 1978, pp. 669-670; Pieper, 1998, pp. 210-211).

Of particular interpretive importance is the presence of a coin in the hoard with the Brahmi legend "Mahi." Recent scholarship, notably by Pankaj Tandon (2012), has demonstrated that the name "Mahi" was created by re-cutting dies that had read initially "Shaka," producing so-called "Mi-Shaka" coins which were then modified into Mahi issues. This process suggests that Mahi must have ruled after Shaka (Tandon, 2012, p. 14). However, the discovery of the Takhta Baig hoard with its clear association of both Vasudeva II and Mahi-type coins challenges previous assumptions about the succession and separation of these rulers, rather than belonging to a distinct, later Kidarite king placed in the late 4th century. AD, the so-called Mahi coins may represent a later phase or variety of Vasudeva II's coinage, distinguished primarily by minor variations in Brahmi aksharas.

This new numismatic evidence thus clarifies several anomalies in the late Kushan sequence. It supports a more continuous dynastic development from Vasudeva II into the transition period marked by the emergence of the Kidarites. Comparable finds in the region, while rare, corroborate the typology and iconographic patterns found in the Takhta Baig hoard (Mitchiner, 1978, pp. 668-671; Pieper, 1998, p. 211). The Takhta Baig hoard, therefore, represents a critical anchor point for refining the chronology and historical placement of Vasudeva II, as well as for understanding the broader numismatic and political transformations of late Kushan Bactria and Gandhara.

### **Description of the Coins Hoard:**

#### **Type 1. King standing facing and Ardochsho (Gold Dinar).**

**Obv.** Crowned, diademed king standing facing, nimbate, holding standard and sacrificing at altar at left, Bactrian legend around: ᵢAONANOᵢAO BA ... ZOΔηO KOᵢANO, Brahmi legend: Vasu at right, chu between legs, khu at left.

**Rev.** Goddess of plenty Ardochsho enthroned facing, holding diadem and cornucopia, Bactrian legend right: APΔOXᵢO, tamgha at left.

**Reference.** Göbl 577.

**Coin nos.** Plates 1-11, Section 4.7.10.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins

**Type 2. King standing facing and Ardochsho (Gold Dinar).**

**Obv.** Crowned, diademed King standing facing, nimbate, holding standard and sacrificing at altar at left, Blundered Bactrian legend around, Brahmi legend: Mahi at right, pu under arm.

**Rev..** Goddess of plenty Ardochsho enthroned facing, holding diadem and cornucopia, Bactrian legend right: APΔOXpO, tamgha at left.

**Reference.** Göbl 577.

**Coin nos.** Plates 12, Section 4.7.10.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**iii. SHAKA, (c. 325 CE)**

**a. Shaka Coins Hoard from Taidi Bazaar, Tehsil Jamrud.**

The coin hoard (see Section 4.7.11 in Part II: Illustrations Coins) was accidentally discovered in Taidi Bazaar during the construction of a house. The coin hoard consists of seventeen gold dinars, all exhibiting the distinctive combination of a crowned and diademed king standing and the enthroned goddess Ardochsho. This type typifies the so-called "Shaka" series. The consistent presence of the Brahmi inscription "Shaka" in the right field of the coins' obverse, side links these coins to the mysterious Shaka ruler or title mentioned in records from that period (Mitchiner, 1978, pp. 678-681).

Typologically, the coins are divided into six discernible types, each differentiated by minor variations in Brahmi letters beneath the king's left arm, blundered or unclear Bactrian legends, and specific stylistic elements. Type 1 (Göbl 579, coins 1-2) depicts a king holding a standard and performing a sacrifice at an altar. At the same time, the reverse features the goddess Ardochsho seated on a throne, holding a diadem and a cornucopia. Type 2 (Göbl 591, coins 3-12) and Type 3 (Göbl 589, coin 13) repeat this motif but with different under-arm Brahmi aksharas such as "sita," "bha," or "bhri." Type 4 (Göbl 585, coins 14-15) and Type 5 (Göbl 594, coin 16) introduce further variations like "sayatha," "aya," and "vi." In contrast, Type 6 (Göbl 594, coin 17) omits any additional akshara under the arm, maintaining the Shaka legend to the right. The reverses of all types are consistent, showing Ardochsho (the Iranian goddess of abundance) enthroned, the blundered Bactrian legend APΔOXpO to the right, and the characteristic tamgha at left. These types fit closely with Göbl's typological schema for late Kushan and early post-Kushan gold coinage (Göbl, 1984, pp. 174-177).

Chronologically, coins are attributed to the mid-fourth century CE, following the uncertain period after Vasudeva II's reign, when regional power dynamics in the northwest shifted, and the Kushan state fragmented into several successor principalities (Cribb, 1993, p. 135; Mitchiner, 1978, p. 680). The Shaka coins, so named for the consistent Brahmi "Shaka" legend, may represent either a personal name, a tribal or dynastic designation, or a royal title. The reference to a "Devaputra Shahi Shahanshahi Shaka Murunda" in Samudragupta's Allahabad inscription points to a contemporary ruler or dynasty with whom the Guptas had contact, lending further support to this interpretation based on the coins (Cribb, 1993, p. 134). The blundered Bactrian legends and repetitive iconographic program, crowned king sacrificing at altar, Ardochsho enthroned, signal a decline in die-engraving quality but persistence of traditional motifs, which are diagnostic of late Kushan and post-Kushan gold issues.

Interpretively, the hoard's uniform typology and subtle stylistic variations reflect both the ideological continuity of the Kushan imperial tradition and the fragmentation of authority during the fourth century. The sustained use of Ardochsho and royal sacrifice motifs on the coinage signals a deliberate effort by local powers to assert religious legitimacy and dynastic continuity. The diversity in Brahmi under-arm legends may indicate different issuing authorities, mints, or chronological phases within a rapidly changing political landscape. Similar gold dinars of the Shaka type have also been found at various sites across Gandhara and northern India. However, the Taidi Bazaar hoard is remarkable for its typological diversity within a small, closed group (Pieper, 1998, pp. 222-224).

Archaeologically, the context at Taidi Bazaar, Tehsil Jamrud, reinforces the region's role as a transitional zone between the waning Kushan state and emergent polities of the Gupta and Kidarite periods. Although precise stratigraphic data for the hoard's deposition are lacking, the presence of multiple Shaka types in one assemblage suggests either a short interval of active minting or the rapid succession of authorities in this borderland context. The hoard thus not only illuminates the end-phase of Kushan numismatics but also provides a window onto broader cultural and political transformations in fourth-century northwestern South Asia.

### **Description of the Coins Hoard:**

#### **Type 1. King standing and Ardochsho (Gold Dinar).**



**Obv.** Crowned, diademed king standing facing, nimbate, holding standard and sacrificing at altar at left, unclear Bactrian legend around, Brahmi legend: Shaka at right, mi under arm.

**Rev.** Goddess of plenty Ardochsho enthroned facing, holding diadem and cornucopia, Bactrian legend right: APΔOXpO, tamgha at left.

**Reference.** Göbl 579.

**Coin nos.** Plate 1-2, Section 4.7.11.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type 2. King standing and Ardochsho (Gold Dinar).**

**Obv.** Crowned, diademed king standing facing, nimbate, holding standard and sacrificing at altar at left, Blundered Bactrian legend around, Brahmi legend: Shaka at right, sita under arm, bha left.

**Rev.** Goddess of plenty Ardochsho enthroned facing, holding diadem and cornucopia, Blundered Bactrian legend right: APΔOXpO, tamgha at left.

**Reference.** Göbl 591.

**Coin nos.** Plate 3-12, Section 4.7.11.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type 3. King standing and Ardochsho (Gold Dinar).**

**Obv.** Crowned, diademed king standing facing, nimbate, holding standard and sacrificing at altar at left, Blundered Bactrian legend around, Brahmi legend: Shaka at right, bhri under arm.

**Rev.** Goddess of plenty Ardochsho enthroned facing, holding diadem and cornucopia, Blundered Bactrian legend right: APΔOXpO, tamgha at left.

**Reference.** Göbl 589.

**Coin nos.** Plate 13, Section 4.7.11.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type 4. King standing and Ardochsho (Gold Dinar).**

**Obv.** Crowned, diademed king standing facing, nimbate, holding standard and sacrificing at altar at left, Blundered Bactrian legend around, Brahmi legend: Shaka at right, sayatha under arm, bha left.

**Rev.** Goddess of plenty Ardochsho enthroned facing, holding diadem and cornucopia, Blundered Bactrian legend right: APΔOXpO, tamgha at left.

**Reference.** Göbl 585.

**Coin nos.** Plate 14-15, Section 4.7.11.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type 5. King standing and Ardochsho (Gold Dinar).**

**Obv.** Crowned, diademed king standing facing, nimbate, holding standard and sacrificing at altar at left, Blundered Bactrian legend around, Brahmi legend: Shaka at right, aya under arm, vi left.

**Rev.** Goddess of plenty Ardochsho enthroned facing, holding diadem and cornucopia, Blundered Bactrian legend right: APΔOXpO, tamgha at left.

**Reference.** Göbl 594.

**Coin nos.** Plate 16, Section 4.7.11.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type 6. King standing and Ardochsho (Gold Dinar).**

**Obv.** Crowned, diademed king standing facing, nimbate, holding standard and sacrificing at altar at left, Blundered Bactrian legend around, Brahmi legend: Shaka at right, under arm, no Akshar as like above types.

**Rev.** Goddess of plenty Ardochsho enthroned facing, holding diadem and cornucopia, Blundered Bactrian legend right: APΔOXḡO, tamgha at left.

**Reference.** Göbl 594.

**Coin nos.** Plate 17, Section 4.7.11.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

## **b. Gold Bracteates**

These thin gold discs functioned as decorative appliquéés (Plate 1, Section 4.7.12 in Part II: Illustrations Coins) sewn onto the funerary garments of royal individuals prior to interment. Their use not only signified the elevated social and political status of the deceased but also reflected broader traditions of opulent burial practices associated with royalty in ancient cultures (cf. Boardman, 1994, p. 157).

## **M. KUSHANO-SASANIAN (c. 230 CE-c. 365 CE)**

No coins or any artefacts related to this period have been attested from Jamrud and adjacent areas during the research.

## **N. SASSANID PERIOD (c.224 CE - 651 CE)**

### **i. Shapur I (c. 240 CE - 272 CE)**

#### **a. Shapur I Gold Dinars Hoard from Lora Miana, Jamrud.**

The coin hoard of Shapur I (see Section 4.10.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins) was accidentally discovered at Lora Miana near Jamrud, during the construction of a house. The hoard represents a remarkable assemblage of early Sasanian numismatic material, offering critical insight into both the economic and ideological apparatus of the empire's formative centuries.

The twenty gold dinars comprising (Coin Nos. 1-20) uniformly display, on the obverse, a right-facing, diademed and draped bust of Shapur I. The king is rendered with a mural crown featuring a prominent korymbos (a globular, veiled headdress) and distinctive ear flaps. The long beard, tied in the centre and framed by thick tufts of curly hair, is a motif characteristic of early Sasanian imperial portraiture. Two ribbons extend upward from behind the head, accompanied by a pellet below and another behind the shoulder,

all of which enhance the coin's dynastic symbolism. Surrounding the portrait is an inscription in Pahlavi script:

mzdysn bgy šhpwhry MRKAn MRKA 'yr'n MNW ctry MN yzd'n

('The Mazda-worshipping Lord Shapur, King of Kings of the Iranians, whose essence is from the gods'), affirming both royal legitimacy and divine sanction (Göbl, 1971: Type I/1; SNS I, Type IIc/1a; cf. Mitchiner 1982: Vol. 2, 690-695; Pieper, 2007, pp. 19-21).

The reverse depicts a Zoroastrian fire altar flanked by two regal attendants, each wearing mural crowns and holding sceptres. The attendant figures not only emphasise the king's role as divine mediator but also reinforce the centrality of fire cult and ritual authority within the Sasanian polity. The accompanying Pahlavi legend, NWRA ZY - šhpw[hry] ('ādur ī Šābuhr', i.e., 'Fire of Shapur'), directly associates the altar with the king himself, underscoring the personalised relationship between sovereignty and Zoroastrianism (cf. MACW I: 33-38; Curtis 2007: 123-128).

The hoard's numismatic uniformity, typologically and metrologically, suggests a tightly controlled imperial minting policy, likely centred in the metropolitan region of Ctesiphon or a major provincial centre. The consistent iconography and inscriptions articulate a programmatic assertion of Shapur I's divine kingship, as well as the doctrinal ascendancy of Mazdaean Zoroastrianism within imperial ideology (Gyselen, 2012, pp. 57-61). The invocation of divine lineage ("whose essence is from the gods") and the explicit identification with the fire altar suggest an intentional conflation of religious and political legitimacy.

Comparable finds include the Sasanian gold dinar hoards reported from Hamadan and Marv, which share analogous typologies and epigraphic formulae (Mitchiner, 1982, pp. 687-702; Sellwood, 1980, pp. 58-61). The Lora Miana assemblage, however, is distinguished by its state of preservation and the rare concentration of early dinars attributable solely to Shapur I, enabling a focused assessment of his reign's numismatic production.

While detailed stratigraphic data from Lora Miana are lacking, the discovery context, within the historical frontier zone of Jamrud, suggests possible connections to Sasanian military or administrative activity in the region. The presence of high-value coinage so

far east is indicative of extensive imperial reach and may reflect mechanisms of tribute, military payroll, or elite exchange (cf. Callieri 1998: 192-195).

The Lora Miana hoard of Shapur I gold dinars constitutes a significant corpus for the study of early Sasanian monetary policy, royal imagery, and religious symbolism. Its documentation enriches our understanding of the transmission and function of precious-metal currency at the eastern margins of the empire. It provides a vital comparative dataset for the interpretation of Sasanian power and ideology in frontier contexts.

### **Coins:**

#### **Type. Bust of King and Fire Alter (Gold Dinars).**

**Obv.** Diademed and draped bust of Shapur I to right, wearing mural crown with a great korymbos on top and long earflaps; long beard tied in the middle and thick tufts of curly hair at the back; two ribbons rising from behind head; one pellet below the ribbons and one behind the shoulder; around, 'mzdysn bgy šhpwhry MRKAn MRKA 'yr' n MNW ctry MN yzd' n' = 'mazdēsn bay Šābuhr šāhān šāh Ērān kē čih̄r az yaz(a) dān' ('The Mazda-worshipping Lord Shapur, King of Kings of the Iranians, whose essence is from the gods (in Pahlavi).

**Rev.** Zoroastrian fire altar flanked by two regal attendants wearing mural crowns and holding sceptres; to left and right, 'NWRA ZY - šhpw[hry]' = 'ādur ī Šābuhr' ('Fire of Shapur' in Pahlavi).

**Reference:** Göbl type I/1. SNS I, type IIc/1a.

**Coin nos.** Plate 1-20, Section 4.10.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

### **O. KIDARITES (C. 320 CE-467 CE)**

#### **i. Kidarite coins Hoard from Lashora, Jamrud.**

The entire hoard (Section 4.12 in Part II: Illustrations Coins) of Kidarite coins discovered from Lashora, Jamrud, represents a significant numismatic find, as all the coins in the hoard belong to Kidara, the eponymous founder of the Kidarite dynasty. Unfortunately, during research and documentation, the reverse sides of the coins were deleted or lost, and only the obverse images are currently available for study. Despite this limitation, the Lashora hoard stands as the sole documented evidence for Kidarite coinage recovered from the Khyber region to date. Its discovery not only fills an important gap in the numismatic record of the northwest but also provides a rare glimpse into the early phase of Kidarite presence in South Asia, reinforcing the

historical significance of Jamrud as a critical point of cultural and monetary transition between the late Kushan and Kidarite periods.

## **P. HUN/ HEPHTHALITE PERIOD (c. 440s - 560 CE)**

No coins or any artefacts related to Kanishka III have been found in Jamrud and adjacent areas during the research.

## **Q. GUPTA PERIOD (c. 240 - 579 CE)**

### **i. Chandragupta II Coin Hoard from Qadam, Jamrud.**

A small but significant Gupta coin hoard (Plate 1-5 Section 4.15.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins) was reportedly discovered at Qadam by local treasure hunters. The hoard consists of silver coins minted under Chandragupta II (c. 375-413 AD), notable for their rare occurrence and historical significance. Chandragupta II's coins were consciously minted in the style of the Western Satraps, whose territories he had conquered. These coins, struck in eastern Gujarat, mirror the Satrap coinage in size, weight, and typology, thereby facilitating their acceptance and circulation in regions previously under Western Satrap control (Todd & Fishman, 2022, p. 214; Pieper, 2021, p. 102). The coins display, on the obverse, the king's head facing right in the characteristic Kshatrapa style, encircled by a debased Greek legend. At the same time, the reverse depicts Garuda, the mythical mount of Vishnu, standing with wings spread and encircled by a Brahmi inscription reading *Parama bhagavata Maharajadhiraja Sri Chandragupta Vikramaditya* "(coin) of Great King of Kings Chandragupta Vikramaditya, supreme devotee of Vishnu" (Todd & Fishman, 2022, p. 217). Measuring 15 mm in diameter and weighing 2.07 grams, these coins (Type G12, Todd/Fishman; Pieper 867; MACW 4821) reflect both the religious affiliation and political authority of Chandragupta II. The combination of Western Satrap coinage traditions with Gupta royal titles and imagery reflects the transitional economic and cultural environment of Gujarat during the late 4<sup>th</sup> CE and early 5<sup>th</sup> centuries CE. The scarcity of coins issued by Chandragupta II makes this discovery particularly significant for numismatic research on the Gupta era (Pieper, 2021, p. 103).

## **ii. Gupta Period Royal Seal in Carnelian**

The royal seal (Plate 1-2, Section 5.10.4 in Part II) is oval from the Gupta period, made from carnelian, a semi-precious, translucent stone of distinctive reddish-orange hue, and mounted within a bronze setting. The seal is 6x 4 centimetres in size. It features an intaglio (negative-relief) carving on the carnelian surface, created to produce a positive impression when stamped onto clay or similar materials.

The central motif is a lively depiction of a dancing female figure, rendered with pronounced dynamism and naturalism. The figure is depicted in a traditional dance posture, with knees bent and legs apart, conveying a sense of rhythmic movement characteristic of Gupta-period artistry. The torso is shown nude, conforming to artistic conventions of early Indian sculpture. At the same time, the lower body is draped in a garment that extends below the knees, executed with elaborate linear folds.

The female figure is adorned with numerous ornamented jewels, including large circular earrings of the "Bengal" type, as well as bracelets. Her hair is styled in thick curls, and she wears an elaborate headdress or crown, further accentuating her elevated status. Notably, she holds an olive branch or leafy twig in her right hand, possibly symbolising victory, peace, or fertility. In contrast, her left hand holds a musical instrument, indicating her association with dance, music, and possibly ritual performance. A halo encircles her head, reinforcing her divine or royal significance. The facial features are highly expressive, with large eyes, a prominent nose, and heavy, open lips that enhance the sense of vitality and presence.

Below the central figure, a horizontal band contains a deeply incised inscription in Gupta Brahmi script (Un-deciphered). The inscription is executed and forms a distinctive textual register typical of official seals of the period. This text likely identifies the seal's owner or function, following the administrative and ceremonial practices of the Gupta era.

Culturally and chronologically, this seal is securely attributable to the Gupta period (circa 4th-6th century CE), a time renowned for artistic sophistication and the flourishing of courtly and religious iconography (Harle, 1994; Huntington, 1985). The combination of the dancing female figure, musical instrument, olive branch, and elaborate adornments encapsulates the Gupta ideal of feminine grace, beauty, and divine or royal power (Rowland, 1977; Huntington, 1985). The seal would have served

as a symbol of identity, authority, and possibly ritual or ceremonial status, used for authenticating documents or signifying royal approval.

In summary, this Gupta-period royal seal in carnelian and bronze embodies the artistic excellence and rich symbolic language of its era. The depiction of a crowned, jewel-adorned dancing woman with an olive branch and a musical instrument is an outstanding example of Gupta-period iconography, offering important perspectives on the social, religious, and administrative traditions of ancient India.

## **R. ARAB-SASSANID PERIOD (c. 632 - 654 CE)**

No coins or any artefacts related to Kanishka III have been found in Jamrud and adjacent areas during the research.

## **S. CHACH PERIOD (632 CE - 712 CE)**

### **i. Sri Yashaditya (679 CE - 712 CE)**

Sri Yashaditya is mainly known from his unique coinage, which offers valuable information about the social, political, and economic conditions of Sindh in the late seventh to early eighth centuries CE. The silver dammas of the "Yashaditya series" usually feature a crowned king on the obverse of the coins, while the reverse depicts a trident and a Brahmi inscription (Sharma, 1966, p. 106; Goron & Goenka, 2001, pp. 122-123). Numismatic analysis situates these coins within the period circa 679-712 CE, coinciding with the rule of the Chach dynasty over much of present-day Sindh and extending into the Multan region of ancient Punjab (Wink, 1991, pp. 146-147; Alram, 2012, p. 151).

Significantly, coins of Yashaditya have been frequently discovered along principal caravan routes in District Khyber, a region historically recognised as a critical corridor for movement between the Indo-Pak sub-continent and Central Asia. The consistent presence of these coins in such locations points to active trans-regional trade links. It suggests that commercial networks connected the southwestern territories of ancient India, governed by the Chach dynasty, to Central-Asian markets via the Khyber Pass (Alram, 2012, pp. 151-153; Dani, 1969, p. 88). The widespread distribution of Yashaditya's coinage thus serves not only as evidence of political authority but also as a tangible indicator of economic interaction and the flow of goods, ideas, and cultural motifs across regions.

Moreover, the archaeological and historical evidence indicates that, despite the Balochistan route being geographically shorter for reaching Central Asia or even the Chinese regions, it was considered less practical and more hazardous in ancient times. The Khyber Pass route, by contrast, offered greater feasibility and safety for large-scale caravans and the regular movement of goods and people (Dani, 1969, pp. 86-89; Alram, 2012, p. 153). This further substantiates the interpretation that the accumulation of Yashaditya coins along the Khyber corridor reflects not merely local use but vibrant, long-distance trading activity, integrating the economic spheres of South Asia and Central Asia during the late pre-Islamic period.

Therefore, the assemblage of Yashaditya coins along these routes is more convincingly interpreted as a reflection of vigorous trading activity and the strategic preference for the Khyber Pass over the less secure Balochistan routes. This pattern reinforces the view that the Chach polity was integrated into larger economic and exchange systems spanning from the Indian subcontinent to Central Asia (Wink, 1991, pp. 146-147).

## ***ii. Silver Dammas Coins Hoard I of Sri Yashditya from Shah Kas, Jamrud.***

The Hoard I (Plates 1-14, Section 4.16.1.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins) of Sri Yashaditya comprises fourteen silver dammas reportedly discovered by local treasure hunters in the Shah Kas locality of Jamrud, within the Khyber District. The coins were found as a compact assemblage, indicative of intentional deposition, possibly for safekeeping or as a merchant's reserve. Each damma exhibits the distinctive iconography of the "Yashaditya series," featuring a crowned portrait of the ruler on the obverse and a trident flanked by Brahmi script on the reverse, unmistakably identifying them as coins from the late Chach period of Sindh, circa 679-712 CE..

The location of the hoard, discovered near a historically important caravan route at the entrance to the Khyber Pass, highlights the area's significance as a key point in trans-regional trade networks. Although the coins were found without proper archaeological documentation, as is familiar with locally recovered, non-scientific finds, their presence together in a single hoard offers important evidence of how money circulated and economic activity flourished in the region during the pre-Islamic period.

The Shah Kas hoard thus contributes significantly to our understanding of the distribution and use of Yashaditya's coinage, as well as the broader patterns of trade and



interaction between South and Central Asia, during the late 7th and early 8th centuries CE (cf. Dani, 1969, p. 88; Sharma, 1966, p. 106).

**iii. Silver Dammas Coins Hoard II of Sri Yashditya from Shah Kas, Jamrud.**

Hoard II of Sri Yashaditya comprised eight silver dammas (Plates 1-8, Section 4.16.1.2 in Part II: Illustrations Coins) unearthed at Shah Kas in the Jamrud area, approximately 200 meters from the location of Hoard I. Like the first assemblage, local treasure hunters discovered these coins and display the characteristic features of the Yashaditya series: a crowned bust of king on the obverse and reverse of the coin features, a trident with Brahmi legend on the reverse, affirming their attribution to the late Chach period of Sindh (c. 679-712 CE).

The proximity of Hoard II to Hoard I within Shah Kas highlights the site's significance as a focal point of monetary activity, possibly linked to the area's position along a principal trade route through the Khyber Pass. The discovery of two separate hoards within such a short distance further strengthens the evidence for sustained economic interaction and active coin circulation in this region during the late pre-Islamic era (cf. Dani, 1969, p. 88; Sharma, 1966, p. 106).

**T. HINDU SHAHIS PERIOD (c. 843 CE - 1026 CE)**

**i. Hindu Shahi Coin Hoard from Gudar Archaeological Site, Jamrud.**

The Hindu Shahi coin hoard recovered from the Gudar Archaeological Site in Jamrud represents a significant assemblage of early medieval silver Jitals. The hoard comprises sixteen coins, divisible into three principal groups attributed to Sri Spalapati Deva, Samanta Deva, and Khudarayaka. The Gudar site, located along significant historic trade routes in the Khyber region, offers an archaeological context that underscores the cross-cultural exchanges between Central Asian and South Asian states during the late first millennium CE (see Mitchiner, 1979, pp. 131-122).

Typologically, the coins all adhere to the well-established "Horseman and Bull" type that is emblematic of the late Hindu Shahi dynasty. The earliest group (G1, coins 1-3) is struck in the name of Sri Spalapati Deva, with the obverse featuring a recumbent bull facing left within a dotted border, a plain jhul (saddle cloth), and a trident on the bull's rump. The legend, rendered in Sharada script, reads Sri Spalapati Deva, possibly denoting a high-ranking military commander or local ruler. The reverse shows a

horseman leaning to the right, identified by his tripartite cap and a flag in hand. The horse has three dots on its hindquarters and one on its shoulder. The accompanying inscription is written in cursive Bactrian, a distinctive and informative linguistic detail that points to the region's diverse and cosmopolitan character (Rodger, 1894, p. 487; Pieper, 2021). The second group (G2, coins 4-15), issued in the name of Samanta Deva, displays minor iconographic differences: the bull's mouth is slightly closed, the jhul is ornamented, the trident is thicker, and a bell is affixed to the bull's neck. The reverse of the coin remains unchanged, but now the Sharada letter "di" is present to the left of the horseman, while different characters appear to the right. The third group (G3, coin 16), attributed to Khudarayaka, closely follows the iconography of the preceding types but is distinguished by the Sharada legend "Khudarayaka" and subtle die variations, such as additional characters near the horseman.

These coins are datable to the late 9th and early 10th centuries CE, representing the closing phase of Hindu Shahi rule prior to the region's conquest by the Ghaznavids. The presence of coins bearing the name Khudarayaka is particularly noteworthy, as this title is documented for the governor of Kabul under Yaqub ibn Layith of Seistan. This suggests possible overlaps in political authority and hints at a degree of subordination to Saffarid rule, illustrating the region's complex and shifting political dynamics at the time (Mitchiner, 1979, pp. 263-264; Tye & Tye, 1995, nos. 167-172).

From an interpretive perspective, the Gudar hoard highlights the incorporation of the Khyber region into the administrative, economic, and religious networks of the Hindu Shahi state. The diversity of issuing authorities, from the royal Samanta Deva to local figures like Sri Spalapati Deva and Khudarayaka, illustrates a dynamic monetary system and possibly a decentralised, multi-tiered governance structure. The rarity of Khudarayaka coins compared to those of Samanta and Spalapati Deva further suggests fluctuating spheres of local authority and perhaps short-lived or regionally limited political experiments. Comparable finds from Bootan Sharif, Lali Kas, Saidan Killi, and Shahkas, as well as similar issues catalogued in Mitchiner (1979, nos. 444-452), Pieper (2021, nos. 137-139), and Tye & Tye (1995, nos. 167-172), confirm the widespread but nuanced deployment of the "Horseman and Bull" type across the northwestern frontier.

**G1. Sri Spalapati Deva (AR Jital)**  
**Type. Horse and Bull (Silver Jitals)**

**Obv.** Within a dotted border, a bull is reclining to the left with plain jhul (saddle cloth) on the back, and a trident is shown on its rump. Sharada legend: Sri Spalapati Deva or Honourable Chief Commander.

**Rev.** Within a dotted border, a horseman is reclining to the right, wearing a tripartite cap and holding a flag in his raised right hand. Three dots appear on the rump and one on the shoulder of the horse, and a legend in cursive Bactrian.

**Reference:** Rodger, 1894, PMC, 481.

**Coin nos.** Plate 1-3, Section 4.17.4 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

## **G2. Samanta Deva (AR Jital)**

### **Type 1. Horse and Bull (Silver Jitals)**

**Obv.** As above, but the mouth of the bull is slightly closed and an ornamented jhul on the back of the horse (opposite of Roman alphabet L). A thick trident is on the rump, and a bell is added to the neck of the bull., Sharada legend: Samantadeva,

समन्तदेव

**Rev.** As above, a Sharada letter di is on the left of the horseman and an unknown letter on the right.

**Reference:** Rodger, 1894, PMC, 487.

**Coin nos.** Plate 4-10, Section 4.17.4 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

### **Type. 2. Horse and Bull (Silver Jitals)**

**Obv.** As above, but the mouth of the bull is slightly closed and an ornamented jhul on the back of the horse (opposite of Roman alphabet L). A thick trident is on the rump, and a bell is added to the neck of the bull., Sharada legend: Samantadeva,

समन्तदेव

**Rev.** As above, a Sharada letter di is on the left of the horseman, and an unknown letter is on the right.

**Reference:** Rodger, 1894, PMC, 487.

**Coin nos.** Plate 11-15, Section 4.17.4 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

## **G3. Khudarayaka (AR Jital)**

### **Type. Horse and Bull (Silver Jitals)**

**Obv.** As above, but the mouth of the bull is slightly closed and an ornamented jhul on the back of the horse (opposite of Roman alphabet L). A thick trident is on the rump, and a bell is added to the neck of the bull., Sharada legend: Khudarayaka.

**Rev.** As above, a Sharada letter di is on the left of the horseman and an unknown letter on the right.

**Reference:** Rodger, 1891, PMC, 479.

**Coin nos.** Plate 16, Section 4.17.4 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

## **ii. Terracotta Coin Die of Sri Spalapati Deva for Horse and Bull Type Silver Jitals**

The discovery of a terracotta coin die (see Section 4.17.5 in Part II: Illustrations Coins) of copper coins, inscribed with the Sharada legend "Sri Spalapati Deva," intended for

striking Horse and Bull type Jitals, is a singularly important addition to the archaeological and numismatic record of the Hindu Shahi dynasty. This die was reportedly found at the Gudar Archaeological Site in Jamrud, a location of particular historical significance due to its strategic position on the ancient routes linking Gandhara with the Central-Asian steppe. The find provides direct material evidence for the minting practices of the Hindu Shahi period, illuminating both the technology and organisation of coin production in the late first millennium CE.

### **Typological Analysis and Chronological Range**

The die is specifically associated with the copper "Horse and Bull" type, as silver coins are mostly minted using anvil striking technique, the most distinctive and widely circulated coins of the Shahis dynasty from the ninth to early eleventh centuries CE (Mitchiner, 1979, nos. 444-452; Pieper, 2021, nos. 137-139). These type of coins typically features a recumbent bull facing left, surmounted by a trident and accompanied by a Sharada legend, on the obverse of the coins. In contrast, the reverse features a horse rider to the right, wielding a flag. The terracotta die replicates these motifs in negative relief, matching the typology of coins attributed to Sri Spalapati Deva, believed to have been a high-ranking official, commander, or perhaps a regional governor under the later Shahis. The corresponding chronology, derived from parallels in coinage as well as the stylistic evolution of the script and iconography, indicates that the production of these dies occurred between the late 9<sup>th</sup> CE and early 10<sup>th</sup> centuries CE (Rehman, 1979, p. 95; Tye & Tye, 1995, nos. 167-172).

### **Minting Technique and Archaeological Context**

The Gudar die provides rare, direct evidence of minting technique during the Hindu Shahi period. Numismatic studies and recent archaeological findings now confirm that the coin manufacturing process involved a sequence of stages: first, coin dies were carved in durable metal, typically copper or bronze, to ensure sharpness and longevity. From these, impressions were taken to produce terracotta (clay) moulds or dies, which could then be arranged in mass, sometimes in honeycomb-shaped clusters or similar arrays, enabling the simultaneous casting or striking of multiple flans. This method allowed for efficient mass production, crucial for a polity engaged in both regional and long-distance trade (see Pieper, 2021; Mitchiner, 1979). While metal dies were preferred for direct striking of high-value silver or billon coins, terracotta dies were

likely employed for the rapid production of lower-value or ceremonial issues, or perhaps served as master patterns for apprentice engravers and local workshops.

The findspot at Gudar is significant, suggesting the existence of a regional mint or at least a workshop capable of mass-producing coinage for distribution throughout the frontier regions of the Hindu Shahi realm. Comparable evidence of coin manufacture in terracotta is scarce in the context of South-Asian numismatics, although analogous moulds have been reported from other sites in Central Asia and ancient India, notably for punch-marked and Kushan issues (Pieper, 2021, p. 134; Tye & Tye, 1995, p. 45).

The terracotta die of Sri Spalapati Deva must be viewed against the broader historical backdrop of the Hindu Shahi state. As the dynasty faced growing military and economic challenges, efficient coin production became increasingly important for both state legitimacy and the facilitation of commerce. The mass-production capabilities implied by the Gudar die support the idea of a monetised regional economy and attest to sophisticated minting infrastructure. Furthermore, the personalisation of coin legends (naming high officials such as Sri Spalapati Deva) may indicate a devolved system of administrative authority or delegated minting rights to regional commanders, a phenomenon occasionally attested in other medieval South-Asian polities (Rodger, 1894, p. 487; Mitchiner, 1979).

From an interpretive perspective, this discovery bridges a crucial gap in our understanding of Hindu Shahi minting technology. The sequence from metal die to terracotta mould to mass production is now archaeologically attested, illuminating how coinage of such a uniform style and broad circulation could be achieved. The possibility that such moulds could be assembled in honeycomb formations points to innovative methods for scaling up production, similar to practices seen at other ancient and medieval mints across Eurasia (Pieper, 2021).

Comparable coin types and their technical features have been catalogued in standard works such as Mitchiner (1979), Pieper (2021), and Tye & Tye (1995). However, direct evidence of terracotta coin dies for this period and type does not exist or has not been reported, making the Gudar find unique. Analogous examples of coin moulds or dies are more commonly reported from earlier periods, such as Mauryan and Kushan India, but are exceedingly rare for the Hindu Shahi era (Pieper, 2021, pp. 134-136).

In sum, the terracotta coin die of Sri Spalapati Deva represents an extremely fascinating recent discovery in the study of Hindu Shahi numismatics. It not only confirms hypotheses about regional minting workshops and the technological sophistication of the dynasty but also provides concrete archaeological evidence for mass-production methods previously inferred only from the coins themselves. The find thus offers new avenues for research into the economic, administrative, and technological history of early medieval South Asia.

### **iii. Hindu Shahi Coin Hoard from Shahkas, Jamrud.**

The hoard, discovered in Shahkas, located in the Jamrud region of Khyber District, was discovered by treasure hunters with a metal detector. The hoard comprises eleven silver Jitals of the renowned Horse and Bull type, a hallmark of late Hindu Shahi numismatic tradition.

The hoard consists of two principal issuing authorities. The first group (G1, coin nos. 1-6) is struck in the name of Samanta Deva and includes two closely related types. Both types feature, on the obverse, a recumbent bull with a slightly closed mouth, an ornamented jhul (saddle cloth) shaped like an inverted "L," a thick trident on the rump, and a bell attached to the bull's neck. The Sharada script legends read "Samantadeva" and "Sri Samantadeva," respectively. The reverse presents a horseman reclining right, adorned with a tripartite cap and holding a flag, featuring the Sharada akshara "di" to the left of the horseman and an unidentified akshara on the right.

The second group (G2, coin nos. 7-11) is issued in the name of Khudarayaka, a less frequently encountered ruler or governor of the period. These coins maintain the core iconography of the Horse and Bull type but bear the Sharada legend "Khudarayaka" on the obverse. The reverse design closely mirrors that of the Samanta Deva types, retaining the characteristic positioning of the Sharada letters.

#### **G1. Samanta Deva (AR Jital)**

##### **Type 1. Horse and Bull (Silver Jitals)**

**Obv.** As above, but the mouth of the bull is slightly closed and an ornamented jhul on the back of the horse (opposite of Roman alphabet L). A thick trident is on the rump, and a bell is added to the neck of the bull., Sharada legend: Samantadeva,

समन्तदेव

**Rev.** As above, a Sharada letter di is on the left of the horseman and an unknown letter is on the right.

**Reference:** Rodger, 1894, PMC, 487.

**Coin nos.** Plate 1, Section 4.17.6 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type. 2. Horse and Bull (Silver Jitals)**

**Obv.** As above, but the mouth of the bull is slightly closed and an ornamented jhul on the back of the horse (opposite of Roman alphabet L). A thick trident is on the rump, and a bell is added to the neck of the bull., Sharada legend: Sri Samantadeva,

स्रमृदप

**Rev..** As above, a Sharada letter di is on the left of the horseman and an unknown letter is on the right.

**Reference:** Rodger, 1894, PMC, 487.

**Coin nos.** Plate 2-6, Section 4.17.6 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**G2. Khudarayaka (870s AD)**

**Type. Horse and Bull (Silver Jitals)**

**Obv.** As above, but the mouth of the bull is slightly closed and an ornamented jhul on the back of the horse (opposite of Roman alphabet L). A thick trident is on the rump, and a bell is added to the neck of the bull., Sharada legend: Khudarayaka.

**Rev..** As above, a Sharada letter di is on the left of the horseman and an unknown letter is on the right.

**Reference:** Rodger, 1894, PMC, 487.

**Coin nos.** Plate 7-11, Section 4.17.6 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**U. ISLAMIC/ MUSLIM PERIOD (c. 11th CE- 1857 CE)**

**i. Umayyad Period**

No coins or any artefacts related to this period have been attested from Jamrud and adjacent areas during the research.

**ii. Abbasid Period (c. 750-1258 CE)**

No coins or any artefacts related to this period have been attested from Jamrud and adjacent areas during the research.

**iii. Ghaznavid Period (977 CE - 1186 CE)**

**b. Mahmud Ghaznavi ( March 998 - 30 April 1030)**

**c. Silver Dirhams Coin Hoard of Mahmud of Ghaznavi from Ali Masjid, Jamrud.**

The Ghaznavid dynasty, centred in Ghazni, constitutes a pivotal era in the history of the eastern Islamic world, profoundly influencing the political, economic, and cultural landscape of the Indian subcontinent. Mahmud of Ghazni (r. 998-1030 CE), the

dynasty's most distinguished ruler, is particularly renowned for his extensive military campaigns into India and for fostering the proliferation of Persianate culture and Islamic administration. Numismatic finds from the Khyber region dating to this period are extremely rare. The recent unearthing of a small hoard of silver dirhams attributed to Mahmud Ghaznavi at Ali Masjid, Jamrud, is the only known numismatic evidence of Ghaznavid activity in District Khyber. This group of ten silver dirhams, discovered by local treasure hunters, later appeared in a jewellery shop in Jamrud. The coins feature the Islamic declaration of faith (Kalima) alongside Mahmud's royal titles. The obverse bears the inscription "adl, la ilah illa Allah wahdahu la sharik lahu al-Qadir Billah, Yamini." At the same time, the reverse reads "lillah, Muhammad rasul Allah, Yamin al-Dawla, Amir al-mulk, Mahmud." The uniqueness of this discovery highlights its importance, as it represents the only tangible evidence of Ghaznavid rule found in the Khyber region's archaeological record. This hoard provides valuable insight into the area's coinage and political landscape during the early medieval era.

#### **Description of the Hoard.**

##### **Type. Kalima/ King Name (AR Dirham)**

**Obv.** adl, la ilah illa Allah wahdahu la sherikh lahu al-Qadir Billah, Yamini.

**Rev.** (star) lillah (star), Muhammad rassul Allah Yamin al-Daw la amir al-mulk, Mahmud.

Coin nos. Plate 1-10, Section 4.18.3.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

#### **iv. SELJUK PERIOD (c.1037-1308 CE)**

##### **a. Seljuk Gold Dinars Hoard from Ali Masjid, Jamrud.**

The Seljuk gold dinar hoard discovered at Ali Masjid (refer to Plate 1-29, Section 4.18.2.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins), Jamrud, is instrumental in clarifying and establishing the medieval Islamic chronology of the Khyber region. While the obverse sides of the coins are largely illegible, the reverse inscriptions and detailed typology allow for clear identification with the Seljuk period, serving as concrete chronological markers that correspond with historical accounts of Seljuk presence and trade activities.

This hoard not only provides concrete evidence of Seljuk gold coins circulating along the Khyber Pass, but also helps anchor the broader historical narrative of interactions among Central Asia, Iran, and the Indian subcontinent. The find's stratigraphic context further aids in building a more nuanced timeline of economic and political changes in this frontier region. As the first documented collection of its type from Khyber, these



coins allow for the synchronisation of local archaeological sequences with the more exhaustive chronology of Islamic dynasties, deepening our understanding of trade networks, political authority, and cultural exchange in the area.

The existence of such a hoard also points to episodes of concentrated wealth, perhaps associated with the movement of merchants, military campaigns, or diplomatic missions. Ultimately, it stands as tangible evidence of the complexity and interconnectedness of the era.

## **v. GHURID PERIOD (c. 1175 CE - 1215 CE)**

### **a. Muhammad ibn Sam (c. 1173 CE - 15 March 1206 CE).**

Sultan Shahab-ud-Din Muhammad Ghori (Mu'iz Uddin Muhammad bin Sam, 1150-1206 CE), the most distinguished ruler of the Ghurid dynasty, was instrumental in establishing the foundations of Islamic political authority in the Indian subcontinent, a transformation with enduring historical consequences (Bosworth, 2011, pp. 191–194). Despite the political and military significance of his rule, numismatic evidence from his reign in the Khyber region remains scarce. The discovery of a coin hoard (see Section 4.18.4 in Part II: Illustrations Coins) of Mu'izz al-Din Muhammad ibn Sam from Shah Kas is, therefore, of exceptional significance (Tye, 1995, pp. 142–146). This hoard, recovered from the Shah Kas area, comprises both silver and billion (debased silver) jitals, including six silver jitals (Tye 164) and seventeen billion jitals (Tye 165), exhibiting the iconic 'horseman and bull' type (Lane-Poole, 1892, pp. 49-51). The presence of both Islamic and Indic motifs and scripts reflects the complex cultural and political interactions in the Indo-Afghan region during this era (Chattopadhyaya, 1977, pp. 131-133).

#### **• Jitals Coins Hoard of Muhammab Ibn Sam from Shah Kas.**

##### **Type 1. Horseman/ Bull (Silver Jitals)**

**Obv.** Horseman, right, holding a standard. Sri Hamirah ("Amir") around.

**Rev.** Bull standing left, partial Sri Mahamada Sama in Nagari.

**Reference.** Tye 164. SKU T2000-53058

**Coin nos.** Plate 1-6, Section 4.18.4.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

##### **Type 2. Horseman/ Bull (Billion Jitals)**

**Obv.** Horseman, right, holding a standard. Sri Hamirah ("Amir") around.

**Rev.** Bull standing left, partial Sri Mahamada Sama in Nagari.

**Reference.** Tye 165. SKU T2000-53058

**Coin nos.** Plate 7-17, Section 4.18.4.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**vi. DELHI SULTANATE (1206 - 1526)**

**a. Slave (Mamluk) Dynastic Period (1206 Ce -1290 Ce)**

During the course of this study, no material evidence, such as coins or artefacts, pertaining to this period was found in Jamrud or neighbouring localities.

**b. Khalji Period (c. 1290 CE - 1320 CE)**

**• Sultan Qutb al-Din Mubarak Shah I (c. 1316 CE - 1320 CE)**

The Khalji era represented a vibrant and transformative period in the history of the Delhi Sultanate, characterised by territorial expansion and notable administrative reforms. Sultan Qutb al-Din Mubarak Shah I (r. 1316-1320 CE), son of Alauddin Khalji, rose to prominence as a significant, albeit controversial, monarch, following a turbulent succession defined by palace intrigues and the ousting of rival contenders (Jackson, 2003, pp. 201-202). Mubarak Shah's reign was characterised by populist policies, including the abolition of heavy taxes and the release of thousands of prisoners, as well as significant military campaigns in Gujarat, Devagiri, and Warangal (Chattopadhyaya, 2006, pp. 186-188). Numismatic evidence from this period in the Khyber region is minimal. During this research, only four coins attributed to Qutb al-Din Mubarak Shah I, comprising both gold and silver tankas, have been reported from Jamrud and its adjacent areas. The obverse of these coins displays the king's name and titles, while the reverse is inscribed with the Persian epithet "Sikandar Al Thani" ("The Second Alexander"), reinforcing the sultan's assertion of being the 'right hand of the Caliphate' and 'helper of the amir al-mu'minin,' as well as including the date and mint location. The scarcity of such coins highlights their importance as the primary physical evidence of Khalji-period presence and influence in this frontier area (Tye, 1995, pp. 203–204).

**Description of the Coins**

**Type 1. Name of the King/ Persian Epithet (Gold Tanka)**

**Obv.** Name and titles in four lines across the field.

**Rev..** Sikandar Al thani "The second Alexander", the right hand of the Caliphate, helper of the Amir al-mum'inin, in three lines across the field; date and mint-name around.

**Coin nos.** Plate 1, Section 4.18.5.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type 2. Name of the King/ Persian Epithet (Silver Tanka)**

**Obv.** Name and titles in four lines across the field.

**Rev.** Sikandar Al thani "The second Alexander", the right hand of the Caliphate, helper of the Amir al-mum'inin, in three lines across the field; date and mint-name around.

**Coin nos.** Plate 2-4, Section 4.18.5.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

• **Site No. 1**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                         |               |             |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Name:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Chora Fort/ Spena Qalla | Reference No: | KH 14       |
| Nearest Village:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Chora                   | Area of Site: | 2903sq.m    |
| Coordinates:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | 33.9673380N 71.1842470E | Altitude:     | 942 M       |
| Access Route:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Accessible              | Condition:    | intact      |
| Cast Area                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Malik Din Khel          | Sub Cast      | Jhanda Khel |
| Site Description:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                         |               |             |
| <p>According to the renowned historian Professor Dr. Ahmad Hassan Dani, the Chora fort (Plate 3.19 in Part II: Illustrations Plates) situated near Chora village in Khyber District is attributed to the construction efforts of Sultan Alauddin Khilji, a prominent ruler of the Khilji Dynasty in the Delhi Sultanate era. This historically significant structure is located to the northeast of Chora, strategically positioned at an elevation of 942m above sea level (see Map 1.27 in Part II). The fort is constructed on a rocky ridge along the right bank of the Kabul River, skillfully making use of the natural terrain to enhance its defensive position.</p> <p>Architecturally, the fort is organised across three distinct terraced levels, each serving specific structural and functional purposes—the lowest terrace houses a mosque, reflecting the integration of religious facilities into military architecture. The second terrace, referred to as the Hujra, likely served as a communal or administrative space. The uppermost terrace comprises residential chambers, constructed from finely cut stone blocks, with lime mortar employed as the primary binding material.</p> <p>The residential rooms exhibit a double-storey design, with the upper level featuring wooden railings that face outward, perhaps used for monitoring movement or social interaction. Across all terraces, wooden beams have been installed, adding structural reinforcement and possibly enhancing resistance to seismic activity. Notably, several rooms contain strategically placed apertures functioning as both air ventilators and observation points, indicating a thoughtful approach to ventilation and surveillance.</p> |                         |               |             |

In the northern corner of the fort, a watchtower is constructed, further enhancing the fort's military functionality by providing elevated visibility over the surrounding terrain. This tower would have served as a vital outpost for early warning and defensive coordination, underscoring the site's strategic military purpose.

The fort's design reflects a blend of utilitarian military planning and regional construction practices, offering insight into medieval frontier defence systems in what is now northwestern Pakistan. Its association with Alauddin Khilji situates it within the broader context of Islamic military architecture during the Sultanate period.

**c. Sayyid (c. 1414 - 1451 CE)**

During the course of this study, no material evidence, such as coins or artefacts, pertaining to this period was found in Jamrud or neighbouring localities.

**d. Tughlaq (c. 1320 - 1413 CE)**

• **Ghiyath Al-Din Tughluq**

**Type 1. Name of the king in Persian (Gold Tanka).**

**Obv.** al-sultan al-ghazi Ghiyath al-dunya wa'l din abu'l Muzafar.

**Rev.** Tughlaq Shah al-sultan Nasir Amir al-muminin, date and mint name along with margin outside the circle.

**Reference:** ur-Rahman 60.

**Coin nos.** Plate 1, Section 4.18.5.2.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type 2. Kalima and the king's name in Persian (Silver Tanka).**

**Obv.** Kalima within a square.

**Rev.** Name of the king at the bottom, Tughlaq Shah.

**Reference:** ur-Rahman 60.

**Coin nos.** 2.

**e. LODHIS PERIOD (1451 CE - 1526 CE)**

No coins or artefacts of the Lodhis period have been attested from Jamrud.

**f. MUGHAL PERIOD (1526-1540/ 1555-1857 CE)**

• **Zahir ud-din Muhammad Babur (c. 1526-1530 CE).**

**Type. Kalima and the Name of the King in Persian (Silver Shahrukhi).**

**Obv.** Kalima in three lines across the field; all within an ornate circular frame; titles in the outer margin.

**Rev..** Name of Babur, three lines across the field; all within the hexalobe; titles in the outer margin.

**Reference:** ur-Rahman 60.

**Coin nos.** 1-2. Plate 1, Section 4.18.5.2.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

• **Babur Silver Coins Hoard from Warsak, Mullagori.**

The silver Shahrukhi coins hoard of Babur was discovered by treasure hunting from Warsak, Mullagori, in the Jamrud region and consisted of 9 nine coins, which offer a rare glimpse into the early coinage of the Mughal Empire as well as the historical landscape of the Khyber region. The coins, typologically characterised by the kalima and the name of the king in Persian on the obverse, and Babur's name with date, mint (notably Badakhshan), and titles on the reverse, closely conform to known early Mughal numismatic forms (ur-Rahman 60). Of particular historical interest is the provenance of the hoard from Warsak, a location identified by local tradition as an ancient secondary route opening towards the Peshawar Valley, directly facing Hashtnagar in Charsadda. Contemporary accounts further enhance this route's significance; Babur himself records hunting rhinoceros in this area, and historical sources note that the main route to Peshawar was denied to his army by the Afridis as he advanced from Kabul. Consequently, Babur, with the aid of Fazl of the Gagiani tribe, whom he met at Jo Shahi (likely the Charbagh pond near Jamrud), diverted his march into the Warsak and Mullagori area (Babur, 1505/1922, pp. 206, 229, 250, 260, 382, 411, 492). The presence of this coin hoard not only affirms the use of alternative pathways into the Peshawar region during the early sixteenth century but also supports oral traditions regarding Babur's movements in the frontier zone. As such, these coins constitute both tangible evidence of imperial activity and an important contribution to reconstructing the historical routes and local interactions that shaped the foundation of Mughal power in South Asia.

**Type. Kalima and the Name of the King in Persian (Silver Shahrukhi).**

**Obv.** Kalima and the Name of the Prophet in the centre.

**Rev..** It has the date the coin was minted (Hijri year 910, 1504-1505 AD), the mint town (Badakhshan), and the name of King Zaheer Ud din.

**Reference:** ur-Rahman 60.

**Coin nos.** Plate 1-9, Section 4.18.6.1.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

- **Humayun - Nasir ud-din (c.1530-1540/ 1555-1556 CE).**

Only a single coin (Plate 1, Section 4.18.6.2.1n Part II: Illustrations Coins) of the Mughal emperor Humayun was identified during the course of this research, recovered from the locality of Choura Khwar in Jamrud. The extreme rarity of Humayun's coinage in the entire Khyber region, evidenced by the absence of additional specimens despite extensive survey, strongly suggests that these areas did not fall under effective Mughal control during his reign. The solitary find may be attributed to the movement of individuals or transient trade, rather than administrative integration or imperial presence. This lack of Humayun's monetary circulation thus corroborates historical narratives indicating that the Khyber and its adjoining territories remained outside the stable boundaries of the Mughal Empire until after his death.

- **Akbar - Abu'l Fath Jalaluddin Muhammad (c. 1556-1605 CE)**

A minute number of emperor Akbar coins have been discovered from diverse localities in Jamrud (Plate 1, Section 4.18.6.3 in Part II: Illustrations Coins), illustrating both the scale and innovation of Mughal monetary policy during his reign. Three distinct types of coins are present: Type 1, the gold mohars (Coin Nos. 1-3), feature the Islamic kalima reads ("La Ilaha Illallahu Muhammadur Rasulullah"), while the names of the four Rightly Guided Caliphs, Abu Bakr, Umar, Usman, and Ali, are arranged around the margin, occasionally accompanied by their respective honorifics.. The reverse carries the emphatic invocation "Allahu Akbar Jalla Jalalhu," echoing Akbar's policy of religious authority and imperial grandeur.

Type 2, the silver rupees (Coin Nos. 4-7), share the same obverse arrangement, with the kalima and the caliphal names in the margin. On the reverse, the mint name, Ilahi year, and Persian month appear in the central field, reflecting Akbar's introduction of the Ilahi calendar and his systematisation of mint outputs across the empire. Type 3, a scarcer variety (Coin Nos. 8-9), is inscribed with "Allahu Akbar Jalla Jalalhu" on the obverse of the coin while the reverse bears the mint name, the Ilahi year, and the Persian month, exemplifying administrative and calendrical reforms that set Akbar's coinage apart.

The distribution of these types, gold and silver, Islamic and Persian formulae across Jamrud points to the penetration of imperial currency into the frontier economy and the practical as well as ideological reach of Akbar's coinage towards the extent of his

empire. The explicit presence of the four caliphs, either with or without honorifics, signals Akbar's balancing Act between Sunni orthodoxy and the new Mughal imperial identity. The use of the Ilahi calendar and localised mint names on the silver issues reflects the systematic bureaucratic reforms characteristic of Akbar's rule.

Significantly, the appearance of these coins in Jamrud, a key node on transregional trade routes, confirms the area's economic integration into the Mughal world and highlights the regional legacy of Akbar's far-reaching monetary innovations. In contrast, prior to this period, there is no evidence for a proper administrative or trading link in the Khyber region during the time of Humayun, aside from the chance discovery of a single, isolated coin. This sharp disparity underscores the transformative impact of Akbar's policies, which effectively incorporated the frontier into the economic and administrative orbit of the Mughal Empire.

### **Coins:**

#### **Type 1. Kalima and Persian Epithet (Gold Mohars).**

**Obv.** La Ilaha Illallahu Muhammadur Rasulullah with names of four Caliphs (Abu Bakr, Umar, Usman, and Ali) with or without their respective epithets, in the margins.

**Rev.** Allahu Akbar Jalla Jalalhu.

**Coin nos.** Plates 1-3, Section 4.18.6.3 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

#### **Type 2. Both sides Persian Epithet (Gold Mohar).**

**Obv.** Allahu Akbar Jalla Jalalhu.

**Rev..** Mint name with Ilahi year and Persian month placed in the centre flan.

**Coin nos.** Plate 4, Section 4.18.6.3 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

#### **Type 3. Kalima and Persian Epithet (Silver Rupee).**

**Obv.** La Ilaha Illallahu Muhammadur Rasulullah with names of four Caliphs (Abu Bakr, Umar, Usman, and Ali) with or without their respective epithets, in the margins.

**Rev..** Mint name with Ilahi year and Persian month placed in the centre flan.

**Coin nos.** Plates 5-8, Section 4.18.6.3 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

#### **Type 4. Both sides Persian Epithet (Silver Rupee).**

**Obv.** Allahu Akbar Jalla Jalalhu.

**Rev..** Mint name with Ilahi year and Persian month placed in the centre flan.

**Coin nos.** Plates 9-10, Section 4.18.6.3 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

- **Jahangir - Muhammad Nur-ud-din Salim (c. 1605-1627 CE).**

Only two silver rupees of Jahangir have been reported from the Jamrud region, highlighting the relative scarcity of Jahangir's coinage along this frontier. These coins are typologically notable for bearing inscriptions on both sides in Persian, with the

obverse featuring a joint issue of Akbar and Jahangir. This convention signalled dynastic continuity and filial piety. The reverse is inscribed with a Persian epithet in praise of the emperor, further emphasising the royal ideology of Jahangir's reign. Referenced as ur-Rahman 60, and represented by only two specimens (coin nos. 1-2), this minimal presence suggests that while Jahangir's monetary authority did extend into the Khyber region, its reach was limited compared to that of later Mughal rulers.

#### **Description of the coin:**

##### **Type. Inscriptions on both sides in Persian (Silver Rupee).**

**Obv.** Names of Akbar and Jahangir.

**Rev..** Persian epithet on the reverse side.

**Reference:** ur-Rahman 60.

**Coin nos.** Plates 1-2, Section 4.18.6.4 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

- **Shah Jahan -Shahab-ud-din Muhammad Khurram (c. 1628-1658 CE)**

The silver rupees attributed to Shah Jahan present a distinct numismatic type characterised by both their epigraphic content and archaeological context. Each coin features the Islamic shahada (kalima) inscribed within a central square on the obverse, often accompanied by the year of minting, such as 1049 AH (RY 12, corresponding to 1639 CE), a formula typical of Mughal coinage that fused religious proclamation with state authority. The reverse bears the Persian epithet "Shah Jahan Badshah Ghazi" (Shah Jahan, the Victorious King) prominently in the central square, with the mint name positioned to the left, following established Mughal conventions (see KM 235, 235.19, 235.23). These coins are die-struck in high relief, employing hand-hammered techniques on well-prepared silver planchets, and display clear, elegant nasta'liq inscriptions that exemplify the artistic and technical standards of the Mughal imperial mints.

Unlike settlement-based hoards, all of these coins, numbering at least sixteen, were recovered by treasure hunters from sites along the principal caravan routes and roads traversing the Jamrud region. The absence of domestic or habitation debris at the discovery spots suggests that the coins were most likely lost or concealed by travellers or traders moving along these commercial arteries, rather than being deliberately buried as savings in settled areas. The find context reinforces the interpretation of Jamrud as an integral node in trans-regional trade, where Mughal silver currency facilitated long-distance mercantile exchange and reflected the mobility of wealth across the empire's



frontiers. The presence of both the kalima and precise dating on the obverse, combined with the king's full Persian titles on the reverse, not only attests to the dual religious and royal messaging intrinsic to Mughal numismatic practice but also aids scholars in securely attributing, dating, and contextualizing the coins within Shah Jahan's reign (Mitchiner, 1979, pp. 660-661; Krause & Mishler, 2009, p. 1162; Pieper, 2009, p. 171). Collectively, these finds illuminate the economic history and connective infrastructure of the Mughal northwest, as well as the material realities of commerce and travel under one of the dynasty's most illustrious rulers.

### **Description of Discovered Coins**

#### **Type. Kalima and Name of the king in Persian (Silver Rupee).**

**Obv.** Inscriptions on both sides: Shahada in a square, date (1049 AH / RY 12 (1639).

**Rev.** Shah Jahan Badshah Ghazi in the centre square, mint name to the left.

**Reference:** KM 235; 3-4- KM 235.23; 5-6- KM 235.19;

**Coin nos.** Plates 1-16, Section 4.18.6.5 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

- **Discovery and Numismatic Significance of a Rare 200-Rupee Silver Coin of Shah Jahan from Taidi Bazaar, Jamrud.**

The rare 200-rupee silver coin (Plates 1-16, Section 4.18.6.5.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.) of Shah Jahan (KM 304.1) have been discovered from Taidi Bazaar, located near the Mughal-era Charbagh pond in Jamrud, This discovery constitutes a noteworthy contribution to the corpus of Mughal numismatic material and offers valuable perspectives on the economic and political history of the Khyber region during the mid-seventeenth century. Minted at the imperial capital of Shahjahanabad, this specimen represents only the third known example of its kind; previously, just two others have been recorded, one held in a private Islamic coin collection in Lahore and the other belonging to the Kuwait royal family (KM 304.1). The discovery of this coinage in such a rugged and historically turbulent frontier highlights not only the extent of Mughal ceremonial coins but also the vital role this region played in overland trade linking the Indian subcontinent with Central Asia.

The coin is monumental in both scale and artistry, with a weight of 200 rupees (2286gm), and is composed of high-grade silver. The obverse displays the Islamic kalima (declaration of faith) within a central square, " لا اله الا الله محمد رسول الله ضرب " ("There is no god but Allah, Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah; Struck at the Imperial Capital Shahjahanabad"). Surrounding the square, each marginal

panel invokes one of the four Rightly Guided Caliphs, emphasising the legitimacy and Sunni piety of the Mughal house: Abu Bakr (truthfulness and perfect faith), 'Umar (justice and strength), 'Ali (knowledge and imamate), and 'Uthman (modesty). Such a legend not only asserts the religious orthodoxy of the Mughal court but also aligns Shah Jahan's sovereignty with the revered foundations of early Islam.

The reverse, likewise arranged around a central square, bears the emperor's full Persian titlature: "بادشاه غازی، قرن ابی شاه، شاهجهان، شهاب الدین محمد" ("Victorious King, The Pride of His Age, Shah Jahan, Shahabuddin Muhammad"). The surrounding poetic panels extol the coin's unique status and the prosperity of the reign, referring to the coin as a two-hundred-rupee stamp struck by divine favour, praising Shah Jahan as the King of the Faith, and invoking metaphors of celestial beauty and rarity.

This type is firmly dated to the reign of Shah Jahan (r. 1628 CE -1658 CE) and was coined at Shahjahanabad, following the emperor's establishment of his new capital in 1648 CE. The stylistic and epigraphic features correspond with the mature phase of Mughal ceremonial coinage, characterised by monumental silver issues, sophisticated calligraphy, and dense religious and dynastic symbolism (Mitchiner, 1979, p. 745; Pieper, 2009, MACW 304.1).

The findspot of this coin, Taidi Bazaar, Jamrud, Khyber Pass, carries significant implications for its history and circulation. Unlike settlement hoards or courtly deposits, its discovery in a commercial and caravan context suggests a likely role in high-value trade or diplomatic exchange along the primary corridor linking South and Central Asia. The challenging terrain and frequent unrest of the Khyber likely contributed to the coin's loss or deliberate concealment. Its extraordinary denomination, artistic program, and geographic dispersal reinforce its function as a ceremonial or presentation piece, rather than as a coin for daily commerce.

Comparable finds are exceedingly rare; the present coin's appearance as only the third known specimen further underscores its numismatic and historical value. The other two known examples (one privately held in Lahore, one in the Kuwait royal collection) highlight the coin's elite, transregional trajectory and the exceptional wealth and ambition of the Mughal state. Standard catalogues, including Mitchiner (1979, #304.1), Pieper (2009, MACW), and Krause & Mishler (2011, KM 304.1), confirm the rarity and monumental nature of this type.

This 200-rupee coin is not only a triumph of Mughal minting technology but also a unique document of imperial ideology. Its legends blend Islamic piety, Timurid legitimacy, and poetic self-praise in a format designed to awe both contemporaries and posterity. Its recovery from the Khyber underscores the cosmopolitan ambitions of Shah Jahan's court and the integration of the frontier into broader imperial and economic networks. As a tangible intersection of trade, diplomacy, and ceremonial display, this specimen exemplifies the Mughal dynasty's capacity for both symbolic and material projection of power at the very limits of its realm.

### Description of the Coin

#### Type. Kalima and Persian Epithet (Silver 200 Rupee).

**Obv.** Central Square:

لا اله الا الله محمد رسول الله  
ضرب دارالخلافة شاهجهان آباد

#### Transliteration:

Lā ilāha illā Allāh Muhammad Rasūl Allāh  
Zarb Dār-ul-Khilāfa Shāhjahānābād

(There is no god but Allah, Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, Struck at the Imperial Capital Shahjahanabad).

#### Surrounding Legends (Panel by Panel):

Top (Above Square):

تصديق صد ايمان ابوبكر از  
Tasdeeq sad imān Abū Bakr az  
"Truthfulness and perfect faith from Abu Bakr"

Left (To the Left of Square):

اسلام قوى صدق از عدل  
Islām qawī sadaq az ‘adl  
"Strength of Islam comes from [his] justice"  
(likely a reference to 'Umar)

Right (To the Right of Square):

علم على و امامت ديت  
‘Ilm ‘Alī wa imāmat diyat  
"Knowledge of 'Ali and the right of Imamate"

Bottom (Below Square):

حياء عثمان  
Hayā-yi' Uthmān

"Modesty of 'Uthman").

**Rev. Central Square:**

بادشاه غازی  
قرن ابی شاه  
شاهجهان  
شهاب الدین محمد

**Transliteration:**

Bādshāh Ghāzī  
Qarn-e Abī Shāh  
Shah Jahan  
Shahāb-ud-Dīn Muhammad

Translation:

Victorious King  
The Pride of His Age  
Shah Jahan  
Shahabuddin Muhammad

Around the Square (in panels, clockwise from top):

Top Panel:

مهری زد از لطف اعلی سکه بر مهر دو صد  
Mehrī zad az lutf-e a'lā, sikka bar mehr du sad  
"With the Highest Grace, a stamp was struck on a two-hundred [coin] seal"

Left Panel:

شاهجهان دین شاه بنی صاحب قرآن  
Shah Jahan dīn shāh, banī sāhib Qur'ān  
"Shah Jahan, King of the Faith, descendant, possessor of the Qur'an"

Right Panel:

زوشین روی ماه تا شود از طُرّاهش خوش شُد  
Zū shīn ruy-e māh tā shavad az turra-'ash khush shud  
"The radiant face of the moon [coin], that becomes pleasing by the trace/mark of his curl/seal"

Bottom Panel:

مکان عالم فیروز روی زر نادر بهی  
Makān 'ālam firūz, ruy-e zar nādir bhi  
"In the world's place, the victorious, the face of the gold [coin] is even rarer".

**Reference:** KM 304.1.

**Coin nos.** 1

- **Aurangzeb - Abul Muzaffar Muhi-ud-Din Muhammad (c. 1658 -1707 CE)**
  - **Royal Seal of Aurangzeb from Shah Kas, Jamrud.**

The royal seal of Mughal emperor Aurangzeb (Plates 1-2, Section 4.18.6.6.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins), discovered at Shah Kas, Jamrud, represents a significant artefact in the corpus of Mughal imperial material culture. The provenance of the seal at Shah Kas, near the vital gateway of the Khyber Pass, underscores the region's enduring importance as both a military frontier and a channel of imperial administration. Shah Kas, controlling one of the main passes, was a strategic node where the assertion of Mughal authority was not only military but also symbolic, communicated through imperial paraphernalia such as coins and seals (Eaton, 2019, p. 124).

Seals such as this one were essential for validating royal orders, grants, and correspondence, but they also functioned as potent emblems of sovereignty. The craftsmanship, evident in the fine Persian nasta'liq script and decorative floral motifs, signals the Mughal court's patronage of Persianate literary and artistic traditions (Alam, 2013, p. 52).

The inscription on the seal, executed in high-relief nasta'liq script, follows the rich conventions of Mughal titulature and administrative formulae. The actual reading of the seal, as per your correction, is:

**Transliteration (line by line):**

1. عالمگیر
2. اورنگزیب شاہ
3. ار خان شد مرصد
4. خان آزدان

**Translation:**

1. "Alamgir" (World-Seizer, one of Aurangzeb's most famous imperial titles)
2. "Aurangzeb Shah" (Emperor Aurangzeb)
3. "' Ar Khan shud marsad" (Ar Khan became the guardian/watchman [or, in charge])
4. "Khan-i-Azdan" (Khan of the Nobles or Chief Khan)

**Interpretive paragraph:**

This Mughal royal seal is a classic representation of imperial authority and

bureaucratic legitimacy during Aurangzeb's rule. The inscription opens with "Alamgir," the celebrated title of Aurangzeb, underscoring his ambition to be perceived as the "Seizer of the World" and a universal sovereign. The second line, "Aurangzeb Shah," directly names the emperor, anchoring the seal firmly within his reign and providing a clear attribution for historical and administrative purposes. The third line, "' Ar Khan shud marsad," indicates that Ar Khan (likely a high-ranking official or military commander) was appointed as guardian, overseer, or supervisor. This detail not only authenticates the document to which the seal was affixed but also offers a glimpse into the administrative machinery of the Mughal state. The final line, "Khan-i-Azdan," confers upon Ar Khan the status of chief among nobles, further affirming his authority and the trust bestowed upon him by the emperor.

The presence of this seal at Shah Kas, Jamrud, a crucial site at the gateway of the Khyber Pass, enhances its historical and archaeological significance. It provides evidence of the Mughal administrative presence and military organisation at a key frontier outpost, reflecting not just the expanse of imperial governance but also the reliance on trusted local commanders to secure and manage these volatile regions. As a material artefact, the seal encapsulates both the grandeur of Mughal titlature and the complex realities of regional control, serving as a tangible witness to the interplay of imperial aspiration, administrative practice, and frontier politics in the late seventeenth-century Mughal Empire.

- **Aurangzeb Silver Coins Hoard from Ganj Gahri, Jamrud.**

The hoard of Aurangzeb's silver rupees was accidentally discovered in Ganj Gahri, Jamrud, during the ploughing of fields in May 2025. The hoard, which soon surfaced in a jewellery shop in Jamrud bazaar, consists of at least thirty-three silver rupees, all bearing the distinctive features of Mughal coinage issued under Emperor Aurangzeb Alamgir (r. 1658-1707 CE). In terms of typology, the coins can be grouped into two principal categories. The first type, covering coins numbered 1 to 10, features the Persian inscription "*sikka zad dar jahan chu badr munir shah aurangzeb*" ("A coin struck in the world like the radiant full moon, Shah Aurangzeb") on the obverse. The reverse side bears the legend "*manus memanat sana julus zarb Golkunda*" ("With auspicious hand, year of accession, struck at Golkonda"). The second type, encompassing coins numbered 11 to 33, shares the same obverse inscription but on the

reverse is inscribed "manus memanat sana julus zarb Surat" ("With auspicious hand, year of accession, struck at Surat"). Both types are referenced in standard numismatic catalogues, including Krause (2009, #300.28), and are well represented in the comprehensive works of Mitchiner (1979) and Pieper (2009).

Chronologically, the appearance of coins from both Golkonda and Surat mints, whose operations span the later decades of Aurangzeb's reign, suggests a deposition date after 1687, coinciding with the consolidation of Mughal power in the Deccan. The coins were struck using the traditional hand-hammered die technique on well-prepared silver planchets, yielding crisp, deeply incised nasta'liq script characteristic of late seventeenth-century Mughal issues. Although the hoard was not recovered through scientific excavation, its findspot in Ganj Gahri, Jamrud, an agricultural area near the historic Khyber Pass, highlights the economic vitality and strategic significance of this frontier zone. The context mirrors other Mughal coin hoards found in the greater Punjab and Afghan frontier, such as those documented by Mitchiner (1979, p. 832). It hints at a period of unrest or economic transition when wealth might be hidden for safekeeping.

Historically, this hoard is remarkable for its illustration of the geographic expanse of Mughal monetary circulation, connecting the distant imperial mints of Golkonda in the Deccan and Surat in Gujarat with the trade corridors of the northwest. The consistent legends extolling Aurangzeb as a sovereign blessed with divine favour underline the ideological messages embedded in Mughal numismatics. The circumstances of its discovery suggest the dynamic interplay between imperial authority, local economic activity, and the contingencies of life along a volatile but commercially vibrant frontier. As such, the Ganj Gahri hoard provides an invaluable resource for reconstructing regional chronology, assessing patterns of currency movement, and understanding the material imprint of Mughal sovereignty in the farthest reaches of the empire (Krause & Mishler, 2009, p. 1231; Mitchiner, 1979, pp. 820-860; Pieper, 2009, p. 288).

**Type 1. Both Side Inscription in Persian (Silver Rupee).**

**Obv.** Sikka zad dar jahan chu badr munir shah aurangzeb.

**Rev.** Manus memanat sana julus zarb gulkunda.

**Reference:** Krause-300.28.

**Coin nos.** Plates 1-10, Section 4.18.6.6.2 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type 2. Both Side Inscription in Persian (Silver Rupee).**

**Obv.** Sikka zad dar jahan chu badr munir shah aurangzeb.

**Rev.** Manus memanat sana julus zarb Surat.

**Reference:** Krause-300.28.

**Coin nos.** Plates 11-33, Section 4.18.6.6.2 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

- **Azam Shah - Qutb ud-Din Muhammad (c. 1707 CE).**

No coins or artefacts attributable to Azam Shah have been confirmed from Jamrud. To date, there is no numismatic or archaeological evidence linking his reign to this region.

- **Bahadur Shah I or Shah Alam I - Mirza Muhammad Mu'azzam (c. 1707-1712 CE)**

Only two silver rupees of Bahadur Shah I have been attested from Jamrud and its adjacent areas (Plates 1-2, Section 4.18.6.7 in Part II: Illustrations Coins). The small number of Bahadur Shah I's coins found in Jamrud indicates that, although Mughal monetary authority technically reached this frontier during his short reign, likely as a result of internal political unrest, the actual circulation of his currency in the area was quite limited. This scarcity stands in contrast to the more abundant coinage evidence for both his predecessors and successors, suggesting that imperial influence in the region was either restricted or that the economic integration of Jamrud with the Mughal core territories was relatively weak during this period of transition in the empire.

- **Jahandar Shah (c.1712 CE - 1713 CE)**

- **Royal Seal of Jahandar Shah from Shah Kas, Jamrud.**

The seal of Jahandar Shah (Plates 1-2, Section 4.18.6.8.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins), discovered at Shah Kas near Jamrud, is an invaluable primary source for understanding the shifting locus of imperial authority in the late Mughal era. Its material form, consisting of both an original Brass seal and its impression in clay, is adorned with refined Persian calligraphy in the nasta'liq script. Such craftsmanship is emblematic of Mughal courtly culture and the continued centrality of Persianate aesthetics in imperial self-representation (Kaicker, 2020, pp. 187-189; Alam, 2013, p. liii).

Jahandar Shah's reign, lasting scarcely a year from March 1712 to February 1713 CE, was characterised by profound dynastic turbulence, having followed a violent succession crisis with the death of Bahadur Shah I. This period witnessed the rise of kingmakers among the nobility, particularly Zulfiqar Khan, who installed Jahandar Shah as a "puppet" ruler, fundamentally altering the structure of Mughal sovereignty (Richards, 1993, p. 261; Chandra, 2002, p. 107). In this context, the issuance and use of royal seals took on heightened significance. Not only did they serve bureaucratic and



administrative functions, validating royal edicts and grants, but they also acted as tangible assertions of legitimate kingship at a time when the basis of imperial authority was under threat (Faruqui, 2012, p. 310).

The seal's inscription, rendered in classical Persian, reads "Badshah Ghazi," meaning "Victorious King" or "Warrior King," a title that emphasised the emperor's role as a champion of Islam and a leader in battle, a customary designation among Mughal sovereigns. The central line explicitly states the name and royal title, "Shah Jahandar Shah," thereby identifying the authority from whom the seal emanated. The bottom line features the name " 'Ar Khan," likely referring to a high-ranking court official, possibly the issuer or a mint master, whose inclusion signified administrative oversight or the authenticity of the seal. Together, these inscriptions encapsulate the Mughal practice of combining sovereign identity, religious legitimacy, and bureaucratic authentication in a single official emblem. This practice was not merely formulaic; it was an ideological instrument, ascribing continuity with earlier Mughal emperors while reasserting the cosmopolitan and religious ideals that underpinned the dynasty's power (Kaicker, 2020, p. 188; Alam, 2013, p. liii). Jahandar Shah's decision to reintroduce poetic couplets and classical motifs on his coins and seals has been interpreted by modern historians as a deliberate strategy to compensate for his weak political position by drawing on the rich symbolic capital of Mughal tradition (Faruqui, 2012, pp. 310, 317).

The provenance of the seal at Shah Kas, Jamrud, significantly enhances its historical value. Jamrud, controlling access to the Khyber Pass, was a vital frontier post for the Mughal Empire, often serving as the first line of defence and a contact zone for imperial authority and regional actors. Notably, Jahandar Shah was the grandson of Aurangzeb Alamgir, the formidable Mughal emperor who himself led several military campaigns against the Afridis of the Khyber region. Historical sources indicate that Jahandar Shah, as a prince, may have accompanied his grandfather during these expeditions against the Afridis that repeatedly challenged Mughal control of the Khyber Pass (Eaton, 2019, pp. 341-342). The Mughal forces suffered significant defeats in these confrontations, and it is plausible that the seal ended up at Shah Kas, Jamrud, as a result of the tumultuous events of the Mughal-Afridi wars. Thus, the discovery of Jahandar Shah's seal at this strategically critical site not only demonstrates the extent of imperial administration but also evokes the Mughal efforts, often fraught and ultimately unsuccessful, to project royal legitimacy across distant provinces even amidst military crisis.

The royal seal of Jahandar Shah from Shah Kas, Jamrud, is more than an administrative artefact; it is a material testament to the late Mughal struggle for dynastic legitimacy and central authority. Its script, form, and very location all underscore the complex interplay between tradition and crisis, and the enduring importance of visual and textual symbols in the articulation of kingship in early modern South Asia (Irvine, 1971, pp. 236-238; Chandra, 2002, p. 107). In a reign remembered for its brevity and turbulence, such objects offer critical insight into both the persistence and transformation of imperial ideology at the threshold of Mughal decline.

- **The Waning Presence of the Later Mughals in Khyber in Numismatic and Archaeological Perspectives.**

The numismatic and archaeological record from Jamrud and its adjacent regions presents a vivid narrative of the declining reach of the Mughal dynasty from the early 18th to the mid-19<sup>th</sup> centuries. For many late Mughal emperors, including Farrukhsiyar (c.1713-1719), Rafi ud-Darajat (c.1719), Shah Jahan II (c. 1719), Alamgir II (c. 1754-1759), Shah Jahan III (c. 1759-1760), Shah Jahan IV (c. 1788), and Akbar Shah II (c. 1806-1837), there is a conspicuous absence of coins or any archaeological evidence in the Khyber area (ur-Rahman, 1999, pp. 58-61; Pieper, 2009, p. 353). For others, such as Muhammad Shah (Nasir ud-Din Muhammad, r. 1719-1748), Ahmad Shah Bahadur (Mujahid ud-Din Muhammad, r. 1748-1754) only one coin have been attested from Shahkas Jamrud in possession of private coins collector (see Section 4.16.5.9 in Part II: Illustrations Coins), and Shah Alam II (Jalal ud-Din Muhammad Ali Gauhar, r. 1760-1788 & 1788-1806), only isolated coin ((see Section 4.16.5.10 in Part II: Illustrations Coins)), typically single specimens discovered in private jewelry shops or as stray finds, attest to their ephemeral monetary presence (Mitchiner, 1979, pp. 809-811; Krause & Mishler, 2011, p. 1162; Mahmud, 1996, p. 41). This minute and sporadic evidence is in stark contrast to the relatively robust circulation of earlier Mughal coinage and reflects the region's shifting political landscape (Eaton, 2019, pp. 312-315).

Following the death of Jahandar Shah, several factors likely contributed to the scarcity of coins and archaeological remains from this period in the region. The late Mughal era was characterised by significant imperial decline, weakening of central authority, and frequent struggles over succession, all of which undermined effective governance of distant frontiers like the Khyber Pass (Chandra, 2002, pp. 162-164; Richards, 1993, p. 267). The strong economic and administrative connections that had thrived under Akbar

and his immediate successors gradually unravelled amid internal decay and waves of foreign invasions (Alam, 2013, p. 73).

In addition, the eighteenth century saw the emergence of powerful new dynasties, notably the Afsharids and Durrani, in Persia and Central Asia. Nadir Shah's conquest of northern Afghanistan and India, culminating in the sack of Delhi in 1739, dealt a severe blow to Mughal prestige and disrupted established monetary networks (Axworthy, 2006, pp. 189-192; Sarkar, 1984, pp. 14-15). The subsequent rise of the Durrani Empire under Ahmad Shah Durrani further diminished Mughal influence in the northwestern subcontinent, as the Khyber Pass and surrounding areas were drawn firmly into the orbit of Afghan rule (Ewans, 2002, pp. 26-28; Noelle, 1997, pp. 85-86).

These profound geopolitical shifts resulted in the replacement of Mughal administrative and monetary systems by those of the Afsharids, Durrani, and eventually the Sikhs and British, leaving little material trace of later Mughal rulers in the archaeological record of Jamrud (Eaton, 2019, pp. 318-319; Mahmud, 1996, p. 44). The few coins that do surface are likely remnants of informal trade, personal movement, or accidental loss, rather than evidence of a sustained Mughal presence. Ultimately, the absence of late Mughal coinage in the Khyber region serves as concrete evidence of the decline of imperial authority, the shifting dynamics of power along the Indo-Afghan frontier, and the rise of new political entities that would influence the area up to the onset of colonial rule.

- **Ghundi, Islamic Amulet**

The amulet discovered at Ghundi (Plate 1-2, Section 5.11 in Part II), Jamrud, bears finely inscribed Arabic verses from the Holy Qur'an. These inscriptions appear to have been chosen with care, drawing on themes of divine protection, righteous struggle, and safe passage. The verses include:

1. **Surah Yusuf (12:64):** *"Fa Allāhu Khayrun Ḥāfiẓan Wa Huwa Arḥamu Ar Rāḥimīn", "Yet Allah is the best of protectors, and He is the most merciful of all who show mercy."*
2. **Surah Yusuf (12:99):** *"Wa Qāla Udkhulū Miṣra In Shā'a Allāhu Āminīn", "And he said: Enter Egypt, if Allah wills, in security."*
3. **Surah Al Baqarah (2:137):** *"Fa Sayakfīkahumullāh Wa Huwa As Samī'u Al' Alīm", "Then Allah will suffice you against them; and He is the Hearing, the Knowing."*

4. **Surah Ghāfir (40:28):** *"In Yakun Kādhīban Fa' Alayhi Kadhībuh, Wa In Yakun Ṣādiqan Yuṣibkum Ba 'ḍ Alladhī Ya'idukum"*, "If he is lying, his lie will be upon him; but if he is truthful, then some of what he promises will befall you."
5. **Surah Yā Sīn (36:17):** *"Wa Mā' Alaynā Illā Al Balāgh Al Mubīn"*, "And our responsibility is only to convey the clear message."

These verses span several *ajzā'* of the Qur'an, primarily from Surahs Yusuf, Al Baqarah, and Yā Sīn, and are commonly associated with trust in divine protection, truth in prophecy, and spiritual fortitude. Their presence on the amulet suggests its use as a spiritual safeguard likely worn by an individual seeking divine assistance in the face of uncertainty, hostility, or migration.

The presence of the verse concerning Egypt (*"Enter Egypt in security, if Allah wills"*) is particularly noteworthy given that the amulet was recovered not in North Africa, but in Khyber Agency (present-day Khyber District). At first glance, this might seem geographically incongruent. However, local oral traditions provide a striking clue to this choice of inscription: many among the tribal populations of the Khyber Pass, including certain clans of the Afridis, have historically identified themselves as being descended from the *Bani Israel* (Children of Israel). This belief, although not universally accepted, has been deeply rooted in regional folklore and was noted by several colonial and ethnographic observers from the 19th century onward.

Within this cultural framework, the verse about Egypt gains new meaning. It does not merely recall the journey of Prophet Yusuf's family, but symbolically resonates with ancestral memory, exile, and return. For a community identifying with the Israelites, the verse may invoke a spiritual homeland or divine promise of protection and continuity through migration or hardship. This association is even more significant when considering that Ali Masjid and the broader Khyber area have long served as a corridor for caravans, armies, and displaced peoples moving between empires. The area was militarised during the Anglo-Afghan campaigns, further increasing the need for protective talismans.

The amulet's stylistic and epigraphic features, its calligraphic style, metalwork, and Qur'anic selection suggest it dates from the late 18th CE to the early 19th century CE. This was a period marked by geopolitical instability, intensified British colonial penetration, and the strengthening of tribal and religious identities. Given the strategic

importance of the Khyber Pass and Ali Masjid as both a spiritual and military landmark, the amulet may have belonged to a tribal leader, a spiritual guide, or a soldier invoking divine aid before a journey or conflict.

In sum, this artefact is not merely a protective object; it is a complex historical palimpsest that reflects the intertwined layers of local tradition, Islamic spirituality, and deep-rooted identity. The inscription of a verse about Egypt within a region where people self-identify as descendants of Bani Israel suggests a profound connection between scriptural memory and tribal self-conception, where history, belief, and territory merge into a singular cultural expression.

**g. DURRANI PERIOD (c. 1747 CE - 1823 CE)**

**• Durrani Talab - Site No. 1**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                 |               |             |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Name:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Durrani Period Reservoir /Talab | Reference No: | KH 15       |
| Nearest Village:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Talab ghara, T.D. Bazaar        | Area of Site: | 300+ sqm    |
| Coordinates:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | 34° 0'0.12"N 71°22'3.58"E       | Altitude:     | 474         |
| Access Route:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Accessible Via T.D. Bazaar      | Condition:    | Damaged     |
| Cast Area                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Malik Din Khel                  | Sub Cast      | Jhanda Khel |
| Site Description:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                 |               |             |
| <p>The site, known as Talab Ghara, is located at coordinates 34.0000320°N and 71.3676600°E, with an elevation of 474 meters, near Wali Baba in T.D. Bazar. This historical water pool is square in design, constructed with rubble stone, and bound together using lime as a joining material. A water channel, which originates from the northern side, supplies water to the pool. According to local tradition, this pool is believed to have been a royal reservoir for King Jamshed. The name "Jamrud" is said to have been derived from King Jamshed, underscoring the site's historical and cultural significance. The water for the pool was supplied through a channel that originated from Sor Qamar, demonstrating the advanced water management systems in place at the time. This structure stands as a testament to the region's ancient royal heritage and the engineering ingenuity required to maintain water resources for the ruling elite.</p> |                                 |               |             |

**• Masoom Baba Mazaar - Site No. 1**

|                  |                    |               |       |
|------------------|--------------------|---------------|-------|
| Name:            | Masoom Baba Mazaar | Reference No: | KH 16 |
| Nearest Village: | Lower Tatara       | Area of Site: |       |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                             |            |        |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|--------|
| Coordinates:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 34° 5'51.84"N 71°16'27.91"E | Altitude:  |        |
| Access Route:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Accessible                  | Condition: | Intact |
| Cast Area                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                             | Sub Cast   |        |
| Site Description:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                             |            |        |
| <p>The site (Plate 3.65 in Part II: Illustrations Plates) is situated at coordinates 34.0966870°N and 71.2748360°E, with an elevation of 1012 meters, in the village of Lower Tatarā (see Map 1.74 in Part II). Known locally as the Mashoom Baba graveyard, named after the associated saint whose tomb is located here, the cemetery is notable for its graves, which are oriented east-west rather than the more typical south-west alignment. According to some residents, this unusual orientation suggests the graves may date to the pre-Islamic or early Islamic period. However, upon closer examination, it appears that this is an ancient and densely packed burial ground, with some gravestones overlapping or set at angles, which may give the impression of a different orientation.</p> |                             |            |        |

- **Durrani Period Coins from Khyber.**

During this research, a minimal number of Durrani period coins have been attested, which consists of one gold mohar featuring the Kalima on the obverse and the royal epithet "Badshah Ghazi, Ahmad Shah Durran" on the reverse, symbolising both religious legitimacy and sovereign authority. His descendant, Shah Shuja al-Mulk, whose reigns spanned the early and mid-nineteenth century, issued silver rupees inscribed with "Khursheed Mah, Shah Shujah Al Mulk, Sika Ayub..." on the obverse and "Zarb Peshawar, Sanah Jolos" on the reverse, reflecting the dynasty's ongoing connections to local mints and its persistent assertion of power (Tye, 1995, pp. 286-288). Remarkably, despite the historical prominence of the Durrani dynasty and the limited number of coin discoveries, the local antiquarians assert that Durrani coins are frequently found in hoards. However, due to the clandestine nature of the antiquities market in Peshawar and elsewhere, such discoveries often go unreported. The coins documented in this study, including one gold mohar of Ahmad Shah Durrani and two silver rupees of Shah Shuja al-Mulk, were likewise found in hoards. However, they were subsequently dispersed and sold individually in Jamrud jewellery shops, rather than being preserved as a complete assemblage. The rarity and context of these finds highlight not only the region's historical ties to the Durrani state but also the challenges posed by the unregulated antiquities trade, making these coins particularly significant

as tangible evidence of Durrani monetary and political influence in the Khyber region (Jha, 1998, pp. 101-103).

- **Ahmad Shah Durrani (c. 1720 - 1722 - 4 June 1772)**

**Type 1. Kalima/ Persian Epithet (Gold Mohar).**

**Obv.** Kalima in Arabic.

**Rev.** Badshah Ghazi, Ahmad Shah Durran.

**Coin nos.** Plate 1, Section 4.18.7.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

- **Shah Shuja al-Mulk (First reign, 1803-1809/Second 1839-1842 AD).**

**Type 1. Name of the king (Silver Rupee).**

**Obv.** Khursheed Mah, Shah Shujah Al Mulk, Sika Ayub...

**Rev.** Zarb Peshawar, Sanah Jolos.

**Coin nos.** Plate 1-2, Section 4.18.7.2 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

#### **h. SIKHS PERIOD (C.1799-1849 CE)**

- **Ali Masjid fort - Site No. 1**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                |               |             |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Name:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Ali Masjid Fort                | Reference No: | KH 17       |
| Nearest Village:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Shagai, Katta Kushta Ghar Obba | Area of Site: | 44 5 Acres  |
| Coordinates:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | 34.033770N 71.255820E          | Altitude:     | 910 M       |
| Access Route:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Accessible                     | Condition:    | intact      |
| Cast Area                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Malik Din Khel                 | Sub Cast      | Jhanda Khel |
| Site Description:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                |               |             |
| <p>The Ali Masjid Fort (Plate 3.16 in Part II: Illustrations Plates), located to the northeast of Ali Masjid village, is strategically perched at the elevation of approximately 910 meters, making it one of the most significant defensive structures in the Khyber region (see Map 1.24 in Part II). The original fort is believed to have been constructed under the reign of Doost Muhammad Khan, an influential Afghan ruler who recognised the tactical value of this narrow point in the Khyber Pass. Over time, the fort underwent several reconstructions, one of which became historically notable due to a significant conflict involving General Hari Singh Nalwa, a prominent commander in the Sikh Empire.</p> <p>During the fort's redevelopment in the early 19th century, Hari Singh Nalwa came under fierce attack by Afridi tribesmen, known for their control over the surrounding mountain terrain. The general was killed in battle, and his body was later cremated at</p> |                                |               |             |

Jamrud Fort, where a Samadhi (memorial shrine) was erected in his honour. This site still exists today as a testament to his legacy. Following the battle, the Sikh forces fortified the structure further, adding several functional components, including a Gurdwara (Sikh temple), a Talab (water tank), a barood khana (ammunition storage), and a prison cell, reflecting both religious and military utility.

In the post-colonial era, the fort's importance has not diminished. Today, it is under the control of the 105th Wing of the Khyber Rifles, a paramilitary unit stationed to secure the region and maintain peace in the tribal belt. The fort is not only a military outpost but also a historical monument, encapsulating the region's turbulent past, its resistance traditions, and the complex interplay between invading powers and indigenous tribes.

• **Jamrud Fort - Site No. 2**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                             |               |             |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Name:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Jamrud Fort                 | Reference No: | KH 18       |
| Nearest Village:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Jamrud bazar                | Area of Site: | 19500sq.m   |
| Coordinates:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | 34° 0'12.10"N 71°22'43.25"E | Altitude:     | 461 M       |
| Access Route:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Accessible                  | Condition:    | intact      |
| Cast Area                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Kuki Khel                   | Sub Cast      | Abdaal Khel |
| Site Description:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                             |               |             |
| <p>The Jamrud Fort (Plate 3.17 in Part II: Illustrations Plates) stands adjacent to the iconic Bab-e-Khyber monument, marking the gateway into the Khyber Pass from the Peshawar side (see Map 1.25 in Part II). It is situated in Jamrud Bazaar in Tehsil Jamrud. Although the exact date of the fort's original construction is not definitively recorded, historical accounts point to its establishment following the Sikh conquest of Jamrud in October 1836, when the Afghan Durrani Empire lost the area to the expanding Sikh Empire.</p> <p>The renowned Sikh general Sardar Hari Singh Nalwa (1791–1837) proposed the construction of a robust fortification at this strategically significant location. Although his suggestion initially faced opposition, the foundation of the fort was eventually laid on 6 Poh 1836 Sambat (18 December 1836). Remarkably, the fort was completed in only 54 days and was named Fatehgarh, or "Fort of Victory," in honour of the Sikh triumph over local tribal resistance.</p> <p>In early 1837, as arrangements were being made for the wedding of Prince Nau Nihal Singh, grandson of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, a pivotal event took place. With a</p> |                             |               |             |



substantial contingent of Sikh forces having departed for Lahore to participate in the royal festivities, Mohammad Akbar Khan, son of Dost Mohammad Khan, received intelligence from Mr. Fast, a former British India officer en route to Kabul, that Jamrud Fort was left with a significantly reduced garrison.

Recognising the strategic opportunity, with the help of Afridi tribespeople, Akbar Khan launched a surprise attack on Jamrud on 30 April 1837, leading to a fierce confrontation between Afghan and Sikh forces. The Sikhs sustained considerable losses in this battle. General Hari Singh Nalwa, despite recognising the danger, was unable to receive timely reinforcements. The Dogra chiefs allegedly withheld his urgent plea for military support, preventing it from reaching the Maharaja in Lahore. As a result, reinforcements did not arrive in time, and Hari Singh Nalwa was martyred on the battlefield, sealing the fort's place in both military and martyrdom history.

- **Sikhs Coins Hoard from Shah Kas, Jamrud**

A hoard consisting of fourteen Sikh rupees (Plate 1-2, Section 4.19 in Part II: Illustrations Coins) was accidentally discovered in a field at Shah Kas, Jamrud, offering rare coins. This discovery provides important insights into the patterns of monetary circulation and the scope of Sikh administrative authority in the Khyber region during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. All the coins are silver rupees of the "zarb Peshawar" type, signifying they were minted in Peshawar under Sikh authority. The obverse of each coin features the Persian inscription: *"deg tegh fath nusrat be dirang, yaft az Nanak Guru Gobind Singh,"* invoking victory, religious authority, and the martial heritage of Sikhism. The reverse legend, partially preserved, reads *"zarb Peshawar"* at the top and features the Vikram Samvat year 1892, both sides marked by the distinctive pipal leaf symbol. The Shah Kas hoard not only demonstrates the circulation of Sikh coinage in the trans-Indus frontier but also provides direct evidence of Peshawar's role as a key administrative and minting centre under Sikh dominion. As the only hoard of its kind reported from the Khyber region, these fourteen rupees significantly enhance our understanding of Sikh numismatic presence and political control in this historically contested area (cf. Deyell, 1990, pp. 192-195; Singh, 2016, p. 77).

**i. BRITISH PERIOD (Cc. 1849 - 1947 CE)**

**• Site No. 1**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                            |               |            |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------|------------|
| Name:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Shagai Fort                | Reference No: | KH 19      |
| Nearest Village:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Shagai Lala Chena          | Area of Site: | 32399sq.m  |
| Coordinates:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | 34° 1'1.63"N 71°16'47.93"E | Altitude:     | 839 M      |
| Access Route:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Accessible                 | Condition:    | intact     |
| Cast Area                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Koki Khel                  | Sub Cast      | Farid Khel |
| Site Description:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                            |               |            |
| <p>Shagai Fort (Plate 3.18 in Part II: Illustrations Plates) is a Strategic Frontier Bastion of the Khyber Pass, situated approximately 13 kilometres northeast of Tehsil Jamrud in Khyber District (see Map 1.26 in Part II). It stands at an elevation of 839 meters in the village of Shagai Lala Chena, a settlement perched near the rugged terrain of the Khyber Pass. The name Shagai is derived from a local term meaning the "sound of gunfire" or "stone throwing," reflecting the region's volatile history and its tribal martial traditions.</p> <p>Constructed in 1927 by British colonial forces, the fort was strategically established to monitor and control movement along the Khyber Pass, one of South and Central Asia's most historically significant and geopolitically sensitive corridors. It served as a forward military outpost, safeguarding the route between Peshawar and Landi Kotal, and functioned as a linchpin in the broader framework of British frontier defence policy.</p> <p>Following independence, Shagai Fort was integrated into Pakistan's national security infrastructure. Today, it remains under the control of the Pakistan Army and paramilitary forces, continuing its legacy as a key surveillance and coordination point in the region. It has historically served as the headquarters of the Khyber Rifles, an elite paramilitary force raised initially by the British and comprised mainly of local tribal recruits. The Khyber Rifles have been instrumental in patrolling and securing the pass, earning a reputation as the traditional guardians of this critical mountain passage.</p> <p>In the post 9/11 geopolitical climate, Shagai Fort gained renewed significance as a site for trilateral flag meetings among military officials from Pakistan, NATO, and Afghanistan. These meetings have played a diplomatic role in managing border security and coordinating counterterrorism operations along the Durand Line.</p> |                            |               |            |

Architecturally, the fort is rectangular in layout, featuring a single main entrance located on its southern side. Despite its age, the structure remains in good condition, symbolising the resilience of colonial-era frontier architecture. It is situated on the left side of the Peshawar-Landi Kotal on the main N5 highway, directly facing the historic Shagai family fort, thereby intertwining local heritage with its colonial legacy.

• **Site No. 2**

|                  |                       |               |            |
|------------------|-----------------------|---------------|------------|
| Name:            | Shagai Fort II        | Reference No: | KH 20      |
| Nearest Village: | Shagai Lala Chena     | Area of Site: | 2264sq.m   |
| Coordinates:     | 34.014891N 71.283561E | Altitude:     | 871 M      |
| Access Route:    | Accessible            | Condition:    | Intact     |
| Cast Area        | Koki Khel             | Sub Cast      | Farid Khel |

**Site Description:**

The unattributed Historical Fort Opposite Shagai Fort, Shagai Lala Chena Village, is located in Shagai Lala Chena village. This unidentified historical fort stands on the left side of the main highway, directly opposite the more prominent British era Shagai Fort. Unlike its counterpart, this fort is less well documented in historical records, and its origin, builder, and exact construction period remain unknown. Despite its obscurity, the fort holds architectural and historical significance, particularly due to local oral traditions, which suggest that it predates the British-built Shagai Fort.

The fort is constructed in a rectangular plan and features two main gateways, one on the northern side and another on the western side. Its internal arrangement is notably spacious, comprising eleven rooms along the northern wing, four rooms on the southern wing, and four rooms on the eastern side. Alongside these residential quarters, the fort includes essential amenities such as a kitchen and a washroom, portions of which appear to have been renovated or restored by the Pakistan Army, indicating a degree of modern re-utilisation.

A notable feature of this fort is the iron sniper observation points installed in all directions, presumably for surveillance and defensive purposes. These features suggest that, while the structure's original purpose is unclear, it likely served a military or strategic role, possibly as a watch post or barracks predating the colonial military infrastructure of the area.

The fort's proximity to Shagai Fort and its enduring physical presence underscore its potential importance within the broader military and tribal history of the Khyber Pass region. Further archaeological or archival investigation may shed light on its origin and functional context.

- **Site No. 3**

|                  |                             |               |             |
|------------------|-----------------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Name:            | Ali Masjid Bunker I         | Reference No: | KH 21       |
| Nearest Village: | Ali Masjid Katta Kushta     | Area of Site: | 30sqm       |
| Coordinates:     | 34.030951N 71.258472E       | Altitude:     | 794         |
| Access Route:    | Accessible Via Katta Kushta | Condition:    | Intact      |
| Cast Area        | Malik Din Khel              | Sub Cast      | Jhanda Khel |

**Site Description:**

The site (Plate 3.58 in Part II: Illustrations Plates) is situated in Ali Masjid village at the coordinates 34.0309510°N and 71.2584720°E, with an elevation of 794m above sea level (see Map 1.57 in Part II). These bunkers, constructed during World War I, were strategically placed around the Ali Masjid area to ensure the security and supervision of key trade routes that passed through the region. Their placement at various critical points in the landscape highlights their importance in controlling access to this strategic corridor.

The bunkers are square, with a solid concrete structure designed to withstand external pressures. The interiors are efficiently designed for observation and defence, with snap windows providing visibility for surveillance purposes while maintaining protection for personnel stationed inside. The exterior of each bunker is reinforced with stone block casings, offering an additional layer of defence against potential threats. The choice of materials, coupled with the strategic positioning, underscores the defensive role these structures played during the tumultuous period of World War II.

These bunkers are a testament to the military strategies employed during the war, reflecting the region's significance in broader global conflicts. As such, they remain important historical and architectural markers, offering insights into the defensive measures taken to safeguard vital trade routes and maintain control over critical geopolitical areas.

- **Site No. 4**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                              |               |             |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Name:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Ali Masjid Bunker II         | Reference No: | KH 22       |
| Nearest Village:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Katta Kushta Ali Masjid Kali | Area of Site: | 30sqm       |
| Coordinates:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | 34.031120N 71.257683E        | Altitude:     | 755         |
| Access Route:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Accessible Via Katta Kushta  | Condition:    | Intact      |
| Cast Area                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Malik Din Khel               | Sub Cast      | Jhanda Khel |
| Site Description:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                              |               |             |
| <p>The site (Plate 3.59 in Part II: Illustrations Plates) is located in Ali Masjid village at the coordinates 34.0311200°N and 71.2576830°E, with an elevation of 755m above sea level (see Map 1.68 in Part II). Positioned just above the first bunker, this structure is larger and consists of two distinct portions. The first portion measures 12 feet in length and 10 feet in width, while the second portion is 10 feet long and 10 feet wide. These two sections are interconnected by a narrow pathway, allowing for easy movement between them.</p> |                              |               |             |

- **Site No. 5**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                             |               |             |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Name:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Ali Masjid Bunker III       | Reference No: | KH 23       |
| Nearest Village:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Katta Kushta Ghar Obba Kali | Area of Site: | 300sqm      |
| Coordinates:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | 34° 2'52.05"N 71°15'12.18"E | Altitude:     | 842         |
| Access Route:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Accessible Via Katta Kushta | Condition:    | Intact      |
| Cast Area                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Malik Din Khel              | Sub Cast      | Jhanda Khel |
| Site Description:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                             |               |             |
| <p>The site (Plate 3.60 in Part II: Illustrations Plates) is located in Kata Kushta, Ali Masjid village, at coordinates 34.0477920°N and 71.2533840°E, at an elevation of 842m above sea level (see Map 1.69 in Part II). Positioned below the Kata Kushta railway station area, near the river, this site consists of 72 bunkers. These bunkers are of two distinct types: one features a cone-like structure, while the other is circular or cylindrical.</p> <p>Constructed from concrete, these bunkers are designed for both structural durability and strategic use. Each bunker measures between 6 and 7 feet in height, with approximately 4 feet of the structure buried underground, providing additional protection and stability. The design of these bunkers, with their varied shapes and substantial underground construction, reflects the practical needs for defence and security in this region during their period of use. These bunkers, although now</p> |                             |               |             |

potentially abandoned or repurposed, remain a significant part of the area's wartime infrastructure.

- **Site No. 6**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                |               |             |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Name:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Kata Kushta Tank Blockers - IV | Reference No: | KH 24       |
| Nearest Village:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Katta Kushta, Ali Masjid       | Area of Site: | 15 sqm      |
| Coordinates:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | 34° 3'2.79"N 71°14'57.50"E     | Altitude:     | 852         |
| Access Route:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Via Katta Kushta, Ali Masjid   | Condition:    | Damage      |
| Cast Area                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Malik Din Khel                 | Sub Cast      | Jhanda Khel |
| Site Description:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                |               |             |
| <p>The Kata Kushta bunkers (Plate 3.61 in Part II: Illustrations Plates) are situated at coordinates 34.0507750°N and 71.2493060°E, with an elevation of 852m above sea level, in Kata Kushta village (see Map 1.70 in Part II). These bunkers are strategically located below the main road area near the river, positioned to monitor and secure the trade route. There are two distinct types of bunkers: one features a cone-like structure, while the other is circular or cylindrical. Constructed from concrete, these bunkers stand at a height of 6 to 7 feet, with approximately 4 feet of the structure buried underground for added protection and stability.</p> <p>However, during the construction of a nearby water pool, some of the bunkers have been displaced. The water pool, now in use for storing water, has impacted the original placement of these bunkers. Despite this, the remaining bunkers continue to represent a critical aspect of the region's wartime defence infrastructure. The strategic location and design of these bunkers highlight their importance in the security of the area during their operational period.</p> |                                |               |             |

- **Site No. 7**

|                   |                                   |               |             |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Name:             | Kata Kushta Bunkers/ Sniper Posts | Reference No: | KH 25       |
| Nearest Village:  | Katta Kushta, Ali Masjid          | Area of Site: | 15 sqm      |
| Coordinates:      | 34° 2'45.10"N 71°15'23.23"E       | Altitude:     | 852         |
| Access Route:     | Via Katta Kushta, Ali Masjid      | Condition:    | Damage      |
| Cast Area         | Malik Din Khel                    | Sub Cast      | Jhanda Khel |
| Site Description: |                                   |               |             |

This site (Plate 3.62 in Part II: Illustrations Plates) is situated at coordinates 34.0458620°N and 71.2564520°E, with an elevation of 855m above sea level, in Ali Masjid village (see Map 1.71 in Part II). The bunkers are strategically placed near the F.C. filtration plant, positioned at various key locations along the trade route for enhanced security and surveillance. The interior of these bunkers is designed with a square layout, constructed from solid concrete, and equipped with snap windows for observation. The exterior is reinforced with stone block casing, adding to their structural integrity and durability, making them an important part of the region's security infrastructure.

- **Site No. 8**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                             |               |             |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Name:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Battle Tanks Stand          | Reference No: | KH 25       |
| Nearest Village:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Malik Abad village          | Area of Site: |             |
| Coordinates:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | 34° 0'10.95"N 71°23'10.78"E | Altitude:     | 452 m       |
| Access Route:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Accessible Via Malik Abad   | Condition:    | Intact      |
| Cast Area                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Malik Din Khel              | Sub Cast      | Jhanda Khel |
| Site Description:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                             |               |             |
| <p>The Water Tanker Stand (Plate 3.63 in Part II: Illustrations Plates) at Jamrud, constructed during World War I, is strategically located at coordinates 34.0030430°N and 71.3863270°E, with an elevation of 452 meters in Malik Abad village, Jamrud (see Map 1.72 in Part II). This structure was built using British standard kiln-fired bricks, a technique that ensures durability and resistance to weathering, particularly for infrastructure intended to support logistical operations in wartime conditions. The primary function of the stand was to accommodate water tankers, which played a critical role in supplying water to steam engines used in the transportation of military goods and personnel. The stand served as a vital point for refuelling and maintaining the water supply for steam-powered trains, which were essential to the transportation infrastructure during the war. Given its historical context, the structure stands as a testament to the engineering practices of the period, reflecting the importance of logistical support in wartime operations. The design and construction of the Water Tanker Stand also highlight the strategic importance of Jamrud as a key location for military transportation and infrastructure in the region during World War I.</p> |                             |               |             |

- **Site No. 9**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                             |               |             |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Name:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Katta Kushta Bunker I       | Reference No: | KH 27       |
| Nearest Village:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Kata Kushta                 | Area of Site: | 15 sqm      |
| Coordinates:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 34° 3'19.03"N 71°15'5.43"E  | Altitude:     | 887 m       |
| Access Route:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Accessible Via katta Kushta | Condition:    | Intact      |
| Cast Area                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Malik Din Khel              | Sub Cast      | Jhanda Khel |
| Site Description:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                             |               |             |
| <p>This military bunker (Plate 3.64 in Part II: Illustrations Plates) is situated at coordinates 34.0552850°N and 71.2515090°E, with an elevation of 887 meters in Kata Kushta village (see Map 1.73 in Part II). The bunkers are strategically distributed around the Kata Kushta area, positioned at key locations to ensure the security and monitoring of the trade route. The design of the bunkers is square in plan, constructed from durable concrete, and features a snap window, enhancing their functionality for surveillance purposes. The exterior of the bunker is further reinforced and finished with stone blocks, providing additional protection against environmental elements. These bunkers were likely built as part of a military strategy to safeguard vital trade routes, highlighting their role in both security and logistical support during periods of heightened geopolitical importance. The construction reflects the military's emphasis on strategic positioning and robust infrastructure to maintain control over critical transportation and trade corridors.</p> |                             |               |             |

- **Khyber Railway**

The concept of building a railway through the Khyber Pass was first introduced during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Anglo-Afghan War (1878-1880). Sir Guilford Molesworth, a leading British engineer, suggested constructing a meter gauge railway that would connect India with Afghanistan by way of the pass. However, the lack of a bridge over the River Indus presented a significant logistical obstacle, resulting in the postponement of the project. By 1885, Captain J.R.L. McDonald revived the railway proposal, conducting surveys for a possible line extending to Landi Kotal, a strategically important location near the Afghan border. In 1890, his exploration reached the Kabul River gorge, assessing the possibility of constructing a railway along its challenging, winding path. Additional surveys in 1898 examined the feasibility of a meter or narrow-gauge line through the Khyber Pass.



Significant advancement occurred in 1901 with the extension of the broad-gauge North Western Railway from Peshawar to Jamrud, establishing a foundation for future development and expansion. By 1905, plans were being developed to extend the railway through the Mullagori Hills and along the Kabul River valley. Eventually, Parliament approved construction as far as Torkham, sparking debate over two potential routes: One route traversed the Loi Shilman Valley up to the Shilman Ghakki Pass, while another followed the Kabul River to Smatsai near Fort Dakka. On 17 December 1904, Lieutenant Colonel H.A. Deane, who was then the Agent to the Governor General and Chief Commissioner of the North West Frontier Province, submitted comprehensive plans and cost estimates, ultimately recommending the Shilman alignment.

Lord Kitchener, serving as Commander in Chief at the time, endorsed a direct route through the Loi Shilman Valley, which would have necessitated the construction of an expensive tunnel between Warsak and Smatsai. However, because of the substantial projected costs, the route was redirected to follow a bend in the river toward Palosi, providing a more cost-effective alternative. The railway project encountered serious geopolitical and local challenges. The Afghan government asserted territorial claims east of the Durand Line, contending that the planned railway would intrude onto Afghan land. At the same time, resistance from local tribespeople was persistent, with frequent attacks on construction workers. To address these issues, the government sought expert guidance on safeguarding the railway. Major G.O. Roos Keppel, commander of the Khyber Rifles, was tasked with devising a defence plan for both routes.

Roos Keppel met with senior military officials, including Major Dundee of the Royal Engineers and Captains Bickford and Rouston of the Khyber Rifles, who convened at Landi Kotal to deliberate on defence strategies. In a letter to Major W.E. Venour dated 31 May 1905, he outlined concerns about the railway's exposure to attacks from the north. He proposed the creation of a robust, independent levy corps of about 1,750 rifles. His plan called for bolstering the Khyber Rifles, increasing soldiers' pay, and forming additional infantry units, six for the Loi Shilman route and nine for the more vulnerable Kabul River alignment, each supported by 100 cavalries (Sowars).

To protect the railway, a system of blockhouses was proposed. For the Loi Shilman alignment, blockhouse locations were:

Blockhouse 1 was located one mile northwest of Shahmansur Khel, overseeing the Chena Gudr ferry; Blockhouse 2 stood north of Ghorangi on a commanding spur; Blockhouse 3 was positioned east of the entrance to the Loi Shilman Valley; Blockhouse 4, half a mile further north; Blockhouse 5, northwest of Fattah village; Blockhouse 6, north of Kama on a low hill; and Blockhouse 7 was planned for either the main ridge south of Shilman Ghakki Pass or a knoll to the southeast. For the Kabul River route, blockhouses 4, 5, and 6 were to be established on the river's left bank, with blockhouse 7 placed either at the exact location or slightly westward. Additional infantry units were intended to be stationed from Shinilo Gudr to Sara Tigga, with smaller detachments at Shinpokh and Smatsai.

On 6 July 1905, Lieutenant Colonel Deane formally submitted his recommendations to the Government of India, underscoring the necessity of safeguarding construction workers and securing the railway once completed. He identified a dual threat from the Afridis, who controlled the right bank of the Kabul River and the Mohmands on the left bank. Given the ongoing hostilities between these tribes, Deane advised a combined security approach: modestly increasing the strength of the Khyber Rifles for patrols within the Khyber District, and forming a Mohmand levy corps to protect the flank from Michni to Sara Tigga.

However, on 15 July 1905, the British Government expressed reservations about the suitability of the Shilman Ghakki route and requested further assessment. Despite these concerns, construction advanced, and by 1907, 32 kilometres of metre-gauge railway had been laid from Kacha Garhi (near Peshawar) to Warsak, following the Kabul River valley toward the Loi Shilman Valley.

This provisional railway, popularly known as "The Flying Afridi," operated as far as Warsak within the Peshawar plain. The strategic context shifted dramatically after the signing of the Convention of St Petersburg on 31 August 1907 between Britain and Russia. Under this accord, Britain agreed not to annex or occupy Afghan territory, while Russia recognized Afghanistan as outside its sphere of influence.

With the Russian threat removed, the strategic rationale for the Kabul River railway evaporated. Consequently, the line was dismantled in 1909 before reaching the Durand Line, and its materials, including rails, bridges, and equipment, were repurposed elsewhere in British India.

This brief but significant episode underscores the intricate interplay between colonial infrastructure ambitions, tribal dynamics, and international diplomacy, illustrating the numerous challenges encountered in establishing durable transport networks in the volatile frontier regions of the British Raj.

- **Site No. 1**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                              |               |           |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------|-----------|
| Name:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Jamrud Railway Station       | Reference No: | KH 28     |
| Nearest Village:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Jamrud                       | Area of Site: | 700 Sq.m  |
| Coordinates:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | 34° 0'25.23"N 71°22'40.75"E  | Altitude:     | 461m      |
| Access Route:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Accessible via Jamrud bazaar | Condition:    | Intact    |
| Cast Area                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Koki Khel                    | Sub Cast      | Lala Khel |
| Site Description:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                              |               |           |
| <p>The Jamrud Railway Station (Plate 3.20 in Part II: Illustrations Plates) is located to the northeast of Jamrud town in Khyber District, and stands at an elevation of 461m above sea level (see Map 1.28 in Part II). Established in 1922, the station served as the western terminus of the Rawalpindi-Peshawar extension under the British colonial railway network, marking a significant point on the frontier railway infrastructure to connect the Indian subcontinent to Afghanistan via the Khyber Pass. This extension was part of broader strategic ambitions, including military mobility, trade facilitation, and imperial control over the northwest frontier.</p> <p>Architecturally, the station exemplifies late British colonial design, incorporating durable construction and a function-oriented layout. The building houses distinct rooms for the station master, ticketing services, and passenger waiting areas, reflecting the administrative efficiency valued during the Raj era. The station retains many of its original furnishings and weight balance equipment, offering a rare example of intact colonial railway interiors in Pakistan.</p> <p>Notably, the roof structure and platform benches still bear British-era emblems and insignia, showcasing the imperial symbolism embedded in public architecture of the time. The station was a transit point and a logistical node for supplies and troops during conflict and surveillance along the Durand Line.</p> <p>Despite its decline in operational use over the decades, Jamrud Railway Station remains a heritage site. It symbolises the complex interplay of engineering, colonial administration, and frontier geopolitics. It also reminds us of the unfinished ambitions</p> |                              |               |           |

surrounding the Khyber Railway, which was once envisioned to connect British India with Central Asia through an enduring steel line.

- **Site No. 2**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                             |               |             |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Name:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Medanak Railway Station (Reversing Station) | Reference No: | KH 29       |
| Nearest Village:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Medanak                                     | Area of Site: | 376.87 Sq.m |
| Coordinates:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | 34.0081540N 71.3083170E                     | Altitude:     | 638m        |
| Access Route:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Accessible                                  | Condition:    | Intact      |
| Cast Area                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Koki Khel                                   | Sub Cast      | Abdaal Khel |
| Site Description:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                             |               |             |
| <p>The Medanak Railway Station (Plate 3.21 in Part II: Illustrations Plates), constructed in 1923, is situated to the northeast of Kafi Tangi village, at an elevation of 638m above sea level (see Map 1.29 in Part II). It holds significant historical importance as the first reversing station on the route from Jamrud town. The station functions by having the first engine proceed forward while the last engine begins its operation, making it a crucial point in the railway line's logistics. Located on a high terrace, the station features two rooms along one side, accompanied by a storage area. The structure includes a single iron door and five iron-framed windows, ensuring durability and security. The door itself is composed of three iron plates, with thicknesses ranging from 1.5 to 2 inches, providing robust protection against the elements. Additionally, both the door and windows are fitted with sniper windows, enhancing visibility and security for operational needs. The measurements of the station's door are 6 1/2 feet by 4 feet, while the windows measure 3 feet 2 inches by 4 feet, which are consistent with the station's design standards. These architectural features reflect the station's utilitarian design, which served both functional and security purposes during its construction.</p> |                                             |               |             |

- **Site No. 3**

|                   |                         |               |             |
|-------------------|-------------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Name:             | Changai Station         | Reference No: | KH-30       |
| Nearest Village:  | Kafir Tangi             | Area of Site: | 448 Sqm     |
| Coordinates:      | 34.0079390N 71.3070160E | Altitude:     | 710 m       |
| Access Route:     | Accessible              | Condition:    | Intact      |
| Cast Area         | Koki Khel               | Sub Cast      | Abdaal Khel |
| Site Description: |                         |               |             |

The Changai Station (Plate 3.21 in Part II: Illustrations Plates) is situated northeast of Kafi Tangi village, at 710m above sea level (see Map 1.30 in Part II). It is positioned directly above the Medanak Railway Station and strategically located on the railway line. The station is designed in a rectangular layout and comprises a two-story structure, each floor comprising six rooms. Stone stairs provide access to the ground floor, while the second tier is reached via wooden stairs. The station features an ablution area and four iron water tanks, all of which remain in good condition. The third terrace, which is at the highest point of the station, includes three rooms and one corner room, accessible by a stone staircase. The most notable aspect of this area is its heavy iron-plated doorway, which reinforces the station's security. From the highest point, the Kabul-Peshawar highway can be seen, making this location functional and strategically significant. The overall design of the station reflects its utilitarian purpose, combining practical access with security measures and offering a commanding view of the surrounding area.

• **Site No. 4**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                            |               |            |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------|------------|
| Name:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Shagai Railway Station     | Reference No: | KH 31      |
| Nearest Village:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Shagai                     | Area of Site: | 731sq.ft   |
| Coordinates:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | 34° 1'6.12"N 71°16'31.80"E | Altitude:     | 823        |
| Access Route:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Accessible                 | Condition:    | Intact     |
| Cast Area                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Koki Khel                  | Sub Cast      | Farid Khel |
| Site Description:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                            |               |            |
| <p>The Shagai Railway Station (Plate 3.22 in Part II: Illustrations Plates), constructed in 1923, is located at coordinates 34.0184830°N and 71.2755610°E, with an elevation of meters in Shagai village (see Map 1.31 in Part II). Positioned near the Shagai Fort, the station is designed in a square layout, featuring two entrance gateways and two watchtowers, each accessed by wooden stairs from inside the building. The rooms are arranged around a central courtyard, which includes an iron water tank beneath two half-circular iron roofs. The station was constructed in two phases: the first phase included rooms on the northeast and southeast, using square stone blocks fixed with lime mortar, followed by plastering. The second phase consisted of rooms on the northwest and southwest. The distinctive architectural feature of the station is its iron sheeted half circular roofs, a unique design element for its time. The door</p> |                            |               |            |

measurements are 6 1/2 feet by 4 feet, and the windows measure 3 feet 2 inches by 4 feet. This station's layout and construction reflect both functional and aesthetic considerations, blending traditional materials with more modern techniques to create a secure and durable structure.

- **Site No. 5**

|                  |                             |                   |               |
|------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|---------------|
| Name:            | Medanak Tunnel I            | Reference No:     | KH 32         |
| Nearest Village: | Kafir Tangi                 | Length of Tunnel: | 456 X 20 feet |
| Coordinates:     | 34° 0'45.17"N 71°18'42.27"E | Altitude:         | 619 m         |
| Access Route:    | Accessible                  | Condition:        | Intact        |
| Cast Area        | Koki Khel                   | Sub Cast          | Abdaal Khel   |

**Site Description:**

The Medanak Tunnel I (Plate 3.24 in Part II: Illustrations Plates), located northeast of Kafir Tangi village at an elevation of 619m above sea level, stands as a key railway tunnel on the line originating from Jamrud Railway Station (refer to Map 1.33 in Part II). Built in 1923, the tunnel extends 456 feet in length, with a height of 30 feet and a width of 20 feet. Serving as the first tunnel encountered when travelling from Jamrud, it plays a vital role in enabling rail transit through the Khyber Pass. The tunnel's façade is curved at the front, while its roof is designed in a half-circular shape, a feature that contributes to the structural integrity of the tunnel. The tunnel is primarily constructed using baked bricks, and the corbeling technique has been employed throughout its design, providing a sturdy arch-like structure that ensures durability under pressure. Mir Ghulam, a local from Khyber, was the contractor responsible for its construction, according to official records. This tunnel, as part of the historic railway system, reflects the engineering achievements of its time. The design and construction of the Medanak Tunnel I are notable for its use of traditional materials and techniques in a modern infrastructure project. It remains an integral component of the railway line passing through the Khyber Pass, serving as both a functional and architectural landmark.

- **Site No. 6**

|                  |                               |               |           |
|------------------|-------------------------------|---------------|-----------|
| Name:            | Medanak Tunnel II             | Reference No: | KH 33     |
| Nearest Village: | Kafir Tangi                   | Area of Site: | 443X30 ft |
| Coordinates:     | Tunnel Start<br>34° 0'45.62"N | Altitude:     | 633m      |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                   |            |             |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|-------------|
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | 71°18'33.39"E<br><br>Tunnel End<br>34° 0'43.01"N<br>71°18'29.18"E |            |             |
| Access Route:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Accessible                                                        | Condition: | Intact      |
| Cast Area                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Koki Khel                                                         | Sub Cast   | Abdaal Khel |
| Site Description:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                   |            |             |
| <p>The Madanak Tunnel II (Plate 3.25 in Part II: Illustrations Plates) is the second tunnel encountered when travelling from Jamrud Railway Station. Constructed in 1923, it is located at coordinates 34.0119510°N and 71.3080290°E, with an elevation of 633m above sea level, in Kafir Tangi village (see Map 1.34 in Part II). The tunnel measures 443 feet in length, 30 feet in height, and 20 feet in width. The tunnel's façade is curved and takes a half-circular shape, adding to its structural efficiency. The construction of the tunnel employs bricks at its centre, and the corbelling technique was utilised throughout the structure. This technique, which involves placing successive layers of bricks that slightly overlap each other, ensures the stability and longevity of the tunnel. The design and construction methods used in the Madanak Tunnel 2 II reflect early 20th-century engineering practices, tailored to withstand the demanding terrain of the Khyber Pass.</p> |                                                                   |            |             |

• **Site No. 7**

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|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Name:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Madanak Tunnel III                              |                                              | Reference No: | KH 34       |
| Nearest Village:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Kafir Tangi                                     |                                              | Area of Site: |             |
| Coordinates:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Tunnel Start)<br>34° 0'46.35"N<br>71°17'58.47"E | Tunnel End<br>34° 0'46.51"N<br>71°17'52.72"E | Altitude:     |             |
| Access Route:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                 |                                              | Condition:    |             |
| Cast Area                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Koki Khel                                       |                                              | Sub Cast      | Abdaal Khel |
| Site Description:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                 |                                              |               |             |
| The Madanak Tunnel III (Plate 3.26 in Part II: Illustrations Plates), also known as the Kafir Tangi Tunnel, is located to the northeast of Kafir Tangi village (see Map 1.35 in Part II). It is the third tunnel encountered when travelling from Jamrud Railway Station and was constructed in 1923. The tunnel has a height of 30 feet by 20 feet, with a façade that is curved in shape, while the centre of the tunnel is circular. The tunnel is primarily built using baked bricks, and the corbelling technique has been employed throughout |                                                 |                                              |               |             |

its construction to ensure structural stability. At 1403 feet, it holds the distinction of being the longest tunnel in the region. Nawab Malik Mohammad Zaman Khan, a local contractor, oversaw the construction of the tunnel. This tunnel is an important part of the railway system through the Khyber Pass, showcasing the use of traditional building techniques in early 20th-century infrastructure projects.

• **Site No. 8**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                |                                              |               |             |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Name:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Changai Tunnel I                               |                                              | Reference No: | KH 35       |
| Nearest Village:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Kafar Tangi                                    |                                              | Area of Site: | 269 X 20 ft |
| Coordinates:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Tunnel Start<br>34° 0'46.35"N<br>71°17'58.47"E | Tunnel End<br>34° 0'47.33"N<br>71°17'55.38"E | Altitude:     | 708m        |
| Access Route:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Accessible                                     |                                              | Condition:    | Intact      |
| Cast Area                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Koki Khel                                      |                                              | Sub Cast      | Abdaal Khel |
| Site Description:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                |                                              |               |             |
| <p>Changai Tunnel I (Plate 3.27 in Part II: Illustrations Plates) is strategically located at coordinates 34.012910°N and 71.2995940°E, in Changi village, at an elevation of 708m above sea level (see Map 1.36 in Part II). As the fourth tunnel encountered along the railway route from Jamrud Railway Station, it was constructed in 1923 by the local contractor Malik Niaz Mohammad Khan.</p> <p>The tunnel's total length is 269 feet and has internal dimensions of 30 feet in height and 20 feet in width. Its façade is curved to optimise structural load distribution, while the tunnel's internal cross-section adopts a half-circular shape at the centre to enhance stability further. The tunnel's construction utilised baked bricks, with the corbelling technique applied throughout. This method, which involves the successive layering of bricks to close the tunnel gradually, provides added strength and resistance to the compressive forces exerted by the surrounding earth.</p> <p>Corbeling ensures the tunnel's structural integrity and enables the efficient handling of internal pressures, especially in a mountainous region such as Khyber Pass. The overall design and construction methods utilised for Changai Tunnel I reflect early 20th-century engineering advancements tailored to meet the specific geographical challenges of the region.</p> |                                                |                                              |               |             |



- **Site No. 9**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                |                                              |               |             |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Name:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Changai Tunnel II                              |                                              | Reference No: | KH 36       |
| Nearest Village:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Peeryanu Kali, Kafir Tangi                     |                                              | Area of Site: | 169 X 30ft. |
| Coordinates:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Tunnel Start<br>34° 0'48.88"N<br>71°17'52.51"E | Tunnel End<br>34° 0'50.12"N<br>71°17'50.87"E | Altitude:     | 715 m       |
| Access Route:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Accessible                                     |                                              | Condition:    | Intact      |
| Cast Area                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Koki Khel                                      |                                              | Sub Cast      | Abdaal Khel |
| Site Description:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                |                                              |               |             |
| <p>Changai Tunnel II (Plate 3.28 in Part II: Illustrations Plates) is situated at coordinates 34.0138930°N and 71.297430°E, near Kafir Tangi village in Peeryanu Kali, with an elevation of 715m above sea level (see Map 1.37 in Part II). It is the fifth tunnel encountered when travelling from Jamrud Railway Station and was constructed in 1923 by Malik Niaz Mohammad Khan.</p> <p>The tunnel extends for a total of 169 feet, with internal dimensions of roughly 30 feet in height and 20 feet in width. The façade of the tunnel is curved, while its interior features a half-circular shape at the centre. Bricks were used as the primary construction material throughout the tunnel, and the corbelling technique was employed in its design. This technique involves the gradual placement of bricks, with each layer slightly extending over the previous one, creating a stable arch structure that distributes compressive forces effectively.</p> <p>The use of bricks and the corbelling technique ensures the tunnel's structural integrity, enabling it to withstand the pressures exerted by the surrounding terrain. These construction methods are emblematic of early 20th-century engineering practices, specifically designed to address the challenges posed by the rugged landscape of the Khyber Pass.</p> |                                                |                                              |               |             |

- **Site No. 10**

|                   |                                                |                                              |               |               |
|-------------------|------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Name:             | Changai Tunnel III                             |                                              | Reference No: | KH 37         |
| Nearest Village:  | Peeryanu Kali, Kafir Tangi                     |                                              | Area of Site: | 166 X 26 ft   |
| Coordinates:      | Tunnel Start<br>34° 0'51.89"N<br>71°17'48.22"E | Tunnel End<br>34° 0'51.44"N<br>71°17'46.30"E | Altitude:     | 714 m         |
| Access Route:     | Accessible                                     |                                              | Condition:    | Intact        |
| Cast Area         | Koki Khel                                      |                                              | Sub Cast      | Sikandar Khel |
| Site Description: |                                                |                                              |               |               |

Changai Tunnel-III (Plate 3.29 in Part II: Illustrations Plates) is located at coordinates 34.0144260°N and 71.2961840°E, in Peeryanu Kali, with the elevation of 714m above sea level, in Piryanu village (see Map 1.38 in Part II). It is the sixth tunnel encountered when travelling from Jamrud Railway Station and was constructed in 1923 by the local contractor Subedar Mirdast.

The tunnel measures 166 feet in length, with an internal height of 30 feet and a width of 20 feet. The tunnel is constructed primarily of kiln-fired bricks, chosen for their durability and strength. Its façade is curved, while the central section features a half-circular shape. This standard design element enhances the tunnel's structural integrity by efficiently distributing the weight from the surrounding earth. Throughout the construction, the corbelling technique was used, where successive layers of bricks are placed in a manner that gradually narrows the opening, forming a stable arch.

The combination of kiln bricks and the corbelling technique provides the tunnel with strength and stability, enabling it to withstand the pressure exerted by the surrounding terrain. This method reflects early 20th-century engineering practices that were specifically designed to tackle the geological challenges of the Khyber Pass region.

• **Site No. 11**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                |                                              |               |               |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Name:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Changai Tunnel IV                              |                                              | Reference No: | KH 38         |
| Nearest Village:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Peeryanu Kali, Kafir Tangi                     |                                              | Area of Site: | 30 X 20 ft.   |
| Coordinates:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Tunnel Start<br>34° 0'52.93"N<br>71°17'41.57"E | Tunnel End<br>34° 0'54.06"N<br>71°17'39.48"E | Altitude:     | 720m          |
| Access Route:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Accessible                                     |                                              | Condition:    | Intact        |
| Cast Area                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Koki Khel                                      |                                              | Sub Cast      | Sikandar Khel |
| Site Description:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                |                                              |               |               |
| <p>Changai Tunnel-IV (Plate 3.30 in Part II: Illustrations Plates) is situated at coordinates 34.0150380°N and 71.2942520°E, in Peeryanu Kali, with the elevation of 720m above sea level, in Piryanu village (see Map 1.39 in Part II). It is the seventh tunnel encountered when travelling from Jamrud Railway Station and was constructed in 1924 by the local contractor Khan Saib Abdul Jabbar Khan.</p> <p>The tunnel measures 166 feet in length, with an internal height of 30 feet and a width of 20 feet. Constructed primarily using kiln-fired bricks, the tunnel features a curved</p> |                                                |                                              |               |               |

façade, with a half-circular shape at the centre. This design helps distribute the structural loads more effectively. The corbelling technique was employed throughout the tunnel's construction, where layers of bricks are placed incrementally, forming a stable, arched structure.

The use of kiln bricks and the corbelling technique ensures the tunnel's resilience and ability to withstand the pressure from the surrounding earth. This method of construction reflects the engineering techniques of the early 20th century, which were designed to meet the challenges posed by the mountainous terrain of the Khyber Pass.

- **Site No. 12**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                |                                              |               |               |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Name:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Waterfall/ Abshaar Tunnel                      |                                              | Reference No: | KH 39         |
| Nearest Village:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Peeryanu Kali, Kafir Tangi                     |                                              | Area of Site: | 741x 5x5m     |
| Coordinates:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Tunnel Start<br>34° 0'57.50"N<br>71°17'32.43"E | Tunnel End<br>34° 0'55.78"N<br>71°17'24.28"E | Altitude:     | 731 m         |
| Access Route:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Accessible                                     |                                              | Condition:    | Intact        |
| Cast Area                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Koki Khel                                      |                                              | Sub Cast      | Sikandar Khel |
| Site Description:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                |                                              |               |               |
| <p>Changai Tunnel 8 (Plate 3.31 in Part II: Illustrations Plates), also referred to as the Waterfall Tunnel, is situated at Peeryanu Kali within Kafir Tangi village (see Map 1.40 in Part II). Constructed in 1923 by the local contractor Malik Muhammad Hassan Khel, this tunnel is notable for its considerable length of 741 meters. It is distinguished as the first tunnel in the series to incorporate two side chambers, each measuring 10 by 10 by 10 feet. The main tunnel features a width of 30 feet and a height of 20 feet. Built predominantly from kiln-fired bricks, it showcases a curved façade with a half-circular central section, enhancing its structural integrity. The use of corbelling throughout its construction, where each successive brick layer projects slightly inward, creates a stable arched form. This construction method, along with the use of kiln bricks, ensures the durability and resilience of the tunnel, allowing it to withstand the pressures of the surrounding terrain. The inclusion of side rooms is a unique feature that adds functional value to the tunnel, and the overall design reflects the advanced engineering techniques of the early 20th century, tailored to address the challenges posed by the Khyber Pass landscape.</p> |                                                |                                              |               |               |

• **Site No. 13**

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|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Name:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Mackson Tunnel                                 |                                              | Reference No: | KH 40         |
| Nearest Village:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Sur Kamar, Changai Kali,                       |                                              | Area of Site: | 301x30x20 ft. |
| Coordinates:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Tunnel Start<br>34° 0'43.87"N<br>71°17'20.34"E | Tunnel End<br>34° 0'41.14"N<br>71°17'22.04"E | Altitude:     | 736m          |
| Access Route:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Accessible                                     |                                              | Condition:    | Intact        |
| Cast Area                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Koki Khel                                      |                                              | Sub Cast      | Sikandar Khel |
| Site Description:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                |                                              |               |               |
| <p>The renowned Mackson Tunnel 9 (Plate 3.32 in Part II: Illustrations Plates) is situated at coordinates 34.0114310°N and 71.2894940°E, to the north of Changai village, at an elevation of 736m above sea level (see Map 1.41 in Part II). It is the ninth tunnel along the route from Jamrud Railway Station and was constructed in 1923 by the local contractor Shamard Khan.</p> <p>Measuring a total length of 301 feet, with a height of 30 feet and a width of 20 feet, the tunnel features a curved façade and a half-circular central section. The structure is primarily built from kiln-fired bricks, contributing to its strength and durability. The construction makes extensive use of the corbelling technique, wherein successive layers of bricks are arranged to form a stable arched profile gradually.</p> <p>This method of construction, combined with the use of kiln bricks, ensures the tunnel's resilience to external pressures. The design and engineering techniques used in Mackson Tunnel 9 reflect the advanced civil engineering practices of the early 20th century, which were essential for overcoming the geological challenges of the Khyber Pass region.</p> |                                                |                                              |               |               |

• **Site No. 14**

|                   |                                                |                                              |               |               |
|-------------------|------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Name:             | Barley Ridge Tunnel                            |                                              | Reference No: | KH 41         |
| Nearest Village:  | Shagai Village                                 |                                              | Area of Site: | 486x30x20 ft. |
| Coordinates:      | Tunnel Start<br>34° 0'10.55"N<br>71°17'24.86"E | Tunnel End<br>34° 0'12.18"N<br>71°17'19.43"E | Altitude:     | 779 m         |
| Access Route:     | Accessible                                     |                                              | Condition:    | Intact        |
| Cast Area         | Koki Khel                                      |                                              | Sub Cast      | Farid Khel    |
| Site Description: |                                                |                                              |               |               |

The site (Plate 3.33 in Part II: Illustrations Plates) is situated at coordinates 34.0034430°N and 71.2886750°E, north of Shagai village, at an elevation of 779m above sea level (see Map 1.42 in Part II). This tunnel is the tenth encountered when travelling from Jamrud Railway Station and was built in 1923 by the local contractor Mirak Hasham.

The tunnel measures 486 feet in length, 30 feet in height, and 20 feet in width. It features a curved façade, with a central section designed in a half-circular form. Constructed mainly from kiln-fired bricks, the tunnel is notable for its durability and strength. The corbelling technique was employed throughout, with bricks arranged in layers that progressively extend inward, forming a stable arched structure.

The combination of kiln-fired bricks and corbelling provides the tunnel with the structural resilience needed to withstand the pressures exerted by the surrounding earth. This tunnel serves as another illustration of the engineering approaches used in the early twentieth century to overcome the rugged terrain of the Khyber Pass.

• **Site No. 15**

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|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Name:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Red Hill Tunnel                                |                                             | Reference No: | KH 42         |
| Nearest Village:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Maskot Kali, Sur Kamar                         |                                             | Area of Site: | 446x30x20 ft. |
| Coordinates:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Tunnel Start<br>34° 1'30.05"N<br>71°16'12.58"E | Tunnel End<br>34° 1'30.46"N<br>71°16'7.36"E | Altitude:     | 833 m         |
| Access Route:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Accessible                                     |                                             | Condition:    | Intact        |
| Cast Area                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Koki Khel                                      |                                             | Sub Cast      | Abdaal Khel   |
| Site Description:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                |                                             |               |               |
| <p>This tunnel site (Plate 3.34 in Part II: Illustrations Plates) is situated at coordinates 34.0250980°N and 71.2702390°E, with an elevation of 833m above sea level in Maskot village (see Map 1.43 in Part II). It is the 11th tunnel encountered when travelling from Jamrud Railway Station. Constructed in 1923 by the local contractor Langar Jadran, the tunnel spans a total length of 446 feet. Its height measures 30 feet, with a width of 20 feet. The tunnel's façade is curved in shape, while the central portion of the tunnel is designed with a half-circular structure. Notably, this tunnel is the first in the series to be plastered, with a circular roof made of concrete. This engineering feature distinguishes it from other tunnels in the region, marking an important milestone in the development of the area's infrastructure. The design and construction</p> |                                                |                                             |               |               |

of this tunnel highlight the region's evolving architectural techniques and provide valuable insights into early 20th-century engineering practices.

- **Site No. 16**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                |                                              |               |             |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Name:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Barrack Ridge Tunnel                           |                                              | Reference No: | KH 43       |
| Nearest Village:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Maskot, Sur Kamar                              |                                              | Area of Site: |             |
| Coordinates:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Tunnel Start<br>34° 1'37.10"N<br>71°15'55.37"E | Tunnel End<br>34° 1'38.45"N<br>71°15'52.30"E | Altitude:     | 276x30x20ft |
| Access Route:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Accessible                                     |                                              | Condition:    | 836m        |
| Cast Area                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Koki Khel                                      |                                              | Sub Cast      | Abdaal Khel |
| Site Description:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                |                                              |               |             |
| <p>The Barrack Ridge Tunnel (Plate 3.35 in Part II: Illustrations Plates) is located at coordinates 34.0273370°N and 71.2645820°E within the Sur Kamar mountain range, at an elevation of 836m above sea level in Maskot village (see Map 1.44 in Part II). The twelfth tunnel encountered when travelling from Jamrud Railway Station was constructed in 1923 by the local contractor Usman Khan.</p> <p>The tunnel measures approximately 276 feet in length, with a height of 30 feet and a width of 20 feet. Its façade is curved, while the central section features a circular design. Built from kiln-fired bricks, this tunnel is the second one completed within the Sur Kamar mountain range, exemplifying both indigenous construction methods and the broader infrastructural advancements made in the region during the early twentieth century.</p> |                                                |                                              |               |             |

- **Site No. 17**

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|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Name:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Ali Masjid Tunnel I                            |                                              | Reference No: | KH 44       |
| Nearest Village:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Ali Masjid                                     |                                              | Area of Site: | 219x30x20   |
| Coordinates:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Tunnel Start<br>34° 1'53.09"N<br>71°15'41.83"E | Tunnel End<br>34° 1'58.52"N<br>71°15'38.54"E | Altitude:     | 848         |
| Access Route:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Accessible via Ali Masjid                      |                                              | Condition:    | Intact      |
| Cast Area                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Koki Khel                                      |                                              | Sub Cast      | Abdaal Khel |
| Site Description:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                |                                              |               |             |
| This tunnel, the first (Plate 3.36 in Part II: Illustrations Plates) of six railway tunnels in the Ali Masjid railway line, is located at coordinates 34.0313310°N and 71.2616820°E, with an elevation of 848m above sea level in Ali Masjid village (see Map 1.45 in Part |                                                |                                              |               |             |

II). It is the 13th tunnel along the route from Jamrud Railway Station. Constructed in 1923 by the Peshawar-based contractor Mahmud Jan Peshawari, the tunnel spans approximately 219 feet in length, has a height of 30 feet, and a width of 20 feet. The tunnel's façade is curved, transitioning to a semicircular shape at its centre. The roof is constructed with solid concrete, reinforcing the tunnel's durability and structural integrity, marking a significant feat of engineering during the period of construction.

• **Site No. 18**

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|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Name:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Ali Masjid Tunnel II                           |                                              | Reference No: | KH 45         |
| Nearest Village:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                |                                              | Area of Site: | 293x30x20 ft. |
| Coordinates:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Tunnel Start<br>34° 1'53.09"N<br>71°15'41.83"E | Tunnel End<br>34° 1'54.71"N<br>71°15'40.16"E | Altitude:     | 854m          |
| Access Route:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Accessible via Ali Masjid                      |                                              | Condition:    | Intact        |
| Cast Area                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Koki Khel                                      |                                              | Sub Cast      | Abdaal Khel   |
| Site Description:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                |                                              |               |               |
| <p>This tunnel, the second (Plate 3.37 in Part II: Illustrations Plates) in the series of six railway tunnels at Ali Masjid, is located at coordinates 34.0330080°N and 71.2607340°E, with an elevation of 854m above sea level in Ali Masjid village (see Map 1.46 in Part II). It is the 14th tunnel along the route from Jamrud Railway Station. Constructed in 1923 by the Peshawar-based contractor Mahmud Jan Peshawari, the tunnel spans approximately 293 feet in length, with a height of 30 feet and a width of 20 feet. The façade of the tunnel is curved, transitioning to a semicircular shape at its centre. The roof is made of solid concrete, enhancing the structural integrity and durability of the tunnel.</p> |                                                |                                              |               |               |

• **Site No. 19**

|                   |                                               |                                              |               |               |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Name:             | Ali Masjid Tunnel III                         |                                              | Reference No: | KH 46         |
| Nearest Village:  | Ali Masjid                                    |                                              | Area of Site: | 1540x30x20 ft |
| Coordinates:      | Tunnel Start<br>34° 2'0.72"N<br>71°15'37.96"E | Tunnel End<br>34° 2'13.17"N<br>71°15'28.62"E | Altitude:     | 867 m         |
| Access Route:     | Accessible via Ali Masjid                     |                                              | Condition:    | Intact        |
| Cast Area         | Malik Din Khel                                |                                              | Sub Cast      | Jhanda Khel   |
| Site Description: |                                               |                                              |               |               |

This tunnel, the third (Plate 3.38 in Part II: Illustrations Plates) among the six railway tunnels at Ali Masjid, is located at coordinates 34.0371240°N and 71.2579240°E, at an elevation of 867m above sea level in Ali Masjid village (see Map 1.47 in Part II). It is the fifteenth tunnel encountered when travelling from Jamrud Railway Station and was constructed in 1923 by the local contractor Amal Din.

Extending approximately 1,540 feet in length, with a height of 30 feet and a width of 20 feet, the tunnel features a curved façade that transitions into a semicircular arch at its center. The roof is built of solid concrete, ensuring robust structural integrity and long-term durability. This design exemplifies the engineering standards of the period, combining both practicality and resilience.

- **Site No. 20**

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|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Name:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Ali Masjid Tunnel IV                           |                                              | Reference No: | KH 47         |
| Nearest Village:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Ali Masjid                                     |                                              | Area of Site: | 347x30x20 ft. |
| Coordinates:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Tunnel Start<br>34° 2'18.48"N<br>71°15'21.72"E | Tunnel End<br>34° 2'24.23"N<br>71°15'21.31"E | Altitude:     | 895           |
| Access Route:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Accessible via Ali Masjid                      |                                              | Condition:    | Intact        |
| Cast Area                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Malik Din Khel                                 |                                              | Sub Cast      | Jhanda Khel   |
| Site Description:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                |                                              |               |               |
| <p>This is the fourth (Plate 3.39 in Part II: Illustrations Plates) tunnel among the six railway tunnels in Ali Masjid, located at coordinates 34.0385430°N and 71.2561040°E, with an elevation of 895m above sea level in Ali Masjid village (see Map 1.48 in Part II). It is the 16th tunnel when coming from Jamrud Railway Station, constructed in 1923 by the local contractor Malik Ghulam Muhammad. The tunnel spans approximately 347 feet in length, with a height of 30 feet and a width of 20 feet. The tunnel's façade is curved, transitioning to a semicircular shape in the centre. The roof of the tunnel is made from solid concrete, providing strong structural support and durability.</p> |                                                |                                              |               |               |

- **Site No. 21**

|                  |                                                |                                              |               |               |
|------------------|------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Name:            | Ali Masjid Tunnel V                            |                                              | Reference No: | KH 48         |
| Nearest Village: | Katta Kushta                                   |                                              | Area of Site: | 152x30x20 ft, |
| Coordinates:     | Tunnel Start<br>34° 2'27.06"N<br>71°15'21.68"E | Tunnel End<br>34° 2'34.99"N<br>71°15'22.81"E | Altitude:     | 859 m         |



|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                           |            |             |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|------------|-------------|
| Access Route:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Accessible via Ali Masjid | Condition: | Intact      |
| Cast Area                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Malik Din Khel            | Sub Cast   | Jhanda Khel |
| Site Description:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                           |            |             |
| <p>The fifth tunnel (Plate 3.40 in Part II: Illustrations Plates) in the Ali Masjid railway tunnel series is located at coordinates 34.0401910°N and 71.255930°E in Katta Kushta village, with an elevation of 859m above sea level (see Map 1.49 in Part II). It is the 17th tunnel from Jamrud Railway Station and was constructed in 1923 by the local contractor Malik Latif Khan. The tunnel measures approximately 152 feet in length, with a height of 30 feet and a width of 20 feet. The façade of the tunnel is curved, with a semicircular shape at its centre. The roof is constructed using solid concrete, providing robust structural integrity and long-term durability. This tunnel exemplifies the engineering standards of the era, designed to facilitate the passage of trains through challenging terrain.</p> |                           |            |             |

- **Site No. 22**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                           |               |               |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Name:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Ali Masjid Tunnel VI      | Reference No: | KH 49         |
| Nearest Village:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Katta Kushta              | Area of Site: | 852x30x20 ft. |
| Coordinates:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | 34.0432120N 71.2563050E   | Altitude:     | 812m          |
| Access Route:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Accessible via Ali Masjid | Condition:    | Intact        |
| Cast Area                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Malik Din Khel            | Sub Cast      | Jhanda Khel   |
| Site Description:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                           |               |               |
| <p>The sixth and final tunnel (Plate 3.41 in Part II: Illustrations Plates) in the Ali Masjid railway tunnel series is located at coordinates 34.0432120°N and 71.2563050°E, within Katta Kushta village, at an elevation of 812m above sea level (see Map 1.50 in Part II). It is the 18th tunnel from Jamrud Railway Station and was constructed in 1923 by the local contractor Muhammad Akbar. The tunnel measures approximately 852 feet in length, with a height of 30 feet and a width of 20 feet. The façade of the tunnel features a curved design with a semicircular shape at its centre. The roof is made of solid concrete, ensuring structural durability. Like its predecessors, this tunnel was engineered to navigate the region's rugged terrain, serving as a critical part of the railway network.</p> |                           |               |               |

- **Site No. 23**

|       |                  |               |       |
|-------|------------------|---------------|-------|
| Name: | Railway Bridge I | Reference No: | KH 50 |
|-------|------------------|---------------|-------|

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|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Nearest Village:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Kafir Tangi                 | Area of Site: |             |
| Coordinates:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | 34° 0'45.88"N 71°18'40.09"E | Altitude:     | 615m        |
| Access Route:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                             | Condition:    | Intact      |
| Cast Area                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Koki Khel                   | Sub Cast      | Abdaal Khel |
| Site Description:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                             |               |             |
| <p>The bridge (Plate 3.43 in Part II: Illustrations Plates) located at coordinates 34.0127450°N and 71.3111350°E with the elevation of 615 meters in Kafir Tangi village, serves as a vital link between Tunnel 1 and Tunnel 2 (see Map 1.52 in Part II). It is entirely constructed from iron blocks, including both the pillars and the plates. Originally named Kafir Tangi, the bridge is now referred to as Islam Dara. The bridge bears a manufacturing inscription on its plates, which provides the following details:</p> <p>West Wood Baillie &amp; Co, Engineers &amp; Contractors, London, England, ISR 1879.</p> <p>This historical information highlights the bridge's significance and its construction date, providing a glimpse into its origin and craftsmanship.</p> |                             |               |             |

- **Site No. 24**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                           |               |              |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|---------------|--------------|
| Name:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Railway Bridge II at Takhta Bhaig Ghariza | Reference No: | KH 51        |
| Nearest Village:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Takhta Bhaig                              | Area of Site: | 450 x 32 ft. |
| Coordinates:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | 33°59'58.93"N 71°24'3.36"E                | Altitude:     | 463 m        |
| Access Route:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Accessible                                | Condition:    | Flooded      |
| Cast Area                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Koki Khel                                 | Sub Cast      | Tor Khel     |
| Site Description:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                           |               |              |
| <p>The bridge (Plate 3.44 in Part II: Illustrations Plates) located at coordinates 33.999130°N and 71.4017420°E with the elevation of 463 meters in Takhta Bhaig Ghariza village, spans a total length of 450 feet (see Map 1.53 in Part II). The height of the bridge is 32 feet, while its width is 15 feet. In 2010, the bridge suffered significant erosion due to flooding, which destroyed approximately 80% of its arches. Currently, only eight arches remain, each having a half-circular shape. The entire bridge is constructed from kiln bricks, showcasing the materials and craftsmanship used in its original construction.</p> |                                           |               |              |

- **Site No. 25**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                              |               |                |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|---------------|----------------|
| Name:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Railway Bridge III at Guddar Road, Bhag Kali | Reference No: | KH 52          |
| Nearest Village:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Bhag Kali                                    | Area of Site: | 40x10x15 ft.   |
| Coordinates:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | 34° 0'32.31"N 71°22'19.39"E                  | Altitude:     | 455m           |
| Access Route:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Accessible via Bhag Kali                     | Condition:    | Damage         |
| Cast Area                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Koki Khel                                    | Sub Cast      | Sher Khan Khel |
| Site Description:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                              |               |                |
| <p>This bridge (Plate 3.45 in Part II: Illustrations Plates) is located at coordinates 34.0089750°N and 71.3720540°E, with an elevation of 455 meters in the Guddar Road area of Takhta Bhaig village (see Map 1.54 in Part II). Currently, the structure consists of only one remaining arch and two circular bases. The overall length of the bridge is 40 feet, with a height of 10 feet and a width of 15 feet. The bridge, which once featured a more complex design, has suffered significant degradation over time. Despite the damage, the remaining portions still serve as a reminder of its original form and importance in the region's infrastructure.</p> |                                              |               |                |

- **Site No. 26**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                      |               |                |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------|----------------|
| Name:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Railway bridge IV New Abadi Td Bazar | Reference No: | KH 53          |
| Nearest Village:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | New Abadi, TD Bazaar village.        | Area of Site: |                |
| Coordinates:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | 34° 0'33.52"N 71°22'2.14"E           | Altitude:     | 461m           |
| Access Route:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Accessible, metallic road            | Condition:    |                |
| Cast Area                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Koki Khel                            | Sub Cast      | Sher Khan Khel |
| Site Description:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                      |               |                |
| <p>The bridge (Plate 3.46 in Part II: Illustrations Plates) is located at coordinates 34.0093110°N and 71.367260°E, at an elevation of 461 meters, in the New Abadi TD Bazar village. It is 40 feet long, 10 feet high, and 15 feet wide. (see Map 1.55 in Part II), Despite its simplicity of dimensions, the bridge serves as an important local structure, connecting various regions and facilitating movement within the area.</p> |                                      |               |                |

- **Site No. 27**

|                  |                                       |               |              |
|------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------|--------------|
| Name:            | Railway Bridge V, New Abadi Td Bazaar | Reference No: | KH 54        |
| Nearest Village: | New Abadi T.D Bazar                   | Area of Site: | 26x12x14 ft. |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                             |            |                |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|----------------|
| Coordinates:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | 34° 0'29.19"N 71°21'48.63"E | Altitude:  | 466 m          |
| Access Route:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Accessible via Td Bazaar    | Condition: | Intact         |
| Cast Area                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Koki Khel                   | Sub Cast   | Sher Khan Khel |
| Site Description:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                             |            |                |
| <p>The bridge (Plate 3.47 in Part II: Illustrations Plates) is situated at coordinates 34.0081070°N and 71.3635080°E, with an elevation of 466m in New Abadi TD Bazar village (see Map 1.56 in Part II). This bridge is crucial for facilitating transportation and connectivity within the region, offering both local and regional access.</p> <p>In terms of its dimensions, the bridge measures 14 feet in length, providing a compact but practical crossing over the area. The height of the structure is 12 feet, while its width extends to 26 feet, allowing sufficient space for vehicles and pedestrians.</p> |                             |            |                |

- **Site No. 28**

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|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|---------------|----------------|
| Name:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Railway Bridge VI<br>Sat Sorang Td Baazar | Reference No: | KH 55          |
| Nearest Village:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | New Abadi Sath(7) Sorang T.D Bazaar       | Area of Site: | 111x12x29 ft.  |
| Coordinates:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | 34° 0'27.04"N 71°21'25.15"E               | Altitude:     | 476m           |
| Access Route:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Accessible via T.D. Bazaar                | Condition:    | Intact         |
| Cast Area                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Koki Khel                                 | Sub Cast      | Sher Khan Khel |
| Site Description:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                           |               |                |
| <p>The bridge (Plate 3.48 in Part II: Illustrations Plates) is located at coordinates 34.0075110°N and 71.3569860°E, at an elevation of 476m, in Sat Sorang TD Bazar village (see Map 1.57 in Part II). It plays a crucial role in providing a vital link for transportation within the region, ensuring connectivity for both local and regional travellers.</p> <p>The bridge spans 111 feet in length and offers a substantial crossing over the area. Its height is 12 feet, while its width extends to 29 feet, comfortably accommodating both vehicular traffic and pedestrian movement.</p> <p>Given its strategic location and robust dimensions, this bridge is an essential piece of infrastructure. It facilitates easy movement and supports the local community's connectivity needs. It also significantly contributes to the accessibility and development of the surrounding areas.</p> |                                           |               |                |

- **Site No. 29**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                |               |               |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Name:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Railway Bridge VII Kafar Tangi | Reference No: | KH 56         |
| Nearest Village:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Kafar Tangi (Islam Dara)       | Area of Site: | 230x58x10 ft. |
| Coordinates:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | 34° 0'23.04"N 71°18'45.72"E    | Altitude:     | 599m          |
| Access Route:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Accessible Via Kafar Tangi     | Condition:    | Intact        |
| Cast Area                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Koki Khel                      | Sub Cast      | Abdaal Khel   |
| Site Description:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                |               |               |
| <p>This is the first railway bridge (Plate 3.49 in Part II: Illustrations Plates) encountered on the route from Peshawar, located in Kafir Tangi village (see Map 1.58 in Part II). The bridge is situated at coordinates 34.00640°N and 71.3127010°E, with an elevation of 599m above sea level.</p> <p>The bridge's dimensions are as follows: Its length is 230 feet, making it a significant crossing point. Its height is 58 feet, ensuring clearance for trains and vehicles beneath it. The width is 10 feet, designed to accommodate the railway tracks and provide a safe travel across.</p> <p>As the first railway bridge encountered on this route, it holds a key strategic position. It facilitates transportation and connectivity in the region and supports the railway network's operational flow.</p> |                                |               |               |

- **Site No. 30**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                  |               |              |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------|--------------|
| Name:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Railway Bridge VIII, Kafar Tangi | Reference No: | KH 57        |
| Nearest Village:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Kafar Tangi (Islam Dara)         | Area of Site: | 37x30x16 ft. |
| Coordinates:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 34° 0'19.81"N 71°18'46.22"E      | Altitude:     | 602m         |
| Access Route:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Accessible via Kafar Tangi       | Condition:    |              |
| Cast Area                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Koki Khel                        | Sub Cast      | Abdaal Khel  |
| Site Description:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                  |               |              |
| <p>This bridge (Plate 3.50 in Part II: Illustrations Plates) is located in Kafir Tangi village at coordinates 34.0055030°N and 71.312840°E, with an elevation of 602m above sea level (see Map 1.59 in Part II).</p> <p>The bridge's length is 37 feet, providing a short but vital passage. It stands at a height of 30 feet, offering clearance for any traffic or natural elements passing below. The</p> |                                  |               |              |

width of the bridge is 16 feet, accommodating the necessary infrastructure for its intended use.

This bridge plays a significant role in maintaining connectivity and supporting the local transportation network in Kafir Tangi, situated in a region of strategic importance.

- **Site No. 31**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                |               |              |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------|--------------|
| Name:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Railway Bridge IX, Kafar Tangi | Reference No: | KH 58        |
| Nearest Village:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Kafar Tangi (Islam Dara)       | Area of Site: | 73x11x15 ft. |
| Coordinates:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | 34° 0'45.88"N 71°18'40.09"E    | Altitude:     | 615m         |
| Access Route:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Accessible via Kafar Tangi     | Condition:    | Intact       |
| Cast Area                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Koki Khel                      | Sub Cast      | Abdaal Khel  |
| Site Description:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                |               |              |
| <p>This bridge (Plate 3.51 in Part II: Illustrations Plates) is located in Kafir Tangi village at coordinates 34.0127450°N and 71.3111350°E, with an elevation of 615m above sea level (see Map 1.60 in Part II).</p> <p>The bridge has a length of 73 feet, providing ample space for vehicular or pedestrian passage. It stands at a height of 11 feet, ensuring sufficient clearance for any traffic or natural flows beneath. The width of the bridge is 15 feet, which accommodates the region's required traffic capacity.</p> |                                |               |              |

- **Site No. 32**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                               |               |              |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------|--------------|
| Name:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Railway Bridge X, Kafar Tangi | Reference No: | KH 59        |
| Nearest Village:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Kafar Tangi (Islam Dara)      | Area of Site: | 71x10x22 ft. |
| Coordinates:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | 34° 0'41.53"N 71°18'28.00"E   | Altitude:     | 626m         |
| Access Route:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Accessible via Kafar Tangi    | Condition:    | Intact       |
| Cast Area                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Koki Khel                     | Sub Cast      | Abdaal Khel  |
| Site Description:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                               |               |              |
| <p>This bridge (Plate 3.52 in Part II: Illustrations Plates) is situated in Kafir Tangi village at coordinates 34.0115360°N and 71.3077780°E, with an elevation of 626m above sea level (see Map 1.61 in Part II). The bridge's length is 71 feet, providing a solid span for crossing. Its height is 10 feet, allowing for adequate clearance below. The width measures 22 feet, ensuring sufficient space for both vehicles and pedestrians. This</p> |                               |               |              |

bridge plays a crucial role in facilitating transport and connectivity within the region, contributing to the infrastructure of Kafir Tangi village.

- **Site No. 33**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                      |               |            |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------|------------|
| Name:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Railway Bridge XI, Shagai Lala Chena | Reference No: | KH 60      |
| Nearest Village:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Shagai Lala Chena                    | Area of Site: | 161x40x19  |
| Coordinates:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 34° 0'20.40"N 71°17'34.75"E          | Altitude:     | 759m       |
| Access Route:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Accessible via Shagai                | Condition:    | Intact     |
| Cast Area                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Koki Khel                            | Sub Cast      | Farid Khel |
| Site Description:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                      |               |            |
| <p>The bridge (Plate 3.53 in Part II: Illustrations Plates) is located in Shagai Lala Chena village at coordinates 34.0056310°N and 71.2930120°E, with an elevation of 759m above sea level (see Map 1.61 in Part II).</p> <p>The site's length is 162 feet, offering ample space for passage or structural utility. Its height is 40 feet, providing adequate clearance. The width measures 19 feet, ensuring a sufficient area for movement or operations related to the site. This location is essential to the region's infrastructure, supporting transportation and other activities in Shagai Lala Chena village.</p> |                                      |               |            |

- **Site No. 34**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                      |               |               |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Name:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Railway Bridge XII - I, Katta Kushta | Reference No: | KH 61         |
| Nearest Village:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Katta Kushta                         | Area of Site: | 150x14x14 ft. |
| Coordinates:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | 34° 3'6.18"N 71°15'0.11"E            | Altitude:     | 855m          |
| Access Route:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Accessible via Katta Kushta          | Condition:    | Intact        |
| Cast Area                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Malik Din Khel                       | Sub Cast      | Jhanda Khel   |
| Site Description:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                      |               |               |
| <p>The bridge (Plate 3.54 in Part II: Illustrations Plates) is located in Katta Kushta village at coordinates 34.0516370°N and 71.250040°E, with an elevation of 855m above sea level (see Map 1.63 in Part II). The 150-foot-long bridge provides ample space for traffic or other infrastructure functions. Its 14-foot height ensures sufficient clearance for movement beneath it. The bridge's width measures 14 feet, offering enough room for vehicles or other necessary operations.</p> |                                      |               |               |

- **Site No. 35**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                 |               |               |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Name:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Khyber Railway Bridge - XIII - II, Katta Kushta | Reference No: | KH 62         |
| Nearest Village:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Katta Kushta                                    | Area of Site: | 290x10x15 ft. |
| Coordinates:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | 34° 3'17.75"N 71°14'59.37"E                     | Altitude:     | 869m          |
| Access Route:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Accessible via Katta Kushta                     | Condition:    | Intact        |
| Cast Area                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Malik Din Khel                                  | Sub Cast      | Jhanda Khel   |
| Site Description:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                 |               |               |
| <p>The bridge (Plate 3.55 in Part II: Illustrations Plates) is located in Katta Kushta village at coordinates 34.0551450°N and 71.249680°E, with an elevation of 869m above sea level (see Map 1.64 in Part II). The bridge's length is 290 feet, providing significant space for vehicular or pedestrian traffic. Its height is 10 feet, allowing adequate clearance beneath it. Its width measures 15 feet, ensuring sufficient room for movement or operational purposes.</p> |                                                 |               |               |

- **Site No. 36**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                         |               |               |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Name:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Khyber Railway Bridge Prangsang - XIV I | Reference No: | KH 63         |
| Nearest Village:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Prangsang                               | Area of Site: | 138x15x16 ft. |
| Coordinates:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | 34° 3'40.28"N 71°14'21.07"E             | Altitude:     | 892m          |
| Access Route:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Accessible via Prangsang                | Condition:    | Intact        |
| Cast Area                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Malik Din Khel                          | Sub Cast      | Jhanda Khel   |
| Site Description:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                         |               |               |
| <p>The bridge (Plate 3.56 in Part II: Illustrations Plates) is located in Prangsang village at coordinates 34.0611870°N and 71.2392380°E, with an elevation of 892m above sea level (see Map 1.65 in Part II). The bridge's length is 138 feet, providing ample space for passage. Its height is 16 feet, offering sufficient clearance beneath it. Its width measures 15 feet, ensuring enough area for movement and operational activities.</p> |                                         |               |               |

- **Site No. 37**

|                   |                                          |               |               |
|-------------------|------------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Name:             | Khyber Railway Bridge Prangsang - XIV II | Reference No: | KH-64         |
| Nearest Village:  | Prangsang                                | Area of Site: | 140x15x15 ft. |
| Coordinates:      | 34° 3'29.25"N 71°14'40.47"E              | Altitude:     | 878m          |
| Access Route:     | Accessible via Prangsang                 | Condition:    | Intact        |
| Cast Area         | Malik Din Khel                           | Sub Cast      | Jhanda Khel   |
| Site Description: |                                          |               |               |



The bridge (Plate 3.57 in Part II: Illustrations Plates) is located in Prangsang village at coordinates 34.0581250°N and 71.2445740°E, with an elevation of 878m above sea level (see Map 1.66 in Part II). The 140-foot-long bridge provides adequate space for passage. Its 15-foot height ensures sufficient clearance, and its 15-foot width allows for safe and efficient movement. This bridge is key in supporting transportation and connectivity in the Prangsang village area.

- **Coins and Medals of British India reported from District Khyber**

The coinage of British India reflects both the evolution of colonial administration and the broader economic transformations of the subcontinent under imperial rule (Chattopadhyay, 1977, p. 45; Mitchiner, 1979, p. 622). The numismatic history of British rule in the Indian subcontinent is generally categorised into two main phases: the East India Company period (before 1858) and the later Imperial coinage issued under the direct authority of the British Crown (after 1858) (Stevens, 2012, p. 18; Goenka, 2000, p. 83). Initially, the EIC administered separate monetary systems within the three major Presidencies, Madras, Bombay, and Bengal, each minting its distinctive coinage to suit local requirements and traditions (Wiggins, 1992, p. 120; Rhodes, 1979, p. 44). Over time, the necessity for standardised currency led to the introduction of uniform coinage across British territories, beginning in 1835, which continued until the dissolution of EIC authority in 1858 (Greasley & Oxley, 1996, p. 211; Craig, 1981, p. 312).

The Indian Rebellion of 1857 was a pivotal event that led to the British Crown taking direct control over India (Metcalf & Metcalf, 2006, p. 156). After this transition, the so-called Imperial coin series began to feature portraits of the reigning British crowned heads, Queen Victoria, Edward VII, George V, Edward VIII (though none were issued for circulation), and George VI (Stevens, 2012, p. 64; Singh, 2011, p. 97). The design elements, iconography, and inscriptions on these coins evolved; for instance, the title "Empress of India" was adopted for Queen Victoria in 1877 following the Royal Titles Act of 1876 (Robinson, 1986, p. 242; Allen, 2012, p. 53). British Indian coinage not only enabled trade and administration across the empire but also played a vital role in linking the Indian economy to the broader British imperial system (Roy, 2012, p. 139; Mishra, 2017, p. 201). In places like District Khyber, these coins are commonly found in archaeological deposits, reflecting their widespread use and the deep reach of British

administrative and economic networks into even the frontier areas (Sharma, 2008, p. 78; Tandon, 2021, p. 66).

- **William IV (c. 26 June 1830 CE - 20 June 1837 CE)**

The coinage of William IV in India marks the initial phase of uniform East India Company (EIC) issues, introduced in response to the need for a standardised monetary system across British territories. The principal type reported from District Khyber consists of the rare silver rupee, featuring the bust of William IV facing right on the obverse, a motif derived from contemporary British portraiture (Mitchiner, 1979, p. 1034; Pieper, 2009, p. 225). The reverse design incorporates the value "ONE RUPEE" in both English and Urdu (یک روپیہ) within a laurel wreath, with the legend "EAST INDIA COMPANY" and date below, exemplifying the transition from localised presidency coinage to centralised imperial motifs (Craig, 1981, p. 312; Stevens, 2012, p. 32). Finds from Khyber are congruent with similar EIC issues documented across northern and north-western India (Pieper, 2009), often appearing in stratified archaeological deposits associated with early colonial administrative and military activity (Sharma, 2008, p. 77).

**Type. Bust of king and Year (Rare One Silver Rupee)**

**Obv.** Bust of King William facing right.

**Rev..** Value within wreath in English and Urdu (Yek Rupiya), outside wreath English legend & date below, with legend: ⌘ EAST INDIA COMPANY ⌘ • 1835  
ONE RUPEE

یک روپیہ

**Coin nos.** Plate 1-11, Section 4.20.1.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

- **Victoria (c. 20 June 1837 CE - 22 January 1901 CE)**

The coinage of Queen Victoria in India is notable for both its typological diversity and its abundance in archaeological contexts. Early in her reign, coins were issued with the legend "*VICTORIA QUEEN*," transitioning to "*VICTORIA EMPRESS*" after 1877 by the Royal Titles Act (Allen, 2012, p. 53; Pieper, 2009, p. 238). Multiple denominations are attested from District Khyber, including a rare one rupee (1892), half rupee, quarter rupee, and two annas, each bearing left-facing effigies of Victoria. The reverse design typically features value inscriptions in both English and Urdu within a wreath, with a variety of legends reflecting changes in imperial titulature and minting authority (Mitchiner, 1979, pp. 1063-1069; Stevens, 2012, p. 64). These coins are widely found

in both urban and rural archaeological sites across South Asia, serving as primary chronological markers for the high colonial period (Tandon, 2021, p. 68; Rhodes, 1979, p. 65). Comparative assemblages from Punjab, Bengal, and Sindh reveal similar patterns of typological continuity, though the overstruck and restruck issues found in Khyber sometimes hint at frontier circulation dynamics (Goenka, 2000, p. 95).

**Type 1. Bust of Queen and Year (Rare One Rupee)**

**Obv.** Bust of Queen Victoria facing left with the legend: VICTORIA QUEEN.

**Rev..** Value within wreath in English and Urdu (Yek Rupiya), outside wreath English legend & date below, with legend: ONE RUPEE, INDIA, 1892

ONE RUPEE

**Coin nos.** Plate 1, Section 4.20.1.2 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type 2. Bust of Queen and Year (Silver Half Rupee)**

**Obv.** Bust of Queen Victoria facing left with the legend: VICTORIA QUEEN.

**Rev..** Value within wreath in English and Urdu (Hasth Anna), outside wreath English legend & date below, with legend: ⌘ EAST INDIA COMPANY ⌘ • 1840

ONE RUPEE

**Coin nos.** Plate 2-3, Section 4.20.1.2 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type 2.1. Bust of Queen and Year (Silver Half Rupee)**

**Obv.** Bust of Victoria facing left with the legend: VICTORIA EMPRESS.

**Rev..** Value within wreath in English inside wreath English legend & date below, with legend: HALF RUPEE, INDIA • 1886 • 1895 • 1899.

**Coin nos.** Plate 4-6, Section 4.20.1.2 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type 3. Bust of Queen and Year (Silver 1/4 Rupee)**

**Obv.** Bust of Victoria facing left with the legend: VICTORIA EMPRESS.

**Rev.** Value within wreath in English outside wreath English legend & date below, with legend: 1/4 RUPEE, INDIA • 1886 • 1895 • 1899

**Coin nos.** Plate 7-13, Section 4.20.1.2 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type 4. Bust of Queen and Year (Silver Two Annas)**

**Obv.** Bust of Queen Victoria facing left with the legend: VICTORIA QUEEN.

**Rev..** Value within wreath in English and Urdu (Hasth Anna), outside wreath English legend & date below, with legend: ⌘ EAST INDIA COMPANY ⌘ • 1841

TWO ANNAS

**Coin nos.** Plate 14, Section 4.20.1.2 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type 5. Bust of Queen and Year (Two Annas)**

**Obv.** Bust of Victoria facing left with the legend: VICTORIA EMPRESS.

**Rev..** Value within wreath in English outside wreath English legend & date below, with legend: 1/4 RUPEE, INDIA • 1886 • 1888 • 1891 • 1892 • 1895 • 1896 • 1897 • 1900 • 1901.

**Coin nos.** Plate 15-28, Section 4.20.1.2 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

- **Edward VII (c. 22 January 1901 CE - 6 May 1910 CE)**

Edward VII's coinage continues the imperial portraiture tradition, typified by the bust of the king to the right with the legend in English, "*EDWARD VII KING & EMPEROR*" (Pieper, 2009, p. 275). The one-rupee silver coins feature, on the reverse, the denomination in both English and Urdu, flanked by sprays of lotus and surmounted by a crown, maintaining the bilingual and syncretic iconographic traditions of the Raj (Stevens, 2012, p. 91). Chronologically limited to a single decade, these coins are less common but are significant for their clear typological demarcation and their association with the transition to twentieth-century monetary regimes (Mitchiner, 1979, p. 1097). Comparable finds have been reported from stratified contexts in the North-West Frontier and urban deposits in Delhi (Sharma, 2008, p. 81).

**Type. Bust of king and Year (Silver One Rupee)**

**Obv.** Bust of King Edward VII facing right, dividing a legend within a raised and toothed border, legend: EDWARD VII KING & EMPEROR.

**Rev..** The value in English and Urdu - Yek rupiya (One rupee), and the date below with a spray of lotus flowers on each side and a crown above, all within a raised, toothed border, Legend: ONE RUPEE, INDIA, یک روپیہ, 1909.

**Coin nos.** Plate 4-6, Section 4.20.1.3 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

- **George V (c. 6 May 1910 CE - 20 January 1936 CE)**

The reign of George V is marked by a substantial increase in coin production and typological diversity, with numerous issues found throughout District Khyber. The obverse of the coin features a crowned, left-facing portrait of George V, accompanied by the inscription "GEORGE V KING EMPEROR." On the reverse, the rupee's denomination appears in both English and Urdu, set within an ornate circle and encircled by a wreath made up of roses, thistles, shamrocks, and lotus flowers, symbols intended to represent imperial unity (MACW, 2016, p. 118; Stevens, 2012, p. 102). Lesser denominations, such as the two annas and 1/12 anna, feature similar iconography (Pieper, 2009, p. 310). These coins are often found in abundance at both archaeological and surface find sites, providing important chronological markers for the late colonial period (Allen, 2012, p. 102; Sharma, 2008, p. 85). Typological parallels exist with contemporary issues from the Punjab and Sindh, and their widespread circulation is attested by coin hoards and numismatic surveys across South Asia (Mitchiner, 1979, p. 1115).

**Type 1. Bust of king and Year (Silver One Rupee)**

**Obv.** Crowned bust of King George V facing left (type II), Legend: GEORGE V KING EMPEROR.

**Rev.** Within a circle, the date divides legend in English & Urdu (Yek Rupya) with the outside of the circle having a wreath made of roses, thistle, shamrock leaves and lotus flowers, all within a toothed border, Legend: ONE RUPEE, INDIA, (Dates: 1912; 1913; 1914; 1915; 1916; 1917; 1918; 1919; 1920), یک روپیہ.

**Coin nos.** Plate 1-9, Section 4.20.1.4 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

### **Type 2. Bust of king and Year (Silver Two Annas)**

**Obv.** Crowned bust of King George V facing left, Legend: GEORGE V KING EMPEROR.

**Rev.** Within the circle, date divides legend in English & Urdu (Do Aana), a wreath made of roses, within a toothed border, Legend: TWO ANNAS, INDIA, 1913, دو آنہ روپیہ.

**Coin nos.** Plate 10, Section 4.20.1.4 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

### **Type 3. Bust of king and Year (Silver 1/12 Anna)**

**Obv.** Crowned bust of King George V facing left, Legend: GEORGE V KING EMPEROR.

**Rev.** Within the circle, date divides legend in English & Urdu (Do Aana), a wreath made of roses, within a toothed border, Legend: 1/12 ANNA INDIA, 1924.

**Coin nos.** Plate 10, Section 4.20.1.4 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

- **Edward VIII (c. 20 January 1936 CE - 11 December 1936 CE)**

Edward VIII's reign was so short that no coins bearing his portrait were ever issued for circulation in British India. While dies were produced and pattern coins exist, no official coins featuring his image have been found in archaeological contexts in District Khyber or other regions (MACW, 2016, p. 136; Pieper, 2009, p. 355). This absence is well-documented in both historical records and standard coin catalogues, serving as a useful chronological indicator in the study of colonial numismatics.

- **George VI (c. 11 December 1936 CE - 15 August 1947 CE)**

The coinage of George VI is significant as it represents the final phase of British imperial rule in India. The left-facing bust of George VI and the legend "GEORGE VI KING EMPEROR" are characteristic of both the rupee and half-rupee silver coins (Stevens, 2012, p. 136; Pieper, 2009, p. 364). The reverse maintains the established format: the denomination in English and Urdu, encircled by a wreath of roses, thistle, shamrock, and lotus, and a toothed border. Coins from this reign are commonly encountered in late colonial and proto-independence archaeological contexts, often associated with both civilian settlements and British military installations (Tandon,

2021, p. 76; Allen, 2012, p. 119). Their abundance in regions such as District Khyber underlines the enduring economic penetration of the British administration until the eve of independence (Craig, 1981, p. 421).

**Type 1. Bust of king and Year (Silver One Rupee)**

**Obv.** Bust of George VI facing left, small rim decoration, Legend: GEORGE VI KING EMPEROR.

**Rev.** Within circle, date divides legend in English & Urdu (Yek Rupya). Outside circle, wreath made of roses, thistle, shamrock leaves, and lotus flowers. All within a toothed border, Legend: ONE RUPEE INDIA, 1940. یک روپیہ

**Coin nos.** Plate 1, Section 4.20.1.5 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type 2. Bust of king and Year (Silver Half Rupee)**

**Obv.** Bust of George VI facing left—small rim decoration, Legend: GEORGE VI KING EMPEROR.

**Rev.** Within circle, date divides legend in English & Urdu (half Rupya). Outside circle, wreath made of roses, thistle, shamrock leaves, and lotus flowers. All within a toothed border, Legend: HALF RUPEE INDIA, 1930.

**Coin nos.** Plate 1, Section 4.20.1.5 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**5.1.1.13 Recent Era (Pakistan)**

**A. Site No. 1**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                            |               |             |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Name:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Bab-e-Khyber               | Reference No: | KH          |
| Nearest Village:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Jamrud Bazar               | Area of Site: | 1700 sq. ft |
| Coordinates:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | 34° 0'9.00"N 71°22'48.12"E | Altitude:     |             |
| Access Route:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                            | Condition:    |             |
| Cast Area                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                            | Sub Cast      |             |
| Site Description:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                            |               |             |
| <p>Bab-e-Khyber (Plate 3.66 in Part II: Illustrations Plates), also known as the Khyber Gate, is a monumental structure located at the start of Khyber Pass (see Map 1.75 in Part II). Constructed in 1964 during the rule of President Ayub Khan, it serves as a symbolic gateway to the Indian-subcontinent from the northwest. The gate stands adjacent to the Jamrud Fort, approximately 16 kilometres west of Peshawar, marking the beginning of the Khyber Pass, a passage that has been pivotal throughout history.</p> <p>The Khyber Pass itself has been a crucial route for various civilisations, facilitating invasions, migrations, and trade between Central Asia and the Indian subcontinent. Historical figures such as Alexander the Great, Genghis Khan, and Mahmud of Ghazni traversed this path, underscoring its strategic significance. The construction of Bab e</p> |                            |               |             |

Khyber in the 1960s was aimed at commemorating this rich history and reinforcing the region's importance as a cultural and historical landmark.

Architecturally, Bab-e-Khyber is designed to reflect the region's heritage, featuring elements that resonate with the traditional Pashtun style. Its robust structure and imposing presence symbolise the resilience and strength of the people who have historically inhabited the area. Over the years, the gate has become a prominent symbol of Pakistan's connection to its past and its role as a bridge between different cultures and civilisations.

In addition to its impressive architecture, Bab e Khyber holds deep cultural and symbolic meaning. It embodies the resilience of the local people and their longstanding role in bridging different cultures throughout history. The gate stands as a powerful symbol of the region's rich heritage and its continuing relevance in Pakistan's cultural and historical identity.

Acknowledging its significance, the government of Pakistan features Bab-e-Khyber on the reverse of the 10-rupee banknote, with the founder of Pakistan, Muhammad Ali Jinnah's portrait on the front and Bab-e-Khyber on the back, underscoring its status as a national monument.

Today, Bab e Khyber remains a point of interest for visitors, historians, and tourists alike. It continues to highlight the strategic and cultural importance of the region, drawing those interested in the Khyber Pass and its pivotal role in shaping the subcontinent's history.

## **5.1.2 TEHSIL LANDI KOTAL**

### **5.1.2.1 PROTOHISTORIC PERIOD**

The recent discoveries in District Khyber have marked a significant milestone in the archaeological understanding of the region, unveiling the presence of a protohistoric cultural phase hitherto undocumented in this frontier zone. Traditionally, the protohistoric period in Pakistan has been well studied in the Punjab, Sindh, Gomal plains, Bannu Basin, and sites such as Rehman Dheri and Gundi Umar Khan. These areas have provided rich material culture associated with the Indus Valley Civilisation and its immediate successors. However, District Khyber, long regarded primarily for its strategic and tribal historical relevance, has now emerged as a critical site

contributing to the narrative of early human settlements and cultural transitions in northwest Pakistan.

The most significant and recent explorations near the Torkham border have shifted this paradigm. A groundbreaking site was reported at the Omari Camp area in Torkham, Nangarhar Province, which is directly adjacent to District Khyber. This site, located at an elevation of 597 meters above sea level, was identified by cultural staff under the supervision of Mawlawi Zabihullah Noorani, Head of the Department of Information and Culture in Nangarhar. Initial findings from this location indicate a multi-period site encompassing remnants of the Mughal period (specifically Babur's era), the Kushan civilisation, and most remarkably, artefacts dating back to the protohistoric phase associated with the Mature Indus period (c. 2600-1900 BCE).

The protohistoric period is typically described as a transitional era bridging prehistoric and historic times. This phase is defined by the rise of early writing systems, the development of organised urban centres, and increasingly complex material culture. The recent discovery of protohistoric artefacts in Omari Camp, near Torkham and adjacent to District Khyber, suggests a northwestern extension of the Mature Indus Civilisation (c. 2600-1900 BCE), a significant expansion beyond the previously documented core regions such as Dera Ismail Khan, Gomal, and Bannu. This new northern outpost notably aligns with other key protohistoric trade settlements such as Shortugai, a prominent Harappan site in present-day Afghanistan, strategically located near lapis lazuli mines and at the crossroads of Central and South-Asian trade networks. Shortugai, situated on the Oxus River, served as an Indus trading colony and reflects the far-reaching commercial and cultural influence of the Indus Civilisation into northeastern Afghanistan, likely connected via routes passing through the Khyber Pass (Possehl, 2002, p. 34). These findings collectively reshape our understanding of the Indus cultural periphery, highlighting the Khyber Torkham axis not only as a historical military corridor but also as a vital protohistoric exchange route linking South and Central Asia.

The discovery of protohistoric relics in District Khyber, particularly near the Omari Camp area of Torkham, is a momentous development in South-Asian archaeology. Located in a geopolitically sensitive and culturally stratified region, these findings not only connect the area to the well-documented Mughal and Kushan periods but also embed it within the broader Indus Valley and protohistoric narrative, which is critical



for understanding the emergence of urbanism, trade, and complex societies in the region. The presence of Mature Harappan-era material culture suggests that Khyber was more than just a military or tribal passage; it functioned as an active cultural and economic corridor, facilitating interaction between South and Central Asia via the Khyber Pass. This expands the known reach of the Indus Civilisation beyond its traditional core areas like Harappa, Mohenjo-Daro, and Gommal Bannu, pushing its frontier deeper into the northwestern uplands. Given the site's multi-period stratigraphy, including relics from protohistoric, Kushan, and Mughal phases, there is an urgent need for preservation and professional archaeological investigation to authenticate, date, and interpret its layers. Such work could not only fill critical gaps in regional chronology but also reposition District Khyber as a significant node in the prehistoric and early historic development of South Asia.

#### **A. Description of Site and Material Analysis**

The exact location of the protohistoric site in Landi Kotal, District Khyber, remains undisclosed, mainly due to the illicit activities of treasure hunters and illegal diggers, who have explored and partially looted the area under the cover of secrecy, fearing detection by law enforcement agencies. As a result, these sites have been disturbed without any formal archaeological oversight, leading to the loss of stratigraphic integrity and contextual data essential for proper scientific analysis. However, based on surface collections and local informant accounts, it is evident that the lower occupational layers of several disturbed sites contain protohistoric and Bronze Age cultural material. Notably, the pottery assemblages recovered from these contexts are frequently reported from the Landi Kotal region, which is thus identified as the general provenance of these materials. However, the precise archaeological coordinates remain unverified, as clandestine diggers have intentionally withheld this information to avoid legal consequences.

The pottery recovered is typologically consistent with both the Mature Harappan phase (c. 2600-1900 BCE) and the Early Indus Valley Civilisation (IVC) phase. Diagnostic features include red slipped, wheel-made ware, painted geometric and linear motifs, and a variety of domestic utilitarian forms, such as jars, bowls, and storage vessels, attributes closely aligned with major Indus cultural centres. The presence of such material strongly suggests a culturally continuous and complex occupation during the

protohistoric period, placing this part of District Khyber within the northern frontier of the Indus cultural sphere.

This challenges traditional models that restrict protohistoric cultural development to southern zones like Gomal, Bannu, and Dera Ismail Khan. Instead, it proposes a northwestern extension of the Indus Civilisation, likely facilitated by the trade and communication networks that historically traversed the Khyber Pass. The evidence underscores the urgent need for systematic archaeological intervention, including proper excavation, stratigraphic analysis, and heritage protection, to prevent further destruction and to reconstruct the cultural and chronological framework of this underexplored yet archaeologically rich region.

A wide variety of protohistoric pottery types have been reported from the sites under investigation, reflecting the rich material culture and diverse artistic expressions of these ancient communities. The assemblage includes painted terracotta bowls with broad rims, often featuring animal motifs such as winged lambs and birds, rendered in striking black and red pigments. Large water pitchers and jars, some with narrow necks and others with wide openings, display intricate geometric patterns, crosshatching, and medallion-style decorations. Unique forms like perforated jars, animal-headed vessels, and globular pots with mythological or composite creatures have also been recovered, showcasing both utilitarian and ceremonial uses. Many pieces are adorned with complex motifs, including floral designs, zigzag patterns, and scenes of hunting or daily life, testifying to a sophisticated visual language. This diversity in pottery styles not only provides insight into the technological advancements and aesthetic preferences of the protohistoric peoples but also suggests extensive cultural interactions and symbolic traditions in the region.

## **B. The Ceremonial Vase/ Jar**

The ceramic vessel (Plate 1, Section 5.2.1 in Part II) is of considerable archaeological significance, characterised by elaborate decoration that strongly associates it with the Mature Harappan phase (c. 2600-1900 BCE) of the Indus Valley Civilisation.

The vessel is large and cylindrical with a rounded bottom, widening slightly towards the mid-section and tapering gently toward a slightly flared rim. The rim area has noticeable damage and partial chipping. A measuring tape alongside indicates that the

vessel stands approximately 45 centimetres in height, signifying that it likely served a storage or ceremonial function.

The ceramic is executed in a typical Indus Valley style, featuring a distinctive reddish to buff colored slip with decoration in dark brown or black paint. The painted designs are well preserved but exhibit minor fading and abrasion, consistent with prolonged burial or ancient deposition.

The jar's body is organised into horizontal registers; each filled meticulously with symbolic and decorative motifs. The decoration is divided primarily into three prominent registers, each separated by narrower geometric bands:

Contains intricate patterns, including rows of short vertical lines, horizontally elongated S-shaped or wave-like motifs, and small semi-circular loops.

Repetitive and orderly, suggesting careful standardisation typical of Mature Harappan ceramic styles.

#### **5.1.1.1.1 Central Figurative Register (Primary Motif):**

- i. Dominated by stylised representations of animals, primarily long-horned bulls, depicted with great artistic skill.
- ii. Each bull is represented in a distinctive elongated profile, characterised by finely drawn body patterns, including cross-hatched details on the torso, indicating a textile or decorative element on the animal's body.
- iii. Prominent horns are curved and deliberately exaggerated, demonstrating symbolic or ritual significance.
- iv. Bulls alternate orientation, facing left or right, with distinct separation by carefully executed motifs:
- v. Palm-like trees or plants: Highly stylised, with radiating branches and symmetrical leaf patterns.
- vi. Circular sun-like symbols: Each composed of multiple concentric circles with a central dot, possibly representing astral or solar symbolism.
- vii. Snake-like or serpentine motifs: Repeatedly drawn as curved or wave-like lines, possibly symbolising water or fertility, important themes in Indus iconography.
- viii. Smaller motifs resembling fish or aquatic creatures are also occasionally visible, reinforcing aquatic symbolism.

#### **5.1.1.1.2 Lower Geometric and Figurative Register:**

- i. Features similar animals and plant motifs to those in the central band but scaled smaller, with additional palm trees, serpentine patterns, sun symbols, and repeating geometric or vegetal patterns.
- ii. Each motif is carefully spaced and clearly defined within smaller frames or compartments.

#### **5.1.1.1.3 Bottom and Base:**

The lower portion of the vessel transitions into simpler geometric patterns, primarily triangular motifs, forming a visual base for the vessel. This element is common in Indus ceramics, marking a clear stylistic convention.

### **C. Royal of Ceremonial chalice or pedestal**

The ceramic vessel (Plate 1, Section 5.2.2 in Part II) exhibits a unique and elaborate shape resembling a chalice or pedestal bowl. It comprises three distinguishable segments:

#### **Upper Bowl:**

The bowl section (Plate 2, Section 5.2.2) is shaped in a floral or lobed pattern, consisting of six petals, like curved indentations, creating a flower-like silhouette when viewed from above. The rim is gently flared outward, well-defined, and maintains symmetry despite minor signs of wear or chipping.

#### **Central Columnar Stem:**

The bowl narrows sharply into a slender cylindrical stem with a distinct midsection that tapers slightly inwards (Plate 3, Section 5.2.2). This stem section is decorated with a meticulous checkered or grid-like geometric pattern composed of alternating small squares in dark brown/black and buff/yellowish shades.

#### **Base Section:**

The lower segment flares outwards again, stabilising into a broad, rounded base. It is designed for firm stability and support (Plate 3, Section 5.2.2).

Like the upper and middle sections, it is carefully ornamented with bands of decoration.

#### **Surface Treatment and Colours:**

The vessel's ceramic body displays a buff or creamy white slip, typical of finely crafted ancient pottery. Decoration employs a palette primarily of dark brown or black outlines,

complemented with subdued shades of red ochre or terracotta. The paint remains remarkably vivid, suggesting careful application and advanced firing techniques.

### **Decorative Motifs and Patterns:**

#### **Exterior Surface:**

The bowl's exterior is divided into panels framed by vertical borders containing large white circular dots. Panels predominantly feature stylised birds rendered in profile, depicted with exaggerated, curvilinear forms. These birds possess large wings elaborately patterned with geometric shapes and line detailing. The birds are frequently shown alongside stylised aquatic motifs, including fish and simplified vegetal or floral elements.

Decorative bands of white circles appear repeatedly, providing visual harmony and separating figurative motifs from geometric patterns.

#### **Interior Surface:**

The bowl's interior mirrors (Plate 4, Section 5.2.2) the complexity of the exterior. At the centre of the bowl's base, a circular medallion prominently features a single stylised bird with detailed, outstretched wings. This bird faces right and is accompanied by a smaller fish-like motif. Surrounding this central bird medallion, each lobed indentation carries additional motifs of fish and plants, set against a background decorated with circular bands or linear details. A continuous band of repeating white circles runs along the inner upper rim, echoing the external decorative scheme.

#### **Stem and Base Patterns:**

The stem's geometric checkerboard pattern provides a striking contrast against the organic motifs of birds and fish on the upper and lower parts, demonstrating a thoughtful interplay of geometric and natural forms.

The base features a repeating band of stylised fish encircled by circular dots, creating visual coherence from top to bottom.

### **Artistic and Cultural Significance:**

The vessel's stylistic attributes, intricately detailed animal motifs, geometric patterns, and balanced colouration point towards an artistic tradition closely aligned with ancient South-Asian protohistoric or early historic periods, potentially associated with

Harappan or later Bronze Age cultures. The use of avian and aquatic imagery likely holds symbolic significance relating to fertility, water symbolism, or cosmological beliefs prevalent among ancient Indus communities.

### **Condition and Preservation:**

The artefact appears to be in excellent preservation condition despite minor abrasions and signs of age-related wear. Its detailed decoration and vibrant colour palette underscore its high status, possibly indicating ceremonial or ritual usage.

The iconography and decorative sophistication of this ceramic artefact represent a crucial piece of cultural heritage. It provides invaluable insight into the ceremonial or ritualistic traditions of the communities in the Indus Valley or adjoining regions. Its documentation, scientific analysis (such as thermoluminescence dating), and careful preservation are of utmost importance to accurately situate it within a broader archaeological context and further our understanding of ancient South-Asian civilisations

### **D. Terracotta Pot/Globular**

The Jar (Plate 1-6, Section 5.2.3 in Part II) is wheel-made, having a thin fabric form with a relatively narrow neck and broad shoulders, made of buff colored clay and painted using dark brown to black mineral pigment. The most striking feature is the elaborate hunting scene that encircles the entire body, an extraordinary example of narrative iconography in early South-Asian protohistoric pottery.

The central visual motif (Plate 1) showcases a majestic bird of prey, possibly a falcon or eagle, grasping two ibexes, one in each of its outstretched talons. This scene is rendered with dynamic movement and careful proportioning, emphasising the predator's assertive posture and the resistance of the prey animals. The ibexes are distinguished by their signature backwards curving horns and elongated limbs. At the same time, the raptor is marked by an angular beak, forward staring eye, and commanding wingspan that extends across the compositional space (Plate 2).

Surrounding this central vignette is a dense field of zigzag and wave patterns, which may symbolise terrain, flowing water, or the energetic atmosphere of the hunt. These repeating zigzag motifs create a textured backdrop that not only frames the figures but also animates the surface visually. Among the design elements are additional fauna,

including spotted leopards or panthers (Plate 3), possibly engaged in interaction one pair appears to be locked in a mirrored, almost heraldic pose, their bodies twisted toward each other with shared gaze, conveying either confrontation or courtship and another scene a leopard is trying to grasp the prey head from the eagle.

Other notable decorative elements include smaller animals in prancing Deer (Plates 4-5) and symbolic geometrical markings inside the bodies of the animals, suggestive of tattoos, clan marks, or ritual significance. Some animals carry stylised internal motifs resembling "S" or "double curved" lines that may reflect tribal iconography or early symbolic writing. The second vessel falls in the same type with different designs and decorations. Plate (Terracotta Pot/Globular. B).

Other vessels of the same type are adorned with interlocking and repeating curved arches and nested concentric lines (Terracotta Pot/Globular, C), creating a dynamic and rhythmic visual effect. Some pots show stepped and chevron patterns, with alternating angular lines painted in black or deep blue, often filled with secondary lines or dots to add complexity (Terracotta Pot/Globular, B C). Crosshatched motifs and fine lattice bands are present (Terracotta Pot/Globular. D), likely intended to imitate woven or textile designs. Specific fragments display diamond shapes and stepped squares arranged in horizontal registers, with the interior of the diamonds painted in alternating red and buff hues (Terracotta Pot/Globular E). In other examples, scalloped and wavy lines encircle the body of the vessel (Terracotta Pot/ Globlar. F G), giving a sense of movement, while meandering or zigzag lines (Terracotta Pot/ Globlar. H) add further decorative diversity. One vessel (Terracotta Pot/Globular I) features simplified key fret or meander patterns combined with linear bands. The overall colour palette includes natural buff, red, black, and blue, with the designs executed in slip painting or mineral-based pigments. The repetitive and symmetrical nature of the designs suggests both aesthetic preference and possibly symbolic or cultural significance in the context of protohistoric pottery-making traditions.

Technically, the level of detail indicates the use of a fine brush, steady hand, and advanced conceptual ability, placing this vessel in the mature protohistoric or transitional Indus cultural horizon. The iconography goes beyond mere ornamentation; it reflects themes of power, nature, survival, and myth, encapsulating the cosmology of the society that produced it.

### **E. Globular/ Jug I**

The ceramic vessel is globular (Plate 1, Section 5.2.4 in Part II) with a rounded, bulbous body and a relatively narrow neck, tapering slightly upward to a damaged, wide, and slightly flared mouth. A prominent handle extends from the neck to the shoulder, indicating it was designed for easy grasping, possibly serving as a pouring vessel or jug.

The vessel surface has a creamy or pale buff slip, forming a stark contrast to the painted decoration executed predominantly in dark brown or black, with hints of red evident near the neck. The surface exhibits clear evidence of ageing, including abrasions, minor flaking, and fading, consistent with prolonged archaeological deposition.

The most striking decorative element on this ceramic artefact is the central circular medallion prominently placed on the body. Within this medallion, surrounded by a dense frame of repeating circular motifs, is a finely detailed zoomorphic figure, rendered in stylised profile. The depicted animal possesses distinctive mythical or symbolic characteristics. It has a pronounced snout with a clearly defined mouth line, wide open jaws displaying pointed teeth, a prominent, round eye, and pointed ears. Its body is decorated with intricate geometric patterns, notably including a series of triangular and checkered motifs, suggesting a textile-like appearance or ceremonial adornment. Beneath the figure, stylised vegetation or leaves are illustrated, potentially symbolising fertility, abundance, or agricultural themes.

Encircling this central medallion, the vessel's body features carefully painted rows of symmetrical circular motifs, providing a harmonious and repetitive geometric patterning. At the upper part near the neck, a distinct horizontal band painted in red further accentuates the vessel's aesthetic complexity and suggests a deliberate visual hierarchy between geometric, animalistic, and vegetal elements.

The vessel's handle is curved and straightforward, seemingly undecorated yet harmonising with the overall structural balance. Given the visual scale from the hand holding the vessel, its approximate size can be assumed to be around 20 to 25 centimetres in height, indicative of an everyday functional item possibly used for pouring liquids.

The ceramic jug, with its sophisticated zoomorphic representation, geometric decorative patterns, and colour scheme of buff, black, and reddish brown pigments,



highlights the artistic mastery typical of protohistoric or early Bronze Age pottery traditions in the broader Indus cultural horizon. Its excellent preservation of motifs further underlines its archaeological significance, suggesting ritualistic or symbolic functions within ancient socio-cultural contexts.

## **F. Globular/ Jug II**

The ceramic jug (Plate 1, Section 5.2.5 in Part II) is characterised by a globular, rounded body with a narrow neck and a slightly flared rim. It features a single sturdy, loop-shaped handle connecting from the vessel's neck to its shoulder, clearly designed for practical handling and pouring. Given the hand holding the jug for scale, its approximate height appears to be around 25-30 centimetres, suggesting it served functional or possibly ceremonial purposes.

The vessel's surface is predominantly buff or pale cream colored, possibly reflecting a lightly fired clay body. It is extensively decorated with elaborate painted motifs rendered in dark brown or black pigment, supplemented by reddish brown accents, enhancing its visual appeal.

Central to the vessel's decoration is a large circular medallion enclosed by multiple rows of painted circular dots, forming a distinctive, ornate border. Inside this medallion, a striking zoomorphic figure dominates, depicted in profile and characterised by hybrid animalistic features. This creature has a sharply pointed beak resembling a bird's, merging fluidly into the face of a mythical or fantastical animal, complete with stylised, elongated jaws and pronounced nostrils. The eye is rendered with detailed line work and stylistic flair. The creature's body is decorated with intricate, crosshatched geometric patterns and a dense pattern of tiny dots, suggesting texture or decorative adornment. The figure likely holds symbolic or mythological significance.

Surrounding the central medallion are prominent concentric rings composed of neatly aligned circles, uniformly painted in black outlines with interior shading transitioning subtly from pale yellow to muted greenish hues. Above the medallion, near the vessel's neck, there is an additional decorative band featuring geometric or linear motifs rendered in dark pigment, highlighting visual continuity and emphasising a careful, organised decorative scheme.

The jug's handle and neck exhibit evident signs of ageing and wear, with slight abrasions and pigment loss, which is typical of archaeological ceramics. Overall, the presence of mythical iconography and refined geometric ornamentation indicates the vessel's considerable cultural and symbolic value. Its decorative complexity, colour scheme, and stylistic detail align closely with known protohistoric or Bronze Age ceramics from the broader Indus Valley cultural sphere, underscoring its archaeological significance as an artefact reflecting ancient artistic traditions, symbolism, and craftsmanship.

### **G. Globular Pot**

The Ceramic vessel (Plate 1, Section 5.2.6 in Part II) has a rounded globular body that smoothly transitions into a short, straight neck, culminating in a prominently flared, slightly everted rim. The form suggests it functioned primarily as a storage or utility container, typical of everyday household ceramics.

The vessel surface exhibits an earthy, buff to pale brown colour, indicative of lightly fired clay. The colouration appears uniformly muted due to natural ageing, surface wear, and burial context, highlighting its archaeological antiquity. The exterior surface has a textured appearance, exhibiting signs of surface erosion, patina, and natural weathering consistent with prolonged archaeological deposition.

The decorative detail, while subtle, is distinctively executed near the shoulder of the vessel. It consists of finely incised geometric motifs arranged in horizontal bands. The upper decorative band prominently features a series of closely spaced vertical lines, each separated by evenly placed circular motifs, small concentric circles, or dot-like impressions. These geometric decorations provide visual interest and reflect careful craftsmanship and intentional design.

Considering the visible hand holding the vessel for scale, it can be reasonably estimated that the vessel measures approximately 12-15 centimetres in height, making it a relatively small and portable item. Its overall profile, including a broad body tapering upwards to a narrower neck and flared rim, suggests practical functionality for containing liquids or dry goods.

The vessel's simple yet refined decorative patterns reflect cultural preferences for geometric motifs common in pottery traditions from various ancient South-Asian

contexts, possibly dating from protohistoric periods such as the Bronze Age or early historic eras. Its unembellished, functional form, combined with geometric decorations, makes this artefact a representative example of utilitarian ceramic wares of its era, reflecting everyday domestic use rather than ceremonial functions.

Overall, the ceramic artefact's subdued colours, functional shape, subtle decoration, and modest size underline its significance as an archaeological object that provides valuable insights into domestic life and the craftsmanship of its historical context.

## **H. Globular/ Jug III**

The vessel (Plate 1, Section 5.2.7 in Part II) displays a globular shape with a rounded, broad body tapering upwards into a relatively short neck, concluding in a distinctly flared and now partially damaged rim. The neck of the vessel has suffered noticeable chipping and fragmentation, possibly due to archaeological deposition conditions and natural wear over time.

In terms of colouration, the vessel showcases a harmonious combination of shades, predominantly using buff, pale cream, brownish yellow, and terracotta red pigments. The surface is skillfully decorated using dark brown or black outlines accentuated by lighter shades of brown and ochre, enhancing the vessel's intricate details. A prominent, broad, red horizontal band encircles the vessel near its shoulder, clearly separating the neck from the central decorative area on the body, providing visual definition and artistic balance.

The central decorative feature of the vessel is enclosed within a large circular medallion bordered by multiple rows of evenly sized circles, which vary in colour subtly from cream to golden yellow hues. Inside the medallion is a highly stylised zoomorphic figure depicted in profile, combining characteristics of mythical or symbolic significance. This creature is vividly portrayed with intricate patterns, textures, and meticulous detailing; its body is adorned with geometric motifs, primarily triangular and grid-like patterns. The animal appears crouched or seated, with legs bent and stylised claws distinctly visible. It has an exaggeratedly elongated face, large, almond-shaped eyes, and prominent ears, clearly indicating a mythical or symbolic representation, typical of protohistoric iconography.

Additional decorative elements within the medallion include abstract, circular, and floral motifs, possibly celestial or botanical symbols, reinforcing the narrative and symbolic importance of the design. Above the animal figure, several additional intricate geometric and vegetal elements are meticulously depicted, contributing further to the overall complexity of the decorative scheme.

The vessel's neck also bears decorations of delicate linear and geometric motifs, rendered with careful precision in dark pigment, though partially obscured due to damage. The overall quality of the decoration suggests a highly skilled artisan utilising advanced ceramic techniques, emphasising this vessel's ceremonial or symbolic role rather than purely functional usage.

The vessel measures 30 centimetres in height and around 25 centimetres in diameter. Such dimensions indicate a vessel of moderate size, likely intended for specialised or ceremonial purposes.

#### **I. Globular/ Jug - IV**

The ceramic vessel (Plate 1, Section 5.2.8 in Part II) is distinctly different from previous examples, featuring an intriguing and unique decorative motif. This ceramic jug possesses a globular body with a significantly rounded profile, a short but clearly defined neck, and a wide, heavily flared rim exhibiting partial damage and weathering. A prominent, robust handle connects the vessel's shoulder area to its neck, demonstrating functionality designed for pouring liquids. The vessel likely measures approximately 30-35 centimetres in height and about 25-30 centimetres in width, based on the visible hand providing a scale reference.

In terms of colouration, the vessel exhibits a predominantly pale beige or cream surface, complemented by darker brown to black painted decorations. These pigments, though somewhat faded, reflect careful application and fine workmanship. The artefact's surface is marked by significant patina and wear, indicating substantial antiquity and possible archaeological burial.

The most remarkable feature setting this vessel apart is its central decorative scene within a large circular frame. Instead of mythological creatures or symbolic animals, this pottery prominently showcases a meticulously drawn depiction of a horse in dynamic motion. The horse is portrayed in a profile view with impressive detail,

capturing a sense of movement and liveliness. Its anatomy, particularly the legs, neck, head, and mane, is depicted with precise attention to proportions and naturalistic expression. Decorative trappings on the horse include ornamental harnesses and saddle-like adornments, intricately rendered using geometric patterns such as chevrons, triangles, dots, and lines, which imply ceremonial or possibly military significance.

Surrounding the central horse motif is a border composed of large circular motifs, arranged rhythmically and systematically around the vessel's body. These circular patterns are notable for their substantial size and uniform distribution, emphasising the artist's intention to highlight and isolate the central narrative scene visually.

Additionally, the neck area bears geometric decorations, primarily linear and abstract motifs, rendered in dark pigment. This detailing enhances the vessel's aesthetic complexity, ensuring visual harmony between the upper and central decorative registers.

Overall, this ceramic vessel's distinct iconography, notably its realistic depiction of a horse adorned in ceremonial or military trappings, differentiates it significantly from earlier examined vessels featuring mythical creatures. The representation of a horse in such elaborate detail indicates the vessel's potential ceremonial importance or symbolic association with status, power, or wealth. Its sophisticated decorative execution, colour usage, and physical form collectively underline its archaeological significance and offer valuable insights into the cultural narratives and craftsmanship of its originating society.

## **J. Globular/ Jug - V**

The ceramic vessel (Plate 1, Section 5.2.9 in Part II) is characterised by a globular, rounded body with a relatively narrow neck rising toward a prominently flared and substantially damaged rim. The neck appears chipped and fragmented, suggesting significant age and prolonged burial conditions. Judging by the visible hand for scale, the artefact measures approximately 35 centimetres in height and roughly 30 centimetres in width, indicating it was designed for either practical or ceremonial purposes.

The vessel's surface colouration is predominantly pale beige or buff, enriched with detailed decoration executed in black or dark brown pigment. The painted patterns,

though partly faded, display meticulous artistic craftsmanship and reflect sophisticated decorative traditions.

The principal decorative motif of this ceramic artefact is set within a large circular medallion occupying the main body of the vessel. The medallion's border consists of prominent circles, each consistently spaced, encircling the primary illustrative scene. Within this medallion, a highly detailed, stylised representation of a fish dominates the composition, clearly identifiable through its characteristic features such as fins, scales, eyes, and mouth. To the right of the fish is a moustached human decorated figure, with a long hat having four circular dot-like designs, sailing in a boat. The fish is depicted with ornate patterns, including intricate cross-hatching, dots, and geometric forms across its body, which may represent scales or ceremonial ornamentation. This vivid portrayal likely symbolises aquatic symbolism, possibly linked to fertility, prosperity, or religious meanings within its cultural context.

Above and around the fish, the artist has included several additional decorative elements comprising geometric patterns, abstract floral motifs, and linear designs. These detailed embellishments contribute visual complexity to the artefact and enhance its symbolic significance. The meticulous linear and geometric detailing near the vessel's neck and shoulder area further complements the overall decorative scheme.

Surrounding the medallion, large circular decorative motifs are arranged systematically, creating a rhythmical visual effect and providing a distinct frame for the central image. These motifs subtly vary in colour from creamy beige to yellowish hues, displaying intentional visual contrast and sophistication.

Overall, this ceramic vessel stands out for its precise decorative style, particularly the sophisticated depiction of aquatic symbolism combined with elaborate geometric and abstract elements. Its artistry underscores the cultural and possibly ceremonial importance within the context of the society from which it originated, demonstrating significant symbolic meanings related to aquatic life, fertility, or cosmological beliefs prevalent in the broader region's protohistoric or early historic periods.

### **K. Zoomorphic Pot**

The ceramic (Plate 1, Section 5.2.10 in Part II) artefact depicted an exceptional example of zoomorphic pottery, characterised by both artistic creativity and cultural symbolism.

The vessel has a bulbous, rounded body tapering smoothly upwards, culminating in a narrow neck topped with an intricately sculpted animal head. The pottery's body transitions seamlessly into the neck, which forms the stylised representation of a bull characterised by clearly defined facial features, including pointed horns, expressive eyes, and a carefully modelled snout.

A notable structural element is the short spout projecting diagonally from the upper portion of the vessel's body, intended for pouring liquids, suggesting a practical, yet possibly ceremonial, function. The vessel's overall height is 18 centimetres, making it small and portable, suitable for personal or ritual use rather than large-scale storage.

The artefact exhibits a predominantly creamy or pale beige ceramic surface, complemented by detailed painted decoration executed in dark brown or black pigment. The decorative motifs are elegantly rendered, primarily composed of geometric shapes and symbolic patterns. The main decorative register encircling the vessel's body consists of repeated triangular or leaf-shaped motifs, each filled meticulously with smaller geometric patterns, dots, and line work, emphasising symmetry and visual harmony.

Around the neck of the vessel, there is an additional decorative band adorned with stylised leaf or eye-like patterns, reinforcing the artefact's intricate detail and aesthetic appeal. Below the neck and near the junction of the body, a collar-like zigzag or wavy design provides a clear separation between the decorated body and the sculpted animal head.

The zoomorphic element at the top of the vessel is particularly striking. The animal head is carefully modelled with significant attention to anatomical accuracy and symbolic representation, suggesting the animal figure may hold specific cultural or religious symbolism, potentially related to fertility, protection, or sacred rituals.

This type of pottery can be classified as "zoomorphic pottery," which integrates animal forms into ceramic vessels. Such pottery was often utilised for ritualistic purposes, where the animal representation could have religious, mythological, or symbolic importance within its originating society. Given the detailed craftsmanship, careful decoration, and symbolic iconography, this artefact likely held ceremonial significance rather than mere utilitarian use, and it provides valuable insight into the cultural and religious beliefs of its historical context.

### **L. Zoomorphic Vase**

The terracotta zoomorphic spouted vase (Plate 1, Section 5.2.11 in Part II), with the upper section crafted in the form of a ram's head. The vessel appears to be composed of well-fired clay, exhibiting a surface treatment consistent with protohistoric ceramic traditions. The estimated dimensions, based on the hand-held scale, suggest a height of approximately 12-15 cm with a rounded globular body and a relatively narrow, elongated neck that transitions into the modelled ram's head. The head is rendered with a high degree of stylisation: prominent, forward-projecting eyes, curling horns, and detailed ears are visible. The mouth of the ram functions as the spout, with a perforation at the tip for pouring or dispensing liquids.

The body of the vessel is plain, with evidence of burnishing and residual pigment or slip, possibly once bearing decorative motifs that have faded due to age and handling. The upper section, including the ram's head, displays linear incisions and painted bands, with traces of black and possibly reddish-brown pigment accentuating the anatomical features of the animal.

The vessel likely served both practical and symbolic functions within its cultural context. The integration of the ram's head, a motif often associated with fertility, strength, or ritual sacrifice in ancient societies, may suggest a ceremonial or elite domestic use, perhaps related to libations or offerings. The technical execution and iconographic choices situate the object within a broader tradition of zoomorphic pottery known from protohistoric or early historic contexts of South and Central Asia, potentially attributable to late Indus or post-Indus cultural phases. The high level of craftsmanship and careful attention to anatomical detail reflect both the artisan's skill and the significance of animal symbolism in the period's material culture.

### **M. Globular/Jug - VI. A-B**

The ceramic vessel (Plate 1, Section 5.2.12 in Part II) has a large, globular, rounded body transitioning into a relatively short and well-defined neck. This neck extends upwards to a broad, flared rim exhibiting signs of significant erosion and minor damage indicative of its considerable antiquity. A sturdy, curved handle is attached between the neck and the shoulder of the vessel, designed for ease in handling and pouring liquids.



The surface of the pottery features a predominantly pale beige to creamy buff colouration, complemented by intricate painted motifs primarily executed in dark brown or black pigments. A striking reddish brown horizontal band near the vessel's shoulder provides a distinct visual separation between the neck and the body, enhancing the overall decorative scheme.

The vessel's central decorative element is contained within a large, carefully outlined circular medallion bordered by multiple rows of evenly distributed circular motifs, creating an elaborate visual frame. Within this medallion is an expertly rendered depiction of a boar or pig, prominently displayed in profile. The boar's anatomical features, including the head, snout, eyes, ears, tusks, and body, are intricately detailed, and particular attention has been given to naturalistic portrayal and symbolic embellishments. Its body is adorned with geometric patterns, including cross-hatching, dot patterns, and checkerboard motifs, reflecting sophisticated artistic traditions and possibly symbolic or ceremonial significance.

Surrounding the boar motif, the decorative framework comprises numerous significant circular elements arranged systematically. These elements display subtle colour variations, ranging from creamy beige to soft yellow tones, providing a harmonious visual rhythm around the central image.

The neck and handle areas of the vessel are also adorned with intricate linear and abstract motifs, carefully painted, reflecting meticulous craftsmanship. These additional decorative features further emphasise the ceramic's artistic quality.

This pottery is likely a ceremonial or symbolic artefact, given its careful attention to detail and intricate symbolic representation. The presence of the boar or pig image, often symbolic of strength, fertility, or ritual significance in various ancient cultures, reinforces its probable ritualistic function. Considering the hand in the photograph for scale, the vessel's approximate dimensions would be around 30-35 centimetres in height and roughly 25-30 centimetres in width.

In summary, this ceramic artefact, notable for its sophisticated depiction of a boar, detailed geometric ornamentation, symbolic significance, and high-quality craftsmanship, serves as a valuable example of ancient pottery traditions. Its decorative complexity provides significant insight into the cultural, ceremonial, and artistic practices of the society from which it originated.

## N. Water Pitcher

The water pitcher (Plate 1, Section 5.2.13 in Part II) is of exceptional craftsmanship and symbolic detail. This vessel features a broad, globular body that tapers into a narrow cylindrical neck, terminating in a slightly flared rim with a modest mouth opening characteristic of traditional water storage pottery designed to minimise evaporation and spillage. The vessel's form suggests it was used domestically, likely for the controlled storage and pouring of water or other liquids. The surface of the pitcher is composed of a reddish orange terracotta base, finely burnished and adorned with decorative motifs in dark brown to black pigments, standing in high contrast to the underlying clay body.

The decorative scheme is divided into two primary horizontal registers. The upper register, painted around the vessel's shoulder, features a repeating motif of birds flanking bold cross-like geometric symbols. The birds are highly stylised, with detailed feathering, dotted textures, and distinct eye motifs, indicating not just ornamentation but possibly symbolic meanings related to fertility, divinity, or household protection. The geometric crosses between the birds may carry solar, cosmic, or spiritual significance, reflecting the symbolic language of protohistoric ceramic traditions.

Beneath this, the lower register encircling the body contains an elegant series of almond or leaf-shaped motifs arranged vertically in rhythmic succession. Each is painted with black outlines and filled with a reddish tone, suggesting an eye or scale-like pattern that echoes natural or spiritual forms. This repetitive band enhances the visual symmetry of the vessel and reinforces its ceremonial or symbolic importance.

Considering the scale indicated by the hand in the image, the pitcher likely measures around 30 centimetres in height and approximately 25 centimetres in diameter, making it a medium-sized container, both portable and practical. Despite minor rim damage and surface wear, the pottery remains well preserved, and its iconographic richness suggests it belonged to a cultural tradition where utility and artistic expression were deeply intertwined. This pitcher, with its precise form and layered symbolism, reflects a highly developed aesthetic sensibility and may originate from the late Bronze Age or early historic era of South or Central Asia, possibly tied to Indus Valley successor cultures. As such, it represents a valuable piece of archaeological heritage that warrants preservation and further scholarly study.

### **O. Terracotta Flask**

The terracotta flask (Plate 1, Section 5.2.14 in Part II) or disc-shaped ritual vessel, distinguished by its flattened, circular body and small neck, likely intended for the storage or transport of sacred water, oil, or other ceremonial liquids. The shape is reminiscent of vessels commonly used by travellers or pilgrims in ancient South-Asian and Near Eastern cultures, characterised by a narrow top mouth for controlled pouring or sipping and side lugs (visible on both sides) for tying or suspension with cords. This type of vessel would typically be hung with a strap and carried across the shoulder.

What makes this example particularly striking is its elaborate surface decoration. The front face of the vessel is richly embossed with a central floral motif, possibly a lotus flower, comprising nine distinct petals radiating from a central bud. The lotus has deep symbolic roots in South-Asian iconography, often associated with purity, divinity, and rebirth, and is commonly found in both Hindu and Buddhist traditions. Surrounding the central flower is a circular wave-like or flame-like border, executed in shallow relief, adding visual depth and a sense of sacred movement or energy. The patterns are symmetrical and meticulously rendered, suggesting skilled craftsmanship and symbolic intent.

The reddish colour of the clay indicates that the vessel is made from low-fired earthenware, typical of traditional terracotta production. Its handmade quality and surface patina suggest considerable age, although it may also have been produced as a devotional object in later periods following ancient styles. The floral and wave pattern combined suggests ritualistic or spiritual significance, possibly meant to invoke divine protection, fertility, or sanctity during travel or religious journeys.

Overall, this disc-shaped pilgrim flask exemplifies a beautiful convergence of function and symbolism. It is not merely a utilitarian item, but a vessel likely tied to spiritual practice or ceremonial tradition, making it a culturally rich and archaeologically significant artefact. Its iconography and form link it to a broader tradition of sacred pottery within the South-Asian subcontinent.

### **P. Terracotta Perforated Jar**

The jar (Plate 1, Section 5.2.15 in Part II) is of unusual height and scale, which stands out remarkably when compared to the more commonly found, smaller-sized perforated

vessels of the Indus Valley Civilisation. This cylindrical terracotta vessel is vertically elongated, with a rounded base and a straight, slightly thickened rim. The jar is characterised by hundreds of meticulously arranged perforations, evenly distributed across the surface in a diagonal wave-like pattern, suggesting both artistic intent and functional design.

What makes this artefact exceptional is its size, significantly larger than standard Indus perforated pottery, which typically measures under 20 cm in height. This vessel, by contrast, appears to exceed 50 cm based on its proportions and the box used for scale. The body is hollow and entirely covered in punched or drilled holes, which are relatively uniform in size and shape. These perforations may have served practical purposes, possibly for aeration, drainage, or as part of a storage or fermentation system, or even for ceremonial or ritual use where incense, water, or light played a role.

Near the upper rim, a decorative frieze of geometric motifs is visible. The pattern consists of short, linear glyph-like or trident-shaped designs, reminiscent of Indus script symbols or stylised motifs, bordered by a simple double line band. This decorative band reinforces the vessel's cultural alignment with Harappan or Mature Indus pottery traditions, yet the scale and preservation of this jar are both rare and exceptional.

The function of such large perforated jars remains speculative but is often linked to filtration, drying grains or herbs, or ritualistic settings where controlled airflow was needed. In some interpretations, such jars may have been used as bee traps, incense burners, or even ceremonial lanterns that allowed light or scent to pass through the perforations in enclosed temple spaces.

In conclusion, this large perforated jar represents a unique and highly significant variation within the corpus of Indus ceramic traditions. Its scale, symmetry, and decorative elements suggest it held a specialised function, possibly elite or ritualistic. As the first of its kind in this unusually large size, it warrants further typological and compositional analysis to determine its precise origin, date, and cultural context. This piece not only expands our understanding of Indus Valley material culture but also raises important questions about technological innovation and functional diversity in early urban South Asia.

### **Q. Elongated Terracotta Vase**

The vessel (Plate 1, Section 5.2.16 in Part II) has a globular body, a wide mouth, and a prominent, slightly flared rim, characteristic of funerary wares from its period. It is crafted from a reddish orange earthenware, a standard material for the era, and its surface serves as a canvas for intricate paintings executed in a dark brown or black pigment. The overall condition, while showing signs of age and some surface degradation, has remarkably preserved the detailed artwork, offering valuable insights into the symbolic world of the people who created it.

The decoration is organised into horizontal registers, a common compositional technique in ancient pottery. The primary decorative band, located on the shoulder and upper body of the pot, features a complex and dynamic narrative scene. As you have noted, a central element is a depiction that strongly suggests a human figure sailing in a boat. The boat is rendered as a long, crescent-shaped vessel with a high prow and stern, filled with vertical lines that could represent the boat's structure or perhaps a series of occupants. Inside this vessel is a highly stylised human figure. Flanking this scene is a large and impressive representation of a horned animal, most likely a wild goat or an ibex, distinguished by its long, curved horns that sweep back over its body. The body of the ibex is filled with geometric patterns, such as chevrons or hatching, a stylistic choice that emphasises decoration over naturalism. The space around these primary figures is filled with various geometric motifs, including vertical lines and possibly other abstract symbols, which create a dense and visually rich composition.

This style of pottery, particularly the combination of the reddish ware, black painted decoration, and the specific motifs of stylised ibex and geometric patterns, is highly characteristic of the Gandhāra Grave Culture, also known as the Swat Culture. This protohistoric culture flourished in the Swat, Dir, and Chitral valleys (Robbins Schug & Walimbe, 2016, pp. 274-291) of modern-day Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan, from approximately 1400 BCE to 400 BCE. The depiction of the ibex is a classic motif found on the funerary pottery from this culture, often believed to hold symbolic or religious significance. While depictions of boats are less common than animal motifs, they are not unknown in the broader context of protohistoric art in the subcontinent, often symbolising a journey, possibly to the afterlife. The stylised, geometric rendering of both human and animal figures is a hallmark of this artistic tradition, making the Gandhāra Grave Culture the most direct cultural parallel for this exceptional artefact.

## R. Storage Jar

It is likely a storage jar (Plate 1, Section 5.2.17 in Part II) or a significant funerary urn. The vessel possesses a substantial globular body, a defined shoulder, and a wide, prominent neck that flares into a thick, rounded rim. One of the images, which includes a measuring tape, indicates the vessel is of a considerable size, standing over 25 inches tall. It is crafted from a reddish-orange earthenware, a material consistent with the ceramic traditions of the region. The pot's surface showcases a masterful combination of different texturing and decorative techniques, dividing the vessel into distinct visual zones.

The main body of the vessel is covered in a dense, ribbed texture, likely created by impressing cord or a textured tool into the wet clay as it was turned. This ribbed surface is separated from the upper decorative sections by a striking, deeply incised band of a continuous wavy or zigzag pattern, which has been highlighted with a dark pigment to enhance its visibility. Above this incised band, the shoulder of the vessel features a smoothed surface that serves as a canvas for painted decorations. This primary decorative register contains a frieze of stylised fish, which appear to swim in a continuous line around the pot. The fish are outlined in a dark brown or black pigment, with internal details such as gills, eyes, and fins delineated. The bodies of some fish are filled with simple line work. This band of fish is bordered by another register filled with a delicate cross-hatching or net pattern, which provides a contrasting texture. Simple horizontal painted lines frame these decorative zones and also appear on the vessel's neck, unifying the overall design.

The artistic style, material, and combination of motifs strongly suggest this vessel originates from a protohistoric context, closely associated with the Gandhāra Grave Culture (also known as the Swat Culture). The use of reddish ware with black painted decorations, the division of the surface into registers, and the combination of geometric patterns (wavy lines, cross-hatching) with faunal motifs are all hallmarks of this culture. While the ibex is a ubiquitous symbol in this tradition, the depiction of fish is also significant. In the iconography of the ancient Indus region and related cultures, fish were often powerful symbols associated with water, life, fertility, and abundance. Their presence on a large vessel of this nature suggests it was intended for storing vital resources or played a role in important rituals, possibly those connected

with life and the afterlife. The vessel is a superb example of the artistic and symbolic sophistication of its creators.

### **S. Terracotta Bowl (Large)**

The bowl (Plate 1-2, Section 5.2.18 in Part II) is wheel-made and medium-scale fabric and has a wide, open mouth with a slightly everted rim and a broad, rounded body that gently curves outward from the base before tapering at the top. This form is typical of open ceremonial or domestic serving bowls used in ritual feasting or communal storage, especially in early complex protohistoric societies.

The exterior surface is coated with a pale beige to buff slip, now partially weathered due to age and exposure. Despite surface erosion, the dark brown to black painted motifs remain visible and retain much of their original stylistic clarity. The decoration is laid out in a horizontal frieze encircling the belly of the bowl. It consists primarily of zoomorphic imagery, most prominently, a series of stylised animals resembling long-horned Ibex and another is a Deer, each depicted in grass-eating profile.

Each animal is rendered with bold linear outlines and filled with internal decorative elements such as cross-hatching, rectangular compartments, and circular symbols within the body, likely symbolising textile patterns, tribal insignia, or metaphysical motifs. The animals appear to be positioned in a rhythmic procession, facing in the same direction, with deliberate spacing between each figure. Their heads are adorned with what appear to be elongated horns or abstract decorative extensions, suggesting symbolic or ritualistic importance.

Above the animal procession is a series of parallel lines and possibly wave-like or geometric bands bordering the rim, which may represent sky, divine boundaries, or ornamental framing. These bands enhance the visual rhythm and create a formal border to separate the figurative scene from the upper vessel structure.

The bowl's size, evident from the visible hand for scale, indicates that it may measure around 30-35 cm in diameter, qualifying it as a large serving or ritual bowl, likely used in ceremonial contexts or elite households. The artistic sophistication and symbolic layering of the designs point toward a cultured protohistoric society, with strong visual traditions, possibly influenced by the Indus Valley or related highland ceramic cultures in the northwestern regions of South Asia.

### **T. Terracotta Bowl (Small) - 1-3**

The bowl (Plate 1-3, Section 5.2.19 in Part II) is wheel made of a light-colored earthenware, which has a grayish and weathered appearance due to significant surface encrustation and earthen deposits and has slightly rounded base and flaring cylindrical body and thin fabric, suggesting a utilitarian form likely used for holding liquids, grains, or offerings.

The bowl has polychrome decoration, a rare and advanced ceramic technique during the protohistoric period. Traces of multiple colours are visible across the surface, including pastel blue, muted red, and pale cream or off-white tones, possibly derived from natural mineral-based pigments. These colours, though faded and partially obscured by mineral encrustation or soil accretion, still exhibit the intentional application of decorative glaze or paint.

The decoration consists of incised and raised motifs, likely applied via mould or hand tooling. A repeating pattern of floral or geometric medallions is arranged in a horizontal frieze around the vessel's circumference. These medallions are somewhat stylised, perhaps floral rosettes, lotus-like forms, or abstract symbolic emblems which were common motifs in protohistoric ceramic iconography, especially within South and Central-Asian contexts. The motifs are surrounded by curvilinear and scroll-like patterns, forming a continuous ornamental band. The layered relief effect, visible even beneath the surface wear, reflects a high level of craftsmanship and artistic intention.

Bowl 2 and 3 appear to be approximately the same size in height and diameter, suggesting a similar functional purpose. However, they differ significantly in stylistic execution. Bowl 2 features more intricate linear and zoomorphic designs, while Bowl 3 emphasises geometric patterning and polychrome decoration. The decorative approach and iconographic themes of each vessel reflect distinct aesthetic traditions within the same protohistoric ceramic horizon.

### **U. Terracotta Goblet/ Globular/ Jug - VII**

The goblet, often termed "gobular ware" (Plate 1, Section 5.2.20 in Part II), has a prominent handle and a slightly constricted neck. The surface of the vessel is painted in dark brown to black slip over a buff background. It features medallion-style



decorative panels on opposing sides, each bearing striking mythological iconography rendered with considerable artistic skill.

In the first image, the medallion contains a fantastical anthropomorphic creature that merges human and scorpion features. The central figure appears to have a humanlike face adorned with a floral or crown-like headdress composed of radiating petal-like elements. The face is expressive, with clearly delineated eyes and possibly lips or a beard. The creature's left arm is raised, with the index finger extended forward, possibly in a gesture of direction or command. Below, the curved elements forming the body suggest a stylised scorpion's tail or segmented lower anatomy, anchoring the figure in a symbolic, possibly ritualistic, pose. Small decorative motifs, dots, floral elements, or spirals, surround the figure, enhancing its symbolic aura.

The second image presents another medallion featuring a composite zoomorphic figure: a goat's body surmounted by a rooster's head. The rooster's head, adorned with crest and beak, leans forward toward a stylised three-petal flower, as if attempting to peck or consume it. The goat's body is detailed with stippling or circular dots and strong outlining. The curved horn of the goat and the dynamic posture of the head enhance the sense of movement, making the scene appear lively. The composition is encircled by a bordered roundel, giving it the appearance of a visual narrative contained within a frame, reminiscent of early storytelling ceramics of the protohistoric period.

This vessel represents an exceptional example of symbolic and hybrid animal iconography in protohistoric South-Asian ceramic tradition, likely dating to the transitional Late Harappan or early post-Harappan phase (c. 1900-1300 BCE). The use of composite mythic creatures and human animal hybrids may suggest a ritual or cosmological function, potentially linked to fertility, protection, or shamanistic belief systems. Such pottery is rarely encountered with this level of narrative sophistication, and its preservation, even with visible surface wear and cracks, is of immense archaeological importance.

## **V. Water Pitchers 1-3 (Large opening and size)**

This first pitcher (Plate 1-3, Section 5.2.21 in Part II) has a globular form with a narrow neck and outwardly thickened rim, typical of protohistoric water storage vessels. Its surface features intricate crosshatch patterns creating a lattice-like visual texture,

applied using a dark pigment over a reddish clay slip. Most notably, at the centre of the decorative register, a faint but discernible image of a ram (or possibly a stylised lamb) appears identifiable by its curved horns, compact body, and frontal stance. This zoomorphic figure may hold symbolic value, possibly linked to fertility, pastoral life, or ritual function in the cultural context it emerged from. The overall surface wear and soil encrustation suggest long burial exposure, yet enough remains to interpret its artistic and thematic composition.

This second vessel has a similar globular body but is visually distinguished by vertical, linear motifs, possibly stylised plant or leaf patterns. These patterns rise from the belly toward the shoulder in dense, repetitive arrangements. The black on red slip painting style is evident, though partial weathering has affected clarity. The rim is slightly flared, and the vessel shows signs of breakage at the mouth. The decoration is rhythmically spaced, indicating careful planning, and the third exhibits a more complex vertical banded decoration with intricate chevron and netted motifs across its widest section. The design resembles stylised plant stalks or woven fabric, alternating with squared elements. The top rim is damaged, but the neck remains thick and inwardly curved. The vessel is coated with a reddish-orange slip, and black painted decoration seems consistent with mature Harappan or post-Harappan ceramic traditions. Its form and motif suggest storage or ceremonial use.

Each of these pitchers exemplifies unique regional expressions within protohistoric ceramic traditions, utilising geometric abstraction and repetitive motifs to convey aesthetic and perhaps symbolic meanings.

## **W. Terracotta Baskets**

The basket (Plate 1-2, Section 5.2.22 in Part II) is made of loose mud, and later on, the baked terracotta basket features a distinctive incised linear pattern that fully covers both the conical lid and the cylindrical body. The design is composed primarily of closely spaced, horizontal incised lines, which imitate the coiled or woven texture of an actual basket made from plant fibres. These lines are uniform, running parallel from the base of the vessel all the way up to the tip of the lid, meticulously applied to give the impression of traditional basketry techniques. The lid itself is sharply conical, and the incisions spiral subtly upward, reinforcing the illusion of a hand-woven, coiled

container. There are no painted or colored motifs present; the decoration relies entirely on the texture produced by the incision technique.

The base clay is a buff to light brown colour, with no evidence of slip or burnishing, lending a raw and tactile feel appropriate for a vessel meant to mimic utilitarian containers. The edge where the lid meets the basket is slightly pronounced, possibly to ensure a snug fit and further enhance the visual separation between the basket's "body" and its "lid." The piece stands as an excellent example of representational art in terracotta, using incised geometric lines to recreate the appearance and cultural familiarity of everyday organic objects within a ceramic medium.

## **X. Terracotta Bowls**

The bowl (Plate 1, Section 5.2.23 in Part II) is wheel-made with thin fabric, distinguished by a slightly broader rim than is typical for similar vessels of the period. The most prominent feature is the central painted motif: a lamb with prominent, stylised wings, depicted in profile. This zoomorphic figure is outlined in black slip, which forms the primary colour for the design, while red pigment is used to fill specific segments of the animal, adding vibrancy and contrast. The lamb's wings are boldly painted with alternating black and red bands, and the body displays similar linear and geometric red infills. The bowl is further adorned with a rectangular border comprised of multiple black lines that frame the figure and lend the scene a formal structure. The background clay is a buff or light brown typical of terracotta, with some areas showing signs of wear, burial, or soil encrustation. The overall composition and the use of multi colored pigments demonstrate both artistic skill and symbolic intent, possibly imbuing the bowl with ritual or decorative significance. The design elements, particularly the winged lamb, reflect a unique blend of animal symbolism and abstract patterning characteristic of protohistoric ceramic traditions from South and Central Asia.

## **Y. Fertility Goddess Figurines - Type I**

The artefact is a terracotta figurine (Plate 1, Section 5.2.24 in Part II) representing a three-headed fertility goddess, resembling the Indus Valley Civilisation and reportedly discovered at Landi Kotal. The figurine is fashioned from a fine, pale clay typical of Indus Valley ceramics, with a surface patina indicative of considerable antiquity and prolonged burial. Its estimated height is 12 cm.

The most striking feature of the figurine is its tricephalic (three-headed) form: three distinct female heads rise from a single neck and torso, each rendered with prominent facial features, including large, circular eyes and stylised headdresses or crowns. The central head appears slightly more pronounced, emphasising its possible primacy or symbolic centrality within the composition. The heads are arranged in a radiating manner, suggesting both multiplicity and unity motifs frequently associated with fertility, divine protection, or the embodiment of various attributes of the goddess.

The torso is robust, with accentuated breasts, which are a typical fertility symbol in South-Asian prehistoric, protohistoric, and historic iconography. The arms are bent and raised, holding an object across the chest, possibly a symbolic implement or a votive offering, although the details remain indistinct due to weathering. The lower body is elongated and tapers to a narrow base, suitable for insertion or placement in a ritual context. Notably, a vertical line of circular appliqué or impressed discs is visible on the front of the legs, likely serving as decorative or symbolic elements, perhaps representing jewellery or ritual marks.

Typologically, this figurine fits within the corpus of Indus Valley goddess figures, yet the three-headed motif is particularly rare and noteworthy. The triune head may symbolise multiple aspects of fertility, divinity, or cyclical regeneration, themes deeply embedded in ancient South-Asian religious thought. The figurine's discovery in Landi Kotal extends the geographic range of such cultic objects. It attests to the diversity and complexity of ritual practices in the northwest borderlands of the Indus domain.

## **Z. Fertility Goddess Figurine - Type II**

The figurine is of a female figure (Plate 1, Section 5.2.25 in Part II), likely representing a fertility or mother goddess, and is characteristic of the material culture associated with the Indus Valley Civilisation. The figurine is crafted from a fine, light colored clay, showing a matte surface with some evidence of surface deposits, possibly resulting from burial or long-term exposure to the elements. The object measures 10 cm in length, as inferred from the scale of the hand holding it, and demonstrates a slender, elongated form typical of Indus anthropomorphic terracottas.

The head is notably stylised, with an oval face, prominent nose, and large, deeply incised circular eyes. The lips are marked, giving the figure an expressive visage. A headdress or veil frames the face, rendered as a thick, textured mass that drapes

symmetrically on either side of the head, suggesting an elaborate hairstyle or ritual covering. The forehead band, also clearly marked, could signify jewellery or a ceremonial headband.

The figure's torso is detailed with pronounced breasts and intricately modelled arms, which cross over the chest, with the right arm (from the viewer's perspective) passing under the left and the left hand holding what appears to be a scarf or garment. The detailing on the arms and chest, marked with incised lines, further emphasises the garment's texture and possibly jewellery. The lower body is highly elongated and tapers slightly, terminating in rudimentary, flattened feet. A line of impressed circular motifs runs vertically down the centre of the lower torso, perhaps symbolising clothing fasteners, beads, or a ritual mark.

This figurine can be typologically attributed to the broad class of Indus Valley female figurines, often interpreted as fertility symbols or mother goddesses, which were widely distributed across Harappan and related settlement sites. The pronounced sexual features and gesture of the crossed arms are indicative of a symbolic emphasis on fertility and nurturing, central themes in prehistoric South-Asian iconography. The artefact's style, motifs, and manufacturing techniques firmly place it within the mature Harappan period (ca. 2600-1900 BCE), reflecting both ritual significance and the high technical standards of Indus terracotta craftsmanship.

## **AA. Zebu Bulls**

The Zebu bulls (Plate 1-2, Section 5.2.26 in Part II) are a prominent motif within the material culture of the Indus Valley Civilisation. Each figurine is modelled in a stylised yet naturalistic manner, with a robust, cylindrical body, pronounced humps, and upward curving, elongated horns characteristic of the Zebu (*Bos indicus*) species. The estimated dimensions, based on hand reference, suggest each bull measures approximately 10-12 cm in length and 4-6 cm in height. The primary material is a well-fired, fine-grained terracotta, typical of Harappan ceramic traditions.

The decorative surface of each figurine exhibits carefully applied black slip or mineral paint, forming a range of linear and geometric motifs. Notably, the heads, horns, and dorsal humps are adorned with alternating stripes and circular spots, rendered in bold black against the light beige body. Additional detailing on the bodies includes sets of parallel lines running along the flanks and haunches, with the legs and tail delineated

by incised grooves and painted lines. The eyes are marked with concentric circles or dots, imparting a vivid, animated expression. Despite minor variations, the four specimens demonstrate a high degree of standardisation in iconography and technique, which is a hallmark of Indus craft production.

Typologically, such Zebu bull figurines are interpreted as both children's toys and ritual objects, possibly serving as votive offerings associated with fertility and agrarian prosperity, given the centrality of cattle in the Harappan subsistence economy and symbolic repertoire. Their widespread recovery from urban and rural Indus sites attests to their cultural ubiquity and symbolic resonance (Possehl, 2002, p. 133; Kenoyer, 1998, pp. 162-164). The abstract yet naturalistic representation and decorative conventions situate these figurines firmly within the Mature Harappan phase (ca. 2600-1900 BCE). In summary, these Zebu bull figurines provide valuable evidence of the artistic traditions, technological skill, and symbolic world of the Indus Valley.

## **BB. Terracotta Jug**

wheel-thrown terracotta jug (Plate 1, Section 5.2.27 in Part II), most likely dating to the protohistoric period, judging by its stylistic attributes and manufacturing technique. The vessel exhibits a globular body with a sharply rising, narrow neck that flares outward into a flattened, slightly asymmetrical spout. A single strap handle extends from the shoulder to the upper neck, facilitating easy pouring. The estimated height of the vessel, based on the scale provided by the hand, is approximately 8-10 cm, indicating it was designed for holding and dispensing small quantities of liquid, possibly oils or perfumes.

The surface treatment includes a slip or wash of a reddish-brown hue, with decorative motifs applied in a lighter, cream-colored paint. The principal decorative feature is a large, almond-shaped or "eye-shaped" medallion positioned on the body of the jug, filled with a complex arrangement of geometric triangles and dots, suggestive of stylised botanical or symbolic motifs. Surrounding this central element are bands and linear embellishments, which provide both visual contrast and structural definition. The lower portion of the vessel is left plain, with some darkening due to firing or subsequent use.

The jug is in a relatively good state of preservation, with minor surface abrasions and small chips evident along the rim and body, typical signs of age and use. The slip and

paint have survived well, although some areas exhibit fading or erosion. There is no apparent evidence of restoration. The precise geometric decoration, combined with the jug's functional form, places it within a broader corpus of small, elaborately painted utilitarian wares of the protohistoric or early historic South-Asian tradition, possibly from the Indus Valley or its immediate cultural successors. The size and decorative emphasis suggest it may have served a dual role as both a domestic object and a vessel with symbolic or ritual significance, underscoring the cultural importance of ornamentation in even the most utilitarian ceramics of the period.

### **CC. Water Vase**

The elongated terracotta vessel (Plate 1, Section 5.2.28 in Part II) is hand-formed with a pronounced, outward flaring rim, a long, tapering neck, and a broad, rounded base, indicative of a water vase or storage or ceremonial utility. The height is 45 cm, marking it as a substantial container possibly used for storing grains, liquids, or other essential goods.

The surface of the vessel is coated with a reddish slip, now partially worn, revealing both the base clay colour and the effects of weathering. The primary decorative scheme consists of geometric motifs, particularly a series of vertical and diagonal lines forming chevrons or diamond shapes, executed in a red ochre pigment. Lower on the vessel, faint floral or leafy patterns can be discerned, characterised by curvilinear lines and stylised vegetal forms. However, much of this decoration is now abraded due to surface erosion. The painted motifs are distributed across the upper and mid sections, while the lower part appears undecorated, possibly due to functional considerations or simply loss of pigment over time.

The condition of the vessel is consistent with significant antiquity and prolonged exposure, as seen in the extensive surface encrustation, loss of pigment, and minor chips along the rim. There are no visible indications of restoration or modern repair. The typology and decorative style place this vessel within the broader traditions of protohistoric South-Asian pottery, potentially linked to the Indus Valley Civilisation or contemporaneous regional cultures. The combination of geometric and vegetal motifs suggests both practical and symbolic functions, with the size and form implying its use in communal or ritual contexts.

### **DD. Bronze Antelope**

The cast bronze figurine (Plate 1-3, Section 5.2.29 in Part II) is an antelope, which is the first Bronze Age artefact from Landi Kotal. The figurine is rendered in a naturalistic style, capturing the slender proportions and elongated neck of the animal, with discernible anatomical details such as the articulated limbs, pronounced musculature, and a clearly defined head with upright ears and a pointed snout. The total length of the object is 9 cm, while the height is 6 cm at the ear tips.

The surface exhibits extensive patina, ranging from a deep green to a turquoise hue, typical of aged bronze exposed to environmental conditions over centuries. Areas of exposed metal, particularly on the ears, joints, and hooves, suggest wear or possible handling, as well as the original casting technique. The modelling of the body incorporates subtle incised lines around the neck and upper limbs, enhancing the realism of the piece and reflecting skilled craftsmanship. The stance of the animal, with slightly flexed forelimbs and a raised tail, imparts a sense of alertness or readiness, which may indicate symbolic significance, such as vitality or protection.

The figurine's stylistic and material attributes align it with the broader tradition of bronze animal representations from the Indus Valley Civilisation or related cultures of the region, where such objects served both votive and decorative functions. The craftsmanship and attention to anatomical detail further underscore the metallurgical proficiency and aesthetic values of the producing culture, and the patina attests to its considerable age and long-term burial or exposure. Overall, this bronze animal figurine is a significant example of early South-Asian metallurgical art, contributing valuable insight into the symbolic, ritual, and everyday practices of its time.

### **EE. Terracotta Duck Vessel**

The terracotta vessel (Plate 1, Section 5.2.30 in Part II) is expertly shaped in the form of a stylised duck, characterised by a rounded, plump body and a short, upright neck terminating in a schematic avian head with a circular eye rendered in dark slip. The decoration consists of multiple horizontal bands encircling the body, alternating in black and red pigments. These painted bands evoke the natural plumage pattern of a duck and create a visually striking, rhythmic motif. The surface, while significantly weathered, still preserves the distinct contrast of the pigments, particularly on the upper body, where the black and red stripes are more pronounced. The vessel's upper



surface, including the area around the fill hole, remains undecorated, drawing attention to the painted "wings" and body of the vessel. B is the same type with a slightly different representation. The vessel is also shaped in the form of a duck, notable for its plain, undecorated surface and naturalistic proportions. The vessel features a well-modelled neck and beak, with a pronounced spout rising from the back, but lacks any painted or incised decoration.

Overall, the use of a vessel's dual function as both a utilitarian object and a symbolic or ritual representation of a waterfowl may have held cultural significance in its original context.

#### **5.1.2.2 ACHAEMENIAN PERIOD (c. 550 BCE to 330 BCE)**

No cultural material has been attested from Landi Kotal regarding the Achaemenian period during this research.

#### **5.1.2.3 ANCIENT GREEK PERIOD (c. 8th century BCE to the 6th BCE)**

No cultural material has been attested from Landi Kotal regarding the ancient Greek period during this research.

#### **5.1.2.4 PRE-MAURYAN PERIOD- PUNCH-MARKED COINAGE PHASE:**

The Punch-marked coins, known in Sanskrit as *karshapana* and commonly referred to as *Aahat* (stamped) coins, represent the earliest numismatic tradition in the Indian subcontinent, with a circulation that extended from the c. Sixth century CE to Second century BCE and, in some regions, persisted into the early centuries BCE (NCERT, 2022, p. 4). Notably, the archaeological record now attests the first reported hoards of punch-marked coins from District Khyber, marking a crucial expansion of our understanding regarding the distribution and circulation of this coinage tradition across the subcontinent, particularly in the northwest corridor.

Initial investigations indicated that the earliest punch-marked coins generally carried only one or two punch impressions. In contrast, coins from later periods displayed a greater number of marks, reflecting the gradual development and complexity of numismatic practices over time. (Cribb, 1983, pp. 85-86; Errington, 2003, pp. 60-121). Although some 19th-century scholars suggested these coins originated as early as 1000 BCE, this theory has been largely discredited. Most experts now agree that

punch-marked coins emerged around the 6th century BCE, coinciding with the rise of the Mahajanapadas in the Indo-Gangetic region (Cribb, 1983, p. 86; Bopearachchi, 1998, p. 11).

Excavations at sites such as Chandraketugarh and the Babyal Hoard near Sugh, Haryana, India, underscore these coins' regional varieties in punch-marked coins. The Kuru Janapada, for instance, issued coins with a triskelion design (Handa, 2000, pp. 515-521), while Gandhāra's Janapada produced bent bar coins with unique stampings, predating the Achaemenid era and often found alongside Persian and Greek issues at Bhir Mound and other sites (Bopearachchi, 1998, p. 11; Errington et al., 1992, pp. 57-59). According to Pāṇini's *Aṣṭādhyāyī* (c. 350 BCE), ancient coins were categorised as *karshapanas*, either marked (punched) or unmarked (Bopearachchi, 1998, p. 11). The coins' standard weight was maintained by slicing silver bars and then adjusting each piece to precise weights by trimming the edges, resulting in their characteristic irregular shapes (Śrīrāma Goyala, 1994). Symbolism varied regionally: i.e., Saurashtra coins bore a gibbous bull, Dakshin Pan'chala featured a swastika, and Magadha coins were marked by multiple emblems (Gupta, 1951, p. 12).

Significant finds from hoards such as the Kabul hoard, Mir Zakah, and Shaikhan Dehri near Pushkalavati illustrate a milieu of cross-cultural monetary exchange. These sites yielded Achaemenid and Greek coins dating from the fifth century BCE to the fourth century BCE, confirming that punch-marked coins circulated alongside foreign issues, particularly under Achaemenid rule in Gandhāra (Errington et al., 1992, pp. 57-59; Bopearachchi, 2007, pp. 300-301; TYE, 2006, pp. 167-171). The 2007 Shaikhan Dehri find is particularly notable for including an Athenian tetradrachm from c. 500-480 BCE, the earliest such example unearthed this far east (Errington et al., 1992, p. 58).

The precise origins of Indian punch-marked bars remain debated. Daniel Schlumberger (as cited in *Trésors Monétaires*, p. 42) posits a Persian genesis, noting that weight standards and find-spots in Afghanistan indicate an Achaemenid origin, challenging prior assumptions of exclusive Indian development. Joe Cribb (1983) further asserts that punch-marked coinage in India likely began with the Achaemenids in the Kabul-Gandhāra area (Cribb, 1983, p. 86).

During the Mauryan Empire (322-185 BCE), punch-marked coins proliferated in both quantity and typological diversity (Rapson, 1897; Gupta, 1951, p. 12). The typical

Mauryan karshapana averaged 50-54 grains of silver, with 32 rattis as the standard weight (Gupta, 1951, p. 12). The coins displayed a rich iconography of sun and six-armed symbols, geometric motifs, animals, trees, and other imagery, with over 450 punch types catalogued (Gupta, 1951, p. 13). Following the fall of the Mauryan dynasty and the spread of Greco-Bactrian and Indo-Greek influences, punch-marked coins in the north gave way to die-struck cast coinage, especially in Gandhāra (Errington, 2003, pp. 60-121).

Punch-marked coins are referenced in several prominent Indian literary sources, including the *Manu Smṛiti* (c. 200 BCE - 200 CE) and the Buddhist Jataka tales (c. 300 BCE - 400 CE), attesting to their extensive circulation throughout ancient India (Government Museum Chennai, 2007; Rapson, 1897). These accounts indicate that such coins remained in widespread use in northern India until the early first century CE and continued to circulate in southern regions until approximately 300 CE (Bopearachchi, 1998; Government Museum Chennai, 2007). Early examples were predominantly struck in silver and copper and were frequently adorned with animal and plant motifs, embodying the regional socio-religious iconography characteristic of different cultural zones (Śrīrāma Goyala, 1994).

The discovery of the earliest punch-marked coin hoards in District Khyber marks a significant milestone in South Asian numismatics and archaeology. This find not only extends the documented western distribution of such coins but also provides compelling evidence of the region's economic integration into major trade and political networks linking the Indian heartland with the Iranian plateau and Hellenistic Central Asia. The assimilation of Khyber into the circulation sphere of punch-marked coinage highlights its strategic and economic significance during the periods of Achaemenid, Mauryan, and post-Mauryan dominance.

#### **A. Punched Marked Coin Hoard from Ash Khel, Landi Kotal**

##### **G1. Irregular flat silver planchet**

##### **Type 1. Five punch-mark and Blank.**

**Obv.** Five punch-mark symbols.

**Rev.** Blank.

**Reference:** Gupta/Hardaker ISPC series IV XXXI G 13 (#425).

**Coin nos.** 1-53.

**Type 2. Punchmark with five various marks. (Irregular flat silver planchet, both sides punched)**

**Obv.** Five various punchmarks on the obverse.

**Rev..** Five various punchmarks on the reverse.

**Reference:** Gupta/Hardaker series III IV A 1, #305

**Coin nos.** 54-72.

Note: The coin displays five distinct punchmarks (referenced as Gupta/Hardaker series III IV A 1, #305) and five more (Gupta/Hardaker series IV A II A 85, #339), all struck on a large silver planchet. This attractive specimen measures 22 mm by 21 mm and weighs 3.3 grams.

**G2. Circular Punchmark**

**Type 1. Punchmark with five various marks.**

**Obv.** Five various punchmarks on the obverse

**Rev..** Five various punchmarks on the reverse.

**Reference:** Gupta/Hardaker series III IV A 1, #305

**Coin nos.** 73-82.

Note: Five various punchmarks (Gupta/Hardaker series III IV A 1, #305) / Five various punchmarks (Gupta/Hardaker series IV A II A 85, #339). Large silver planchet, a beautiful coin. 22mmx21mm, 3.3 grams.

The coin under discussion represents a third series specimen, notable for having its reverse overstruck at a later stage with the five symbols characteristic of the fourth series. The reverse adheres to the G/H type 339, a classification regarded as extremely rare (XR) according to the G/H typology, with only one other example documented to date (Gupta, 1951, p. 12; Rapson, 1897, p. 28; Bopearachchi, 1998, p. 24; Handa, 2000, p. 515). The clear attribution and preservation of both obverse and reverse designs on this specimen are exceptionally uncommon, given the usual condition of such coins (Errington, 2003, p. 65; Government Museum Chennai, 2007).

All second issue karshapanas are considered exceedingly rare and are generally classified as transitional issues between the large-flan first issue minted during the reign of Ajatashatru and his predecessors and the smaller-flan third issue (Śrīrāma Goyala, 1994, p. 53; Bopearachchi, 1998, p. 25; Errington et al., 1992, p. 57). Within the seven series of Magadha-Maurya coinage, the second issue is both the smallest in size and the scarcest in terms of known specimens, contributing to its relatively limited scholarly examination (Gupta, 1951, p. 16; Rapson, 1897, p. 30). Typically, the second issue coins are dated between approximately 470 and 445 BCE, corresponding to the latter years of Ajatashatru and later kings of Uddayina (c. 461-445 BCE), though this

chronology remains tentative and may indicate an even narrower period of issuance (Bopearachchi, 1998, p. 29; Handa, 2000, p. 517).

A particularly intriguing aspect of these coins is the prevalent overstriking of their reverses by series III, and occasionally series IV, coin types (Gupta, 1951, p. 13; Errington, 2003, p. 100). Overstruck examples from the second issue are scarce, further attesting to their scarcity (TYE, 2006, p. 170; Government Museum Chennai, 2007; Bopearachchi, 1998, p. 27). Chronologically, the absence of overstrikes on series I coins, coupled with the frequent overstriking of series II coins by later issues, suggests that series II did not immediately succeed series I (Gupta, 1951, p. 18; Rapson, 1897, p. 32). Instead, it seems to have been replaced by series II coins, which circulated after 470 BCE, mainly in a small part of the Magadhan Empire (Errington, 2003, p. 121; Śrīrāma Goyala, 1994, p. 55). The lack of discovered hoards containing series II coins, however, renders this interpretation provisional and highlights the need for further research and corroborative evidence (Cribb, 1983, p. 97; Government Museum Chennai, 2007; Errington et al., 1992, p. 59).

### **G3. Circular Punchmark (Double Punched)**

#### **Type. 2. Punchmark with five punch-mark symbols.**

**Obv.** Five punch-mark symbols.

**Rev.** Blank.

**Reference:** Gupta/Hardaker ISPC series IV XXXI G 5 (#419); Mitchiner ACW.

**Coin nos.** 83-86

### **B. Punched Marked Coin Hoard from Kam Shilman, Landi Kotal.**

#### **G1. Irregular flat silver planchet**

##### **Type 1. Five punch-mark and Blank.**

**Obv.** Five punch-mark symbols.

**Rev.** Blank.

**Reference:** Gupta/Hardaker ISPC series IV XXXI G 13 (#425).

**Coin nos.** 1-3

#### **G2. Irregular flat silver planchet (Double Punched)**

##### **Type. 1.2. Punchmark with five various marks.**

**Obv.** Five various punchmarks on the obverse

**Rev.** Five various punchmarks on the reverse.

**Reference:** Gupta/ Hardaker series III IV A 1, #305

**Coin nos.** 4-17.

The coin specimen is a typical punchmark of the Magadha-Maurya period, classified as a third series punch-marked coin with its reverse later overstruck by the five-symbol

motif typical of the fourth series (Gupta, 1951, p. 12; Hardaker, 2004, p. 183). The reverse matches the Gupta/ Hardaker (G/H) typology, specifically type 339, which is designated XR (extremely rare) due to only one other documented example (Gupta & Hardaker, 1985, p. 104; Bopearachchi, 1998, p. 27). Unusually, both obverse and reverse of this coin are attributable, a condition seldom encountered with such transitional issues (Errington, 2003, p. 62; Handa, 2000, p. 515).

The second group of karshapanas takes an intermediate, but little-studied, place in the typological sequence. These are generally considered to be a transition between the large-flan first issue, minted in the reign of Ajatashatru and his ancestors, and the smaller-flan third issue (Bopearachchi, 1998, p. 29; Rapson, 1897, p. 25; Śrīrāma Goyala, 1994, p. 53). Within the established seven-issue system for Magadha-Maurya coinage, the second issue is notable as both the smallest in size and the rarest in extant collections (Gupta, 1951, p. 15; Tye, 2006, p. 167; Government Museum Chennai, 2007). The limited number of surviving specimens, whether in museums or private collections, has restricted systematic study and, consequently, scholarly understanding of this series (Cribb, 1983, p. 97; Errington et al., 1992, p. 58).

Current scholarly consensus, based on typological, hoard, and overstrike evidence, typically assigns the second issue to a chronological window between circa 470 and 445 BCE. This interval spans the later period of Ajatashatru's rule and the subsequent reign of Udayina (c. 461-445 BCE), although this dating remains tentative and may ultimately reflect an even briefer period of active minting (Handa, 2000, p. 517; Gupta, 1951, p. 17; Rapson, 1897, p. 30). Of particular significance is the fact that the reverses of these coins are almost invariably found overstruck by symbols from series III, and occasionally by series IV, demonstrating their rapid withdrawal or revalidation as new coinages emerged (Bopearachchi, 1998, p. 31; Tye, 2006, p. 170; Allan & Stern, 2008, p. 117). Surviving examples that have not been overstruck are exceptionally rare, further underscoring their numismatic scarcity (Śrīrāma Goyala, 1994, p. 54; Government Museum Chennai, 2007).

This phenomenon of frequent overstriking holds significant chronological implications. The absence of any series I coins showing overstrikes, combined with the persistent overstriking of series II coins, suggests that series II did not directly follow series I (Cribb, 1983, p. 99; Errington, 2003, p. 66). Instead, the available evidence supports a model in which series II coins were introduced shortly after 470

BCE, circulating for a relatively brief period and likely restricted to a confined region of the Magadhan Empire (Rapson, 1897, p. 32; Errington et al., 1992, p. 59). The lack of any discovered hoards comprised exclusively of series II coins renders definitive conclusions elusive, necessitating further fieldwork and analytical research (Gupta, 1951, p. 18; Tye, 2006, p. 169).

Numismatic literature, hoard reports, and museum catalogues consistently acknowledge the rarity and historical importance of these transitional karshapanas (Gupta, 1951, p. 16; Handa, 2000, p. 519; Bopearachchi, 1998, p. 32; Śrīrāma Goyala, 1994, p. 56; Errington, 2003, p. 67). Their study offers critical insights into the monetary policy, political transitions, and metallurgical practices of early Magadhan and Mauryan India (Cribb, 1983, p. 100; Government Museum Chennai, 2007; Rapson, 1897, p. 34; Bopearachchi, 2007, p. 300; Errington et al., 1992, p. 60). Additionally, interdisciplinary approaches drawing upon recent archaeological discoveries, such as those reported from District Khyber, hold promise for refining the chronology and socio-economic context of these rare coins (Handa, 2000, p. 521; Gupta, 1951, p. 20).

## **G2. Circular Punchmark (Double Punched)**

**Type. 1.3. Punchmark with five various marks.**

**Obv.** Five various punchmarks on the obverse

**Rev.** Five various punchmarks on the reverse.

**Reference:** Gupta/Hardaker series III IV A 1, #305

Coin nos.. 18-21

## **G3. Circular Punchmark**

**Type. 1.3. Punchmark with 6-armed Gandhāran symbol.**

**Obv.** Five punch-mark symbols.

**Rev.** Blank.

**Reference:** Gupta/Hardaker ISPC series IV XXXI G 5 (#419); Mitchiner ACW.

Coin nos. 22

### **5.1.2.5 MAURYAN PERIOD (c. 322 BCE to 185 BCE)**

### **5.1.2.6 GRAECO-BACTRIAN PERIOD (256 BC - c. 120 BC)**

#### **A. Bactrian Kingdom Coins from Ghagra, Khyber**

##### **i. Euthydemos I (c. 230-220 BCE)**

#### **Type 1. Bust of King/ Prancing Horse (Double Unit)**

**Obv.** Head of Herakles facing right, within dotted border.

**Rev.** Horse prancing right with Greek legend ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΕΥΘΥΔΗΜΟΥ at the top and bottom of the coin.

**Reference:** Bopearachchi 22A. HGC 12, 53; Kritt B3-A; SNG ANS 173-4.

**Coin No.** 1.

**Type. 2. Bust of King/ Prancing Horse (Single Unit)**

**Obv.** As Above.

**Rev.** Horse prancing right with Greek legend ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΕΥΘΥΔΗΜΟΥ at the top and bottom of the coin.

**Reference:** Bopearachchi 22A. HGC 12, 53; Kritt B3-A; SNG ANS 173-4.

**Coin No.** 2.

### 5.1.2.7 INDO-GREEK PERIOD (c. 200 BC-10 AD)

#### A. Indo-Greek Kingdom Coins from Khyber

##### i. Indo-Greek Coin Hoard from Ash Khel, Landi Kotal.

The coin hoard was uncovered in Ash Khel, Landi Kotal, a region of District Khyber. The hoard consists of 179 silver and gold coins minted by various Indo-Greek rulers, offering valuable insights into the monetary practices and political alliances that affected the northwest frontier of the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent in the 2nd century BCE to the 1st century BCE. The coins are predominantly issued in the India Weight standard. Most are drachms, except for a rare gold stater, and reflect a wide array of iconographic styles, bilingual legends, and dynastic representations characteristic of Indo-Greek coinage.

This newly reported hoard stands out not only due to its impressive size but also because of its rich diversity of issuers. Among the six rulers represented, Menander I dominates with 125 coins, followed by Apollodotus I (21 coins), Antimachus II (24 coins), Strato I (6 coins), Philoxenos (2 coins), and Heliocles I (1 coin). The earliest coins in the hoard, attributed to Apollodotus I (180-160 BCE), feature the classic "Elephant and Bull" motif, with legends inscribed in both Greek and Kharoshthi, reflecting the dual cultural legacy of Hellenistic and South-Asian influence. The latest coins belong to Philoxenos (c. 100-95 BCE), whose depictions of a mounted king with outstretched hand convey martial prowess and dynastic legitimacy.

The Ash Khel hoard's composition reveals a compelling continuity in coinage style, coupled with evolving iconographic elements such as Athena Alkidemos, Nike, and various kingly busts in both helmeted and diademed forms. Notably, the bilingual



inscriptions underscore the rulers' efforts to engage with both Greek-speaking settlers and indigenous populations through monetary propaganda.

**a. Typology of the Hoard**

**b. G1. Apollodotus I (180 - 160 BC)**

**Type. 1.1. Elephant and Bull (AR Standard Drachm)**

**Obv.** Elephant prancing to the right, having a monogram below.

Greek legend on three sides: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΑΠΟΛΛΟΔΟΤΟΥ / ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ

**Rev.** Humped bull standing right.

Kharoashthi legend on three sides: *maharajasa apaladatasa / tratarasa*

**Reference:** Mitchiner 1978, no.1754 1755

**Coin nos.** Plates 1-6, Section 4.3.3.10.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type. 1.2. Elephant and Bull (AR Standard Drachm)**

**Obv.** Elephant prancing to the right, having a monogram below.

Greek legend on three sides: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΑΠΟΛΛΟΔΟΤΟΥ / ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ

**Rev..** Humped bull standing right, having a monogram below.

Kharoashthi legend on three sides: *maharajasa apaladatasa / tratarasa*

**Reference:** Mitchiner 1978, no.1754 1755

**Coin nos.** Plates 7-21, Section 4.3.3.10.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**c. G2. Antimachus II Nikepheros (160 - 155 BC)**

**Type. 2. Nike/ Riding King (AR Standard Drachm)**

**Obv.** Winged Nike standing to the left, holding a palm and a fillet, monogram on the left side, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΝΙΚΗΦΟΡΟΥ ΑΝΤΙΜΑΧΟΥ.

**Rev.** King riding on a prancing horse to the left, with head facing.

Kharoashthi legend on three sides: *Maharajasa Jayadhrasa Amtimakasa*

**Reference:** Bop 1991, pp. 196 197, Series 1

**Coin nos.** Plates 22-45, Section 4.3.3.10.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**d. G3. Menander I (155 - 130 BC)**

**Type. 3.1 Athena Head/ Owl (AV Gold Stator)**

**Obv.** Head of Athena to the left, wearing a crested helmet in a reel and bead border.

With no legend

**Rev..** Athenian owl prancing to the left with head facing, A symbol to the right in the lower corner.

Reference:

Coin nos. Plate 46, Section 4.3.3.10.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type. 3.2 Helmeted Bust of King/ Athena (AR)**

Obv. Diademed, Helmeted bust of king to right, brain-dashing spear with right arm.

Discontinue Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ / ΜΕΝΑΝΔΡΟΥ

Rev. Athena Alkidemos standing right, holding shield on outstretched left arm, hurling thunderbolt with right hand, monogram in the lower left corner.

Discontinue Kharoshthi legend: *maharajasa tratarasa / menamdrasa*

Reference:

Coin nos. Plates 47, Section 4.3.3.10.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type. 3.3 Helmeted Bust of King/ Athena (AR)**

Obv. Diademed, Helmeted bust of king to left.

Discontinue Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ / ΜΕΝΑΝΔΡΟΥ.

Rev. Athena Alkidemos standing right, holding shield on outstretched left arm, hurling thunderbolt with right hand, monogram to right in the lower corner.

Discontinue Kharoshthi legend: *maharajasa tratarasa / menamdrasa*

**Reference:**

Coin nos. Plates 48-72, Section 4.3.3.10.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type. 3.4 Bust of King/ Athena (AR)**

Obv. Diademed, bust of king to left.

Discontinue Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ / ΜΕΝΑΝΔΡΟΥ

Rev. Athena Alkidemos standing right, holding shield on outstretched left arm, hurling thunderbolt with right hand, monogram to right in the lower corner.

Discontinue Kharoshthi legend: *maharajasa tratarasa / menamdrasa*

Reference:

Coin nos. Plates 73-142, Section 4.3.3.10.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type. 3.5 Bust of King/ Athena (AR)**

Obv. Diademed, bust of king to right.

Discontinue Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ / ΜΕΝΑΝΔΡΟΥ

Rev. Athena Alkidemos standing right, holding shield on outstretched left arm, hurling thunderbolt with right hand, monogram to right in the lower corner.

Discontinue Kharoshthi legend: *maharajasa tratarasa / menamdrasa*

Reference:

Coin nos. Plates 143-161, Section 4.3.3.10.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type. 3.6 Bust of King/ Athena (AR)**

Obv. Diademed, bust of king to right.

Continue Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ ΜΕΝΑΝΔΡΟΥ

Rev. Athena Alkidemos standing right, holding shield on outstretched left arm, hurling thunderbolt with right hand, monogram to right in the lower corner.

Kharoshthi legend: *maharajasa tratarasa / menamdrasa*

Reference:

Coin nos. Plates 162-170, Section 4.3.3.10.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**e. G4. Heliocles (145 - 130 BC)**

**Type. 4 Diademed bust of King/ Athena (AR Drachm)**

Obv. Diademed bust of the king to the left.

Discontinue Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΔΙΚΑΙΟΥ / ΗΛΙΟΚΛΕΟΥΣ.

Rev. Athena Alkidemos, standing right, holding shield on outstretched left arm, hurling thunderbolt with right hand.

Discontinue Kharoshthi legend: *maharajasa dhramikasa / heliyakreyasa*.

Reference: Mitchiner 1978, nos. 288b, Bop 1991, p.223, series 2A

Coin nos. Plate 171, Section 4.3.3.10.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**f. G5. Strato I (125 110 BC)**

**Type. 3.1 Helmeted bust of King/ Athena (AR Drachm)**

Obv. Diademed, Helmeted bust of king to left.

Discontinue Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ / ΣΤΡΑΤΩΝΟΣ

(Basileos Soteros Stratanos ... of King Strato, the saviour)

Rev. Athena Alkidemos, standing right, holding shield on outstretched left arm, hurling thunderbolt with right hand.

Discontinue Kharoshthi legend: *maharajasa tratarasa / stratasa*

Reference: Mitchiner 1978, nos. 308b, Bop 1991, pp. 256, series 6

Coin nos. Plates 172-174, Section 4.3.3.10.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type. 3.2 Diademed bust of King/ Athena (AR Drachm)**

Obv. Diademed bust of the king to the left.

Discontinue Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ / ΣΤΡΑΤΩΝΟΣ

(Basileos Soteros Stratanos ... of King Strato, the saviour)

Rev. Athena Alkidemos standing right, holding shield on outstretched left arm, hurling thunderbolt with right hand, monogram to right in the lower corner.

Discontinue Kharoshthi legend: *maharajasa tratarasa / stratasa*

Reference: Bop 1991, pp. 254, serie 1

Coin nos. Plates 175, Section 4.3.3.10.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type. 3.3 Diademed bust of King/ Athena (AR Drachm)**

Obv. Diademed bust of the king to the left.

Discontinue Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΕΠΙΦΑΝΟΥΣ ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ / ΣΤΡΑΤΩΝΟΣ.

Rev. Athena Alkidemos, standing right, holding shield on outstretched left arm, hurling thunderbolt with right hand.

Discontinue Kharoshthi legend: *maharajasa pracachasa tratarasa / stratasa*

Reference: Mitchiner 1978, nos. 330a, Bop 1991, pp. 254, series 27A

Coin nos. Plates 176-177, Section 4.3.3.10.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

#### **g. G6. Philoxenos (100- 95 BC)**

##### **Type. 6.1. Helmeted bust of King/ Athena (AR Drachm)**

Obv. Diademed, Helmeted bust of king to left.

Greek legend on three sides: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ / ΑΝΙΚΗΤΟΥ / ΦΙΛΟΞΕΝΟΥ

Rev. Helmeted king mounted on a prancing horse to the right with right hand extended.

Kharoshthi legend on three sides: *maharajasa / apadihatasa / philasinasa*

Reference: Mitchiner 1978, nos., Bop 1991, pp. 291, series 6B

Coin nos. Plates 178, Section 4.3.3.10.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

##### **Type. 6.2 Diademed bust of King/ Athena (AR Drachm)**

Obv. Diademed bust of the king to the left.

Discontinue Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΕΠΙΦΑΝΟΥΣ ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ / ΣΤΡΑΤΩΝΟΣ.

Rev. Helmeted king mounted on a prancing horse to the right with right hand extended.

Kharoshthi legend on three sides: *maharajasa / apadihatasa / philasinasa*.

Reference: Mitchiner 1978, nos. 339b, Bop 1991, pp. 289, series 4C

Coin nos. Plates 179, Section 4.3.3.10.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

#### **5.1.2.8 INDO-SCYTHIAN PERIOD**

The Indo-Scythians, identified as the Sakas by Greek and Roman writers, were a nomadic Iranian people who began migrating from Central Asia into the northwestern regions of Indo-Pakistan, the Sub-continent in the late second century BCE (Mitchiner, 1976, p. 11; Senior, 2001, p. 87). Their arrival coincided with the decline of Indo-Greek authority, enabling them to establish themselves as the predominant rulers of Gandhara and the wider northwestern subcontinent (Dani, 2001, p. 172; Tarn, 1951, p. 32).

Their reign, extending from the late first century BCE into the early first century CE, was marked by a rich Synthesis of Hellenistic, Indian, and Iranian cultural traditions,

most clearly reflected in their bilingual coinage and varied iconographic repertoire (Mitchiner, 1975, pp. 343–345; Senior, 2001, pp. 12–15). This phase of political and cultural Hybridity set the stage for the rise of the Indo-Parthians, particularly under Gondophares, who supplanted the Indo-Scythians and initiated a new phase of political reconfiguration in the region during the early first century CE (Wikipedia, 2024; Pieper, 2021, pp. 66–69).

#### **A. Indo-Scythian Coin Hoard from Shinpokh, Landi Kotal, Khyber.**

The coin hoard (see Section 4.6.2 in Part II: Illustrations Coins) from Shinpokh, Landi Kotal, discovered in the Khyber region, offers critical insight into this transitional era. Comprising 56 silver tetradrachms, the hoard includes issues from the reigns of Azes I (c. 60 BCE–20 BCE) and Azes II (c. 35 BCE–12 BCE) of the Indo-Scythian dynasty, as well as the earliest tetradrachms of Gondophares, the first Indo-Parthian king (c. 20 CE). This mixture underscores the political and economic overlap between the two dynasties, suggesting not only the coexistence of their coinage but also a gradual and contested process of regime change rather than an abrupt conquest (Senior, 2001, pp. 61–67; Mitchiner, 1975, pp. 376–378).

The typological and iconographic analysis of these coins is revealing. The Indo-Scythian tetradrachms typically display the king riding on horseback, clad in military attire and holding a standard or spear, accompanied by Greek legends identifying the ruler as "Basileos Basileon Megalou Azou" ("Great King of Kings Azes"). The reverses frequently feature Greek deities, such as Zeus or Athena, with additional monograms and Kharosthi legends translating the royal titles into the local idiom. These bilingual inscriptions and hybrid motifs highlight the cosmopolitan character of the region and the rulers' efforts to appeal to diverse constituencies (Mitchiner, 1975, pp. 389–391). The inclusion of both Type 1.1 (Athena reverse) and Type 1.2 (Zeus reverse) for Azes II in the hoard provides valuable material for numismatic classification (Senior 98.424; Pieper, 2021, #38–40, #45).

The presence of Gondophares' earliest silver tetradrachms is particularly significant. His coins exhibit innovations in both style and iconography: the obverse typically shows the king on horseback, sometimes accompanied by the figure of Nike crowning him, while the reverse features the Indian god Siva standing and holding a trident, with a Kharosthi legend naming "Gudapharasa" (Gondophares) as "tratarasa devavratasa",

the saviour and devotee of the gods. This shift from Hellenistic to Indian divine imagery, while retaining the trappings of Iranian kingship, marks the emergence of a new dynastic identity (Pieper, 2021, p. 67; Senior 98.424).

Historically, Gondophares rose to power by toppling the last Indo-Scythian rulers and founding an independent Indo-Parthian kingdom in the northwest. As noted by recent scholarship and supported by numismatic evidence, Gondophares was initially a local Parthian satrap who asserted his independence following the fragmentation of Indo-Scythian authority, an event mirrored in the overlapping circulation of coins during this era (Pieper, 2021, p. 67). The transitional nature of this political shift is further corroborated by the discovery of Gondophares' coins in previous Indo-Scythian coin hoards, such as the Chaman Hazuri and Sur Kamar hoards, as well as multiple finds from Taxila (Mitchiner, 1975, p. 401; Pieper, 2021, p. 68; Senior, 2001, p. 84; MACW, 1982, p. 57). These mixed deposits demonstrate the contemporaneous use and acceptance of both dynasties' coinage, reflecting a period of uncertainty and negotiation in local authority.

The interpretive significance of the Shinpokh hoard is thus considerable. Not only does it refine our understanding of the chronological overlap and succession between Indo-Scythian and Indo-Parthian rulers, but it also offers a window into the iconographic and ideological strategies employed by emerging powers to legitimate their rule. The blending of Iranian, Hellenistic, and Indian motifs in the coins of Azes and Gondophares encapsulates the rich syncretism of ancient Gandhara and the wider Khyber corridor, a region at the crossroads of cultures and empires. The hoard's archaeological context, at a key transit point between Central and South Asia, further underscores its value for understanding the mechanisms of cultural and political change during the first centuries BCE and CE.

### **i. Typology of the Hoard:**

#### **ii. G1. Azes I (60-20 BC)**

##### **Type. King riding on a horse/ Zeus to the left (Silver Tetradrachm)**

**Obv.** Azes, in military dress, advancing right on horseback, goad in right hand, standard in outstretched left, Kharosthi letter before, with Greek Legend, ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΝ

ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ

AZOY.

**Rev.** Zeus standing facing, head left, Nike standing left in outstretched right hand,

transverse sceptre in left; monograms to left and right, Kharoasthi legend, Maharajasa Rajarajasa mahatasa Ayasa.

**Reference:** HGC 12, 639. Senior 105.

**Coin nos.** Plates 1-42, Section 4.6.2 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

### iii. G2. Azes II (35-12 BC)

#### **Type. 1.1. King riding on horse and Athena (Silver Tetradrachm)**

**Obv.** King riding on a horse to the right, with Greek Legend, ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΝ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ ΑΖΟΥ.

**Rev.** Athena standing to the right with one hand extended, making a mudra gesture monogram in the left and right fields, Kharoshthi legend: maharajasa rajarajasa mahatasa / ayasa.

**Reference:** Senior-98.424

**Coin nos.** Plates 43-54, Section 4.6.2 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

#### **Type. 1.2. King riding on horse/ Zeus to the right (Silver Tetradrachm)**

**Obv.** King riding on a horse to the right, holding a spear, in a Greek legend. : ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΝ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ // ΑΖΟΥ.

**Rev.** Zeus standing right holding transverse sceptre; monograms to left and right, Maharajasa Rajarajasa mahatasa Ayasa.

**Reference:** Senior-99; Senior-98.424

**Coin nos.** Plates 55, Section 4.6.2 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

### iv. G4. Gondophares (20 AD)

#### **Type. 1.1. Horseman and Siva (Silver Tetradrachm)**

**Obv.** King mounted on horse left, right arm raised holding a whip, Nike flying behind crowning the king, Gondopharid symbol at left, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΝ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ ΥΝΔΟΦΕΡΡΟΥ.

**Rev.** Siva standing facing, holding trident in right hand, palm in left, monogram "6" at left with additional letter below, Kharoshthi letter bu at right, with tiny nandipada below, Kharoshthi legend: Maharajasa rajarajasa tratarasa devavratasa / Gudapharasa

**Reference:** Senior-98.424

**Coin nos.** Plates 56, Section 4.6.2 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

### **B. Spalirisos, Spalahores with Spalagadames Coin Hoard from Khuga Khel, Landi Kotal, Khyber.**

The recent discovery of the Indo-Scythian coin hoard at Khuga Khel, Landi Kotal, Khyber (34° 6'37.22"N, 71°10'9.28"E) represents the first known assemblage exclusively featuring the joint and individual issues of Spalarises (Spalirises), Spalahores, and Spalagadames, three significant Saka rulers whose reigns illuminate

the turbulent political dynamics of northwestern South-Asia during the late first century BCE and early first century CE (Gardner, 1929, pp. 98-101; Rezakhani, 2017, pp. 34, 37; Senior, 2001, Sen 59.1, 73.1). Comprising 28 billion tetradrachms, the hoard is typologically notable for two principal series: the first includes joint issues attributed to Spalahores (c. 57 BCE-35 BCE) and his son and successor Spalagadames (c. 19-46 CE), with obverses depicting a king on horseback, adorned with "*ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΝ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ ΑΣΙΑΙΚΟΥ*," in Greek script and reverses portraying Herakles seated on a rock, rendered within a square border and accompanied by a Kharosthi legend "*maharajasa mahatasa ayilishasa*" (MIG 812a; Senior 59.1). The second group includes coins of Spalarises, which feature a king walking left, holding an axe, and are framed by the Greek inscription "*ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΝ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ ΟΝΩΝΟΥ*," with the reverse featuring enthroned Zeus and the Kharosthi legend "*Mahatasa dhramikasa Spalarasa*", indicating Spalarises' Buddhist affiliations (Senior 73.1).

Historically, these three rulers demonstrate the fluid boundaries and ethnic interplay between the Saka and Parthian traditions in the region. Spalarises, whose name in Greek and Kharosthi signifies "commander of the army," first emerges as a military commander under Vonones of Sakastan and was described, along with Spalahores, as a "brother of the king" on contemporary coinage (Gardner, 1929, pp. 99-100; Rezakhani, 2017, p. 34; Harmatta, 1999, p. 410). While R.C. Senior and Khodadad Rezakhani consider these familial titles literal, other scholars, such as Saghi Gazerani and K.W. Dobbins, suggest that the terminology may denote honorific status or satrapal office within Saka power structures (Gazerani, 2015, pp. 15-17). Spalahores himself succeeded Vonones and established a local dynasty in Sakastan, his name also meaning "commander of the army," and is confirmed from coins in both Greek and Kharosthi legends (Gazerani, 2015, pp. 16-17; Harmatta, 1999, p. 410). Spalagadames, the son of Spalahores, is sometimes identified with the early Indo-Parthian king Gondophares, suggesting dynastic continuity and fluidity in the ruling houses of the region (Rezakhani, 2017, pp. 34, 37).

The interpretive significance of the Khuga Khel hoard is multifaceted. The coins exhibit a dynamic iconographic syncretism, blending Hellenistic, Iranian, and South-Asian motifs. Herakles and Zeus appear alongside Buddhist titles and Kharosthi script, demonstrating the cosmopolitan character of the Khyber corridor, situated at the



intersection of Central and South Asia. The explicit adoption of both Greek and Buddhist elements underscores the rulers' attempts at broad legitimacy among multi-ethnic constituencies. Moreover, this hoard's archaeological context, located precisely at a strategic mountain pass, highlights its role in long-distance trade and political connectivity (Mitchiner, 1975, pp. 400-402; Pieper, 2021, pp. 54, 56; MACW, 1982, pp. 105-107). Comparable hoards from Arachosia, Sakastan, and Gandhara have yielded similar issues, but this Khuga Khel find is unique in its exclusive and early representation of these interconnected kings.

**i. Typology of the Hoard:**

**ii. G1. Spalahores (c. 57-35 BCE) and Spalagadames (c. 19-46 CE)**

**Type. King riding Horse/ Heracle (Joint Issues- Copper Cholkon)**

**Obv.** King mounted on horse right, Kharoshthi *ti* above, within square border, Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ / ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΝ / ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ // ΑΖΙΑΙΚΟΥ.

**Rev.** Herakles seated on a rock, holding a club, monogram below left, all within a square border, Kharoshthi legend: *maharajasa / mahatasa / ayilishasa*.

**Reference:** MIG 812a, Sen 59.1.

**Coin nos.** Plates 1-16, Section 4.6.5 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**iii. G2. Spalarises (1st BCE)**

**Type. King Walking/ Zeus (Copper Cholkon)**

**Obv.** King walking left with axe within Greek legend "ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΝ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ ΟΝΩΝΟΥ" "Great king of kings Vonones".

**Rev.** Enthroned Zeus making a blessing gesture. Kharosthi legend: *Mahatasa dhramikasa Spalarasa* "Great follower of the Dharma Spalirises".

**Reference:** Senior 73.1.

**Coin nos.** Plates 17-28, Section 4.6.5 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**5.1.2.9 ROMAN PRESENCE (c.27 BCE - 476 CE)**

**A. Discovery of Gold Coin of Tiberius Julius Caesar Augustus from Khuga Khel, Landi Kotal.**

A Roman gold aureus of Emperor Tiberius Julius Caesar Augustus (reigned 14-37 CE) was unearthed by treasure hunters at Khuga Khel, Landi Kotal, representing a significant addition to the numismatic and historical corpus of the Khyber region (see Plate 1, Section 4.8.1 in Part II: Illustrations - Coins). This find demonstrates that Roman imperial coinage reached the northwestern frontier of the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent and underscores the extensive economic and cultural connections that

evolved between the Roman Empire and the Indian subcontinent during the early centuries CE. The appearance of this coin in Landi Kotal must be viewed within the broader context of the thriving Indo-Roman trade that expanded notably during the reign of Kujula Kadphises, the first Kushan ruler, in the late first century BCE and early first century CE (Bopearachchi, 1991; Dani, 1967; Warmington, 1928).

The influx of Roman gold into South Asia, attested in both literary accounts and archaeological discoveries, resulted from vibrant long-distance trade in luxury commodities, including spices, textiles, and gemstones, alongside diplomatic exchanges and payment transfers (Warmington, 1928, pp. 156–161; McLaughlin, 2010, pp. 109-111). The presence of a Tiberian aureus at Khuga Khel is therefore of considerable importance for establishing the chronology and nature of cultural interactions across the Khyber corridor during the early Kushan era. Comparable finds from sites across Punjab and Gandhara corroborate the existence of sustained maritime and overland trade routes linking the Mediterranean to South Asia, firmly situating Landi Kotal into a broader network of economic integration (McLaughlin, 2010, pp. 109-111; Bopearachchi, 1991).

Such material evidence illustrates the movement of Roman wealth and confirms the Khyber region's active role in transregional exchange. Moreover, the Khuga Khel aureus provides tangible corroboration for classical accounts of Indo-Roman commerce, including those recorded by Pliny the Elder (Warmington, 1928, pp. 149–153). It serves as a vital chronological marker for reconstructing the economic history and cross-cultural connectivity of ancient South Asia. In this respect, the discovery is not merely noteworthy; it is pivotal to understanding the economic and historical geography of the Khyber region in the early centuries CE.

#### **5.1.2.10 KUSHAN PERIOD (C.30 BCE - 375 CE)**

##### **A. Shpola Stupa - Site No. 1**

|                   |                           |               |            |
|-------------------|---------------------------|---------------|------------|
| Name:             | Shpola Stupa at Zarai     | Reference No: | KH-65      |
| Nearest Village:  | Zarai                     | Area of Site: | 765sq. m   |
| Coordinates:      | 34° 4'29.30" 71°12'29.70" | Altitude:     | 1565 M     |
| Access Route:     | Accessible                | Condition:    | Damage     |
| Cast Area         |                           | Sub Cast      | Parth Khel |
| Site Description: |                           |               |            |

The Shpola Stupa, located approximately 27 miles west of Peshawar along the historic Khyber Pass route to Afghanistan, is one of the biggest Buddhist stupas in Gandhara. It was historically described by British travellers William Moorcroft and George Trebeck in 1824.

The stupa was once a well-maintained monument, but after the British annexation of Khyber in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, it was heavily damaged. Its masonry was used in the construction of roads, and the dome was also plundered, mainly by treasure hunters in search of relics. Despite the attempts of the British Political Agents of the early 20th century to save the site, the conservation plans eventually stagnated.

The Shpola Stupa stands as a poignant reminder of the region's Buddhist heritage and the challenges of preserving archaeological monuments in politically sensitive and historically neglected zones.

#### **5.1.2.11 KUSHANO-SASANIAN (c. 230 CE-c. 365 CE)**

Despite targeted archaeological and numismatic investigations, the Kushano-Sasanian period remains conspicuously unattested in Landi Kotal. Neither coins nor artefacts diagnostic of Kushano-Sasanian authority have been recovered from any documented site in this tehsil, suggesting either a lack of imperial penetration or subsequent erasure from the material record.

#### **5.1.2.12 SASSANID PERIOD (224 AD TO 651 AD)**

**No coins or artefacts of this period have been attested from Landi Kotal.**

#### **5.1.2.13 ARAB-SASSANID PERIOD (C. 632CE - 712 CE)**

##### **A. Umayyad Silver Drachm Hoard from Bacha Mena, Torkham (Arab-Sassanid Period).**

The discovery of the Arab-Sassanid coin hoard from Bacha Mena, Torkham, in Landi Kotal represents a significant numismatic assemblage shedding light on the early Islamic expansion into Khurasan and its adjacent frontier zones. Unearthed in 2016 during construction works by law enforcement agencies and documented photographically by the political administration of Khyber Agency in 2019, this hoard offers rare and direct material evidence for the region's integration into the rapidly changing political and monetary landscapes of the seventh century CE.

The hoard comprises silver drachms typologically associated with the late Sassanian and early Arab-Sassanid phases, including issues of Balash (c. 484-488 CE) and Ziyād b. Abī Sufyān (c. 622-673 CE). The earlier coins (nos. 1-5) feature the right-facing, draped bust of Balash wearing an elaborate mural crown, with the Pahlavi legend 'hwkd wld'š' ('The good king, Balash'), and on the reverse, the Zoroastrian fire altar flanked by two attendants an enduring symbol of Sassanian imperial ideology, accompanied by a Pahlavi mint abbreviation 'LYW' (Göbl type I/1; SNS III/2, type Ia/1a). These coins exemplify the persistence of Sassanian royal and religious imagery even as the empire faced political fragmentation.

Of even greater significance are the Arab-Sassanid drachms (nos. 6-10) struck in the name of Ziyad bin ibi Sufyan, governor under Mu'awiya I (c.605 CE- 680 CE) of the Umayyad caliphate. His coins were issued during the reign of Mauáwiya I and emulate the Sassanian model, depicting a bust resembling Khosrau II, with Pahlavi legends identifying Ziyād and invoking divine blessing ('zyy't Y / 'bwswp[y]'n', 'GDE / 'p̄zwt'), as well as an Arabic outer inscription, 'Bism' Allāh - rabbi ('In the name of Allah'), thus reflecting the earliest incorporation of Islamic formulae into the Sassanian monetary tradition (Malek 225; Album 8). The reverse retains the classic fire altar motif, but with date and mint formulae updated in Pahlavi, marking the gradual administrative and ideological shift under early Islamic rule.

The typological and epigraphic continuity from late Sassanian to Arab-Sassanid issues in this hoard highlights the pragmatic adaptation and legitimacy strategies of the first Islamic governors in the east. The coins circulated in a region where old and new authorities overlapped, and where monetary policy reflected both the inertia of Sassanian customs and the claim of new religious-political identities. The presence of Ziyād's issues in particular underscores the Caliphate's administrative penetration into Khurasan and points to Torkham's strategic role as a conduit for both military expeditions and fiscal integration, echoed by historical sources describing the relocation of Arab military families and further conquests in the easternmost provinces.

The Bacha Mena, Torkham hoard, therefore, provides a crucial window onto the processes of early Islamic expansion, monetary adaptation, and the transformation of frontier societies in the seventh century CE. Its documentation enriches our

understanding of the transition from Sassanian to Umayyad authority and the lasting numismatic legacy of the Sassanid world in early Islamic Central and South Asia.

### **Coins.**

#### **G1. Balash (c. 484 CE-488 CE)**

##### **Type. 1.2. Bust of king and Fire Alter (AR Drachm)**

**Obv.** Draped bust of Balash to right, wearing an elaborate mural crown; before head, 'hwkd wld'š' = 'hukay Wardāš/Walāš' ('The good king, Balash' in Pahlavi).

**Rev.** Fire altar with ribbons, flanked by two attendants; head of Balash to the right on the shaft; above the altar, a star and a crescent; to the right, 'LYW' (Abbreviation for the name of the mint in Pahlavi).

**Reference:** Göbl type I/1. SNS III/2, type Ia/1a.

**Coin nos.** Plate 1, Section 4.13.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

#### **G2. Ziyād b. Abī Sufyān (c. 622-673 CE)**

##### **Type. 1.2. Bust of King and Fire Alter (AR Drachm)**

**Obv.** Draped bust resembling Khosrau II to right, wearing an elaborate mural crown; behind head, 'GDE / 'p̄zwt' ('[may his] glory increase' in Pahlavi); before head, 'zyy't Y / 'bwswp[y]' n' ('Ziyad ibn Abi Sufyan' in Pahlavi); in the outer margin, 'bism Allāh - rabbi' ('In the name of Allah, my Lord' in Arabic).

**Rev.** Fire altar with ribbons, flanked by two attendants; above altar, star and crescent; to left, date in Pahlavi; to right, BYŠ (abbreviation for the name of the mint in Pahlavi). Album 8. Nicely toned. Minor flan faults, otherwise, very fine.

**Reference:** Malek 225.

**Coin nos.** Plate 2-10, Section 4.13.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

### **5.1.2.14 CHACH PERIOD (c. 632 CE - 712 CE)**

#### **A. Sri Yashaditya (c. 679 CE - 712 CE)**

#### **B. Silver Dammas Coins Hoard I of Sri Yashditya from Charbagh, Landi Kotal.**

The Hoard I Sri Yashaditya was discovered from Charbagh, Landi Kotal, and consisted of thirty-seven silver dammas (Plates 1-37, Section 4.16.1.3 in Part II: Illustrations Coins). The coins were discovered by local treasure hunters in Charbagh and bear the distinct iconography of the Yashaditya series, featuring a crowned obverse: bust of the king, reverse: trident motif with Brahmi script. The scale and integrity of the hoard not only suggest the significant circulation of the coinage of Yashaditya in this peripheral region, but also suggest the importance of Charbagh in wider networks of exchange and connectivity between Indo-Pakistan, the sub-continent, and Central/ East-Asia in the late 7th to early 8th centuries CE.

Despite being recovered outside formal archaeological investigation, this substantial assemblage provides valuable evidence for reconstructing patterns of coin use, economic activity, and the enduring legacy of ancient monetary systems in the region (cf. Dani, 1969, p. 88; Sharma, 1966, p. 106).

### **C. Silver Dammas Coins Hoard II of Sri Yashditya from Ghagra-I, Landi Kotal.**

The coin hoard I discovered from Ghagra, situated in the Landi Kotal, comprises a total of twenty silver dammas (Plates 1-27, Section 4.16.1.4 in Part II: Illustrations Coins). This assemblage was reportedly uncovered in 2018 during the excavation of a building foundation in the area. Following its discovery, the hoard entered the local antiquities market and was subsequently acquired by a jewellery shop in Jamrud, reflecting the typical pattern of informal finds in the region.

Each of the twenty coins exhibits the distinct iconography of the Yashaditya series, with a crowned bust of the king on the coin's obverse and a trident motif edged by Brahmi script on the reverse. These features securely place the hoard within the late Chach period of Sindh, circa 679-712 CE.

The accidental unearthing of this substantial coin hoard at Ghagra underscores both the continued presence of ancient monetary remains in the trans-Khyber region and the ongoing importance of Landi Kotal as a historical node for trade and circulation. The journey of the coins from discovery to the jewellery market further highlights the challenges of archaeological preservation and documentation in the area, while still providing significant evidence for regional patterns of coin use and economic connectivity during the late pre-Islamic era (cf. Dani, 1969, p. 88; Sharma, 1966, p. 106).

### **D. Silver Dammas Coins Hoard III of Sri Yashditya from Ghagra-II, Landi Kotal.**

The Hoard III of Sri Yashaditya, discovered at Ghagra-II in the Landi Kotal region, consisted of twenty silver dammas (Plates 1-20, Section 4.16.1.5 in Part II: Illustrations Coins). This assemblage was found by treasure hunters using a metal detector in the same residential area where the earlier hoard (Hoard I) had previously been unearthed. Each of the twenty coins displays the same characteristic iconography

of the Yashaditya series: a crowned bust of the king on the obverse, while a trident adorned with Brahmi script is on the coin's reverse.

#### **E. Silver Dammas Coins Hoard IV of Sri Yashditya from Ghagra-III, Landi Kotal.**

This is the third hoard that was discovered at Ghagra locality, consisting of Sri Yashaditya silver dammas, and 4<sup>th</sup> in the Landi Kotal region, at the same spot as the previous hoards. The hoard consisted of twenty-five silver dammas, recovered by the same treasure hunter responsible for the earlier discoveries (Plates 1-25, Section 4.16.1.5 in Part II: Illustrations Coins). Each coin exhibits the distinctive features of the Yashaditya series, as above (see section 5.1.2.14.5), corresponding to the late Chach period of Sindh (c. 679-712 CE).

The repeated discovery of multiple hoards at the same site strongly suggests deliberate concealment, most likely by the same caravan traders or travellers seeking to protect their wealth from potential threats such as local tribal raids. These repeated finds not only add to the numismatic corpus of Sri Yashaditya but also provide compelling evidence of the socio-economic dynamics, trade-related anxieties, and security practices along the historic Khyber route during the late pre-Islamic period (cf. Dani, 1969, p. 88; Sharma, 1966, p. 106).

#### **5.1.2.15 HINDU SHAHIS PERIOD (c. 843 CE - 1026 CE)**

No coins or artefacts related to the Hindu Shahis have been reported from Landi Kotal during this research.

#### **5.1.2.16 ISLAMIC PERIOD (c. 622 - Present)**

##### **A. Abbasid Period (C. 750-1258 CE)**

The Abbasid coin hoard discovered at Dalkhad, Charbagh, Landi Kotal, is a remarkable numismatic find from the early Islamic period, comprising seventeen silver dirhams struck under several Abbasid caliphs, including Al-Mahdi (775-785 CE), Abu Jafar Al-Mansur, Al-Ma'mun (809-833 CE), and Al-Haroon your Rasheed. While the northwest of the Indian subcontinent, such as Landi Kotal, was never directly under Abbasid political control, owing to the dominance of the mighty Hindu Shahis in Khorasan, Kabul, and adjacent territories, the presence and circulation of

these silver dirhams in the area provide compelling evidence of vibrant commercial interactions between the two empires. The coins themselves are characterised by well-preserved Arabic inscriptions, featuring the central Islamic creed (Kalima), the name of the issuing caliph, mint details, and Quranic verses, all framed by decorative motifs. The discovery of Abbasid coinage so far beyond the empire's political frontiers underscores the region's importance as a trade and cultural centre. It testifies to the immense economic power of the Abbasid Caliphate in the 8th and 9<sup>th</sup> centuries CE.

#### i. Abbasid Coin hoard from Dalkhad, Charbagh, Landi Kotal.

##### G1. Abbasid-Al-Mamun (AH 194-218 / 809-833 AD)

##### Type. Kalima/ Epithet (silver Dirham)

**Obv.** Arabic text in three rows in the centre. First row "لا اله الا".

This text is surrounded by one row of Arabic text. Starting with "بسم الله". At 1 o'clock, reading from right to left, two rings in the margin with a pattern of annulets evenly distributed.

لا إله إلا

الله وحده

لا شريك له

بسم الله ضرب هذا الدرهم بسمرقند سنة ثمان و تسعين و مائة

**Rev.** Arabic text in five main rows in the centre. The first row starts with "الله وبه".

The centre text is surrounded by one ring.

One row of Arabic text in the margin outside the ring. Starting with "محمد" at 1 o'clock, reading from right to left.

الله وبه

محمد رسول الله

مما امر به الامام

المأمون امير المؤمنين

الفضل

محمد رسول الله ارسله بالهدى ودين الحق ليظهره على الدين كله و لو كره المشركون

**Coin nos.** Plate 1-17, Section 4.18.1.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

#### B. Taimoor (Tamerlane) Fort- Site No. 2

|                   |                             |               |         |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|---------------|---------|
| Name:             | Taimor Fort                 | Reference No: | KH-66   |
| Nearest Village:  | Michini                     | Area of Site: | 500+sqm |
| Coordinates:      | 34° 6'26.46"N 71° 6'52.72"E | Altitude:     | 1,072 M |
| Access Route:     | Accessible                  | Condition:    | intact  |
| Cast Area         | -                           | Sub Cast      | -       |
| Site Description: |                             |               |         |



The Taimoor Fort (Plate 3.67 in Part II: Illustrations Plates), also known as Tamerlane Fort, is a historical site situated near Michni Check Post in Landi Kotal, within the Khyber District (see Map 1.76 in Part II). Local tradition holds that the fort was once used as a prison during Timur's invasion of India in the late 14th century, although definitive archaeological evidence remains limited.

Perched at a high vantage point, the fort offers panoramic views of the Khyber Pass and the surrounding terrain. It forms part of the larger historical and cultural setting of Landi Kotal, a town long known for its strategic significance along the ancient Silk Road. While modest in structure today, Taimoor Fort remains a symbol of the region's layered past, merging legend with the broader military and political history of the Khyber corridor.

#### 5.1.2.17 BRITISH PERIOD

##### A. Michni Fort -Site No. 1

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                             |               |         |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------|---------|
| Name:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Michni Fort                 | Reference No: | KH-67   |
| Nearest Village:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Landi Khana                 | Area of Site: | 4 / 2 M |
| Coordinates:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | 34° 6'20.27"N 71° 7'11.01"E | Altitude:     | 2008 M  |
| Access Route:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Accessible                  | Condition:    | intact  |
| Cast Area                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | -                           | Sub Cast      | -       |
| Site Description:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                             |               |         |
| <p>Michni Post (Plate 3.68 in Part II: Illustrations Plates), located in the rugged terrain of the Khyber Pass, holds deep historical and strategic significance (see Map 1.77 in Part II). Initially constructed by the British Indian Army in 1925, it served as a vital military outpost and observation point, offering a clear view of the border with Afghanistan. Its placement at a high elevation made it an ideal location for monitoring cross-border movements and ensuring security along this ancient corridor.</p> <p>Over the years, various military units stationed at Michni carved their emblems and insignias into the surrounding rocks, leaving behind a visible record of the post's military legacy. In 1962, the Frontier Constabulary added the now-iconic monumental</p> |                             |               |         |

gate, which stands as a symbol of the post's continuing relevance in border security and local heritage.

Today, Michni Post remains not only a functional military site but also a historical landmark, representing the centuries-old role of the Khyber Pass as a gateway between civilisations, cultures, and empires.

## **B. Railway Tunnel at Shalman-Site No. 2**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                            |               |          |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------|----------|
| Name:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Railway Tunnel at Shalman  | Reference No: | KH-68    |
| Nearest Village:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Warsak                     | Area of Site: | 116x30x2 |
| Coordinates:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | 34° 9'52.97"N 71°23'8.34"E | Altitude:     | 1565 M   |
| Access Route:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Accessible                 | Condition:    | intact   |
| Cast Area                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Mullagori                  | Sub Cast      |          |
| Site Description:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                            |               |          |
| <p>This tunnel (Plate 3.42 in Part II: Illustrations Plates) was initially constructed for the Shalman route to Torkham but was left unfinished and closed in 1907 following a request from the Afghan government. Situated on the right bank of the Kabul River in the Warsak area, the tunnel is positioned at coordinates 34.1647150°N and 71.385649°W, with an elevation of 3 meters above the river (see Map 1.51 in Part II). The tunnel extends approximately 116 feet in length, with a height of 30 feet and a width of 20 feet. Its façade features a curved design, incorporating a semicircular form at the centre, while the roof is constructed from solid concrete. In a subsequent phase, the structure was adapted for use as a supply depot by the British Army.</p> |                            |               |          |

## **C. Landi Khana Railway Station - Site. 3**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                             |               |         |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------|---------|
| Name:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Landi Khana Railway Station | Reference No: | KH-68   |
| Nearest Village:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Torkham                     | Area of Site: | 4 / 2 M |
| Coordinates:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | 34° 6'35.96"N 71° 6'36.30"E | Altitude:     | 2008 M  |
| Access Route:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Accessible                  | Condition:    | intact  |
| Cast Area                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | -                           | Sub Cast      | -       |
| <p>Landi Khana is a historic railway station (see Plate 3.69 in Part II: Illustration Plates) located at Torkham, on the Pakistan-Afghanistan border. Established on 23 April 1926 during the British colonial era (see Map 1.79 in Part II), it served as the terminus of the</p> |                             |               |         |

renowned Khyber Pass Railway, an extraordinary engineering accomplishment through one of the world's most strategically significant mountain corridors.

The railway's inauguration is associated with a distinctive and poignant episode: on 4 November 1925, the first train traversed the Khyber Pass, operated by Mrs. Victor Bayley, the wife of the British engineer responsible for overseeing the railway's construction. Initially, Victor Bayley had been chosen to drive the inaugural train in recognition of his pivotal role in the project. However, his untimely death three months prior to the ceremony led his wife to honour his memory by undertaking the task herself.

Another popular account suggests that tribal opposition to foreign entry prompted Bayley to ask his wife to drive the train, knowing the local Pathan tribes' traditional respect for women. To ensure recognition from a distance, she reportedly wore her hair long to appear visibly female, easing tribal resistance.

The Khyber Pass Railway was an expensive project, costing Rs. 485,000 per kilometre in 1926, a substantial sum for its time. Despite the massive investment, traffic remained sparse, with typically only two trains per week. What truly distinguished the railway, however, was not its commercial success but its engineering marvel set against the dramatic backdrop of the Khyber landscape.

The rail link between Landi Kotal and Landi Khana was officially discontinued on 15 December 1932, following political sensitivities and pressure exerted by the Afghan government. Today, the station and the remnants of the railway stand as enduring symbols of colonial ambition and engineering ingenuity within one of South Asia's most geopolitically significant corridors.

### **5.1.3 TEHSIL BARA**

#### **5.1.3.1 PREHISTORIC PERIOD**

##### **i. Nanawar Cave Site No. 1**

|                   |                             |               |        |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|---------------|--------|
| Name:             | Nanawar Cave                | Reference No: | KH-69  |
| Nearest Village:  | Nanawar Killi               | Area of Site: | 200+m  |
| Coordinates:      | 33°43'35.42"N 70°59'58.98"E | Altitude:     | 934m   |
| Access Route:     | Inaccessible                | Condition:    | Intact |
| Cast Area         | Bangush                     | Sub Cast      | Turi   |
| Site Description: |                             |               |        |

Nanawar Cave (Plate 1, Section 3.1 in Part II), situated in the Mani Khel Dara of Tirah Valley (Map 1.8, Section 1 in Part II), within what is now Orakzai Tribal District (formerly part of Khyber), stands as a site of substantial archaeological and paleoecological interest. Extending over 200 meters and featuring dual natural entrances, the cave is not only ecologically significant, supporting diverse bat and spider populations, but also presents a complex geological profile. Competing hypotheses regarding its origin have been advanced: some scholars posit volcanic processes, with the cave formed by trapped lava bubbles, while others emphasise the role of limestone dissolution by subterranean water activity over geological timescales (Fosse, 2005, p. 440). This geodiversity, combined with an array of cultural and archaeological signatures, underpins Nanawar's status as a key locus for ongoing multidisciplinary research.

Beyond its geological and ecological dimensions, Nanawar Cave has accrued notable cultural and historical associations. Oral traditions and localised historical accounts indicate that the site served as a centre for meditation and ritual activity, possibly dating to the reign of Kanishka in the second century CE, a period marked by strong Buddhist influence across the broader Gandhāran region. The presence of non-Muslim graves in the surrounding area lends additional support to the interpretation of the cave as a locus of pre-Islamic ritual or mortuary practices. (Mukherjee, 1991, p. 45). These cultural overlays signal Nanawar's persistent role as a spiritual and ceremonial node in the region's evolving historical landscape.

Archaeological investigations at Nanawar have produced a diagnostic assemblage of lithic artefacts (see Plates 1-4, Section 5.1 in Part II) indicative of prolonged and repeated prehistoric occupation. The recovery of hand axes (see Plate 2, Section 5.1 in Part II), surrounding terraces align with Palaeolithic and Mesolithic technological traditions (Olivieri, 1996, p. 32). These finds suggest the cave's use by hunter-gatherer populations for activities such as seasonal sheltering, resource processing, or ritual practice. The spatial association of these tools with the cave's entrances and their typological consistency with broader northwest sub-Himalayan lithic traditions reinforce the interpretation of Nanawar as a focal point of early human activity in the Tirah region.

The cultural sequence is further clarified by the detailed analysis of 24 lithic artefacts recovered from the site and its environs. Among these, 14 are axes (eight complete, two nearly intact, four represented by anterior fragments) exhibiting triangular, trapezoidal, and oval morphologies. The working edges, generally sharp, show signs of use for woodworking or resource processing. Notably, one specimen bears lateral grooves near the working edge, interpreted as hafting features. Five hammerstones (two intact, two with damaged butt ends, one with a broken working edge) display morphological variation, with forms ranging from circular to trapezoidal and square. These diverse shapes point to multi-functional use in tasks such as flintknapping, woodworking, and perhaps agricultural processing. Additional finds include a broken chisel with a preserved cutting edge, a knife with an intact blade, and three stray butt ends of indeterminate tool type (possibly axes or hammerstones). All artefacts are heavily weathered, with loss of original surface polish and evidence of laterization due to prolonged exposure or in situ chemical processes. However, their typological features are consistent with Neolithic traditions.

From a methodological perspective, the absence of stratified burials or settlement horizons within the cave itself is notable; the archaeological record remains dominated by surface assemblages and isolated finds, mirroring patterns observed in comparable northwest sub-Himalayan sites (Soni & Soni, 2012, pp. 15-18). However, the concentration and diversity of tools, combined with the ethnographic and oral history context, allow for the reconstruction of a provisional sequence of human occupation and site function, ranging from early foraging and seasonal use to later ritual and commemorative activities.

The cave's more inaccessible chambers, characterised by low oxygen and challenging access, are unlikely to have been utilised for extended habitation but may have served specialised ritual or short-term purposes. Such spatial differentiation is well-documented in both ethnographic analogies and archaeological studies of cave use in South and Central Asia (Fosse, 2005, p. 440).

In short, the finds from Nanawar Cave offer clear proof of prehistoric human habitation in the Tirah Valley and, more broadly, across the Khyber region. The collection of stone tools from the site, along with its complex layers of cultural, spiritual, and ecological history, makes Nanawar a key site for exploring how early populations adapted,

developed new technologies, and expressed symbolic behaviour in South Asia's prehistoric era. Ongoing studies and upcoming efforts to catalogue the artefacts, along with plans for future multidisciplinary excavations and scientific dating, are expected to provide even greater clarity on the chronology and cultural development of the region.

### **5.1.3.2 ACHAEMENIAN PERIOD (c. 550 BCE to 330 BCE)**

#### **A. Treasure of the Achaemenian period from Srawela, Tirah Valley, Bara.**

The Srawela treasure (Plate 1-28, Section 5.3 in Part II) was discovered accidentally, during field ploughing in Tirah Valley in May 2010, and features as one of the significant discoveries of Achaemenian period material culture in the region. Reportedly consisting of over 520 items, the assemblage was fragmented and dispersed due to local disputes, with objects eventually sold piecemeal in Bara and Peshawar. Although the precise archaeological context is lost, the diversity and richness of the objects offer a rare glimpse into the luxury material culture and artistic repertoire associated with the late Achaemenid Empire (Curtis & Tallis, 2005, pp. 118-120; Muscarella, 1988, pp. 95-97).

The collection includes a striking array of gold vases, bowls, rhyta, dishes, animal figurines, buttons, and jewellery, each characterised by elaborate decoration and high technical proficiency. The gold vases and amphorae (Plates 1, 3, 5, 7, 11) are particularly noteworthy, displaying globular or elongated bodies with vertical fluting or ribbing, and necks adorned with lozenge (diamond) patterns in low relief. Many of these vessels are further embellished with sculpted handles or applied figurines, such as caprids or rams, rendered in the round and attached at the shoulder or rim (Boardman, 2000, pp. 174-175). The interplay of geometric and zoomorphic motifs, as seen in the double-ibex handles and ringed necks, speaks to a fusion of Achaemenid court styles with local craftsmanship. The surfaces are often highly burnished, with repoussé and chased decoration highlighting details of animal anatomy and floral motifs (Curtis, 2013, pp. 88-89).

Bowls and dishes (Plates 4, 6.1-6.3, 27.1-27.3) frequently exhibit radiating flutes or petals, sometimes with a central medallion bearing a repoussé figure of a ram, gazelle, or bull. These forms echo Achaemenid ceremonial tableware and point to the symbolic

role of animals, especially horned ungulates, in Persian iconography, where they represent power, fertility, and royal authority (Curtis & Tallis, 2005, p. 119). The gold and silver rhyta (Plates 28.1-28.2) take the form of horned animals, with the vessel body emerging from the animal's back, combining utilitarian function with dynastic and religious symbolism (Boardman, 2000, pp. 182-183; Muscarella, 1988, pp. 108-109). Delicate animal figurines, buttons, and jewellery (Plates 13, 14, 18, 22-24, 26) reveal a similar attention to detail, with miniature ibexes, birds, and mythical creatures fashioned in solid gold, some adorned with granulation, filigree, or inlaid stones. Several pieces, including belts, amulets, and earrings, demonstrate techniques such as casting, engraving, and intricate wirework (Curtis, 2013, pp. 91-92).

The artistic repertoire of the Srawela hoard displays a sophisticated balance between geometric order and naturalistic vitality. The repeated use of vertical fluting, lozenge patterns, and beaded borders frames more fluid motifs such as leaping ibexes, kneeling rams, and birds with outstretched wings (Boardman, 2000, p. 177). The presence of mythical creatures, such as simurghs (phoenixes) and hybrid beasts, reflects the syncretic nature of Achaemenid art, which drew from Mesopotamian, Central-Asian, and local traditions (Curtis & Tallis, 2005, p. 121). The objects' craftsmanship, marked by seamless joins, precise relief work, and polished finishes, attests to the skill of goldsmiths operating in or influenced by Achaemenid courtly workshops (Muscarella, 1988, p. 96).

In conclusion, the Srawela treasure offers persuasive evidence for the movement of luxury goods, artistic prototypes, and iconographic motifs during the late Achaemenid period across the empire's eastern frontiers. Although its precise archaeological context has been lost, the assemblage's richness and variety underscore the cultural complexity and extensive reach of Achaemenid material culture within the Tirah Valley and the surrounding regions (Curtis, 2013, pp. 96-97).

## **B. Gold Rhyton from the Achaemenid Period from Mundi Kas, Bara.**

The gold rhyton (Plate 1-3, Section 5.5.3 in Part II) was discovered in 2014 at Mundi Kas, a locality in the Bara region of District Khyber. The find reportedly occurred accidentally during agricultural activity by local farmers. As is common in such unregulated discoveries, the object was not reported to authorities and eventually surfaced in the Ander Shahr area of Peshawar, where it was offered for sale in a

jewellery shop. The rhyton is crafted in high-grade gold weighing 76.6 g and about 4 inches in length, 2.3 inches in width. It features a zoomorphic ibex protome with garnet inlays, stylistically consistent with ritual drinking or libation vessels from the late Achaemenid imperial tradition. Though the absence of a stratified excavation context limits definitive archaeological interpretation, the artefact nonetheless provides valuable insight into the presence and circulation of Persian luxury objects in the frontier zones of ancient Gandhara. Its stylistic and material features suggest elite ownership and possible use in ceremonial contexts, reinforcing the cultural and artistic influence of Achaemenid Persia in the Khyber region during the first millennium BCE.

### **5.1.3.3 PUNCH-MARKED COINAGE (PRE-MAURYAN PERIOD)**

#### **A. Punched Marked Coin Hoard from Alam Khel, Bara.**

##### **i. Typology:**

##### **ii. G1. Bent Bar Punchmark**

##### **Type. 1.1. Bent Bars with 6-armed Gandhāran symbol.**

**Obv.** Long concave silver bar, 38mm long.

**Rev.** Flat Surface.

**Reference:** Rajgor 540-545 var.

Coin nos. 1-5

The large bent bars are the earliest Indian coinage by scholars in South Asia, which are equivalent in value to three karshapanas (Bopearachchi, 1998, p. 11; Gupta, 1951, p. 10; Rapson, 1897, p. 5). These large specimens, often identified as shatamanas or "bent bars," are thought to have first appeared in the sixth century BCE in the Gandhāra region, which was then an Achaemenid satrapy (Errington et al., 1992, p. 57; Handa, 2000, p. 515). It is highly plausible that the Achaemenid administration introduced the Gandhāran populace to the concept of struck coinage, reflecting broader imperial monetary practices (Schlumberger, as cited in Trésors Monétaires, p. 42; Bopearachchi, 2007, p. 300).

The Numismatic analysis suggests that the Gandhāran shatamanas, whose name signifies "hundred manas," were closely modelled on the Achaemenid siglos standard, as their average weight closely approximates that of two Achaemenid sigloi (Cribb, 1983, p. 96; Errington, 2003, p. 65). This correspondence in metrology underscores the influence of Persian monetary systems in shaping early Indian coinage practices (Government Museum Chennai, 2007; Tye, 2006, p. 168). The adoption and local



adaptation of these standards in Gandhāra facilitated the eventual dissemination of punch-marked coinage techniques further south into the subcontinent (Śrīrāma Goyala, 1994, p. 53).

Subsequently, the practice of striking coins, particularly punch-marked varieties, was rapidly adopted in numerous regions across northern and central India, giving rise to a distinct and widespread numismatic tradition (Bopearachchi, 1998, p. 13; Gupta, 1951, p. 13; coinindia.com, 2010). This early diffusion of coinage not only reflects cross-cultural interactions but also marks a pivotal shift in the economic and administrative history of South Asia (Handa, 2000, p. 517; Errington et al., 1992, p. 59).

### iii. G2. Circular Punchmark

#### **Type. 1.1. Punchmark with 6-armed Gandhāran symbol.**

**Obv.** Punchmark (6-armed Gandhāran symbol with a dot between two of the arms).

**Rev.** Blank.

**Reference:** Rajgor 578.

Coin nos. 7-24

#### **Type. 1.2. Punchmark with four-armed symbol.**

**Obv.** Struck with one 4-armed symbol.

**Rev.** Blank.

**Reference:** Measurement 7mm, 0.20 grams. Rajgor #579a (listed as "Very Rare").

Coin nos. 25

The Gandhāran punchmarked silver was minted in different denominations, 1, 1/2, 1/8, 1/16, and 1/32 shatamana, and are rare and obscure issues from ancient Gandhāra, distinguished as the smallest and most uncommon denomination among the Gandhāran punch-marked silver coinage (Gupta, 1951, p. 23; Bopearachchi, 1998, p. 36). Gandhāran mints produced silver pieces in a range of denominations, including 1, 1/2, 1/8, 1/16, and 1/32 shatamana, with this fractional value recognised as the rarest extant type (Cribb, 1983, p. 99; Tye, 2006, p. 169).

Ancient Gandhāra, flourishing from the early first millennium BCE to the 5th century CE, was a region of profound historical and cultural importance (Handa, 2000, p. 520; Errington et al., 1992, p. 58). Located at the crossroads of important transcontinental trade routes like the Silk Road, Gandhāra was constantly shaped by the interactions of Greek, Indian, and Central Asian cultures (Bopearachchi, 2007, p. 301; Government Museum Chennai, 2007). This dynamic, cosmopolitan setting fostered the rise of Greco-Buddhist art, a distinctive blend of Hellenistic artistic traditions and Buddhist

symbolism which resulted in some of the earliest representations of the Buddha in human form (Errington, 2003, p. 73; Rapson, 1897, p. 45).

## **B. Punched Marked Coin Hoard from Mada Khel, Bara.**

### **i. Typology:**

#### **ii. G1. Silver (karshapanas), 200s BC**

**Type. Cornucopia and Wreath**

**Obv.** Five punched symbols (sun, six-armed Magadha/ Mauryan symbol, and others).

**Rev.** Banker's mark.

**Reference:** Rajgor 540-545 var.

**Coins No.** 1-71.

#### **iii. G2. Circular Punchmark**

**Type. Punchmark with 6-armed Gandhāran symbol.**

**Obv.** Punchmark (6-armed Gandhāran symbol with a dot between two of the arms).

**Rev.** Blank.

**Reference:** Rajgor 578.

**Coin nos.** 72-85.

#### **iv. G3. Silver drachms (karshapanas), 200s BC, Mauryan Empire, India**

**Type. Cornucopia and Wreath**

**Obv.** Five punched symbols (sun, six-armed Magadha/ Mauryan symbol, and others).

**Rev.** Banker's mark.

**Reference:** Rajgor 540-545 var. (Smallest Denomination)

**Coins No.** 86-87.

### **5.1.3.4 GRAECO-BACTRIAN PERIOD (256 BC - c. 120 BC)**

#### **A. Graeco-Bactrian Coins from Bara.**

##### **i. Plato (c. 145 - 140 BCE)**

**Type. Bust of king and Apollo, Silver double decadrachm (Attic standard)**

**Obv.** Diademed bust of the king right, bead and reel border around.

**Rev.** Helios, radiate, standing in quadriga facing, holding spear, Greek legend:

ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΕΠΙΦΑΝΟΥΣ // ΠΛΑΤΩΝΟΣ

**Coin nos.** Plate 1-2, Section 4.3.2.10 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

##### **a. Plato Royal Seal from Shahi Qilla, Tirah Valley, Bara.**

The artefact is a remarkable royal seal, discovered by treasure hunters from the site of Shahi Qilla in the Tirah Valley, Bara Tehsil. This seal closely resembles the iconographic and epigraphic details of a known Attic Silver Tetradrachm of Plato (see

Plate 1, Section 4.3.2.11.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins; MIG196b, Bop 2B), a prominent king of the Graeco-Bactrian period. Such royal seals, particularly bearing the effigy and inscriptions of Plato, provide significant archaeological and historical insights into the extensive cultural and political influence of the Greco-Bactrian kingdoms in South and Central Asia.

The seal exhibits meticulous craftsmanship. On one side, it portrays a profile bust of Plato, adorned with a military style helmet featuring distinctive Hellenistic symbolism, particularly a prominent bull's horn and ear decoration. Around this profile bust, a stylised decorative border is visible. On the reverse, the seal vividly portrays Helios riding a chariot drawn by four horses, an iconography reflective of royal power and divine favour in Greek numismatic traditions. The Greek legend surrounding the chariot depiction reads:

**"ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΕΠΙΦΑΝΟΥΣ ΠΛΑΤΩΝΟΣ"**

(Translation: "Of the Great King manifested Plato").

Plato has been identified as a son of Eucratides I; however, aside from his exceedingly rare coinage, no substantive historical information about him has survived. While it is generally considered that his reign was both brief and confined mainly to Bactria or its immediate environs, the discovery of his coins in the Khyber region, along with a royal seal, suggests that territories beyond the Hindu Kush may also have fallen within his domain. The recovery of his seal from the Tirah Valley, a remote, fertile, mountainous, and verdant region, raises important questions regarding the historical connectivity and strategic significance of this area during the Greco-Bactrian era (Bopearachchi, 2003, pp. 22-23).

There are multiple scholarly possibilities explaining the presence of such a royal seal in this distant and rugged mountainous landscape. Primarily, this region might have functioned as a critical trade route, acting as a connecting corridor between the Greco-Bactrian heartland and the South-Asian subcontinent, particularly given its proximity to historically significant routes such as the Khyber Pass. Eucratides' control and influence likely reached as far as this valley due to trade, military expeditions, or diplomatic interactions (Bopearachchi, 1991, pp. 217-219).

Further bolstering this scenario, the discovery of substantial quantities of Greco-Bactrian coins, including the notable Tirah Graeco-Bactrian Hoard and Bara Coin

Hoard, demonstrates significant Greco-Bactrian presence or sustained contact in this region (Gupta, 1984, pp. 76-77). These coin hoards, notably rich in tetradrachms and drachms, confirm the circulation and widespread recognition of Greco-Bactrian authority under Eucratides and other contemporary rulers, suggesting that the region may have been economically vibrant and culturally interconnected with Greco-Bactrian dominions.

The seal's arrival at Shahi Qilla, Tirah, could be attributed to various historical processes:

1. Military expeditions: Greco-Bactrian kings, particularly Eucratides or Plato as a possible heir to the throne, undertook extensive military campaigns. The seal might represent administrative authority or military presence in the area (Tarn, 1951, p. 263).
2. Commercial interactions: Tirah, situated strategically near vital passes, could have served as a trading or administrative outpost, facilitating the exchange of goods, silver currency, and administrative documents, authenticated by such royal seals.
3. Cultural diffusion: The proliferation of Greco-Bactrian coins and seals might reflect sustained cultural diffusion and integration, underscoring the extensive influence of Hellenistic traditions even within isolated mountainous terrains (Bopearachchi, 1991, p. 221).

Political alliances or diplomatic missions: Diplomatic alliances or political treaties often involved the exchange of symbolic objects, possibly explaining the presence of a royal seal representing Eucratides I.

The discovery of Plato's seal in the Tirah Valley highlights the broader historical narrative of Greco-Bactrian influence extending into what are now northwestern Pakistani tribal territories. It confirms the cultural, economic, and political reach of Eucratides' realm and provides substantial new evidence for studying cross-cultural interactions in ancient Central and South-Asian regions. Moreover, this finding underscores the need for systematic archaeological investigations to prevent further loss of valuable contextual data resulting from unauthorised treasure hunting activities.

## **B. Graeco-Bactria Seal from Bara, Bazaar.**

The silver seal (Plates 1-4, Section 4.3.2.14 in Part II: Illustrations Coins) was discovered by treasure hunters from Bara Bazaar, stylistically attributable to the Graeco-Bactrian period (circa 3rd-2nd century BCE). The obverse displays a left-facing diademed bust of a king. This portrait type is typical of Graeco-Bactrian coinage, with carefully rendered facial features and the characteristic royal headband or diadem. Notably, the seal lacks any accompanying legend or inscription, which distinguishes it from most contemporaneous coinage but aligns with specific utilitarian or personal seals of the period. The reverse features a conical, pierced handle, likely intended for suspension or secure handling during administrative or commercial transactions. The use of silver as the medium, along with the iconography of the diademed royal portrait, suggests both the prestige of the object and its possible function as a personal or official seal within Graeco-Bactrian administrative or elite contexts. Such seals, though less frequently encountered than coins, offer valuable insights into the transmission of Hellenistic artistic conventions and the localised adoption of royal imagery in Central-Asian frontier zones

### **5.1.3.5 INDO-GREEK PERIOD (c. 200 BC-10 AD)**

#### **A. Indo-Greeks Coins from Bara.**

##### **i. Amyntas Nicator (80 65 BCE)**

##### **b. Amyntas Tetradrachm Coins Hoard, Donga, Tirah Valley.**

A significant numismatic discovery from the Donga locality of Tirah Valley, Bara Tehsil, has revealed a coin hoard comprising five silver double decadrachms attributed to Amyntas Nicator (reigned c. 80-65 BCE), a prominent Indo-Greek king. These coins, struck on the Attic standard, feature on the obverse a diademed and helmeted bust of King Amyntas facing right, enclosed within a bead-and-reel border. The reverse depicts Zeus seated three-quarters to the left, holding a sceptre and palm in his left arm and extending Athena in his right hand, accompanied by the Greek legend "ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΝΙΚΑΤΟΠΟΣ ΑΜΥΝΤΟΥ" ("of King Amyntas the Victor") with a monogram positioned to the left. The typology and iconography of this series reflect the persistence of Hellenistic artistic conventions and political symbolism upheld by the late Indo-Greek polities in the northwestern Indian subcontinent.

The discovery of this hoard in the Tirah Valley offers significant evidence for the monetary circulation, economic networks, and geopolitical reach of Amyntas Nikator's reign. It further reinforces scholarly interpretations of Indo-Greek engagement with local communities during the late first century BCE (Bopearachchi, 1991; Senior, 2001; Narain, 1957).

### **Coins:**

#### **Type. Bust of king and Zeus, Silver double decadrachm (Attic standard)**

**Obv.** Diademed and helmeted bust of the king right, bead and reel border around.

**Rev.** Zeus enthroned three-quarters left, holding sceptre and palm in left arm and holding Athena in his outstretched right hand, monogram left,

Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΝΙΚΑΤΟΡΟΣ / ΑΜΥΝΤΟΥ (Basileos Nikatoros

Amyntou ... *of King Amyntas, the victor*)

**Reference:** MIG 385a, Bop 1A.

Coin nos. Plate 1-5, Section 4.3.3.12.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

### **ii. The Ceremonial Gold Crown from Dogra Killi, Ilm Gudar: Evidence of Elite Status and Artistic Exchange**

The gold diadem from Dogra Killi (Plate 1-4, Section 5.6.3 in Part II), Ilm Gudar, represents a rare and elaborate example of ceremonial regalia, notable for its exceptional craftsmanship, rich iconography, and clear indications of cross-cultural artistic influence. Fashioned from hammered and cast gold, the diadem exhibits a remarkable degree of technical sophistication and three-dimensionality, consistent with high-status objects associated with royalty or elite individuals of the Hellenistic or early post-Hellenistic period.

The diadem's structural design is dominated by three large ibex or wild goat heads, each rendered in the round and spaced symmetrically around the circumference. These zoomorphic elements are characterised by elongated, spiralled horns, prominent anatomical modelling, and expressive facial features, hallmarks of accomplished goldsmithing. The naturalistic portrayal of the animal heads underscores both the technical capabilities of the artisan and the cultural value attributed to the ibex as a symbol of strength, resilience, and nobility, motifs frequently encountered in the royal iconography of Central Asia and the wider Hellenistic world (Boardman, 2016, pp. 142-143).

Between the animal heads, the crown is further embellished with high-relief floral sprays, featuring intricately fashioned blossoms, leaves, and stems executed in openwork. These vegetal motifs not only contribute to the diadem's visual opulence but also signify fertility and abundance, reinforcing the cosmological and regal symbolism of the crown. In addition, three-dimensional animal figures are attached along the rim, providing further zoomorphic emphasis and underscoring the importance of fauna in elite visual culture.

A fringe of elongated, leaf-shaped pendants is suspended from the lower edge of the diadem, each individually attached by small gold loops. This mobile fringe would have generated both visual dynamism and gentle auditory effects when the diadem was worn. The inner band remains relatively undecorated, focusing all ornamental detail on the exterior, which would have been most visible in ceremonial display.

The stylistic and technical features of the diadem, its naturalistic modelling, combined animal and floral motifs, and mobile pendants, closely parallel the goldwork traditions of the wider Hellenistic and Greco-Bactrian spheres, reflecting significant artistic exchange across Central and South Asia (Pfrommer, 1990, pp. 120-123). The presence of such an object at Dogra Killi, Ilm Gudar, provides compelling evidence for both the elevated social status of its owner and the region's participation in broader networks of material and artistic exchange during this period.

In sum, the gold diadem from Dogra Killi, Ilm Gudar, stands as an outstanding testament to elite identity, ceremonial practice, and the cosmopolitan nature of artistic traditions circulating through ancient Khyber and its adjoining cultural zones.

### **iii. Gold Ram from Dogra, Ilm Gudar.**

The gold ram figurine (Plate 1-4, Section 5.6.5 in Part II) was recovered from Dogra in the Ilm Gudar region and made of solid gold. The piece displays a finely modelled body with naturalistic proportions and highly detailed anatomical features. The ram stands in a poised, alert posture, with its legs proportionally rendered and slightly apart, providing both structural stability and a sense of lifelike presence.

The head is a focal point of the figurine, characterised by large, expressive, almond-shaped eyes, a carefully shaped snout, and prominent nostrils. The horns are robust and spiral outward in a graceful arc, exhibiting well-defined ridges that convey a sense of

power and vitality. The ears are positioned just below the horns, modelled with subtle textural detail, and oriented outward to enhance the figure's alertness. The beard and fur of the ram are indicated through a series of incised and chased lines, particularly along the chest and neck, producing a tactile and visually dynamic surface.

The body is smooth and rounded, with minimal geometric patterning aside from naturalistic incisions suggesting the animal's musculature and fur. The underbelly is rendered more simply, as visible from the underside (Plate 4), indicating that the piece was likely intended for display from above or the side. The overall form is both compact and elegant, balancing realistic representation with stylised artistic conventions. There is no evidence of excessive ornamentation, which highlights the sculptor's focus on form and anatomical accuracy rather than elaborate decorative motifs.

The ram is a significant figure in ancient Greek mythology, particularly in the story of Phrixus and Helle, and later, Jason and the Argonauts, or the golden-fleeced ram. The artefact may have held symbolic significance, possibly serving as a votive offering, status symbol, or a funerary object. In Greek and Near Eastern traditions, gold rams often symbolise wealth, fertility, and divine favour, linking this example to broader iconographic and mythological currents across the ancient world (Boardman, 2000, pp. 188-189; Rolle, 1989, pp. 63-65).

#### **iv. The Gold Wreath of Ilm Gudar, Jamrud: Discovery and Significance.**

The gold wreath (Plate 1-3, Section 5.6.2 in Part II) was discovered at Dogra Killi, Ilm Gudar, during the ploughing of agricultural fields, and stands as one of the most remarkable finds in the archaeological record of the Khyber region. This exquisite object, which subsequently surfaced in the jewellery bazaar of Bara, is notable as only the fifth fully intact gold wreath of its kind known from antiquity (Boardman, 2016, p. 87).

Gold wreaths such as this are exceptional for their craftsmanship, typically fashioned to imitate the leaves and flowers of plants, most commonly myrtle, laurel, or olive. The Ilm Gudar specimen closely resembles Greek examples, its intricate botanical forms attesting to both artistic sophistication and cultural transmission. Myrtle wreaths, in particular, were closely associated with Aphrodite, the goddess of love, and served a variety of ceremonial functions in the Hellenistic world, including as prizes for athletic victors, adornment at weddings, and offerings at sanctuaries (Stewart, 2023, pp. 59-61).



Literary sources, such as Athenaeus of Nitocris, note that gold wreaths were also worn at banquets and elite gatherings in Hellenistic Egypt (Williams, 2012, p. 113).

The preponderance of such wreaths in funerary contexts suggests their role as markers of status and ritual, reflecting broader patterns of mortuary display and social hierarchy. The discovery of this nearly pristine wreath in the Khyber region underscores the depth of cross-cultural contact along ancient trade and migration routes, demonstrating the transfer of luxury items and artistic influences from the Mediterranean to South Asia in the centuries after Alexander's campaigns (Boardman, 2016, p. 92; Stewart, 2023, p. 63).

As only the fifth known intact gold wreath from antiquity, the Ilm Gudar example provides rare and invaluable evidence of elite material culture, as well as the cosmopolitan character of this frontier zone. Its preservation and contextual ambiguity, having been found during agricultural activity and then circulated through local markets, also raise important methodological questions regarding the documentation and protection of archaeological heritage in Khyber (Williams, 2012, pp. 117-118).

#### **v. Trojan Horse from Dogra, Ilm Gudar.**

The "Trojan Horse" (Plate 1-5, Section 5.6.1 in Part II) artefact from Dogra, Ilm Gudar, represents a truly remarkable and unprecedented find: it is the first reported instance of a Trojan Horse figure in gold from South or Central Asia. The object comprises a small, solid gold figurine of a horse, expertly mounted atop a decorated bronze podium or base, itself fixed on the domed lid of a metal vessel. The artefact's preservation, craftsmanship, and iconography together make it a singular piece within the corpus of ancient Eurasian art.

The horse is depicted standing with one foreleg advanced, its anatomy realistically rendered through the careful modelling of musculature, arched neck, and proportioned haunches. The head features delicately incised eyes and nostrils, alert ears, and a well-defined mane created with fine linear striations. Notably, on each side of the horse's body, there is a small conical pannier tied to the other with a belt, clearly visible in the side views (Plate 2, Section 5.6.1 in Part II). These panniers are attached just behind the forelegs and may symbolise the storage or concealment aspect of the legendary Trojan Horse. The inclusion of these panniers is a highly unusual and meaningful detail, echoing ancient descriptions of the horse as a vehicle for smuggling warriors into Troy.

Beneath the horse, the podium is adorned with miniature pilasters or columns, with further geometric patterning along its base, reinforcing the sense of an architectural or ceremonial platform. On the front-facing side of the podium (Plate 3, Section 5.6.1 in Part II), a small human figure can be seen emerging, dressed in a stylised cloak or armour and stepping forward. This references the myth of warriors concealed within the horse, a narrative reinforced by both the panniers and the aperture-like features of the podium.

The entire assemblage is mounted atop a domed metal lid, the form of which is simple and undecorated, emphasising the sculptural tableau above. The artefact's dimensions are estimated at 7-10 cm in total height, with careful proportional balance between horse, podium, and vessel lid..

Of particular note is the presence of a rectangular platform or podium beneath the horse's hooves. This podium is adorned with a series of miniature, column-like elements or pilasters, adding architectural interest and elevating the horse as if on a ceremonial stage. The base of the podium shows regular incised decoration, possibly mimicking wooden or metal reinforcements. On one side (visible in Plate 2), there appears to be a shallow cavity or aperture beneath the horse, which could be a reference to the legendary hollow construction of the Trojan Horse of Homeric myth.

Another exceptional feature is the human figure emerging from within the podium, visible from the frontal view (Plate 3). The figure appears to be stepping forward, clad in a stylised garment or armour, and holding what could be interpreted as a sword, shield, or tool. This likely alludes to the mythological account of warriors concealed within the horse during the siege of Troy. The figure's posture and positioning at the heart of the horse reinforce the narrative aspect of the artefact.

The gold horse and base are securely attached to the domed metal lid, which has a matte, lightly corroded surface suggestive of bronze or copper alloy. The lid's form is plain, providing a neutral stage for the intricate scene above. The proportions of the horse, podium, and lid are harmonious, with the total height of the combined piece estimated at approximately 7-10 cm.

### **Significance**

The imagery depicted on the artefacts is unparalleled, with no direct parallel in the archaeological record of either South or Central Asia. The representation of a Trojan

Horse scene, complete with a concealed warrior, strongly indicates cross-cultural interaction or the diffusion of Greek mythological themes transmitted through long-distance trade networks or migratory movements during the Hellenistic or post-Hellenistic period. The use of gold and fine workmanship indicates that the object was a high-status item, possibly an elite votive offering, insignia, or ceremonial object, and not a child's toy or simple ornament.

This artefact not only expands the geographic distribution of the Trojan Horse legend but also demonstrates the permeability of myth, art, and technology across ancient Eurasia. Its discovery at Ilm Gudar opens important new avenues for the study of intercultural connections, artistic adaptation, and the circulation of heroic narratives beyond the Mediterranean world.

#### **vi. Gold Bowl from Langroo Killi, Takhtakai, Tirah**

The gold bowl from Langroo Killi, Takhtakai, Tirah, is a remarkable example of ancient metalwork, reportedly discovered by local treasure hunters. This vessel is fashioned from high-purity gold and exhibits a shallow, wide-mouthed form with gently upturned walls and a slightly raised base, characteristics typical of ceremonial bowls or phialai in the Achaemenid and Hellenistic traditions (Boardman, 2000, pp. 185-186; Curtis & Tallis, 2005, pp. 146-147).

The most striking feature of the bowl is its central medallion, which is decorated in high repoussé with the bearded head of a male figure. The figure displays deeply incised hair, a prominent forehead, heavy brows, and an elaborate beard, all rendered with naturalistic detail. This central portrait, possibly representing a deity, hero, or personification, is framed by a circular border that demarcates the medallion from the surrounding field. Radiating from the medallion are four large, stylised floral or palmette motifs, arranged in a cross pattern and joined by linear stems. Each flower consists of finely incised petals and a central boss, lending a sense of symmetry and rhythm to the composition.

The background of the bowl is otherwise plain, allowing the raised designs to stand out in sharp relief against the smooth, polished gold surface. The combination of figural and floral decoration reflects the syncretic artistic milieu of the Achaemenid and post-Achaemenid periods, where Greek, Persian, and local traditions converged in luxury metalwork (Muscarella, 1988, pp. 215-217; Curtis, 2013, pp. 102-103). The

craftsmanship demonstrates a sophisticated command of both repoussé and chasing techniques, and the bowl's iconography, particularly the use of a human head as a central motif, suggests possible connections with both Greco-Persian and Central-Asian ritual vessels.

**vii. Bearded Herakles riding on a Lion from Kham Killi, Tirah.**

The gold object depicting a bearded male riding a lion (Plate 1-2, Section 5.6.6 in Part II), discovered at Kham Killi in Tirah and weighing 711 grams, stands as a remarkable testament to Greco-Iranian artistic fusion and technical mastery. This solid gold piece features a vivid three-dimensional group atop a highly ornate podium.

The central figure may be identified as Herakles (Hercules) rather than Dionysus, who in ancient Greek mythology rides on a lion, based on the presence of a club held in the hero's left hand, a canonical attribute of Herakles in ancient Greek iconography (Boardman, 2000, p. 163). The hero is portrayed as a robust, nude, bearded man with finely modelled musculature and a powerful physique. His wavy hair and full beard are meticulously rendered. Herakles sits astride a well-articulated lion, gripping its mane with his right hand while brandishing the club in his left, evoking the mythic theme of domination over wild beasts. The lion is similarly detailed, with open jaws, expressive features, and a flowing mane, reinforcing the heroic narrative of conquest and strength.

The ensemble is mounted on a broad, circular podium, distinguished by its high craftsmanship. The upper surface is smooth and encircled by a delicate chased border. Around the cylindrical drum of the base, a series of inlaid cabochons or red garnet stones, each set within ornate wirework. The rest of the podium is decorated with beaded and vegetal motifs, ending in a twisted rope-like border at the foot, adding both visual richness and structural stability.

Herakles is a key figure in Greek mythology, renowned for his strength, heroic labours, and frequent depiction with a club. While Dionysus is occasionally shown riding a lion, the iconographic dominance of the club marks this figure decisively as Herakles. The motif of Herakles mastering the lion alludes to his legendary first labour (the Nemean Lion). However, its adaptation into the round and presentation atop a gem-studded podium reflects the cosmopolitan tastes of Greco-Iranian elites and the cultural interplay along ancient Eurasian trade corridors (Boardman, 2000, pp. 162-163; Stewart, 1990, pp. 176-179). Such hybrid luxury objects served not only as symbols of

status but also as vehicles for shared heroic narratives across Hellenistic and Iranian worlds.

### **viii. Bronze and Gold Gilded Wreath from Hisari Dand.**

The wreath (Plate 1-2, Section 5.7 in Part II) was discovered from Hisari Dand, bara, and consisted of a solid cast bronze wreath featuring intricate gold gilding and a prominent sculpted face in relief (Plate 1). The object is circular, with a robust hoop that would have encircled the head or served as a ceremonial ornament. The wreath's design closely echoes the naturalistic botanical motifs seen in Hellenistic gold wreaths, widely recognised as symbols of honour, divinity, and aristocratic status (Boardman, 2000, pp. 193-194; Higgins, 1961, pp. 15-17).

The hoop is cast in bronze, now bearing a dark green patina consistent with prolonged burial and copper corrosion (Plate 2, Plate 3). Along its exterior surface runs a braided gold wire, affixed to the bronze, simulating the intertwined branches and leaves typical of natural laurel or myrtle wreaths. The hoop is further embellished with evenly spaced, spherical gold-gilded bosses, possibly symbolising fruit or berries, enhancing the object's decorative and prestigious character.

Projecting from the front of the wreath is a large medallion, on which the upper portion of a human face is modelled in high relief. The face, likely intended as a personification or divine figure, exhibits classical features: almond-shaped eyes, a straight nose, and full lips, with a calm and slightly abstracted expression. Crowning the head is a delicate gold wreath, rendered in fine repoussé and chased technique to create naturalistic leaves and berry clusters. The craftsmanship of this gold element parallels known Hellenistic royal and funerary wreaths, such as those from Macedonian tombs and the Black Sea region (Higgins, 1961, pp. 52-53).

Wreaths of this kind were greatly valued in the ancient Mediterranean and Near Eastern worlds, serving as marks of distinction in civic, military, and religious contexts. Gold and gilded wreaths have been discovered in the burials of Macedonian nobility at Vergina and Hellenistic tombs along the Black Sea, often placed atop the head or beside the deceased (Boardman, 2000, p. 195; Higgins, 1961, p. 15). The technical combination of bronze and gold in the Hisari Dand piece, along with its robust construction, suggests adaptation for ceremonial use in a more mobile or martial context, perhaps for a local chieftain or noble with Greco-Iranian cultural affiliations.

The iconography of classical facial features crowned with a gilded botanical wreath demonstrates the diffusion of Hellenistic royal symbols into Central Asia, as also reflected in coin portraits and metalwork from the Greco-Bactrian and Indo-Greek realms (Boardman, 2000, pp. 192- 196). This artefact, therefore, provides valuable evidence of the transmission and transformation of Greek ceremonial and honorific traditions beyond the Mediterranean, adapting elite iconography for new cultural landscapes.

**ix. Solid Gold Lion Figurine from Hisari Dand, Bara: Iconography and Symbolism in the Indo-Greek Period (with Reference to the Coinage of Menander II and the Lion Motif of the Pillars of Ashoka)**

This artefact was discovered by treasure hunters at Hisar Dand, Bara, and is cast in solid gold lion (Plate 1-3, Section 5.6.8 in Part II). The figurine is rendered in the round and measures approximately 3 inches in height and 1.5 inches in width. The lion sits upright in a heraldic, alert pose, its body weight balanced on all four paws, haunches firmly on the ground, and tail curled along the right flank. The lion's head is looking straight to the left, mouth open as if mid-roar, and the tongue is visible, protruding just past the lower jaw. The mane, although minimally indicated, is present as a subtle ridge along the top of the head and nape. At the same time, the musculature of the limbs and torso is skillfully modelled, emphasising power and tension.

The entire surface of the figure has been carefully polished, and its golden sheen is preserved chiefly, though there are minor traces of handling or burial patina. The base is a simple, narrow, rectangular platform that grounds the figure and enables it to stand independently.

The artistic treatment of the lion, particularly the upright, attentive posture, prominent chest, and curling tail, closely mirrors lion depictions on Indo-Greek coinage, notably those of Menander II (see: Bopearachchi, 1991, p. 94, 6-O; Senior, 2001; MIG 256). The open mouth and extended tongue, along with the simplified mane, are highly reminiscent of the lions found both on Menander II's coins and on Mauryan Pillars of Ashoka, which served as royal and religious emblems throughout South Asia (Boardman, 1998, pp. 191-192; Rowland, 1977, pp. 211-212). This combination of Greek and Indian iconographic motifs reflects a deliberate syncretism, embodying royal

legitimacy, power, and the dharmic ideals associated with both Hellenistic and Buddhist traditions.

The scale and craftsmanship of this gold lion suggest it was not a utilitarian object but rather a high-status emblem, possibly used as a dynastic insignia, a ritual deposit, or an elite funerary offering. The comparative rarity of such solid gold animal figures in the archaeological record underlines their exceptional status.

The Hisari Dand lion demonstrates the permeability of artistic and symbolic traditions at the Indo-Greek frontier. Its close iconographic ties to both Menander II's coinage and Ashokan capitals highlight the adaptation and transformation of local South-Asian royal symbols by Hellenistic rulers in the region. This object thus provides direct material evidence for how Greek and Indian artistic languages were interwoven in the service of new expressions of kingship and religious authority (Boardman, 1998).

#### **x. Spartan Xiphos (Sword) from Bara.**

The rare sword is a classical xiphos-type short sword (Plate 1-5, Section 5.6.9 in Part II), discovered on the outskirts of Bara Bazaar. The sword, typologically closely resembling the iconic Greek xiphos used by Spartan warriors, presents important evidence for the long-distance transmission and adaptation of Hellenic martial forms on the eastern frontiers of the ancient world.

The blade is double-edged, leaf-shaped, and made of iron, now exhibiting extensive surface corrosion consistent with significant antiquity (Plate 1, Plate 5). The blade's silhouette is broadest at its midpoint and tapers to a strong, acute point, typical of xiphos swords, which were valued for both cutting and thrusting efficiency in close combat. The blade's base is set flush into the hilt without a pronounced guard, echoing Greek and early Italic traditions.

The hilt is particularly remarkable for its preservation and decoration. It is composed of a cylindrical core, likely of bronze or a similar alloy, completely encased in a meticulously wound gold wire (Plate 2, Plate 4). This wire-wrapping technique produces a ribbed grip, offering both tactile security and visual luxury. The hilt is capped by broad, flaring discs at both the pommel and the guard, each disc featuring concentric incised rings and fine knurling (Plate 3). The terminal of the pommel is finished in a spiral motif, echoing known classical prototypes from the Mediterranean

world. The overall proportions of the sword, as observed in Plate 5, suggest a compact, one-handed weapon, with the blade measuring approximately 45 cm in length and the hilt 12 cm.

The combination of a leaf-shaped blade and gold-wrapped hilt firmly aligns this piece with the typology of Greek xiphos swords of the 5<sup>th</sup>-4th centuries BCE (Snodgrass, 1967, pp. 69-72; Sekunda, 1998, pp. 31-32). The use of precious metal for the grip, however, may indicate a ceremonial, high-status, or diplomatic context, as opposed to regular battlefield use. A local chieftain or elite warrior could have plausibly owned such an object with strong Greco-Iranian affiliations, or it may represent spoils, diplomatic gifts, or high-status burial equipment.

The presence of a xiphos-type sword in Bara provides new evidence for the presence and prestige of Greek martial equipment beyond the Achaemenid and later Hellenistic frontiers, further illuminating the intercultural exchange of weapon forms, craftsmanship, and elite symbolism across ancient Eurasia.

#### **5.1.3.6 PARTHIAN PERIOD**

The Parthian dynasty, or Arsacid Empire, ruled an extensive realm from the mid-3rd century BCE to the early 3rd century CE, encompassing the Iranian plateau, Mesopotamia, the Caucasus, Central Asia, and parts of South Asia (Curtis & Tallis, 2005, p. 19; Frye, 1984, p. 194). Renowned for their ability to govern and integrate a wide diversity of peoples, the Parthians fostered a cosmopolitan society in which Greek, Iranian, and indigenous traditions converged, particularly in frontier zones such as Afghanistan and northwestern India (de Callatay, 2014, p. 292; Rezakhani, 2017, p. 89). Through their strategic control of key trade arteries, including critical segments of the Silk Road connecting the Mediterranean, Iran, and South Asia, the Parthians played a pivotal role in facilitating commercial and cultural exchange among Hellenistic, Iranian, Indian, and Central Asian civilizations (Curtis, 2012, p. 185; Olbrycht, 2016, p. 271). Their expansive political influence and active merchant networks helped spread goods, artistic themes, religious concepts, and coinage styles far beyond their core domains, leaving a lasting impact on the material and intellectual landscapes of South Asia and Afghanistan (Dąbrowa, 2010, p. 54; Senior, 2001, p. 205).

It is noteworthy that the region is largely absent from classical literary sources and historical narratives concerning the Parthian Empire. No ancient texts explicitly



reference Parthian administrative, military, or political presence in this area. However, the recent archaeological discovery of coins attributed to various kings of the Parthian dynasty within District Khyber has significantly enriched our understanding of Parthian interactions beyond their traditionally recognised domains. These numismatic finds, uncovered in contexts far removed from the empire's Mesopotamian and Iranian heartlands, strongly indicate the existence of trading links between the Parthian world and the Indian subcontinent (Curtis & Tallis, 2005, p. 92; Senior, 2001, p. 205; Olbrycht, 2016, p. 271). The circulation of Parthian coinage in Khyber suggests not only the movement of goods and economic networks but also the possible transmission of cultural and artistic motifs along these corridors. Thus, the coin discoveries from Khyber District provide tangible evidence of Parthian commercial activity reaching deep into the northwestern frontier of South Asia. These finds reinforce the view that cross-cultural exchanges between Iran and the Indian subcontinent during the Parthian period were both dynamic and far-reaching (Rezakhani, 2017, p. 133; Frye, 1984, p. 194).

#### **A. Parthian Coin Hoard from Wacha Payal, Bara.**

The discovery of the Parthian Coin Hoard from Wacha Payal, Bara, in District Khyber, marks a significant addition to the corpus of numismatic and archaeological material from the Indo-Iranian borderlands. Unearthed in a field by local farmers who accidentally struck the containing vessel during ploughing, the hoard's context suggests it was deliberately concealed, most plausibly for security amid political instability, as is often observed in similar regional finds (Alram, 1986, p. 112; Bopearachchi, 1991, p. 35; Curtis, 2005, p. 122).

##### **i. Discovery and Composition of Hoard**

The Wacha Payal hoard consists of 24 coins representing a remarkable chronological and dynastic spectrum, spanning nearly five centuries from the earliest Parthian issues to late Sasanian and post-Hellenistic types. The coins were recovered from a ceramic container, whose form and typology correspond to 1<sup>st</sup>-4th century CE utilitarian wares from the region (Callieri, 2000, p. 117; Dani, 1965, p. 238). The condition of the coins varies: early drachms show circulation wear, while the latest Sasanian issues are sharply struck and little worn, suggesting a short period between their issue and hoard deposition (Sellwood, 1980, p. 33; Gyselen, 1993, p. 53).

**a. Typology:**

**b. Parthian Coins (Arsacid Dynasty):**

- **Arsaces I** (247-211 BCE), silver drachms (Plate 1-2, Section 4.5.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins), Sellwood 112.1, 2 coins (Sellwood, 1980, p. 12)
- **Mithradates II** (123-88 BCE), (Plate 3-19, Section 4.5.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins) coins in several types (AR tetradrachms, drachms, Sellwood 24.3, 115.4; Shore, 1993, p. 88; Curtis, 2005, p. 126)
- **Artabanos IV** (10-38 CE), AR drachm, Ekbatana mint (Plate 21, Section 4.5.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins), Sellwood 63.7, 1 coin (Gardner, 1886, p. 135)

**c. Graeco-Bactrian:**

- **Eucratides I** (171-145 BCE), silver obol (Plate 20, Section 4.5.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins), Sellwood 1241-1242, (Bopearachchi, 1991, p. 36)

**d. Sasanian Coins:**

- **Narseh** (293-303 CE), AR drachm (Plate 22, Section 4.5.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins), SNS Ia(1)/1a (4), Gyselen, 1993, p. 53
- **Vahrām (Bahram II) with Queen and Prince 4** (Plate 23, Section 4.5.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins) (276-293 CE), AR drachm, SNS VIa(1)/2(1a), (Curtis, 2005, p. 142)
- **Greek/Unattributed:**

Probable Greek hemidrachm, prancing horse and seated Athena, (Plate 24, Section 4.5.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins) (Head, 1911, p. 306)

The coins reflect the evolution of iconography, titulature, and monetary policy across several empires and dynasties. The earliest coins of Arsaces I demonstrate the initial phase of Parthian independence, typified by a diademed, beardless head in bashlyk, emphasising Scythian-Parthian nomadic origins (Colledge, 1967, p. 26; Debevoise, 1938, p. 32). The archer motif on reverses is a persistent Parthian dynastic symbol, alluding to the semi-legendary prowess of the Arsacid house and their Saka affiliations (Bivar, 1968, p. 59).

The majority of coins belong to Mithradates II, under whom the Parthian state achieved its most remarkable territorial expansion and diplomatic engagement, including the

adoption of the "Epiphanes" epithet and expanded titulature such as "King of Kings" (Shore, 1993, p. 90; Frye, 1984, p. 192; Sellwood, 1980, pp. 48-49). These coins, often from eastern mints, show high silver content and excellent craftsmanship, evidence of vigorous economic exchange between Iran, Mesopotamia, and the North-Western subcontinent (Cribb, 1990, p. 104).

Later Parthian and Sasanian issues, including those of Artabanos IV, Narseh, and Bahram II, reveal the gradual replacement of Greek legend by Aramaic and Middle Persian, as well as the increasing prominence of Zoroastrian imagery (fire altar, *fravahar*), signifying the imperial family's religious alignment and legitimization strategies (Curtis, 2005, pp. 134-142; Daryaee, 2009, p. 79).

The inclusion of a Graeco-Bactrian obol and a probable Greek hemidrachm reflects the cultural and economic permeability of the region, with earlier coins likely circulating as bullion or held as prestige objects long after their original minting (Bernard, 1994, p. 312; Bopearachchi & Rahman, 1995, p. 75).

The assemblage's diversity mirrors the Khyber region's long-standing function as a commercial, strategic, and cultural corridor. The area lay astride the Gandhāra, Bactria, and Parthia axis, exposed to fluctuating imperial boundaries, invasions, and migrations (Frye, 1984, p. 232; Dani, 1965, p. 235). The passage and exchange of currency facilitated both economic activity and political legitimacy, coins being bearers of royal imagery and propaganda (Dusinberre, 2005, p. 183; Curtis, 2005, p. 134).

The presence of late Sasanian types, and the almost unworn condition of these coins, suggest the hoard's deposition during or immediately after the Sasanian takeover (c. 303-310 CE), likely prompted by localized disruption following Ardashir I's campaigns and the definitive collapse of Parthian power (Daryaee, 2009, p. 81; Alram, 1986, p. 115). The intermixture of older Parthian and Greek coins suggests both pragmatic economic use and possible retention of older types for social or symbolic reasons (Bernard, 1994, p. 320; Bopearachchi, 1991, p. 36).

The iconography of the hoard's coins is rich in symbolism. The archer motif, predominant on Arsacid and later coins, was not only a dynastic badge but a claim to Iranian martial virtues and legitimacy rooted in Saka and Achaemenid traditions (Colledge, 1967, p. 28; Root, 1979, p. 174). The Sasanian fire altar imagery reflects

Zoroastrian orthodoxy and imperial patronage of the magian clergy, visually communicating divine sanction and order (Curtis, 2005, p. 135; Gyselen, 1993, p. 45).

Hoarding behaviour itself, especially in borderland contexts, is usually interpreted as a response to social and political upheaval. The selection and inclusion of old and new coin types might signal both practical and ideological strategies, maintaining wealth in transportable form while also preserving ancestral or prestigious types as markers of identity (Callieri, 2000, p. 120; Cribb, 1990, p. 108).

The Wacha Payal hoard, with its diverse dynastic composition and tight terminus post quem, epitomises the monetary and cultural entanglements characteristic of the Indo-Iranian frontiers during periods of dynastic transition. Its stratified contents, coupled with archaeological context, provide a rare and valuable window onto economic practices, political history, and symbolic life at the edge of the Parthian and Sasanian worlds (Daryaee, 2009, p. 79; Sellwood, 1980, p. 112; Bopearachchi, 1991, p. 35).

## **Coins:**

### **G1. Arsaces I (247-211 BC)**

#### **Type 3. Bust of king and Archer (Silver Drachm, minted at Mithradatkart)**

**Obv.** diademed and beardless head left in bashlyk, dotted border.

**Rev.** Archer seated left on a backless throne, with a two-line inscription, part Greek, part.

Aramaic, APXAKOY (mostly off the flan), krnw left below bow, mint monogram below stool, dotted border.

**Reference:** Sellwood 1121.

Coin nos. 1-2

### **G2. Mithradates II (123 - 88 B.C)**

#### **Type 1. Bust of king and Archer (AR Tetradrachm, Seleukia)**

**Obv.** diademed and long bearded bust left in tiara, decorated with a star on the side, spiral torque.

**Rev.** Archer enthroned right, holding bow with one hand, five-line inscription ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΝ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ ΑΡΣΑΚΟΥ ΕΠΙΦΑΝΟΥΣ, four from uncertain eastern workshops (S 28.1-7).

**Reference:** Sellwood 24.3; Shore 66; Sunrise 281

Coin nos. 3-6

#### **Type. 1.2. Bust of king and Archer (AR Tetradrachm, Seleukia)**

**Obv.** diademed and long bearded bust left in tiara, decorated with a star on the side, spiral torque.

**Rev.** Archer enthroned right, holding bow with one hand, five-line inscription

ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΝ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ ΑΡΣΑΚΟΥ ΕΠΙΦΑΝΟΥΣ, four from uncertain eastern workshops (S 28.1-7).

**Reference:** Sellwood 24.3; Shore 66; Sunrise 281

Coin nos. 7-8

**Type. 2. Bust of king and Archer (Silver Drachm)**

**Obv.** diademed and long bearded bust left in tiara, decorated with a star on the side, spiral torque.

**Rev.** Archer enthroned right, holding bow with one hand, five-line inscription ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΝ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ ΑΡΣΑΚΟΥ ΕΠΙΦΑΝΟΥΣ, four from uncertain eastern workshops (S 28.1-7).

**Reference:** Sellwood 1154.

Coin nos. 9-11

**Type 3. Bust of King and Horse (Silver Drachm)**

**Obv.** diademed and long bearded bust left in tiara, decorated with a star on the side, spiral torque.

**Rev.** Archer enthroned right, holding bow with one hand, five-line inscription ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΝ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ ΑΡΣΑΚΟΥ ΕΠΙΦΑΝΟΥΣ, four from uncertain eastern workshops (S 28.1-7).

**Reference:** Sellwood 1154

Coin nos. 12-19

**G3. Eucratides I (171-145 BCE, Graeco-Bactrian)**

**Type. Bust of King and Athena (Silver obol, Attic Standard)**

**Obv.** Diademed bust of the king facing right, dotted border around.

**Rev.** Caps and palms of the Dioscuri, with Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΕΥΚΡΑΤΙΔΟΥ.

**Reference:** Sellwood, 1241-1242

Coin Nos. 21.

**G4. Artabanos IV. AR Drachm, Ekbatana mint, circa AD 10-38)**

**Type. Bust of King and Athena**

**Obv.** Bearded bust of Artabanos IV left, wearing diadem and tiara with star, within beaded border.

**Rev.** Archer (Arsakes I) seated right on throne, holding bow; below bow, monogram with Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΝ / ΑΡΣΑΚΟΥ / ΕΥΕΡΓΕΤΟΥ / ΔΙΚΑΙΟΣ ΕΠΙΦΑΝΟΥΣ / ΦΙΛΕΛΛΗΝΟΣ.

**Reference:** Sellwood, 1241-1242

Coin Nos. 21.

**G5. Narseh (Narsē). AD 293-303. AR Drachm**

**Type. Bust of King and Fire Alter.**

**Obv.** Bust right, wearing a crown with arcades, three foliate branches, and a korymbos; hair in single groups; pellet above diadem ties.

**Rev.** Fire altar with ribbons; flanked by two attendants, both wearing mural crowns, the left with korymbos; fravahr and taurus symbol flanking flames.

**Reference:** SNS type Ia (1)/1a (4), Style G and pl. 37, 53; Sunrise

Coin Nos. 22.

**G5. Vahrām (Bahram) II, with Queen and Prince, 4 AD 276-293.**

**Type.** Bust of King and Fire Alter.

**Obv.** Jugate busts of Vahrām (Bahram), wearing a winged crown with korymbos, and his queen, wearing a kolah with a boar's head, right, vis-à-vis the bust of Prince 4, wearing a kolah with an eagle's head, left.

**Rev.** Fire altar; flanked by two attendants facing outward, each wearing a winged crown with korymbos; fravahr to the left of flames.

**Reference:** SNS type VIa(1)/2(1a), Style A; Sunrise

Coin Nos. 23.

**G6. Unidentified King Coin (a probable Greek Hemidrachm)**

**Type.** Horse to the right and Seated Athena.

**Obv.** Prancing horse to the right.

**Rev.** Athena sitting to the right, wearing a crested helmet, thunderbolt in right hand.

**Reference:** Un-reported coin

Coin Nos. 24.

**ii. Artabanos IV Coin Hoard from Alam Gudar, Shiekhan, Bara.**

The Artabanos IV Coin Hoard was discovered at Alam Gudar, a locality situated within the Shiekhan area of Bara in District Khyber. The hoard consists of twenty silver drachms of Artabanos IV. These coins, unearthed together in a single find-spot, represent a significant numismatic discovery, as they offer direct evidence of Parthian economic activity and circulation in a region previously undocumented in literary sources. The composition and preservation of the hoard provide valuable insights into the late Parthian monetary system and its connections with the borderlands of South Asia.

Artabanus IV (also known as Ardavan IV), who reigned from around 213 to 224 CE, was the last ruler of the Parthian Empire and played a key role in its final chapter, both politically and numismatically (Dąbrowa, 2010, p. 55; Rezakhani, 2017, p. 131). The younger son of Vologases V, Artabanus IV, came to power after rebelling against his brother Vologases VI, ultimately controlling most of the Parthian realm. In contrast, his brother maintained only a small principality (Shayegan, 2011, pp. 204-207). His time on the throne was marked by significant events, including the successful defence against the Roman emperor Caracalla's invasion in 217 CE, which secured Parthian control over Mesopotamia (Dąbrowa, 2010, p. 61; Sellwood, 1980, p. 239). The Parthian Empire came to an end after Artabanus IV was beaten and slain at the Battle

of Hormozdgan in 224 CE by Ardashir I, who went on to establish the Sasanian dynasty (Frye, 1984, pp. 267–269; Rezakhani, 2017, p. 135).

Numismatic evidence, notably the Artabanos IV Coin Hoard from Alam Gudar, Shiekhan, Bara, offers invaluable insight into the socio-economic dimensions of his reign. The featured drachm, minted at Ekbatana (Coin nos. 1-20), features the bearded bust of Artabanos IV facing to the left on the obverse, having a diadem and star-decorated tiara motifs symbolising royal legitimacy and continuity with Parthian iconographic traditions (Sellwood, 1980, p. 243; Shore, 1993, p. 114). The reverse depicts the enthroned archer, representing Arsakes I, the dynastic founder, holding a bow, with a Greek legend beneath reading: *ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΝ / ΑΡΣΑΚΟΥ / ΕΥΕΡΓΕΤΟΥ / ΔΙΚΑΙΟΥ ΕΠΙΦΑΝΟΥΣ / ΦΙΛΕΛΛΗΝΟΣ* ("Of King of Kings Arsaces, the Benefactor, the Just, the Illustrious, Friend of the Greeks") (Sellwood, 1980, p. 244; Olbrycht, 2016, p. 289). The inclusion of Hellenistic titles such as "Philellos" (Friend of the Greeks) underscores ongoing Parthian attempts to legitimise their rule in a multicultural empire (de Callatay, 2014, p. 292; Assar, 2004, p. 41).

The coins of current Artabanus IV are important for understanding the complex succession dynamics and the persistence of dynastic iconography even during periods of political turmoil (Shayegan, 2011, p. 216; Rezakhani, 2017, p. 133). The Alam Gudar hoard highlights the presence of Parthian coinage in the northwestern frontier of the empire, indicating far-reaching economic networks and the circulation of imperial imagery well beyond Mesopotamia (Dąbrowa, 2010, p. 63; Senior, 2001, p. 205). Notably, while Artabanian coinage is less common in the Gandhāra region, coins of Mithradates II (123-88 BCE), one of the most celebrated Parthian monarchs, are frequently recovered in Gandhāran archaeological contexts, reflecting enduring Parthian influence over the region (Curtis & Tallis, 2005, p. 92; Olbrycht, 2016, p. 271). Mithradates II's coins, known for their distinctive portraiture and legends, played a significant role in regional commerce and served as prototypes for local imitations (Assar, 2004, p. 42; Curtis, 2012, p. 186).

The coins of Artabanus IV, especially those discovered in coin hoards such as at Alam Gudar, not only illustrate the artistry and administrative capabilities of the late Parthian state but also document the final assertion of Arsacid royal ideology prior to the advent of Sasanian rule (Sellwood, 1980, p. 244; Dąbrowa, 2010, p. 67). Characterised by their distinctive imagery, inscriptions, and wide circulation, these coins serve as vital sources

for reconstructing the economic, political, and cultural landscape of the Iranian world in the early third century CE (Rezakhani, 2017, p. 135; Shayegan, 2011, p. 218).

### **Hoard Description**

#### **G1. Artabanos IV. AR Drachm, Ekbatana mint, circa AD 10-38)**

**Type.** Bust of King and Athena

**Obv.** Bearded bust of Artabanos IV left, wearing diadem and tiara with star, within beaded border.

**Rev.** Archer (Arsakes I) seated right on throne, holding bow; below bow, monogram with Greek legend ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΝ / ΑΡΣΑΚΟΥ / ΕΥΕΡΓΕΤΟΥ / ΔΙΚΑΙΟΣ ΕΠΙΦΑΝΟΥΣ / ΦΙΛΕΛΛΗΝΟΣ

**Reference:** Sellwood, 1241-1242

Coin Nos. (Plate 1-20, Section 4.5.3 in Part II: Illustrations Coins)

### **5.1.3.7 INDO-SCYTHIAN PERIOD (c. 150 BCE - 400 CE)**

#### **A. Scythian Period Exquisite Gold combs from Alam Gudar.**

The exquisite gold combs (Plates 1-3, Section 5.8.2 in Part II) were discovered in Alam Gudar. Based on the representation, it could be dated to the early Scythian cultural sphere. The artefact closely parallels stylistic and cultural features observed in the famous Scythian comb recovered from the royal tomb at Solokha in modern-day Ukraine (Artamonov, 1970, pp. 81-82; Rolle, 1989, pp.58-59), suggesting the vast geographic influence and shared visual vocabulary of Scytho-Siberian elite material culture.

The comb is crafted from high-purity gold and iron, with the decorative upper register in embossed gold and the teeth likely cast in bronze or iron, now exhibiting signs of corrosion. The artefact measures approximately 10-12 cm in height and 8-9 cm in width (based on visual estimation and comparative analogues), making it a substantial object both functionally and symbolically.

Typologically, this object falls within the category of ceremonial or prestige combs, rather than utilitarian grooming tools. It exhibits a two-part structure:

- A. Upper decorative panel: Semicircular and densely ornamented.
- B. Comb teeth: Approximately 18-20 long, evenly spaced tines extending downward.

This duality utilitarian form fused with ceremonial function is characteristic of Scythian prestige items, where martial and artistic symbolism often coalesce in a single object.



The upper gold plaque features a dramatic and animated battle scene, rendered in high-relief repoussé technique. Three Scythian warriors, identified by their distinctive tunic attire, conical helmets, and long-sleeved garments, are engaged in close combat. The central figure is mounted on a horse, dressed in a ribbed cuirass and shown spearing or subduing an enemy who appears to be falling or kneeling. On either side, foot soldiers are depicted advancing with raised arms or weapons, suggesting a coordinated cavalry assault. The figures are dynamic, emphasising the Scythians' renowned martial prowess and cavalry-based tactics.

The horses are portrayed with strong musculature, raised forelegs, and bridles, consistent with Scythian depictions of prized warhorses. The composition reflects both a narrative element and an aesthetic ideal, heroism, speed, and dominance, hallmarks of Scythian aristocratic identity (Murzin & Rolle, 1991, pp. 101-102).

The background is unornamented, allowing the high-relief figures to dominate visually. The naturalistic rendering of the warriors' musculature, garments, and weapons, along with the stylised locks of horsehair, demonstrates a sophisticated artistic tradition that merges Anatolian, Achaemenid, and nomadic motifs.

This comb is not merely a personal grooming object but a symbol of elite status, possibly belonging to a Scythian chieftain or noble. Similar artefacts have been interpreted as funerary offerings, markers of social rank, or ritual insignia (Rolle, 1980, pp.112-115). Its presence in Alam Gudar highlights the long-distance interaction zones extending from the Pontic-Caspian Steppe to Central and South Asia, through which Scythian artistic traditions were disseminated.

The Alam Gudar combs, while stylistically localised, bear clear iconographic and technical parallels to the Solokha tomb comb, one of the most celebrated masterpieces of Scythian goldwork housed at the Hermitage Museum (Artamonov, 1970, pp.81-82). The comparative analysis strengthens the interpretation that the Khyber region, particularly Bara and adjacent territories, lay within a broader cultural sphere influenced by steppe nomadic polities, possibly as a frontier contact zone.

## **B. Scythian Gold medallion from Dogra, Ilm Gudar.**

**Type. King riding/ Blank (Gold)**

**Obv.** King riding on horseback, prancing to the left, with Scythian script in front and back of the horseman.

**Rev.** Blank.

**Ref.** (Plate 1, Section 5.8.3 in Part II)

### **5.1.3.8 KUSHAN PERIOD (c. 30 - 375 CE)**

#### **A. Tirah Relic Casket from Kuraiz, Tirah Valley, Orakzai.**

The discovery of the "Tirah Relic Casket at Kuraiz in the Tirah Valley" (Plate 1-11, Section 5.9.3 in Part II), Bara, constitutes a significant advancement in our understanding of Buddhist material culture and the extent of Kushan imperial influence in northwest Pakistan. The relic casket was reportedly recovered through the unauthorised excavation of a Buddhist stupa, a phenomenon that has regrettably increased in frequency due to unscientific treasure hunting in the region. Stratigraphic and numismatic evidence, specifically the presence of coins of Kanishka I (early to mid-2nd century CE), securely dates the burial assemblage to the zenith of Kushan rule, a period marked by extensive Buddhist activity and monumental architecture throughout Gandhara and the Hindukush region (Cribb, 1999, p. 133; Rosenfield, 1967, pp. 102-104).

#### **Archaeological and Stratigraphic Context**

Photographic documentation of the excavation (Plates 1-2) reveals that the relic casket was deposited within a carefully constructed, multi-tiered burial chamber beneath the stupa. Plate 1 illustrates the removal of the upper stratigraphic layer, exposing the architectural complexity of the structure. Plate 2 presents the lower compartment, which contained two distinct relic caskets: one in the form of a miniature stupa (Plates 3-4), and a second, cylindrical bronze casket adorned with gold wash and accompanied by ritual items such as yashti/ chakras. Notably, the miniature stupa is fashioned from typical Gandharan grey limestone in the double-drum stupa style, with a Kharoshthi inscription encircling the base (Plate 5).

#### **Typological and Iconographic Description**

The bronze casket is cylindrical and was produced using the lost-wax (cire perdue) technique, characteristic of Kushan metalwork (Pieper, 2021, pp. 118-119). Its surface is embellished with high-relief figures framed within arched panels, reflecting both Gandharan architectural motifs and Kushan numismatic iconography. The principal

panel (Plate 10) depicts a standing male deity facing left, with one hand resting on the hip and the other raised in a gesture closely akin to the vitarka mudra, the symbolic hand posture associated with teaching or blessing. Iconographic features such as solar rays, upright posture, and arched framing strongly suggest the identification of this figure as Helios or Mithra, Greco-Iranian deities commonly represented under Kushan patronage (Rosenfield, 1967, pp. 86-88; Pieper, 2021, p. 127), and whose imagery parallels the reverse types on gold coins of Kanishka I (see Göbl coin:25 and 31). According to the finder, the opposite panel, though not photographed, displays a seated Buddha in abhaya mudra (gesture of fearlessness), framed within a similar arched niche. This intentional juxtaposition of Buddhist and Iranian iconographies within a single ritual object exemplifies the syncretic religious milieu of the Kushan dynasty, further attested by comparable finds such as the Bimaran casket (Marshall, 1951, Pl. XLVIII) and the Shah-ji-ki-Dheri reliquary (Marshall, 1951, Pl. XXI).

The miniature stupa (Plates 7-8) is executed in fine grey or light blue limestone, demonstrating wheel-thrown or hand-modelled techniques typical of Gandharan votive art. The concentric rings and domed, hemispherical profile, with a finial reminiscent of the anda and harmika superstructure, deliberately emulate monumental stupa architecture at a reduced scale (Marshall, 1951, pp. 281-285; Errington, 2017, p. 64; Behrendt, 2004, p. 56). Within its hollow interior was found another miniature stupa made of crystal, now yellowed with age (Plate 9), approximately 4 inches in size, reportedly containing Buddha relics or cremated remains in a small gold reliquary (Plate 10), alongside a Kanishka I gold coin (type Göbl 59).

### **Comparative Typology and Archaeological Context**

Typologically, the Kuraiz relic caskets closely parallel reliquaries from major Gandharan sites such as Taxila, Shah-ji-ki-Dheri, and Butkara (Marshall, 1951, pp. 284-285; Faccenna, 1962, pp. 87-91). The combination of a multi-chambered burial configuration, miniature stupas, and bronze caskets aligns with established funerary and devotional practices of the Kushan period, wherein relics, votive offerings, and sacred objects were ritually interred (Rosenfield, 1967, pp. 115-118). The deliberate miniaturisation of stupa architecture for relic veneration facilitated the multiplication and dispersal of Buddhist relics, a hallmark of Kushan religious practice.

### **Chronological and Historical Significance**

The Kuraiz discovery is of exceptional historical importance. Previously, the Khyber region was recognised primarily as a transregional corridor connecting Central and South Asia, with substantive evidence for Buddhist or Kushan presence notably absent except for the poorly documented Shpola Stupa near Ali Masjid (Samad, 2011, pp. 157-158). The Kuraiz find fundamentally alters this narrative, providing the first unequivocal archaeological evidence for direct Kushan administrative and religious activity in District Khyber. The stylistic and material attributes of the caskets and associated objects underscore the cultural reach and religious patronage of the Kushan state (Cribb, 1999, p. 138; Rosenfield, 1967, p. 123). Moreover, while the Khyber Pass has traditionally been interpreted as a "corridor" for movement (Dani & Masson, 1992, p. 39; Behrendt, 2004, pp. 18-20), the material evidence from Kuraiz substantiates the establishment of Buddhist institutions and active integration into the imperial Kushan network. This discovery compels a reassessment of the historical geography of ancient empires in the region, demonstrating that imperial consolidation extended not only to urban centres but also to strategic passes and their hinterlands (Pieper, 2021, pp. 132-134).

The Kuraiz relic casket and miniature stupa play a vital role in bridging gaps in the archaeological and cultural history of northwest Pakistan, reinforcing the view that District Khyber was an integral part of the Kushan Empire's religious and administrative framework. This discovery opens new avenues for examining patterns of imperial expansion, religious diffusion, and cultural interaction across the Indo-Iranian borderlands during antiquity.

## **B. Bronze Relief Plaque of King Kanishka I from Shahi Qilla: An Iconographic and Historical Analysis.**

This bronze relief (Plate 1-3, Section 5.9.4 in Part II) plaque, measuring approximately  $12.3 \times 6.3$  cm, was uncovered by treasure hunters at Shahi Qilla, Bagha, Tirah Valley, in Bara Tehsil, Pakistan. It constitutes one of the few nearly intact images confidently attributable to King Kanishka I, the most prominent sovereign of the Kushan Empire. The artefact is cast in bronze using a low-relief technique, and likely formed part of a larger votive or architectural composition, possibly adorning a shrine or temple structure. The object displays an extensive green patina, typical of aged bronze, with notable stress fractures and wear on the reverse, consistent with prolonged burial and

corrosion, commonly observed in early Kushan-period bronze work subjected to centuries of environmental exposure.

Iconographically and stylistically, the figure's features closely parallel those of the fragmented statues of Kanishka housed in the Kabul Museum (Afghanistan) and Mathura Museum (India), particularly concerning stance, attire, and regalia (Rain Shower, 2019; Pieper, 2021). Presented in a robust frontal pose, the king is depicted with broad shoulders and pronounced limbs, attributes consistent with Gandhāran anthropomorphic traditions of the second-third centuries CE. Notably, the head, crowned with a distinctive, pointed wreath-like diadem featuring a central crest above the forehead, is a recognised attribute of Kushan royal portraiture (Akishev, 1984, Table 10; Pieper, 2021). In contrast to the fragmentary remains from Kabul and Mathura, the Shahi Qilla, Bagha relief preserves the whole head and facial features, including a short beard and moustache, physiognomic details closely matching depictions of Kanishka on his coinage (Mitchiner, 1976, Vol. II, nos. 314-323). This facial type displays a blend of Central-Asian and Indo-Iranian elements, reflecting both the Yuezhi origins of the Kushans and their cultural integration within the Gandhāran milieu.

The details of the king's attire are depicted with remarkable care and hold considerable cultural significance. He wears a heavily quilted calf-length tunic, elaborately finished with braid along the lower hem, typical attire associated with Kushan royal imagery. Over this tunic, he dons a chugha, a longer coat worn open at the front, ornamented with decorative braid along its centre opening and hem. The chugha also seems to have long sleeves gathered at the wrists, highlighting its formal elegance and prestige. At the waist, a belt featuring decorative metallic plaques secures the garments, emphasising their ceremonial and martial importance.

His boots, distinctly padded, are secured by straps wrapping around the ankles and under the foot, held together with ornate clasps. These boots could either be calf-length or shorter, paired with baggy trousers (*chalana*) tucked into them. Together, these clothing elements, the tunic, chugha, decorated belt, and distinctively styled boots, reflect a characteristic Kushan royal dress code, notably linked to individuals of Saka-Parthian heritage.

In his hands, the king holds two swords in decorative scabbards, further amplifying the martial dimension of his royal persona. The left hand typically grasps a long, straight

sword, possibly a variant of the khanda, its scabbard clearly defined, while the right hand is missing and is raised with, perhaps signifying command or royal benediction, a motif recurrent in other Kushan imperial representations. The sword's form, with a distinctive guard and stylised hilt, closely echoes that seen in the Kabul Museum statue (cf. Pieper, 2021, Fig. 6).

Of particular epigraphic and iconographic significance, in the upper-left corner of the plaque, traces of the Bactrian Greek letters are visible. However, several are illegible due to corrosion and wear, the letter "N" (Nu) can be clearly distinguished, while the letter "A" (Alpha) appears on the second line. In front of the "N," within a circular field to the right, a distinctive "T" or trident-shaped monogram is present. This trident is recognised as the royal tamgha of King Kanishka, serving both as a dynastic emblem and as a marker of sovereign authority. The presence of this tamgha, in direct association with Greek script, reinforces the plaque's attribution to Kanishka and highlights the blending of Hellenistic and Central-Asian royal iconography typical of Kushan imperial art.

Typological parallels with known Kanishka statuary, especially the figures of Gandhara and the colossal Kanishka statue of Hadda (Afghanistan) discovered near Khyber Pass, some kilometres in distance, support a secure dating of this plaque to the late second century CE, corresponding with the peak of Kanishka I's reign. The use of bronze, as opposed to schist or terracotta, suggests a commission of significant status, likely connected to a religious or royal context.

The scholarly value of the Shahi Qilla relief is considerable for several reasons. First, its completeness and rarity: it stands as one of the significantly few known representations of King Kanishka with an intact head and face, distinguishing it from the otherwise headless or heavily damaged examples from Kabul and Mathura (Rain Shower, 2019; Kang Woo-bang in Kwon, 2019). Second, it exemplifies the Synthesis of Hellenistic naturalism (in posture and anatomy) with Central-Asian costume and iconography, emblematic of the cosmopolitan ethos of the Kushan court, which linked the Mediterranean, Iranian, Indian, and Chinese worlds (Fussman, 1987; Rosenfield, 1967). Third, the relief's combination of martial emblems (the swords), regal vestments, and a gesture of authority resonates with the Mahayana Buddhist ideal of the "chakravartin" (wheel-turning universal monarch), a concept with which Kanishka is

strongly associated and often styled in Buddhist sources as a second Ashoka (Kwon, 2019, pp. 92-93).

Although the reverse of the plaque shows no detailed inscription, Kushan royal tamgas, unique emblematic symbols, frequently accompany such works. Akishev (1984) documented up to five tamgas used by Kanishka; further technical analysis may reveal traces or symbolic motifs, potentially indicating original placement or function. The absence of visible tamgas on the current piece may be due to corrosion or loss over time, underscoring the need for advanced imaging and conservation techniques.

In conclusion, this newly surfaced bronze relief from Shahi Qilla, Bagha, Tirah Valley is a critical addition to the corpus of Kushan royal imagery, especially given its rare preservation of Kanishka's facial features. Its iconography, materiality, and comparative context significantly deepen our understanding of royal representation in Gandhāran art, Kushan imperial ideology, and the transregional artistic currents that shaped the period. The plaque thus makes a substantive contribution to the study of Kushan visual culture, highlighting both its aesthetic achievements and its political-religious messaging, and stands as a testament to the complex cultural networks linking Gandhāra, Central Asia, and the wider Buddhist world during the height of Kushan rule.

#### **5.1.3.9 KUSHANO-SASSANIAN (c. 230 CE- 365 CE)**

##### **A. Kushano-Sassanian Gold Dinars Hoard from Many Sar, Bara.**

The coin hoard (see Section 4.11.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins) has been discovered at Many Sar, Bara, by treasure hunters in a field which comprises thirteen gold dinars of the Kushano-Sassanian period. The coin dates from approximately the early to mid-third century CE. On its obverse is a depiction of a standing king, whose crown prominently features a pair of ram's horns topped by a pearl ornament and a flower-like globe. Below this crown, the king wears a diadem; a halo surrounds his head, his hair is arranged in carefully styled plaits, and his beard passes through a ring. A trident appears clearly in the left field of the coin. Although the ruler's name is unreadable due to wear on the coins and limitations in the photographic records, the king's depiction and regalia remain identifiable. These attributes closely match those seen in the gold dinars of the Kushano-Sassanian series (Göbl, 1984, DB vgl. 823 ff.; Mitchiner, 1978, pp. 863-864).

The reverse depicts a quintessential Kushan motif, portraying the deity Shiva in a frontal pose with hair rendered as flames. He holds a diadem in his right hand and a trident in his left, while his traditional companion, the bull Nandi, stands to the left behind him. This iconographic arrangement is characteristic of both late Kushan and Kushano-Sassanian coinage, illustrating the continuity of Kushan religious and artistic traditions despite the political supremacy of the Sassanian Empire (Pieper, 1998, pp. 202–203).

Based on stylistic and typological parallels with coins catalogued in Göbl (1984) and Mitchiner (1978), the Many Sar, Bara hoard can be securely dated to the Kushano-Sassanian period, specifically to the reign of Peroz (ca. 245-270 CE) or his contemporaries. However, the absence of a legible king's name precludes definitive attribution. The coins adhere to the Attic weight standard typical of Kushan and Kushano-Sassanian gold dinars, with a metrological range likely between 7.8 and 8.2 grams per coin (Mitchiner, 1978, p. 864).

The iconography of the Many Sar coins is particularly noteworthy for its deliberate fusion of Sassanian and Kushan elements. The obverse portrait follows the pattern of Sassanian royal imagery, especially in the elaborate crown and facial hair styling. At the same time, the reverse preserves the distinctly Kushan motif of Shiva with Nandi, a scene rooted in local religious practice and widely recognised as a symbol of divine legitimisation. This iconographic Hybridity illustrates the adaptive strategies of Kushano-Sassanian rulers as they sought to assert both their Iranian (Sassanian) and Indian (Kushan) claims, appealing to diverse constituencies across the region (Göbl, 1984, p. 155; Pieper, 1998, pp. 202-203).

While specific details of the archaeological context at Many Sar, Bara remain limited, the recovery of these gold dinars in a closed hoard context reinforces their function as high-value, ceremonial, or treasury coins, rather than as circulating currency. Notably, the Kushano-Sassanian period has thus far only been securely identified in Bara; there is no conclusive numismatic evidence for this period from either the Jamrud or Landi Kotal tehsils. Comparable coin hoards of Kushano-Sassanian gold dinars have been reported from sites across northern Pakistan and Afghanistan, including those described by Göbl (1984) and Pieper (1998), further validating the typological and chronological assessment of the Many Sar, Bara find.



### **Description of the Hoard**

#### **Type. Bust of king and Zeus, Silver double decadrachm (Attic standard)**

**Obv.** King standing left, trident in left field, Crown consisting of a pair of ram's horns over a string of pearls surmounted by a flower-like globe; diadem below, halo, hair in plaits, beard drawn through a ring.

**Rev.** Shiva, standing facing with flaming hair, holding a diadem in his right hand and a trident in his left; behind, the bull Nandi, his companion, standing left.

**Reference:** Göbl DB vgl. 823 ff.

**Coin nos.** Plate 1-13, Section 4.11.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins

### **5.1.3.10 SASSANID PERIOD (224 AD TO 651 AD)**

#### **A. Sassanid Coin Hoard from Alam Gudar, Bara.**

A notable coin hoard, detailed in Section 4.10.2 of Part II: Illustrations Coins, was unearthed at Alam Gudar in Bara. This find constitutes a significant assemblage of Sassanian and early Islamic coinage, dating from the late 5th century to the early 8th century CE. The assemblage is dominated by silver drachms and hemidrachms, mainly struck under Sassanian rulers such as Peroz I (457-483 CE), Kavadh I (488-531 CE), and Khushru II (590-627 CE), as well as a later Dabwayhid Ispahbad issue from Tabaristan attributed to Farkhan (711-731 CE). Together, these coins offer invaluable insight into the monetary systems, typological developments, and the interplay between imperial and regional mints on the eastern fringes of the Sassanid Empire.

Most coins in the hoard are Sassanian silver drachms of standard weight (roughly 3.7 to 4.1 grams) and diameter (26-32 mm). These coins are typically identifiable by the crowned, armoured bust of the king to the right on the obverse of the coins, often featuring crescents on the shoulders and the star-and-crescent emblems beside the crown (see Mitchiner ACW 1011ff.; MACW 1111ff.). The reverse consistently depicts a fire altar with two attendants, with the star and crescent symbols appearing in the adjacent fields. Key details, such as the reigning monarch, regnal year, and mint location, are indicated by Pahlavi script inscriptions, especially notable on the coins of Khushru II, where regnal years (e.g., 28 = 617 CE, 29 = 618 CE, 33 = 622 CE, 37 = 626 CE) and mint marks (such as RD for Ray, DA for Darabgard, GN for Gundishapur, NB for an unidentified mint, and GI for Guey/Jayy) are visible (see MACW 1111ff., 1212).

The inclusion of a hemidrachm from the Tabaristan series, minted under Farkhan I (711-731 CE), marks the persistence of Sassanian typology into the Islamic period and the

emergence of localised coinages. This coin, dated 75 post-Yazdegard Era (= 729 CE), displays a Sassanian-style bust with a winged crown and an elaborate reverse with the fire altar, attendants, and Pahlavi inscriptions referencing Tabaristan (Malek 16.5-6; Mitchiner 1332-4; Album 50).

The coins were struck in high-relief using hand-engraved dies, a hallmark of Sassanian numismatic practice. The flan quality is generally broad and thin, typical for late Sassanian silver coinage, facilitating detailed die engraving and clear iconographic expression. Weights range from 3.68 to 4.12 grams for the drachms, with the hemidrachm weighing 2.09 grams, corresponding closely to standard Sassanian and Tabaristanian issues (cf. MACW; Malek, 2000).

Obverse iconography adheres to the Sassanian royal portrait convention, with highly stylised crowns varying by monarch and era, often surmounted by astral and crescentic elements, symbols of divine favour and sovereignty (Mitchiner ACW 1011ff.). The Pahlavi inscriptions include the royal name, titles, and regnal formulas such as "KAVAT AFZUTU" ("may Kavadh increase"), with additional abbreviations denoting mints and regnal years.

The reverse consistently portrays the Zoroastrian fire altar, emblematic of the state religion, with two attendants, often the king himself, standing in adoration. Flanking the altar are astral symbols and, in the later Tabaristanian piece, the iconography is maintained but with local variations, including new Pahlavi inscriptions, the date formula, and regional mint identification.

The hoard's chronological range spans the zenith of Sassanian imperial power to its dissolution and the subsequent rise of regional dynasties under early Islamic hegemony. The presence of mints such as Ray (Rhagae), Darabgard, Gundishapur, and Tabaristan reflects the eastward focus of Sassanian military and administrative organisation, particularly in response to Central-Asian incursions and the empire's contested borderlands. The consistent typological continuity into the early Islamic period, as evidenced by the Farkhan hemidrachm, illustrates both the inertia of Sassanian monetary imagery and the pragmatic adaptation of new rulers (Malek, 2000; Gyselen, 2002).

Comparative finds of Sassanian hoards from the eastern Iranian plateau and northwestern India (see Pieper, 2007; Mitchiner, 1975; MACW) confirm a widespread

pattern of silver hoarding, reflecting both wealth storage and turbulent political circumstances. The Alam Gudar hoard fits this pattern, with its blend of high-denomination, high-purity silver, and broad geographic mint provenance.

The Alam Gudar, Bara coin hoard offers invaluable evidence for the dynamics of monetary circulation, imperial iconography, and cultural exchange during the late antique and early medieval eras in South-Central Asia. The persistence, fire altar iconography, and Sassanian royal imagery in both Sassanid and post-Sassanid (Tabaristanian) issues highlight the enduring symbolic authority of Sassanian models, even as political control shifted. The numismatic evidence from this hoard thus not only illuminates Sassanian administrative and economic strategies but also the broader processes of continuity and transformation in early Islamic and Central-Asian polities.

#### **5.1.3.11 ISLAMIC PERIOD (c. 622 - Present)**

No coins or any artefacts related to this period have been attested from Bara Tehsil and adjacent areas during the research.

#### **5.1.3.12 GUPTA PERIOD (c. 240 CE - 579 CE)**

##### **A. The Shahi Qilla Bronze Horseman: Evidence of Gupta Period Royal Imagery.**

The bronze figurine (Plate 4, Section 5.10.2 in Part II) was discovered by treasure hunters from the exact spot where the Balarama slab was discovered, depicting a royal equestrian figure accompanied by an attendant, which can be attributed stylistically and iconographically to the Gupta period (circa 4<sup>th</sup> CE to 6<sup>th</sup> century CE). The composition is rendered in the round, mounted upon a stepped rectangular plinth, and displays the high degree of craftsmanship characteristic of Gupta-period bronze work.

The central figure is a king, discernible by his elaborate conical crown (mukuta) and regal posture, mounted upon a caparisoned horse. The king is shown frontally and upright, with a slightly stiff posture, both hands positioned as if holding reins or a symbolic implement. The facial features are stylised, with prominent eyes, a straight nose, and a faintly smiling mouth. The royal figure is adorned with jewellery, visible as necklaces and armlets, indicative of high status.

The horse, depicted in a prancing pose with legs slightly apart, is proportionately robust, its musculature and mane schematically rendered. Decorative elements on the horse

include harnesses and a saddlecloth, suggested through incised lines and geometric motifs. The tail is shown curled to one side, and the overall stance conveys stability and strength.

To the left of the king stands an attendant figure, slightly shorter and positioned alongside the rear leg of the horse. The attendant's head is slightly inclined toward the royal figure, signifying deference. He is depicted holding a tall staff surmounted by a domed parasol (*chatri*), which arches above and behind the king, a conventional emblem of sovereignty and divine protection in South-Asian courtly iconography. The attendant's attire is simple, consisting of a short tunic and possibly a sash; his facial features are more schematic than those of the king, but still individualised.

The base is tiered, with two registers of stepped moulding, and the upper surface features a shallow depression, possibly for ritual purposes or as a means of fixing the piece to a larger structure. Geometric motifs, such as incised diagonal hatchings, decorate the edges of the base, enhancing its visual separation from the sculptural group above.

The surface treatment reflects exceptional craftsmanship, evident in the finely rendered details of the king's jewellery and the precise linear ornamentation embellishing both the horse and the attendant's garments. The parasol is embellished with concentric bands and a pronounced central finial, its slightly flared edges further accentuating its significance as a symbol.

The stylistic features, particularly the treatment of the faces, jewellery, and attire, as well as the prominence of the parasol, correspond closely to known Gupta-period bronzes from northern India. The square, tiered plinth and formalised posture further support this attribution. While the artefact bears all the hallmarks of Gupta imperial iconography, it is important to mention here that the local differences in style and detail possibly reflect regional workshops or patronage in the northwestern territories.

## **B. Depiction of Balarama on a Marble Slab from Shahi Qilla.**

The figure was discovered accidentally during ploughing activities at Shahi Qilla, Tirah Valley, Bara, in the year 2021. The discovery marks a significant archaeological milestone as it represents the first substantial finding of a mature Gupta period artefact from this specific region and holds notable significance in the broader context of South-

Asian archaeology. This exceptional discovery provides valuable new insights into the cultural and religious interactions that occurred in the region during the Gupta period, significantly broadening our understanding of Gupta influence beyond its traditionally acknowledged boundaries.

The figure is carved into a white marble slab exhibiting hues of off-white, beige, and greyish-blue. Its dimensions are 2.10 ft x 1.7 ft, suggesting it was initially part of a monumental or ceremonial context. The slab presents an anthropomorphic relief carving depicting Balarama (Plate 1-3, Section 5.10.1 in Part II), a significant figure in early Indian religious iconography. The carving is set within a recessed rectangular niche, prominently showcasing the Balarama figure in a standing frontally position, with a muscular build characteristic of Gupta-period sculptures, identifiable by the balanced proportions and pronounced physique. The central figure has a club in the right hand and a shield in the left.

The depiction is accompanied by engraved inscriptions directly below the relief figure, executed in a Gupta Brahmi script, possibly signifying identification, dedication, or invocation (Note yet Undeciphered). The inscription is partially eroded yet discernible in some sections, suggesting considerable historical exposure. The slab's surface is weathered and worn, indicative of long-term environmental exposure and suggesting that it was likely erected outdoors or within an open sacred precinct. The technique employed involves high relief carving, complemented by engraved linear inscriptions, both stylistically aligned with Gupta-era conventions of the 5th century CE (Pieper, 2020, p. 867).

Unlike the canonical Gupta-period images of Balarama from sites such as Eran, which typically portray him wielding a plough (hala) and pestle (musala) as symbols of agriculture, strength, and fertility (Pieper, 2020, p. 867), the artefact from Shahi Qilla, Tirah Valley, is notable for its unique portrayal of Balarama, shown holding a club (gada) in his right hand and a shield in his left, a combination rarely seen in mainstream Brahmanical iconography of the Gupta period. Instead, this imagery is more reminiscent of the early, syncretic representations of Balarama from northwestern India and the Indo-Greek cultural milieu, where his character merges with the legendary figure of Herakles/Hercules (Misra, 2019, pp. 2-3).

The club (gada) is a symbol of heroic might and is associated with both Balarama and the Greco-Roman Herakles. The presence of the shield in this context further strengthens the comparison with Herakles, who is similarly portrayed in Hellenistic and Indo-Greek art as a warrior wielding a club and sometimes a shield. This iconographic blending likely reflects the cross-cultural interactions between Greek, Central-Asian, and Indian traditions in the north-west of the sub-continent, especially during the Indo-Greek and processing period influence (My India My Glory, 2019, para. 6-10).

While the Eran Balarama and other Gupta images emphasise agricultural implements and sometimes a serpent canopy, underscoring his agrarian and Naga cult associations, the Shahi Qilla figure is more martial. This distinction is particularly significant, as it situates the artefact within a broader historical and cultural dialogue involving Greek mythological types and their Indian reinterpretations. The symbolic and historical connections between Balarama and Herakles/Hercules are now widely recognised in scholarship, as they reflect shared mythic motifs of strength, protection, and cosmic order (My India My Glory, 2019, para. 4, 11).

Thus, the Shahi Qilla artefact represents a unique instance of cross-cultural iconography in South Asia, blending indigenous and foreign elements and diverging from the mainstream Gupta tradition. Its discovery not only attests to the diversity of religious art in the region but also underscores the Tirah Valley's role as a contact zone between multiple artistic and religious traditions during the early historic period.

### **C. Lajjā Gaurī Bronze Seal from Shahi Qillah, Tirah Valley, Bara: Iconography, Epigraphy, and Historical Context**

The seal is moulded in bronze metal (Plate 1-2, Section 5.10.3 in Part II) and rectangular, measuring 3X4 cm in length, discovered at Shahi Qillah in the Tirah Valley, Bara, and features both figural and script elements, executed in low relief on its obverse surface.

Three principal motifs define the upper register. At the right is a striding female figure, identified as Lajjā Gaurī, a well-known symbol of fertility and generative energy in South-Asian iconography, depicted with accentuated hips and raised arms in a dynamic posture suggestive of ritual dance or invocation. Centrally, a prominent trident (trishula) occupies the focal position, a potent emblem of Shaivite religious tradition, closely associated with Shiva and later popular in Gupta-period art. The left side presents a

male figure, also striding and dynamically posed, possibly representing a devotee, attendant, or mythological consort.

Beneath these motifs, a horizontal line of mature Brahmi script is incised, running along the lower edge of the seal. The script style is particularly significant: the well-formed characters closely resemble the mature Brahmi of the Mauryan era, especially as seen in Ashokan rock edicts (Asokan Edict - Delhi Inscription). Such paleographic affinities indicate an early historic date, possibly ca. 3<sup>rd</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup> century BCE, but also reflect the persistence and evolution of Brahmi literacy traditions into the subsequent centuries. While the full reading of the inscription is obscured, the script's form suggests use for administrative authentication, personal identification, or ritual dedication.

The material is solid bronze, showing evidence of wear and edge smoothing consistent with long-term handling or interment. The use of a bronze medium, combined with both Shaivite and fertility iconography, underlines the seal's likely function within religious or ritual contexts.

Comparative analysis reveals that similar bronze seals, often displaying Shaivite motifs such as the trident and figures in dynamic poses, have been documented from sites like Mardan and, notably, the Kashmir Smast cave-temple complex, as discussed by Professor Dr. Nasim Khan (Khan, 2014, pp. 92-97). These parallels situate the Shahi Qillah seal within broader traditions of early Hindu glyptic art and suggest wide-ranging iconographic and epigraphic connections across the northwest subcontinent during the Mauryan-Gupta transition.

The Lajjā Gaurī bronze seal from Shahi Qillah holds outstanding importance for understanding early historic South Asian religion, iconography, and literacy. Blending Shaivite, fertility, and script motifs, the seal reflects the region's rich and evolving material culture. In addition, its inscriptions offer valuable evidence for dating and tracing the spread of the Brahmi script.

#### **5.1.3.13 HUNNIC/ HEPHTHALITE PERIOD (C. 440S CE - 560 CE)**

The recent discovery of Hun, or Hephthalite, period coins (see Section 4.14.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins) in District Khyber marks a significant breakthrough in the numismatic archaeology of northwest South Asia. While discoveries of such coins have previously been frequent, in the Gandhāra region and neighbouring areas of

Afghanistan, as well as throughout Pakistan and India (Bivar, 1969, pp. 277-293; Göbl, 1967, pp. 32-45; Cribb, 1999, pp. 149-168), no systematic hoard or individual finds of Hun coins had ever been reported from District Khyber prior to this (Alram, 2002, p. 35; Carter, 1995, p. 14). This unprecedented find not only extends the documented range of Hephthalite numismatic circulation further westward but also enriches our understanding of transregional interactions along the vital trade and military corridors that traversed the Khyber Pass (Grenet, 2002, p. 61; Sims-Williams, 1995, p. 223). The coins exhibit a range of iconographic and typological features distinctive to Hephthalite monetary practice, including imitations of Sasanian, Kushano-Sasanian, and Gupta prototypes corroborating patterns previously established for major hoards found in Balkh, Kabul, and Peshawar (Frye, 1984, pp. 152-154; Göbl, 1984, pp. 83-88; Vondrovec, 2002, p. 41).

Recent coin evidence comparative, metallurgical analysis of these Khyber finds, how parallel results from earlier discoveries in the broader Gandhāra region, indicating both commercial and political integration with the larger Hephthalite confederacy during the 5th and 6th centuries CE (Nehru, 1989, p. 89; Carter, 1995, p. 15; Alram, 2002, p. 36). Earlier, Hephthalite coins had been regularly discovered from Swat, Taxila, Charsadda, and as far east as the Punjab plains (Göbl, 1967, p. 38; Bivar & Sims-Williams, 1973, pp. 279-280; Alram, 1996, p. 238), but never before from the Khyber region, highlighting a previously undocumented sphere of Hun influence and economic activity (Vondrovec, 2002, p. 44; Bivar, 1969, p. 291). These finds suggest the existence of localised trade networks and political authority, linking the Hephthalite state directly to the western Indian subcontinent and illuminating the cultural mosaic of the early medieval Khyber region (Sims-Williams, 1995, p. 229; Carter, 1995, p. 18).

The coin hoard consists of both copper and silver issues, some bearing the tamgha or tribal marks and others showing the busts of king a typological diversity comparable to the major coinages of the White Huns documented from Bactria and Gandhāra (Alram, 1996, p. 240; Frye, 1984, p. 153; Grenet, 2002, p. 62). The artistic and epigraphic features, such as Brahmi and Bactrian legends, as well as the adaptation of Sasanian royal imagery are consistent with those observed in Hun coinages from the Swat, Kabul, and Zabul regions, further supporting the integration of District Khyber within broader Hephthalite economic and cultural domains (Göbl, 1984, pp. 83-84; Carter, 1995, p. 19; Vondrovec, 2002, pp. 45-46). Such evidence also provides new data for



reconstructing the chronology and extent of Hephthalite activity in northwest South Asia, particularly during the post-Gupta period, when competing polities vied for control of vital cross-border routes (Alram, 2002, p. 37; Grenet, 2002, p. 64; Bivar & Sims-Williams, 1973, p. 283).

The discovery of Hun coins in District Khyber for the first time not only fills a significant gap in the archaeological record but also demonstrates the region's role as a frontier of cross-cultural contact and political contestation during late antiquity (Sims-Williams, 1995, p. 232; Carter, 1995, p. 21; Frye, 1984, p. 154). These findings complement and expand upon the corpus of Hephthalite coinage long known from Afghanistan, Gandhāra, and northern India, revealing the Khyber corridor as an active participant in the transregional dynamics of the Hun era (Vondrovec, 2002, pp. 47-48; Göbl, 1984, p. 88; Alram, 2002, p. 39). The iconographic, metallurgical, and contextual study of these coins from District Khyber provides vital new evidence for the economic, political, and artistic landscapes of the c. 5<sup>th</sup> CE - 6<sup>th</sup> centuries CE, advancing the field of Hun period numismatics and cultural material in South and Central-Asia (Alram, 1996, p. 242; Grenet, 2002, p. 66).

#### **A. Hunnic/ Hephthalites Coin Hoard from Sarai Kandao, Bara.**

##### **G1. Hunnic (600 AD)**

##### **Type 1. Bust of King/ Fire Altar and Two Attendants (Standard Drachm)**

**Obv.** Bust derived from that of Khosrau II, right, crude Khosrau's legends around, *Alchono* in Sogdian script below the bust, small Alchon tamgha in the upper right.  
**Rev.** Two attendants around a fire altar, mint AY (Ērān-xvarrah-Šābuhr [Susa]) and date (RY 37).

**Reference:** SC Tehran 2050-9 (for prototype); Zeno 33518, 31mm, 3.23 grams. Cf.

**Coin nos.** Plate 1 Section 4.14.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

These coins were struck sometimes in the mid-680s. The series of coins was issued in Khurasan, coinciding with the Sogdian Huns' invasion and brief dominance over the province following the outbreak of civil strife within the Arab caliphate (Grenet, 2002, pp. 62-63; Carter, 1995, pp. 20-21). In the year AH 64 (683 CE), the then-governor of Khurasan, 'Abd Allah bin Khazim, rebelled against Umayyad rule, aligning himself with the Zubayrid faction, a rival claimant to the caliphate and thereby plunging the province into chaos (Alram, 2002, p. 38; Cribb, 1999, p. 155). Taking advantage of this political fragmentation, the Hephthalite (Hunnic) groups advanced into Khurasan,

swiftly establishing their authority over the territory for a short duration (Bivar, 1969, pp. 291-292; Göbl, 1967, p. 40).

Numismatic evidence indicates that several varieties of Hunnic drachms were produced during this tumultuous period, likely by Sogdian-speaking artisans and administrators operating local mints (Vondrovec, 2002, p. 44; Sims-Williams, 1995, p. 225). These coin issues display an eclectic approach to prototype selection, with die-engravers replicating both Sasanian (particularly Khusro II) and Arab-Sasanian models, including those associated with 'Abd Allah bin Khazim and Salm bin Ziyad (Göbl, 1984, pp. 85-86; Frye, 1984, p. 154). Notably, every specimen bears the distinctive Alchon-style Hephthalite tamgha, either struck as part of the original die or applied as a subsequent countermark, thus unequivocally identifying the coinage as a product of the Hunnic overlords (Aram, 1996, p. 239; Grenet, 2002, p. 64).

These Hunnic coin types are scarce, their existence attested primarily through a small number of recently discovered hoards (Carter, 1995, p. 21; Bivar & Sims-Williams, 1973, p. 284). The limited number of dies used in their production, with each type struck from a single set of dies, further underscores the scarcity and distinctive nature of this coinage (Göbl, 1967, p. 42; Vondrovec, 2002, p. 46). Early examples from the series generally weigh around 3.5 grams. At the same time, subsequent issues produced as conditions for the Huns in Khurasan deteriorated, and the dies became increasingly degraded, showing a marked weight reduction, with the latest specimens weighing as little as 2.5 grams (Aram, 2002, p. 39; Nehru, 1989, p. 89).

The nuanced variation in metrology and die quality, combined with the iconographic and epigraphic hallmarks, provides critical evidence for reconstructing the short-lived Hunnic polity's economic practices and its engagement with broader monetary traditions in late antique Central Asia (Aram, 1996, p. 242; Carter, 1995, p. 22; Grenet, 2002, p. 66).

**Type. 2. Bust of king/ Fire Alter and Two Attendants (Standard Drachm)**

**Obv.** Bust derived from that of Khosrau II, right, crude Khosrau's legends around, *Alchono* in Sogdian script below the bust, small Alchon tamgha in the upper right.

**Rev.** Two attendants around a fire altar, mint AY (Ērān-xvarrah-Šābuhr [Susa]) and date (RY 37).

**Reference:** Measurement 32mm, 2.52 grams. Cf. SC Tehran 2050-9 (for prototype); Zeno 33518.

**Coin nos.** Plate 2 Section 4.14.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

## **G. 2. Nezak Malka (b.711 AD)**

### **Type. 1.1. Bust of king/ Fire Alter and Two Attendants (Standard Drachm)**

**Obv.** Bust right wearing winged bull headdress and ear-rings, *NAPKI MALKĀ*, control mark behind bust.

**Rev.** Attendants and a fire altar, two 8-spoked sun wheels in upper fields.

**Reference:** Measurement 27mm, 2.56 grams. Minted in the Kabul Valley and Zabul. Mitchiner ACW 1499.

**Coin nos.** Plates 3-5 Section 4.14.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

A notable class of rare coins from the early-medieval period is those imitating Sasanian king Peroz I coins, reflecting a complex web of political and cultural exchanges with the Hindu Kush and Kabul Valley kingdoms (Aram, 2002, p. 38; Göbl, 1967, pp. 117-120). These issues are particularly associated with the Nezak Malkas. This Turkic dynasty ruled over the Kabul Valley and Gandhāra approximately between 630 and 711 CE, under the suzerainty of the Western Turk Yabghus based at Qunduz (Grenet, 2002, p. 62; Frye, 1984, p. 154). The Nezak rulers adopted and adapted the visual and metrological standards of Sasanian drachms, particularly those of Peroz, both as a claim to legitimacy and as a pragmatic solution for facilitating transregional trade and tribute (Cribb, 1999, p. 156; Carter, 1995, p. 22).

The close stylistic imitation extended to the obverse royal bust and the use of fire altar imagery on the reverse, sometimes accompanied by distinctive Nezak tamghas or countermarks signifying the local dynasty's authority (Göbl, 1984, pp. 86-87; Aram, 1996, p. 241). The political landscape of the region was notably dynamic; in 711 CE, the scion of a sub-branch of the Nezak house in Zabulistan overthrew his kinsman, the reigning Nezak Malka at Kabul, underscoring the fragmented and competitive nature of Turkic rule in the region (Bivar, 1969, p. 289; Sims-Williams, 1995, p. 226).

These Nezak imitative coinages thus serve not only as evidence of dynastic transition and external influence, but also illuminate the monetary and administrative complexities of post-Sasanian Central and South Asia (Aram, 2002, p. 39; Vondrovec, 2002, p. 46).

### **Type 3. Bust of King/ Fire Altar and Two Attendants (Standard Drachm)**

**Obv.** Bust right wearing winged bull headdress and ear-rings, *NAPKI MALKĀ*, control mark behind bust.

**Rev.** Attendants and a fire altar, two 8-spoked sun wheels in upper fields.

**Reference:** Measurement 26mm, 3.14 grams. Minted in the Kabul Valley and Zabul. Mitchiner ACW 1499.

**Coin nos.** Plate 6 Section 4.14.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

The simplified legends and relatively crude style are likely attributable to minor mints or may represent unofficial issues produced during periods of dynastic transition (Göbl, 1967, pp. 117-120; Carter, 1995, p. 22). These rare specimens are notable for imitating the Sasanian coinage of Peroz I, a reflection of both the enduring prestige of Sasanian numismatic models and the pragmatic needs of local rulers for recognisable currency (Alram, 2002, p. 39; Cribb, 1999, p. 156). The Nezak Malkas, a Turkic dynasty that governed the Kabul Valley and Gandhāra from circa 630 to 711 CE as vassals of the Western Turk Yabghu at Qunduz, were the primary issuers of these coins (Grenet, 2002, p. 62; Frye, 1984, p. 154). The Nezak coinage often incorporated distinctive tamghas or tribal marks alongside the inherited Sasanian motifs, signalling a complex interplay of cultural adaptation and assertions of local sovereignty (Göbl, 1984, pp. 86-87; Alram, 1996, p. 241). In 711 CE, political upheaval saw the junior branch of the Nezak house in Zabulistan successfully unseat their kinsman, the reigning Nezak Malka at Kabul, marking a significant dynastic shift in the region (Bivar, 1969, p. 289; Sims-Williams, 1995, p. 226). These coins, therefore, not only provide evidence for the continuity and transformation of Sasanian numismatic traditions in post-Sasanian Central Asia but also document the intricate administrative and political landscape of the early medieval era in the Kabul-Gandhāra region (Vondrovec, 2002, p. 46; Alram, 2002, p. 39).

## **B. Hunnic/ Hephthalites Coins Discovered from Different areas of Bara.**

### **G.1. Hunnic/ Hephthalites (480 AD)**

#### **Type. Bust of King/ Fire Alter and Two Attendants (Standard Drachm)**

**Obv.** Sasanian-style bust to the right, wearing a crown with two wings, no inscriptions.

**Rev..** Fire altar with ribbons flanked by two attendants, star and crescent flanking flames, no inscriptions.

**Reference:** Measurement 26mm, 3.61 grams. Uncertain mint in Bactria or Gandhāra (?). Göbl III/1.

**Coin nos.** Plate 1 Section 4.14.2 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

### **G.2. Alkhan-Nezak (650 AD)**

#### **Type. Bust of King/ Fire Alter and Two Attendants (Standard Drachm)**

**Obv.** Bust right wearing a spiky headdress; SRIO ShAHO and a letter 'A' behind bust, countermark in the shape of a small beetle.

**Rev..** Attendants and a fire altar, derived from the Sassanian coins, two 8-spoked sun wheels in upper fields.

**Reference:** Measurement 6mm, 2.21 grams. Kabul mint?. For the host coin: MACW 1491-1494. Vondrovec (2014) type 225; Göbl, Documento Em. 225; MAC 1520+.

**Coin nos.** Plate 2-3 Section 4.14.2 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

The precise identity of the authority responsible for minting these particular coins remains uncertain. Numismatic and stylistic analysis reveals that they are closely modelled on the established Nezak coinage, yet the context of their production suggests a transitional period marked by significant political upheaval in the region (Göbl, 1967, p. 118; Alram, 2002, p. 39). It is widely hypothesised that these issues were produced either by Hunnic groups or by Western Turkic peoples who succeeded in overrunning and displacing the Nezak rulers in the Kabul-Gandhāra corridor during the early eighth century CE (Grenet, 2002, p. 63; Cribb, 1999, p. 157).

### **G.3. Early silver drachm, after c.480s AD, Hephthalites in Bactria/Gandhāra**

#### **Type. Bust of King/ Fire Altar and Two Attendants (Standard Drachm)**

**Obv.** Sasanian-style bust to the right, wearing a crown with two wings, no inscriptions.

**Rev.** Fire altar with ribbons flanked by two attendants, star and crescent flanking flames, no inscriptions.

**Reference:** Uncertain mint in Bactria or Gandhāra (?). Göbl III/1, 29mm, 3.27 grams.

**Coins No.** Plate 4 Section 4.14.2 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

This is the early imitation of the Sasanian Emperor Peroz's silver drachms, specifically reflecting the third crown type issued circa 474- 483 CE (Göbl, 1967, pp. 56-57; Alram, 2002, p. 39). Struck during the ascendancy of the Hephthalite (White Hun) ruler Toramana (c. 484-515 CE), these drachms are among the earliest examples of Hunnic coinage to directly adopt Sasanian imperial iconography in the regions of Afghanistan and Pakistan (Cribb, 1999, p. 154; Vondrovec, 2002, p. 42). The Hephthalites' intimate the coinage of Peroz's silver currency is documented not only numismatically but also in literary sources recounting Peroz's repeated captivity and ransom at one point requiring thirty mules laden with silver drachms as payment, underscoring the prestige and economic centrality of these coins (Frye, 1984, p. 153; Sims-Williams, 1995, p. 224). Consequently, the Hephthalites began striking their drachms, carefully imitating the familiar types of Peroz, likely both as a symbol of sovereignty and to facilitate local and transregional trade (Alram, 1996, p. 239; Göbl, 1984, p. 85).

### **G.4. Early silver drachm, after c.480s AD, Hephthalites in Bactria/Gandhāra**

#### **Type. Bust of King/ Fire Altar and Two Attendants (Standard Drachm)**

**Obv.** Sasanian-style bust to the right, wearing a crown with two wings, no inscriptions.

**Rev..** Fire altar with ribbons flanked by two attendants, star and crescent flanking flames, no inscriptions.

**Reference:** Measurement, 29mm, weight, 3.27 grams; coins 2, 26mm, 3.26 grams  
Uncertain mint in Bactria or Gandhāra (?). Göbl III/1.

**Coin nos.** Plates 5-6 Section 4.14.2 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**G.5. Early issue silver drachm, Alchon Huns (Hephthalites), c. 485-600 CE**

**Type. Bust of King/ Fire Altar and Two Attendants (Standard Drachm)**

**Obv.** Crowned bust right, four pellets, without any legends.

**Rev..** Fire altar with attendants and ribbon, star and crescent flanking flame, without any legends.

**Reference:** Göbl, *Dokumente Em.* 287; Cf. Pars Auction 37, lot 196, 29mm, 4.03 grams.

**Coin nos.** Plate 7 Section 4.14.2 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type. 1.2. Bust of king/ Fire Altar and Two Attendants (Standard Drachm)**

**Obv.** Crowned bust right; countermarked tamgha in the right margin, four pellets, without the Greek legend below.

**Rev.** Fire altar with attendants and ribbon, star, and crescent flanking flame.

**Reference:** Measurement, 31mm, 3.04 grams. Göbl 244; MACW 1560. SKU T1707-45110

**Coin nos.** Plate 7-8, Section 4.14.2 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

This coin is a striking example of early Hunnic imitation of the Sasanian drachms issued by King Peroz (r. 457-484 CE), notable for its crude execution and lack of inscriptions, yet closely adhering to the size and general iconography of the Sasanian prototypes (Göbl, 1967, pp. 56-58; Alram, 2002, p. 39). The coinage of Peroz represents the first primary Persian silver currency encountered by the Huns, an event that had significant repercussions for the development of their monetary tradition (Cribb, 1999, p. 154; Grenet, 2002, p. 63). The historical relationship between the Huns and Peroz was shaped by dramatic episodes of conflict and diplomacy, most notably the Sasanian king's two captures and subsequent ransoms by the Hephthalites, each paid in vast quantities of silver drachms (Frye, 1984, p. 153; Sims-Williams, 1995, p. 224).

This direct exposure to Sasanian currency catalysed the adoption of Peroz's coinage as the principal model for Hunnic mints, a practice that would persist and evolve across diverse Hunnic domains in Central and South Asia over the next two centuries (Alram, 1996, p. 239; Göbl, 1984, p. 85). The imitative coinage retained the recognisable bust of the Sasanian king and characteristic fire altar motif, though rendered with less sophistication and with a pronounced stylistic simplification, as seen in the absence of formal legends and the more schematic execution of design elements (Vondrovec, 2002,

p. 42; Carter, 1995, p. 21). These early imitations thus reveal both the prestige of Sasanian monetary standards and the dynamics of cross-cultural transmission and adaptation in the late antique numismatic landscape of Iran, Afghanistan, and northwestern India (Bivar, 1969, p. 291; Göbl, 1967, p. 57).

**Later rare Hunnic drachm, later 600s, Soghdian Hephthalites passing through Khorasan.**

**Type. 1.1. Bust of king/ Fire Alter and Two Attendants (Standard Drachm)**

**Obv.** Bust derived from that of Khosrau II, right, crude Khosrau's legends around, *Alchono* in Sogdian script below the bust, small Alchon tamgha in the upper right.

**Rev.** Two attendants around a fire altar, mint AY (Ērān-xvarrah-Šābuhr [Susa]) and date (RY 37).

**Reference:** Measurement, 32mm, 32.52 grams. Cf. SC Tehran 2050-9 (for prototype); Zeno 33518.

This series of coins was issued in Khurasan amidst a period of intense political instability and shifting control. In 683 CE (AH 64), the region's governor, 'Abd Allah bin Khazim, rebelled against the Umayyad caliphate, aligning himself with the Zubayrid faction, a rival claimant to the caliphal throne (Afram, 2002, p. 38; Cribb, 1999, p. 155). This internal strife created an opportunity for the Hephthalites (or Sogdian Huns), who swiftly invaded and seized control of Khurasan, exploiting the weakened Arab authority and the general state of civil war (Bivar, 1969, pp. 291-292; Grenet, 2002, p. 63). For a brief period, the entire province fell under Hephthalite rule, during which several types of Hunnic drachms were struck locally, presumably by Sogdian-speaking artisans (Carter, 1995, pp. 20-21; Sims-Williams, 1995, p. 225).

These coins are notable for their eclectic prototypes; the local mints imitated both Sasanian (particularly the Khusro II type) and Arab-Sasanian models, including those attributed to 'Abd Allah bin Khazim and Salm bin Ziyad, reflecting both the diversity of available coinage and the impartiality of the minters regarding prototype selection (Göbl, 1984, pp. 85-86; Vondrovec, 2002, p. 44). Each specimen features an Alchon-style Hephthalite tamgha, either integrated into the die or stamped as a countermark, unequivocally signifying the coins' Hunnic origin (Afram, 1996, p. 239; Frye, 1984, p. 154). The rarity of these issues is attested by their presence in only a handful of recent hoards, with evidence indicating that a minimal number of dies, sometimes only a single set per type, were used in their production (Carter, 1995, p. 21; Göbl, 1967, p. 42). Early coins from this series typically weigh about 3.5 grams, but as political circumstances deteriorated and minting conditions worsened, both the size and quality

of the coins diminished, with the latest issues weighing as little as 2.5 grams (Alram, 2002, p. 39; Nehru, 1989, p. 89).

This rare and regionally specific coinage provides invaluable evidence for the study of economic adaptation and the assertion of new political authority during a period of rapid transition in late antique Central Asia (Grenet, 2002, p. 66; Vondrovec, 2002, p. 46).

**G.7. Trilingual drachm of Vajara Vakhu Deva, c.720 AD, Zabulistan or Seistan, Nezak Huns**

**Type. Bust of King/ Fire Altar and Two Attendants (Standard Drachm)**

**Obv.** Sassanian-type bust in Turkic style right, wearing a winged crown, Brahmi legend in fields: Sri VaJaRa VaKhu DeVaH, cursive Bactrian Greek legend: Sri Bago Ozorko Boohono Dava Bago Srio Shaho. Uncertain countermark at noon.

**Rev.** Fire altar and two attendants, Pahlavi legend Afzui piy shamrat, cursive Bactrian Greek legend Sri Bago Ookbo Bago... (too garbled).

**Reference:** Measurement, 31mm, 3.04 grams. Gobl 244; MACW 1560. SKU T1707-45110

**Coin nos.** 10

**G.8. Silver drachm, Khingila (circa 440s-490s CE), Punjab, Alchon Huns**

**Type. Bust of King/ Fire Altar and Two Attendants (Standard Drachm)**

**Obv.** Crowned bust right, with crescent points at shoulders; tamgha behind, pomegranate on a branch.

**Rev.** Fire altar flanked by attendants.

**Reference:** Gobl, Dokumente Em. 81 var, Measurement, 27mm, 3.60 g.

**G.8. Barbarous (Hunnic?) silver Sassanian drachm of Kavadh I, second reign (499-532 AD), unlisted ABR mint**

**Type. Bust of King/ Fire Altar and Two Attendants (Standard Drachm)**

**Obv.** Crowned and cuirassed bust right, crescents and cornucopeas on shoulders, stars flanking crown, no legible inscriptions, star in each field.

**Rev..** Fire altar with attendants and ribbon; star and crescent flanking flames, mintmark (ABR - unreported for any Sassanian coins), corrupt date (corrupt RY 11?) (510/511 AD).

**Reference:** Measurement, 28.5mm, 4.09 grams. MACW -; Gobl -. Unusual silver drachm, probably a Hunnic imitation. The mintmark is unreported for any Sassanian drachms.

**G.9. Billon drachm or hemidrachm of 'Napki Malka' (after ca.576 AD), Turko-Hepthalites in Gandhāra**

**Type. Bust of King/ Fire Altar and Two Attendants (Standard Drachm)**

**Obv.** Bust right wearing winged head-dress; abbreviated Napki Malka, contracted into two letters - tamgha and two cornucopeas behind.

**Rev.** Attendants and a fire altar, derived from the Sassanian coins.



**Reference:** Measurement, 20.5mm, 2.35 grams. Mint of Gandhāra, Mitchiner ACW 1533. In 576, the Turko-Hepthalites conquered the Nezak territories in Bactria and Gandhāra, introducing significant changes to local coinage. They replaced the standard "Nezak Malka" type with a new "Napki Malka" issue, which featured a distinctive spiky crown instead of the traditional bull crown, and issued these coins as rare, thick, small-flan pieces.

**G.10. Type. Bust of King/ Fire Altar and Two Attendants (Standard Drachm)**

**Obv.** Wheel.

**Rev.** Fire altar without attendants.

**Reference:** Göbl, Hunnen -; Mitchiner ACW, Measurement, 12mm, 0.73 grams.

The Kashmir Smast caves, located in the Babozai region of the Mardan district in northern Pakistan, represent a significant yet understudied archaeological and numismatic phenomenon of ancient Gandhāra. Initially formed as natural limestone cavities and later expanded through human intervention from the Kushan through the Shahi periods, these caves and the surrounding valley appear, according to recent numismatic scholarship, to have served as the center of a semi-independent principality for nearly five centuries, spanning approximately the fourth to the ninth century CE (Ziad, 2014; Alram, 2002, p. 41). This polity was predominantly governed by local Hephthalite (White Hun) princes or governors, known as Tegins, who maintained varying degrees of allegiance to greater Hunnic authorities in Gandhāra and Bactria (Cribb, 1999, p. 158; Göbl, 1967, p. 121). The political structure of the region was distinctly feudal and tribal, enabling a notable degree of local autonomy within the broader framework of Central-Asian Hunnic hegemony (Alram, 1996, p. 242).

Numismatic evidence from the Kashmir Smast region, comprising a unique series of small bronze coins weighing between 0.5 and 1.1 grams, now termed the "Kashmir Smast standard", suggests that these pieces were minted exclusively for local circulation (Ziad, 2014). These coins, while sometimes miniature versions of the more common drachms found in Gandhāra, often feature unique portraits, dynastic symbols, and tamghas, alongside titles and iconography both like and distinct from those of contemporary Gandhāran and Hunnic rulers (Alram, 2002, p. 41; Carter, 1995, p. 25). The absence of these bronze issues from other Hunnic or Gandhāran sites underscores their localised monetary function and highlights the semi-sovereign status of the principality (Cribb, 1999, p. 158; Vondrovec, 2002, p. 46).

The minting of coinage by local rulers within Kashmir Smast not only points to the assertion of administrative autonomy but also reflects the layered nature of political legitimacy in early medieval Central-Asia, where the right to issue, currency was closely linked to feudal privilege and recognition by higher authorities (Göbl, 1984, p. 87; Grenet, 2002, p. 66). That such independent coinage continued through five successive dynasties, up to the Hindu Shahi period, testifies to the enduring autonomy and status of the Kashmir Smast principality over several centuries (Alram, 1996, p. 242; Frye, 1984, p. 154). The coins themselves remain extremely rare and largely unpublished in the formal academic literature. However, recent cataloguing efforts, such as those by Ziad (2014) and Afridi (2017), have begun to illuminate the diversity and significance of this regional numismatic corpus.

#### **5.1.3.14 HINDU SHAHI PERIOD (c. 843 CE - 1026 CE)**

The district of Khyber occupies a crucial position in the early medieval history of South Asia. Before the emergence of the Hindu Shahi dynasty, the area was under the rule of the Turk Shahi dynasty, established by Kabul Shah (Barhatigin) around 666 CE. (Stein, 1972, p. 13). The Turk Shahis ruled a vast territory from Sistan, covering parts of modern Iran and southeast Afghanistan, to Gandhara, which includes present-day Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (Rehman, 1979, p. 37; Rehman & Mulk, 1982, p. 136). The weakening of the Turk Shahi kingdom was precipitated by continuous attacks from Muslim rulers and internal instability, particularly during the reign of the last Turk Shahi ruler, Lagaturman (Majumdar et al., 1946, p. 324; Rehman, 1979, p. 88; Vaidya, 1988, p. 199). Discontent among the masses and complaints from local nobles ultimately led to Kallar, the founder of the Hindu Shahi dynasty, imprisoning Lagaturman and establishing a new ruling house (Rehman, 1979, p. 88; Khan, 1976, p. 96).

The chronology and succession of the Hindu Shahi rulers are still a subject of scholarly debate, due to inconsistencies among early historical sources. Al-Beruni, for example, records a sequence of eight kings, Kallar, Samand, Kamalu, Bhima, Jaypala, Anandpala, Tarojanapala, and Bhimpala (Sachau, 1910, Vol. 2, p. 13). In contrast, Kalhana's *Rajatarangini* mentions only four: Lalliya, Kamaluka/Toramana, Bhima, and Trilochanapala (Mishra, 1972, p. 3; Stein, 1900, p. 337). Farishta adds Ishatpala,

identified as Jaypala's father, introducing a previously unrecorded name into the lineage (Briggs, 1909, p. 313).

Drawing on numismatic and epigraphic evidence, Abdur Rehman (2002, pp. 15, 41) reconstructs the line of succession as follows: Kallar (c. 843 CE - 850 CE), Samanta (c. 850 CE - 870 CE), Khrdarayaka (c.870 CE - 880 CE), Lalliya (c. 880 CE - 902 CE), Toramana/K amalū (c. 903 CE - 921 CE), Bhimadeva (c. 921 CE - 964 CE), Jayapaladeva (c. 964 CE - 1002 CE), Anandpala (c. 1002 CE - 1010 CE), Trilochanapala (c. 1010 CE - 1021 CE), and Bhimapala (c. 1021 CE - 1026 CE). This reconstruction is further supported by Vaidya (1924, p. 64).

In the context of district Khyber, the presence and political influence of the Hindu Shahis have long been overlooked in mainstream archaeological and historical research. Early archaeological and numismatic surveys, including those by Cunningham (1894), Smith (1906), and Wilson (1841), seldom documented finds from this area, resulting in a historical gap regarding the existence and administration of the Hindu Shahis in Khyber. Furthermore, works on the cultural and political history of the region, such as those by Marshall (1951) and Khan (2015), have concentrated primarily on earlier Buddhist and Kushan material. This scholarly oversight has only recently begun to be addressed, following systematic fieldwork and discoveries in the Khyber region over the past two decades (Nasim Khan, 2006, pp. 133-199; Nasim Khan, 2008, pp. 71-122).

The discovery of five major Hindu Shahi coin hoards and several other stray finds during recent research now provides concrete evidence for the presence and monetary activity of the Hindu Shahi dynasty in the district of Khyber. These hoards, namely, from Bootan Sharif (Tirah valley, Bara), Gudar Archaeological Site (Jamrud), Lali Kas (Tirah valley, Bara), Saidan Killi (Nahr Ghara, Bara), and Shahkas (Jamrud), consist mainly of silver Jitals, typologically similar but featuring distinct iconographic and epigraphic variations. The coins typically display, on the obverse, a recumbent bull (a Shaivite symbol) with a Sharada legend, most frequently "Samantadeva," while the reverse depicts a horseman with varying Sharada letters such as Bhi, Di, or Tri (Rodgers, 1894, p. 487; Tye & Tye, 1995; Mitchiner, 1979, pp. 260-267). These coins, especially those attributed to Samantadeva (850-870 CE), are significant not only for their artistry but for their historical implications, corroborating Al-Beruni's and other early sources' accounts (Stein, 1900, p. 337; Roy, 1980, p. 90).

Of particular importance is the fact that these new finds help address prior research gaps, illuminating the political and economic networks maintained by the Hindu Shahi rulers across the northwestern frontier. The hoards' metrological consistency, iconographic motifs, and legend variations provide key data for reconstructing the chronology and territorial extent of the dynasty, as well as the evolution of regional coinage. These discoveries also highlight the region's role as a cultural crossroads and reinforce the Shaivite character of the Hindu Shahi state (Shortt, 1956, pp. 313-325; Khan, 1998, pp. 49-55). Additionally, the study of these coins, accompanied by their systematic documentation, fills a long-standing lacuna in the numismatic and historical narrative of Khyber, demonstrating that the area was far from peripheral during the Hindu Shahi era.

The ongoing documentation and analysis of Hindu Shahi coin hoards in the district of Khyber mark a substantial advance in the region's historical reconstruction. They not only confirm the active rule and cultural vitality of the Hindu Shahis, but also offer a tangible basis for revising existing historical chronologies and mapping the dynasty's influence. This numismatic evidence, when combined with textual and archaeological sources, significantly enhances our understanding of the shifting political landscapes of medieval South Asia and the enduring legacy of the Hindu Shahis in the heart of the Khyber Pass (Rehman, 1979, p. 95; Tandon, 2010).

#### **A. Hindu Shahi Coin Hoard from Bootan Sharif, Tirah valley, Tehsil Bara.**

The coin hoard was reportedly discovered by local treasure hunters in the Tirah valley region of Tehsil Bara (see Section 4.17 in Part II: Illustrations Coins). The find consisted of ten silver Jitals attributed to the Hindu Shahi dynasty. The circumstances of discovery are non-scientific and lack a stratified archaeological context. The location is notable as it lies on the frontier zone amid the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent and Central Asia. This region witnessed significant cross-cultural interactions during the early medieval period.

The coins found in this hoard follow the typical "Horseman and Bull" design that was widely used during the Hindu Shahi period (late 9th to early 11th centuries CE). On the obverse, a recumbent zebu bull is shown with a simple saddle cloth (jhul), a trident (type No. 02) above its rump, and a single dot on its hump. The legend, inscribed in Sharada script, reads Samantadeva (समन्तदेव). The reverse depicts a horseman

prancing to the right, wearing a tripartite cap and holding a flag in his right hand; the figure is mounted on a horse distinguished by three dots on its rump and a single dot on its shoulder. To the left of the rider appears the Sharada letter Bhi, while an unidentified letter is found to the right.

This combination of imagery and inscription is characteristic of the later Hindu Shahi coinage, most likely dating to the reign of Samantadeva (circa 950–980 CE), one of the last prominent Shahi rulers before the Ghaznavid invasions (see Mitchiner, 1977: nos. 444-452; Pieper, 2021: nos. 93-99).

The coins were struck on small, thick flans using dies engraved in negative, a standard practice of the period. The average diameter of these Jitals is typically around 15-17 mm, with weights ranging from 3.1 to 3.4 grams, consistent with the silver Jital standard documented in both numismatic and textual sources (Mitchiner, 1977; Pieper, 2021). The preservation of the coins suggests limited circulation, with most details remaining clear and legible.

The bull and horseman motifs are emblematic of early medieval North Indian and trans-Indus numismatic traditions. The bull, sacred in Hinduism, is closely associated with Shiva (Nandi), while the trident (trishula) further reinforces Shaivite symbolism. The horseman, typically interpreted as a representation of martial prowess and political authority, often carries a flag, possibly a dynastic or military standard. The use of the Sharada script and the explicit mention of Samantadeva firmly anchor these issues within the context of the late Hindu Shahi state.

### **Coins of this type have been catalogued extensively:**

Rodger (1894, PMC, 487) was the first to document these types of finds in the Punjab and surrounding areas. Key references on the subject include Mitchiner, M. (1977). *Ancient Indian Coins Revisited*, Vol. I, and MACW: Tye, R. (1995).

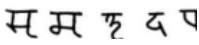
Comparable finds have been reported from Hund, Charsadda, and other sites in the northwest. However, hoards from Tirah are rare, making this assemblage particularly significant for understanding the coinage distribution and political geography of the late Hindu Shahi domain.

The presence of Hindu Shahi silver Jitals in Bootan Sharif, Tirah valley, demonstrates the reach of Shahi monetary circulation into the mountainous frontier zones. These coins attest to the political control and economic integration of the region by the Shahi

state in the centuries preceding the Ghaznavid conquest. The distinctive iconography and local epigraphic features reflect both continuity with preceding traditions (e.g., Kushano-Sasanian and Kidarite issues) and the assertion of Hindu Shahi dynastic identity in a multicultural landscape.

Furthermore, the motifs of the bull and horseman, and the use of Sharada script, provide valuable evidence for religious, cultural, and administrative developments in the region during a period of significant historical transition. The Bootan Sharif hoard thus contributes to our broader understanding of state formation, trade networks, and the shifting boundaries of cultural zones in early medieval South Asia.

**Type. Horse and Bull (Silver Jitals)**

**Obv.** Within a dotted border, a bull is reclining to the left with plain jhul (saddle cloth) on the back, and a trident is shown on its rump (trident No. 02). A dot appears on the hump of the bull, Sharada legend: Samantadeva. 

**Rev.** Within a dotted border, a horseman is reclining to the right, wearing a tripartite cap and holding a flag in his raised right hand. Three dots appear on the rump and one on the shoulder of the horse. A Sharada letter Bhi is on the left of the horseman with an unknown letter on the right..

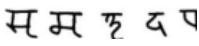
**Reference:** Rodger, 1894, PMC, 487

**Coin nos.** Plate 1-10, Section 4.17.1 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**B. Hindu Shahi Coin Hoard from Saidan Killi, Nahr Ghara, Tehsil Bara.**

The Hindu Shahi Coin Hoard from Saidan Killi, Nahr Ghara, Tehsil Bara, comprises eleven silver Jitals representing two principal types attributed to the reign of Samantadeva. Type 1 (Coin nos.. 1-9) The obverse depicts a reclining bull facing left, framed by a dotted border. The bull is shown with a simple saddle cloth (jhul) on its back, a trident (as seen on coin no. 02) on its rump, and a dot on its hump, alongside the Sharada inscription "Samantadeva." On the reverse, the design features a horseman leaning to the right, recognisable by his tripartite cap and flag. The horse displays three dots on its hindquarters and one on its shoulder. To the left of the rider appears the Sharada letter "Bhi," while an unidentified character is placed to the right. Type 2 (Coin nos. 10-11) shares the same basic motif but is distinguished by the slightly closed mouth of the bull, an ornamented jhul (inverted "L" shape), a thicker trident on the rump, and a bell at the bull's neck; on the reverse, the Sharada letter *di* appears to the left of the horseman. These coins exemplify regional variations in late Hindu Shahi silver coinage, with details closely matching the descriptions provided by Rodger (1894, p. 487).

**Type 1. Horse and Bull (Silver Jitals)**

**Obv.** Within a dotted border, a bull is reclining to the left with plain jhul (saddle cloth) on the back, and a trident is shown on its rump (trident No. 02). A dot appears on the hump of the bull, Sharada legend: Samantadeva. 

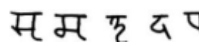
**Rev.** Within a dotted border, a horseman is reclining to the right, wearing a tripartite cap and holding a flag in his raised right hand. Three dots appear on the rump and one on the shoulder of the horse. A Sharada letter Bhi is on the left of the horseman with an unknown letter on the right.

**Reference:** Rodger, 1894, PMC, 487.

**Coin nos.** Plate 1-9, Section 4.17.2 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**Type. 2. Horse and Bull (Silver Jitals)**

**Obv.** As above, but the mouth of the bull is slightly closed and an ornamented jhul on the back of the horse (opposite of Roman alphabet L). A thick trident is on the rump, and a bell is added to the neck of the bull., Sharada legend: Samantadeva,



**Rev.** As above, a Sharada letter di is on the left of the horseman, and an unknown letter is on the right.

**Reference:** Rodger, 1894, PMC, 487.

**Coin nos.** Plate 10-11, Section 4.17.2 in Part II: Illustrations Coins.

**C. Hindu Shahi Coin Hoard from Lali Kas, Tirah Valley, Tehsil Bara.**

The Hindu Shahi coin hoard from Lali Kas (Section 4.17.3 in Part II: Illustrations Coins), located in the Tirah Valley of Tehsil Bara, Khyber district, was discovered by ploughing of fields. Such finds are especially significant for an area previously underrepresented in published numismatic and archaeological studies (see Rehman, 1979, 92).

The hoard comprises at least seventeen silver Jitals (AR Jitals), divisible into two principal groups based on epigraphic and iconographic features (Plates 1-10, Section 4.17.3 in Part II: Illustrations Coins).

G1. Sri Spalapati Deva (Coins plate. 1-2): These coins display, on the obverse, a recumbent bull facing left, with a plain jhul (saddle cloth) and a trident on the rump, surrounded by a dotted border. The Sharada legend reads *Sri Spalapati Deva*, interpreted as "Honourable Chief Commander," suggesting possible issuance by a high-ranking noble or military official under the late Hindu Shahi regime (Rodger, 1894, p. 487; Pieper, 2021, nos. 137-139). The reverse side features a horseman facing right, distinguished by a tripartite cap and holding a flag. The horse is marked with three dots on its hindquarters and one dot on its shoulder. The legend is in cursive Bactrian, which

is highly unusual for Hindu Shahi coinage and points to cultural interactions with neighbouring Central-Asian regions.

G2. Samanta Deva (Coins plate. 3-17): Both Type 1 (Coins plate. 3-16) and Type 2 (Coins plate. 17) share a similar base motif, with the bull's mouth slightly closed, an ornamented jhul (shaped like an inverted "L"), a thick trident on the rump, and a bell at the bull's neck. The obverse legend in Sharada script reads *Samantadeva*. The reverse is as above, but with the Sharada akshara "di" to the left of the horseman and an unknown letter on the right. The consistent typological features align these with late Hindu Shahi issues, particularly the coinage of Samanta Deva (cf. Mitchiner, 1979, nos. 444-452; Tye & Tye, 1995, nos. 167-172).

Chronologically, these coins are assignable to the late 9th to early 10th centuries CE, a period of intensified minting activity by the Shahi rulers prior to the Ghaznavid conquests (Rehman, 1979, p. 95).

The Lali Kas hoard substantiates the presence and operational reach of the Hindu Shahi monetary system in the trans-Indus region, underlining the dynasty's ability to integrate frontier territories into its administrative and economic networks. The Sharada and Bactrian inscriptions, combined with the standardised bull-and-horseman iconography, testify to a fusion of local religious identity and cosmopolitan influences, possibly linked to ongoing interactions with Central-Asian polities and mercantile communities (Mitchiner, 1979; Pieper, 2021).

The coins attributed to "*Sri Spalapati Deva*" are particularly significant, as they may denote the issuance of currency by subordinate nobles or military commanders, a phenomenon that, if confirmed, would offer fresh insights into the administrative systems and practices of the Shahi period (Rodger, 1894, p. 487; Pieper, 2021). Comparable finds have been documented at Bootan Sharif, Saidan Killi, Gudar, and Shahkas in the wider Tirah and Khyber region, reinforcing the emerging picture of a complex and dynamic coinage system at the northwestern margins of the Hindu Shahi state (see Tye & Tye, 1995; Nasim Khan, 2006).

#### 5.1.3.15 BRITISH PERIOD (1849-1947)

##### A. Bara fort - Site No. 116

|       |           |               |      |
|-------|-----------|---------------|------|
| Name: | Bara Fort | Reference No: | KH 0 |
|-------|-----------|---------------|------|



|                   |                                                        |               |            |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|---------------|------------|
| Nearest Village:  | Sheikhan                                               | Area of Site: | 32399sq.m  |
| Coordinates:      | 33.9155° or 33° 54' 56" N<br>71.46709° or 71° 28' 2" E | Altitude:     | 458m       |
| Access Route:     | Accessible                                             | Condition:    | intact     |
| Cast Area         | Koki Khel                                              | Sub Cast      | Farid Khel |
| Site Description: |                                                        |               |            |
|                   |                                                        |               |            |

## **B. Bara Water Supply - Site No. 117**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                        |               |            |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|---------------|------------|
| Name:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Bara Water Supply                                      | Reference No: | KH 0       |
| Nearest Village:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Sheikhan                                               | Area of Site: | 32399sq.m  |
| Coordinates:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | 33.9155° or 33° 54' 56" N<br>71.46709° or 71° 28' 2" E | Altitude:     | 458m       |
| Access Route:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Accessible                                             | Condition:    | intact     |
| Cast Area                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Koki Khel                                              | Sub Cast      | Farid Khel |
| Site Description:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                        |               |            |
| <p>The 19th-century Bara Drinking Water Supply system was once the primary source of clean water for Peshawar and its surroundings. Renowned for its clarity and refreshing taste, it remains partly functional today, though with limited distribution. A key component of this system was the Pishtakhara Filtration Station on Bara Road, an enduring example of early engineering and water management.</p> <p>The Bara River, originating in the Tirah Mountains, was celebrated for its purity and fertile red silt. Its waters nourished Ali Mardan Khan's Mughal gardens and sustained the cultivation of Bara Rice, a delicacy noted even in the 1838 treaty between Ranjit Singh and Shah Shuja.</p> <p>After the British occupation, cholera outbreaks led engineers to seek safer water sources. In 1869, Captain Blair identified the Bara River as ideal due to its elevation and natural gradient, enabling gravity-based flow to Peshawar. Water was channelled through a 1.6 km tunnel to sedimentation tanks near Bara Fort, then via brick ducts to the Pishtakhara filtration site, 6 km away.</p> <p>By 1883, open channels were being replaced with iron pipes, and Sir Ganga Ram proposed Peshawar's first comprehensive water and drainage plan. The 1898 Sanitary Commission Report detailed the system's filtration process using sand and gravel, and by 1918, a stable supply network was in place.</p> |                                                        |               |            |

Designed by Jessop & Co Ltd, the Pishtakhara Filtration Station was completed in 1923. It featured eight sand filters (Patterson system), two half-million-gallon reservoirs, and a cast iron pipeline distributing water to the city and cantonments, two-thirds to the municipality and one-third to the military.

Though the system's reach has declined, it remains a symbol of innovation and continues to evoke nostalgic memories among Peshawar's older residents.

## **5.2 Establishing The Chronological Sequence of Khyber's Cultural and Historical Profile: Insights from Recent Archaeological Discoveries**

The recent archaeological investigations conducted across the Khyber district have revealed a vibrant and stratified cultural landscape, extending from the pre-Buddhist era through the Islamic period. Systematic surveys and targeted explorations have identified a remarkable diversity of archaeological sites, including caves, rock shelters, lithic scatters, and open-air assemblages, as well as a broad spectrum of artefacts such as stone tools, petroglyphs, and depictions of hunting scenes. These discoveries collectively illuminate the deep prehistoric roots of human activity in the region, suggesting the existence of continuous habitation and complex adaptive strategies spanning several millennia.

Despite these significant advances, it is apparent that further scientific excavations and interdisciplinary analyses, especially in the domains of geoarchaeology, archaeobotany, and advanced dating techniques, are necessary to refine the chronology and contextual understanding of Khyber's earliest human communities. The cumulative evidence uncovered thus far, however, underscores a persistent pattern of human settlement and cultural evolution, with each successive period contributing unique elements to the broader historical tapestry of the Khyber district.

The scope and scale of the recent fieldwork are particularly notable: a total of 5 sites to the pre-Buddhist period, 41 sites corresponding to the Buddhist period, eight sites associated with the Hindu Shāhi era, and seven sites from the Islamic and more than 74 British period have been documented. This extensive corpus of sites not only provides an invaluable framework for reconstructing the cultural and historical development of the region but also highlights distinctive phases of religious, economic, and political transformation. The sheer number and density of Buddhist period sites, for example, attest to the region's centrality in the dissemination of

Buddhist culture and art. In contrast, the Hindu Shāhi and Islamic period sites reflect processes of cultural continuity, transformation, and syncretism in later epochs.

In the following sections, a comprehensive and critical examination of these sites, analysed period by period, will be undertaken. This approach aims to establish a coherent chronological sequence, situating the Khyber region into the broader context of South and Central-Asian archaeology and illuminating the key processes that have shaped its historical trajectory.

### 5.2.1 Comparative Chronological Table: Khyber District (Jamrud, Landi Kotal, and Bara Tehsils)

| Period / Sub-period                       | Jamrud                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Landi Kotal                                                               | Bara                                                                                                                      |
|-------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Prehistoric</b>                        | Chottra Rock, Sher Bridge (petroglyphs, hunting scenes, stone tools)                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Omari Camp, rock shelters (painted bowls, figurines, bronze antelope)     | Site (KH-69) Nanawar Cave, Mani Khel Dara, Tirah valley (Cave, ancient wells, stone tools)                                |
| <b>Protohistoric (GGC)</b>                | Shahkas (Gandhara Grave Culture cist burial, cremation ceramics)                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Omari (painted ceramics, early grave types, no full GGC burial)           | Not attested                                                                                                              |
| <b>Achaemenian (550-330 BCE)</b>          | Ali Masjid, Sur Kamar (gold darics, Achaemenid coins), Begyari village (Royal ceremonial goblet)                                                                                                                                                                                        | Not attested                                                              | Srawela, Tirah (gold artefacts)<br>Mundi Kas (gold Rhyton)                                                                |
| <b>Ancient Greek (pre-Alexander)</b>      | Jamrud (silver staters, Athenian tetradrachms, Seleucid coins)                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Not attested                                                              | Not attested                                                                                                              |
| <b>Pre-Mauryan (c. 600 BCE - 322 BCE)</b> | Not attested                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Ash Khel, Kam Shilman (square, round, single, and double Punchmark Coins) | Alam Khel, Mada Khel, Bara (Bent Bar, square, round, single, and double Punchmark Coins)                                  |
| <b>Mauryan (322-185 BCE)</b>              | Gudar (ringstone, discstone, punch-marked coins), other sites                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Punch-marked coins, Mauryan ceramics (Ash Khel, Kam Shilman)              | Ceramics and possible punch-marked coins (site numbers to be confirmed)                                                   |
| <b>Graeco-Bactrian</b>                    | Lala Chena, Bakarabad, others (coin hoards: Diodotus, Euthydemus, Demetrios, etc.), medallion, etc., and coins of Diodotus I, Diodotus II, Euthydemus I, Demetrios I, Euthydemus II, Pantaleon, Agathocles, Antimachus I, Demetrios II, Eucratides I, Plato, Eucratides II, Heliocles I | Ghagra, (Silver Tetradrachm of Euthydemus I), minor finds                 | Shah Qila, Tirah (Royal Seal of Eukratides I), Dogra, Ilam Gudar (Unreported coin of Plato), Greek seal from Bara Bazaar. |

|                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Indo-Greek</b>                    | Jalal Din Killi, Lora Miana, others (large coin hoards: Menander, Apollodotus, Zoilos II, etc.), and coins of the following kings: Apollodotus I, Antimachus II, Menander I, Zoilus I, Agathocleia, Strato I, Lysias Anicetus, silver coin dies, Antialcidas, Heliocles II, Philoxenus, Diomedes, Amyntas, Epander, Theophilus, Menander II, Hermaios & Calliope, Hermaios, Artemidoros, Archebios, Telephos, Apollodotus II, Hippostratos, Dionysios, Zoilus II, Apolophanes, Strato II. | Ash Khel coin hoard consists of the following kings (Apollodotus I, Antimachus II Nikephoros, Menander I, Heliocles, Strato I, Philoxenos) | Donga, Tirah, Amytas Tetradracms, Sporadic coin finds, less frequent, Ceremonial Gold Crown from Dogra Killi, Ilm Gudar, Gold Wreath of Ilm, Gudar (ram), Langroo Killi, Takhtakai (gold bowl), Dogra, Langroo Killi, Hisari Dand, Bara.    |
| <b>Ancient Judea (40-37 BCE)</b>     | Raigi Lalma (Mattathias Antigonus, the last Hasmonean king of Judea)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Not attested                                                                                                                               | Not attested                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Parthian (c. 247 BC - 224 AD)</b> | Jamrud Bazaar (Mithradates II, AE Tetrachalkon)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Not attested                                                                                                                               | Wacha Payal (coin hoard: Parthian Coins (Arsacid Dynasty): Arsaces I, Mithradates II, Artabanos IV; Graeco-Bactrian: Eucratides I; Sasanian Coins: Narseh, Vahrām (Bahram II) with Queen and Prince); Ilam Gudar (coin hoard: Artabanos IV) |
| <b>Indo-Scythian</b>                 | Tatara, Bakarabad (coin hoards: Maues, Azes I/II, Aspavarma, Apraca, gold seal)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Multiple sites (Azes I/II, Spalahores, coins)                                                                                              | Alam Gudar, Ilm Gudar medals, artefacts                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Indo-Parthian</b>                 | Sur Kamar, others (silver/AE drachms: Gondophares, Sanabares)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Not attested                                                                                                                               | Not attested                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Sassanid</b>                      | Lora Miana, others (gold dinars: Shapur I, etc.; fire-altar coins)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Not attested                                                                                                                               | Ilm Gudar (coins hoards: Peroz I, Kavadh I, Khushru II, Farkhan)                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Kushan</b>                        | Lashora, Gudar, Jabba, Shagai, Buddhist sites I-III (coin hoards, Buddhas, seals, monastic remains)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Sphola Stupa, Zarai Multiple sites (coin hoards, sculpture, seals)                                                                         | Buddhist site(s), Tirah Relic Casket from Kuraiz, Tirah Valley, Orakzai, sporadic coins, terracotta figurines, Bronze figures                                                                                                               |
| <b>Kushano-Sasanian</b>              | Not attested                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Not attested                                                                                                                               | Many Sar, Bara (Coins in mixed hoards (stratified with late                                                                                                                                                                                 |

|                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                             |                                                                                |                                                                                                     |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                             |                                                                                | Kushan, Kidarite issues)                                                                            |
| <b>Kidarites</b>                                                                                             | Lashora (Kidarite coin hoard), others                                                                                       | Not attested                                                                   | Not attested                                                                                        |
| <b>Hun/ Hephthalite</b>                                                                                      | Not attested                                                                                                                | Not attested                                                                   | Sarai Kandao, Bara (coin hoard: Napki Malka, Shaho)                                                 |
| <b>Gupta</b>                                                                                                 | Qadam (coins hoard: Chandragupta II, Royal Seal in Carnelian)                                                               | Not attested                                                                   | Shahi Qila, Tirah (Bronze figure on horse), Balarama depiction marble slab, Lajjā Gaurī Bronze Seal |
| <b>Roman</b>                                                                                                 | Not attested                                                                                                                | Khuga Khel (Isolated Roman gold coin of Tiberius Augustus, rare, unstratified) | Not attested                                                                                        |
| <b>Arab-Sassanid Period (Umayyad caliphate)</b>                                                              | Not attested                                                                                                                | Bacha Mena, Torkham (Silver drachms Hoard: Balash, Ziyād bin. Abī Sufyān       | Not attested                                                                                        |
| <b>Abbasids (Early Islamic)</b>                                                                              | Not attested                                                                                                                | Dalkhad, Charbagh (coins hoard: Al-Ma'mun)                                     | Not attested                                                                                        |
| <b>Chach</b>                                                                                                 | Shah Kas (coins hoard: Sri Yashaditya)                                                                                      | Charbagh, Ghagra-I, II, III (coin hoards: Sri Yashaditya)                      | Not attested                                                                                        |
| <b>Hindu Shahis</b>                                                                                          | Gudar, Shahkas (coin hoards: Samantadeva, Spalapati Deva, Khudarayaka, fort remains, terracotta coin dies (sites 1-2, etc.) | Not attested                                                                   | Bootan Sharif, Lali Kas, Tirah, Saidan Killi, Nahr Ghara (coin hoards: Samantadeva, Spalapati Deva) |
| <b>Islamic/ Muslim</b>                                                                                       | Coins (Ghaznavid, Ghorid, Seljuks, Delhi Sultanate, Mughals, Durrani), architecture, seals, forts                           | Coins, architectural remains (mosques, tombs, forts)                           | Not attested                                                                                        |
| <b>Sikh (1799-1849 CE)</b>                                                                                   | Shahkas (Coin hoard, Jamrud Fort, Sikh artefacts)                                                                           | Not attested                                                                   | Not attested                                                                                        |
| <b>British (1849-1947 CE)</b>                                                                                | Jamrud Fort, Bab-e-Khyber, Khyber Railway, numerous site finds (coins, medals, buildings, railway)                          | Shalman Tunnel, forts, coins, medals, and colonial structures                  | Bara Fort, Bara Dam, Bara Filtration Plant, British coins, medals, forts, and colonial buildings    |
| <b>Post-1947 (Pakistan Period)</b>                                                                           | Bab-e-Khyber                                                                                                                | Monumental Gateway                                                             | attested                                                                                            |
| <b>Appendix - I - Comparative Chronological Table: Khyber District (Jamrud, Landi Kotal and Bara Tehsils</b> |                                                                                                                             |                                                                                |                                                                                                     |

### 5.2.2 Chronological Table of the Tehsil Jamrud

| Period/ Sub-period        | Major Kings/Dynasties | Key Sites (Site No.) | Major Artefacts/Coins | Dating Methods         | Recent Scholarly Reference |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>Prehistoric Period</b> | -                     | Chottra Rock, Sher   | Rock art, petroglyphs | Stratigraphy, Typology | Zahir, 2016, pp. 1-3       |

|                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                              |                                     |                        |                            |
|-----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|
|                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Bridge<br>(Petroglyphs)                                                      |                                     |                        |                            |
| <b>Protohistoric (GGC)</b>              | Gandhāra Grave Culture                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Shahkas                                                                      | Cist grave, ceramics                | Typology, 14C (future) | Zahir, 2016, pp. 12-13     |
| <b>Achaemenian (550-330 BCE)</b>        | Darius I-Artaxerxes II                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Ali Masjid, Sur Kamar                                                        | Gold darics, imperial coins         | Numismatics            | Carradice, 1987, p. 24     |
| <b>Ancient Greek (pre-Alexander)</b>    | Greek city-states                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Jamrud, Landi Kotal                                                          | Silver stater, drachms              | Typology               | Bopearachchi, 1991, p. 44  |
| <b>Mauryan (322-185 BCE)</b>            | Chandragupta, Ashoka                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Gudar                                                                        | Ringstone, discstone                | Iconography, strat.    | Bennett, 2019, p. 96       |
| <b>Graeco-Bactrian (c. 256-130 BCE)</b> | Diodotus I/II, Euthydemus I/II, Demetrios I/II, Pantaleon, Agathocles, Antimachus I, Eucratides I, etc.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Lala Chena, Bakarabad, [other sites per catalogue]                           | Coin hoards, medallions             | Numismatics, Typology  | Bopearachchi, 2023, p. 121 |
| <b>Indo-Greek (200 BCE-10 CE)</b>       | Apollodotus I, Menander, Zoilos II, etc.) and coins of the following kings: Apollodotus I, Antimachus II, Menander I, Zoilus I, Agathocleia, Strato I, Lysias Anicetus, silver coin dies, Antialcidas, Heliocles II, Philoxenus, Diomedes, Amyntas, Epander, Theophilus, Menander II, Hermaios & Calliope, Hermaios, Artemidoros, Archebios, Telephos, Apollodotus II, Hippostratos, Dionysios, Zoilus II, Apollophanes, Strato II. | Jalal Din Killi, Lora Miana, Shahkas, Lashora, Bakarabad, Taidi Bazaar, etc. | Large coin hoards, individual types | Typology, strat.       | Bopearachchi, 2023, p. 184 |
| <b>Ancient Judea (40-37 BCE)</b>        | Mattathias Antigonus                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Raigi Lalma                                                                  | Tetradrachm                         | Numismatics            | Meshorer, 1982, p. 36      |
| <b>Parthian (247 BCE-224 CE)</b>        | Mithradates II, later Arsacids                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Jamrud Bazaar                                                                | AE Tetrachalkon                     | Typology               | Sellwood, 1980, p. 53      |
| <b>Indo-Scythian (150 BCE-400 CE)</b>   | Maues, Azes I/II, Aspavarma, Apraca, etc.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Tatara, Bakarabad, [KH-82]                                                   | Coin hoards, gold seal              | Numismatics            | Senior, 2001, p. 111       |

|                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                            |                                                                         |                               |                                        |
|-------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| <b>Indo-Parthian (19-226 CE)</b>                | Gondophares, Sanabares                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Sur Kamar                                                                                                                  | Silver & AE drachms                                                     | Numismatics                   | Pieper, 2021, p. 117                   |
| <b>Sassanid (224-651 CE)</b>                    | Shapur I                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Lora Miana                                                                                                                 | Gold dinars                                                             | Numismatics                   | Göbl, 1971, Type I/1                   |
| <b>Kushan (30-375 CE)</b>                       | Sapalbizes, Arseiles, Heraios, Vima Takto, Vima Kadphises, Kanishka I, Huvishka, Vasudeva I, Kanishka II, Vasishka, Vasudeva II Shaka                                                                                                                | Jamal Khel Killi, Qadam, Wali Khel, Lashora, Gudar, Jabba, Shagai, Takhta Baig, Buddhist sites I-III, [Sites 1-9]          | Coin hoards, bronze Buddha, seals, and bracteates                       | Numismatics, strat.           | Rosenfield, 1999, p. 123               |
| <b>Kushano-Sasanian (230-330 CE)</b>            | -                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Not attested                                                                                                               | Not attested                                                            | -                             | -                                      |
| <b>Kidarites (320-467 CE)</b>                   | -                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Lashora (Kid. coins hoard), [KH-76]                                                                                        | Coins                                                                   | Numismatics                   | Mitchiner, 1975, p. 375                |
| <b>Hun/Hephthalite (440-670 CE)</b>             | -                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Not attested                                                                                                               | Not attested                                                            | -                             | -                                      |
| <b>Gupta (240-579 CE)</b>                       | Chandragupta II                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Qadam                                                                                                                      | Coins Hoard                                                             | Numismatics                   | Pieper, 2021, p. 171                   |
| <b>Arab-Sassanid (632-712 CE)</b>               | -                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Not attested                                                                                                               | Not attested                                                            | -                             | -                                      |
| <b>Abbasids (c. 750-1258 CE)- Early Islamic</b> | -                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Not attested                                                                                                               | Not attested                                                            | -                             | -                                      |
| <b>Chach (632-712 CE)</b>                       | Sri Yashaditya                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Shah Kas                                                                                                                   | coins hoard                                                             | Numismatics                   | Pieper, 2013.                          |
| <b>Hindu Shahis (843-1026 CE)</b>               | Samantadeva, Spalapati Deva, Khudarayaka,                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Gudar, Shahkas                                                                                                             | coin hoards, fort remains, terracotta coin dies                         | Numismatics, strat.           | Rehman, 1988.                          |
| <b>Islamic/Muslim (from 11th c.)</b>            | Seljuks, Mahmud Ghaznavi (Ghaznavid), Muhammad bin Sam (Ghurids), Qutb al-Din Mubarak Shah (Khiljis), Ghiyath Al-Din Tughluq (Tughlaq), Zahir ud-din Muhammad Babur, Humayun, Akbar, Jahangir, Shah Jahan, Aurangzeb, Bahadur Shah I, Jahandar Shah, | Ali Masjid, Shah Kas, Chora, Warsak, Mullagori, Shahkas, Jamal Killi, Takhta Baig, Taidi Bazaar, Ganj Gahri, [Sites 1-44+] | Coins, dirhams, seals, gold dinars, architectural remains, fort, rupees | Numismatics, Arch., Epigraphy | Pieper, 2021, p. 199<br>Surinder, 2021 |

|                                                                 |                                                                            |                                         |                                                 |                                  |                              |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
|                                                                 | (Mughals), Ahmad Shah Durrani, Shah Shuja al-Mulk (Durranis)               |                                         |                                                 |                                  |                              |
| <b>Sikh (1799-1849 CE)</b>                                      | Ranjit Singh, successors                                                   | Shahkas, Ali Majid, Jamrud              | Coins, hoards, forts, artefacts)                | Numismatics, Arch.               | Singh, 2021, p. 335          |
| <b>British (1849-1947 CE)</b>                                   | British Raj (William IV, Victoria, Edw VII, George V, Edw VIII, George VI) | Jamrud Fort, Khyber Railway, Sites 1-44 | Coins, medals, buildings, and railway artefacts | Arch. documentation, Numismatics | Gazetteer, 1932, pp. 121-141 |
| <b>Post-1947 (Pakistan Period)</b>                              | Ayub Khan                                                                  | Bab-e-Khyber                            | Buildings, Currency                             | Arch                             | Khan, T.M, 2005, pp. 20-23   |
| <b>Appendix - II - Chronological Table of the Tehsil Jamrud</b> |                                                                            |                                         |                                                 |                                  |                              |

### 5.2.3 Chronological Table of the Tehsil Landi Kotal

| Period / Sub-period                       | Major Kings/Dynasties                                           | Key Sites (Site No.)                       | Major Artefacts/Coin s                                  | Dating Methods           | Recent Scholarly Reference                             |
|-------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Prehistoric Period</b>                 | -                                                               | Omari Camp, rock shelters                  | Painted ceramics, terracotta figurines, bronze antelope | Stratigraphy, Typology   | Kenoyer, 1998, pp. 162-164; Possehl, 2002, pp. 34, 133 |
| <b>Protohistoric (GGC)</b>                | Gandhāra Grave Culture (possible)                               | Omari (early ceramics, no full GGC burial) | Painted ceramics, early graves                          | Typology, 14C (future)   | Zahir, 2016, pp. 1-3                                   |
| <b>Achaemenian (550-330 BCE)</b>          | Darius I- Artaxerxes II                                         | Not attested                               | Not attested                                            | -                        | Carradice, 1987, p. 24                                 |
| <b>Ancient Greek (pre-Alex)</b>           | Greek city-states                                               | Not attested                               | Not attested                                            | -                        | Sayle, 2008, pp. 7-16                                  |
| <b>Pre-Mauryan (c. 600 BCE - 322 BCE)</b> | Janapada State                                                  | Ash Khel, Kal Shilman                      | Bent Bar Punch-marked coins                             | Numismatics              | Gupta, 1951, pp. 36-39                                 |
| <b>Mauryan (322-185 BCE)</b>              | Chandragupta, Ashoka                                            | Ash Khel, Kam Shilman                      | Punch-marked coins, ceramics                            | Numismatics, Iconography | Gupta, 1951, pp. 12-20                                 |
| <b>Graeco-Bactrian (256-130 BCE)</b>      | Diodotus I/II, Euthydemus, etc.                                 | Multiple sites                             | Coin hoards, medallions                                 | Numismatics, Typology    | Bopearachchi , 2023, p. 121                            |
| <b>Indo-Greek (200 BCE-10 CE)</b>         | Apollodotus I, Antimachus II Nikephoros, Menander I, Heliocles, | Multiple sites                             | Coin hoards, individual coins                           | Numismatics, Typology    | Bopearachchi , 1990, p. 184                            |



|                                       |                                                         |                                           |                                             |                                  |                            |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------|
|                                       | Strato I, Philoxenos, etc.                              |                                           |                                             |                                  |                            |
| <b>Indo-Scythian (150 BCE-400 CE)</b> | Azes I/II, Spalirisos, Spalahores, Spalagadames etc.    | Shinpokh, Khuga Khel                      | Coin hoards                                 | Numismatics                      | Senior, 2001, p. 111       |
| <b>Indo-Parthian (19-226 CE)</b>      | -                                                       | Not attested                              | Not attested                                | -                                | -                          |
| <b>Kushan (30-375 CE)</b>             | Vima Takto, Kanishka, etc.                              | Zarai, Anayat Killi, Landi Kotal          | Coin hoards, seals, and religious sculpture | Numismatics, Stratigraphy        | Rosenfield, 1999, p. 123   |
| <b>Roman (27 BCE-476 CE)</b>          | Augustus, Tiberius                                      | Khuga Khel                                | Roman gold coins                            | Numismatics                      | Cribb, 1983, p. 100        |
| <b>Sassanid (224-651 CE)</b>          | Shapur I, others                                        | Multiple sites                            | Sassanian coins                             | Numismatics                      | Göbl, 1971, Type I/1       |
| <b>Arab- Sassan</b>                   | Balash (Sassan), Ziyad ibn Sufyan Ziyād bin. Abī Sufyān | Bacha Mena                                | Coins Hoard                                 | Numismatics                      | Malek, 2001, pp. 64-65     |
| <b>Abbasid (c. 750-1258 CE)</b>       | Al-Ma'mun                                               | Dalkhad, Charbagh                         | Silver dirhams, copper fulus                | Numismatics                      | Lowick, 2015, pp. 33-49    |
| <b>Islamic (622 CE-present)</b>       | Ghaznavid, etc.                                         | Multiple sites                            | Coins, seals, and architecture              | Numismatics, Epigraphy           | Pieper, 2021, p. 199       |
| <b>Chach (632-712 CE)</b>             | Sri Yashaditya, Chach                                   | Charbagh, Ghagra-I, II, III               | Coin hoards                                 | Numismatics                      | Bopearachchi, 2023, p. 250 |
| <b>Hindu Shahis (843-1026 CE)</b>     | -                                                       | -                                         | Not attested                                | -                                | -                          |
| <b>Sikh (1799-1849 CE)</b>            | -                                                       | -                                         | Not attested                                | -                                | -                          |
| <b>British (1849-1947 CE)</b>         | British Raj                                             | Shalman Tunnel, forts, and colonial sites | Coins, medals, buildings, and railway       | Numismatics, Arch. Documentation | Gazetteer, 1932, p.21-41   |

**Appendix - III - Chronological Table of the Tehsil Landi Kotal**

### 5.2.4 Chronological Table of the Tehsil Bara

| Period / Sub-period                       | Major Kings/Dynasties                                | Key Sites (Site No.)                                                            | Major Artefacts/Coins                                     | Dating Methods                     | Recent Scholarly Reference |
|-------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>Prehistoric Period</b>                 | -                                                    | Site (KH-69)<br>Nanawar Cave, Mani Khel Dara, Tirah Valley                      | Ancient graves, lithics, and cave                         | Stratigraphy, Typology             | Zahir, 2016, pp. 1-3       |
| <b>Protohistoric (GGC)</b>                | -                                                    | Not attested                                                                    | Not attested                                              | -                                  | Zahir, 2016, pp. 1-3       |
| <b>Achaemenian (550-330 BCE)</b>          | -                                                    | Mundi Kas Srawela, Tirah, Mundi Kas                                             | Gold Rhyton, artefacts                                    | Typology                           | Carradice, 1987, p. 24     |
| <b>Ancient Greek (pre-Alex)</b>           | Greek city-states                                    | Not attested                                                                    | Not attested                                              | -                                  | -                          |
| <b>Pre-Mauryan (c. 600 BCE - 322 BCE)</b> | Janapada States                                      | Alam Khel                                                                       | Bent Bar Punch-mark coins                                 | Numismatics                        | Gupta, 1951.               |
| <b>Mauryan (322-185 BCE)</b>              | Chandragupta, Ashoka                                 | Mada Khel, Alam Khel                                                            | punch-marked coins                                        | Numismatics, Iconography           | Gupta, 1951, pp. 12-20     |
| <b>Graeco-Bactrian (256-130 BCE)</b>      | Diodotus I/II, Euthydemus, Eukratides I, Plato, etc. | Shahi, Qila, Tirah, Dogara, Ilm Gudar                                           | Coins, Seals, gold wreaths                                | Numismatics, Typology, artefacts   | Bopearachchi, 2023, p. 121 |
| <b>Indo-Greek (200 BCE-10 CE)</b>         | Amyntas                                              | Donga, Tirah, Langroo Killi, Takhtakai, Dogra, Langroo Killi, Hisari Dand, Bara | Coin hoard, Wreath, gold crown, bowl, gold ram, artefacts | Numismatics, Typology              | Bopearachchi, 2023, p. 184 |
| <b>Parthian (c. 247 BC - 224 AD)</b>      | Arsaces I, Mithradates II, Artabanos IV              | Ilm Gudar, Bara Bazaar, Wacha Payal                                             | Coin hoards, rare coins                                   | Numismatics, Typology              | Mitchiner, 1978, Parthians |
| <b>Indo-Scythian (150 BCE-400 CE)</b>     | -                                                    | Alam Gudar                                                                      | Gold artefacts                                            | Typology                           | Artamonov, 1970, 81-82     |
| <b>Indo-Parthian (19-226 CE)</b>          | -                                                    | Not attested                                                                    | Not attested                                              | -                                  | -                          |
| <b>Kushan (30-375 CE)</b>                 | Vima Takto, Kanishka, Kanishka II, etc.              | Kuraiz, Gudar, Chora                                                            | Relic Caskets, sporadic coins, and terracotta figurines   | Numismatics, Stratigraphy, objects | Rosenfield, 1999, p. 123   |

|                                      |                                                  |                                                          |                                                                                     |                                  |                            |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>Kushano-Sasanian (230-330 CE)</b> | Kushan Shahs                                     | Many Sar, Bara                                           | Coins in mixed hoards (stratified with late Kushan, Kidarite issues), Bronze Statue | Numismatics                      | Cribb, 1993, p. 123        |
| <b>Kidarites (320-467 CE)</b>        | -                                                | Not attested                                             | Not attested                                                                        | -                                | -                          |
| <b>Hun/Hephthalite (440-670 CE)</b>  | Napki Malka, Shaho                               | Sarai Kandao, Bara                                       | Coin hoard, scattered coin finds                                                    | Numismatics                      | Dani, 1999, p. 210         |
| <b>Gupta (240-579 CE)</b>            | Gupta dynasty                                    | Shahi Qila, Tirah                                        | Bronze figure, stone figures, bronze objects, seals                                 | Archaeological objects.          | Pieper, 2021, p. 171       |
| <b>Sassanid (224-651 CE)</b>         | Shapur I, Peroz I, Kavadh I, Khushru II, Farkhan | Ilm Gudar                                                | Gold dinar, Silver Drachms                                                          | Numismatics                      | Mitchiner, 1978, Sassanids |
| <b>Roman (27 BCE-476 CE)</b>         | Augustus, Tiberius                               | Not attested                                             | Not attested                                                                        | -                                | -                          |
| <b>Arab-Sassanid (632-712 CE)</b>    | Umayyad caliphate                                | Not attested                                             | Not attested                                                                        | -                                | -                          |
| <b>Chach (632-712 CE)</b>            | Chach                                            | Not attested                                             | Not attested                                                                        | -                                | -                          |
| <b>Hindu Shahis (843-1026 CE)</b>    | Samantadeva, Spalapati Deva                      | Bootan Sharif, Lali Kas, Tirah, Saidan Killi, Nahr Ghara | Fort remains, scattered coin hoards                                                 | Numismatics, Stratigraphy        | Shani, 2012, p. 83         |
| <b>Islamic/Muslim (from 11th c.)</b> | Ghaznavid, Ghorid, etc.                          | Forts, mosque remains                                    | Coins, architectural remains                                                        | Numismatics, Arch., Epigraphy    | Pieper, 2021, p. 199       |
| <b>Sikh (1799-1849 CE)</b>           | Ranjit Singh, successors                         | Forts, other sites                                       | Coins, scattered relics                                                             | Numismatics, Arch.               | Singh, 2021, p. 335        |
| <b>British (1849-1947 CE)</b>        | British Raj                                      | Forts, colonial buildings                                | British coins, medals, forts, and buildings                                         | Arch. documentation, Numismatics | Gazetteer, 1932            |

Appendix - IV - Chronological Table of the Tehsil Bara.

### 5.2.5 Prehistoric Period

The prehistoric sequence of the Khyber district is now greatly enriched by the recent documentation and analysis of sites like Nanawar Prehistoric Cave (KH-1), which stands as one of the most significant archaeological discoveries for the entire region. Located in Mani Khel Dara, Tirah Valley (historically under Khyber), Nanawar Cave is not only a remarkable geological and ecological formation, spanning more than 200

meters and harbouring diverse bat and spider populations. However, it is also of profound archaeological importance due to its long record of human use (Fosse, 2005, p. 440).

Systematic surface collections and test excavations have revealed an array of stone tools in and around Nanawar Cave, including hand axes, scrapers, and flint implements. These finds are consistent with the technology of the Palaeolithic and Mesolithic periods, indicating that the cave was inhabited or frequented by prehistoric hunter-gatherers for a range of activities, possibly seasonal shelter, hunting, gathering, or ritual use. The close association of these tools with the cave's entrances and accessible chambers strongly supports a timeline for early human occupation extending deep into the prehistory of the region.

Notably, while no stratified prehistoric burials have yet been identified in Khyber, the combination of abundant surface finds, caves, and petroglyphic sites strongly suggests a diverse range of prehistoric lifeways and mortuary practices. The region's record, though rich, remains based mainly on surface assemblages and rock shelter investigations; future excavations may yet reveal more about burial customs and site stratigraphy.

The cultural significance of Nanawar Cave is further amplified by local oral histories and archaeological evidence suggesting that it was used for meditation and spiritual purposes in later eras, possibly during the rule of Kanishka I, in the second century AD, when Buddhist activity flourished in this corridor. The presence of non-Muslim graves in the vicinity points to ongoing, layered spiritual use. It reflects the cave's persistent importance in the collective memory and ritual landscape of the region.

What distinguishes Nanawar Cave from other prehistoric sites is the combination of its geological formation, archaeological assemblages, and associated legends. Debates about its origin, whether from volcanic activity (trapped lava bubbles) or limestone dissolution by ancient water channels, only add to its multidisciplinary research value. Importantly, the cave's more inaccessible, low-oxygen chambers, while unlikely to have been used for long-term habitation, may have served for focused, short-term, or ritualistic activities, as supported by ethnographic parallels from the wider region (Fosse, 2005, p. 440).

In comparative perspective, the Khyber district's prehistoric assemblages resonate with, but are also distinct from, those found in the well-known Soan Valley and Siwalik regions of the northwest sub-Himalayas. Recent research on Soanian and related lithic industries highlights a wide variability in tool types, with both large choppers and smaller flake tools occurring well into the mid-Holocene, often in association with pottery and even late Harappan settlements (Soni & Soni, 2012, pp. 6-18). As in Khyber, much of the Soanian record comes from unstratified surface contexts, complicating chronological resolution. However, recent excavations in the Siwaliks and along the Satluj and Sirsa rivers have revealed that such toolkits persisted alongside, or even within, post-urban Harappan sites, demonstrating technological conservatism, adaptation, and interaction across vast regions (Soni & Soni, 2012, p. 13).

Khyber's record is notable for its combination of petroglyphic, cave, and lithic sites, such as Chottra Rock Engraving (KH-01), Sher Bridge Petroglyphs (KH-02) in Jamrud, Omari Camp in Landi Kotal, and the petroglyph and lithic scatter sites in Bara, establishing a district-wide pattern of deep-rooted, sustained human presence and cultural complexity. The lack of clear, stratified burials in Khyber distinguishes it from some sites in the broader Indus and Balochistan zones but is consistent with the open-air, multi-period character of much of the northwest sub-Himalayan record (Soni & Soni, 2012, p. 15; Kenoyer, 1998, pp. 162-164; Possehl, 2002, pp. 34, 133).

Furthermore, the continuity of use of certain caves and rock shelters into the historic and Buddhist periods, as seen at Nanawar, highlights the layering of sacred and practical landscapes that persisted throughout Khyber's history. Such patterns are increasingly recognised in South-Asian archaeology, where prehistoric sites often acquire new ritual or symbolic functions in subsequent eras.

Taken together, the findings from Nanawar Cave and these other prehistoric sites underscore Khyber's vital role in early human adaptation to rugged environments, long-distance mobility, and the development of complex symbolic economies. The district's prehistoric record, though fragmentary, makes a significant contribution to broader debates on the duration, diversity, and regional interactions of Stone Age communities across the southern margins of the Hindu Kush and beyond (Zahir, 2016, pp. 1-3; Soni & Soni, 2012, pp. 6-18).

Looking forward, Nanawar Cave stands as a prime candidate for multidisciplinary, stratified excavation, which could yield further evidence for prehistoric subsistence, climate adaptation, and religious transformation. Such work will be critical for refining regional chronologies, understanding human-environment interaction, and illuminating the cultural trajectories that made Khyber a true crossroads of civilisations.

It is noteworthy that, as of the time of this research, no large-scale, multidisciplinary, stratified excavation has been undertaken at Nanawar Cave or comparable prehistoric sites in Khyber. Nevertheless, discussions are currently underway with the Department of Archaeology, University of Peshawar, along with international collaborators, to plan future scientific excavations aimed at recovering stratified deposits, palaeoenvironmental data, and more reliable chronological evidence. Such projects, if realised, would mark a significant advance in the prehistoric archaeology of the Khyber region and are identified here as a key research priority for the coming decade.

#### **5.2.6 Protohistoric Period**

The protohistoric landscape of Khyber is dramatically illuminated by finds linked to the Gandhāra Grave Culture (GGC), an early Iron Age mortuary tradition long associated with Swat, Dir, and the upper Indus but now attested further south. In Jamrud, the discovery at Shahkas of a stone-lined cist grave capped by a massive limestone slab constitutes a significant breakthrough: the grave yielded a cremation deposit, a large ash-filled jar, chalice-shaped drinking vessels, miniature cups, and an array of associated grave goods, including spindle whorls and stone beads. The ceramics are typologically consistent with those of GGC cemeteries at Loe Banr, Butkara, and Udegram, confirming both technological links and shared ritual systems (Zahir, 2016, pp. 12-13). Notably, the Shahkas' burial is the first GGC mortuary feature identified south of the traditional Swat-Dir heartland, redefining the culture's southern boundary and demonstrating the permeability of cultural borders in the early first millennium BCE.

In Landi Kotal, Omari Killi yields painted ceramics and large jars, painted bowls, and cup forms, with stylistic and functional parallels to both Harappan and early GGC wares and in seriation comparable to Nal and Kulli culture, Balochistan data 3rd millennium BCE. However, no definitive cist or cremation grave has yet been

identified. This pattern hints at a protohistoric community influenced by, but not fully integrated into, the classic GGC burial tradition, possibly reflecting divergent local practices or the incompleteness of current archaeological exposure. Bara, by contrast, lacks documented protohistoric burials or diagnostic GGC ceramics, possibly due to either limited survey coverage or genuine cultural absence. This absence is itself revealing, emphasising regional variation and possible ecological or social boundaries within Khyber during the early Iron Age.

The broader significance of these discoveries lies in their demonstration that the Khyber corridor was not merely a route for later armies and merchants, but a prehistoric axis of funerary innovation, technological diffusion, and population movement. The trans-regional mortuary landscape evidenced by Shahkas and Omari supports models of social complexity, ritual investment, and proto-urban development in the northwest, challenging traditional core-periphery models and underscoring the region's role in the emergence of early historic South-Asia (Zahir, 2016, pp. 12-13).

### **5.2.7 Achaemenian Period (c. 550-330 BCE)**

The Achaemenian horizon is attested with most excellent clarity in Jamrud, where numismatic finds from Ali Masjid and Sur Kamar include gold darics, "King and Wreath" types, and other imperial coins securely attributed to Darius I, Artaxerxes II, and related Persian monarchs (Carradice, 1987, p. 24). These coins, often found in stratified deposits alongside pre-Alexandrian Greek and local ceramics, provide direct evidence for the economic and administrative integration of Khyber into the Achaemenid imperial system. Their presence also confirms the strategic importance of Jamrud as a nodal point for imperial logistics, revenue extraction, and communication between the Iranian plateau and the Indian subcontinent. The standardisation of weight, iconography, and mint marks on these coins allows for precise dating. It ties the Khyber discoveries to well-documented Achaemenid fiscal reforms and the broader system of satrapal administration (Carradice, 1987, p. 24).

Jamrud's evidence is further amplified by the exceptional discovery of a ceremonial gold goblet at Begyari village. This vessel, decorated with winged gryphons in dynamic relief, not only represents the pinnacle of Achaemenid metalwork but also offers rare tangible proof of Persian elite culture in the eastern satrapies. Its iconography draws clear parallels to gold rhyta and courtly tableware from Persepolis,

Susa, and Ecbatana. At the same time, subtle stylistic elements, such as the frieze-like arrangement of composite beasts, suggest a lingering influence of earlier Mycenaean prototypes, absorbed and reinterpreted by Achaemenid court artisans (cf. Tilia, 1972; Boardman, 2000, pp. 174-175). The association of such high-status objects with standardised imperial coinage highlights Jamrud's deep integration into Persian ceremonial and administrative spheres.

In Bara, the recovery of rare Achaemenid coins, gold vessels, and a gold rhyton (notably at Srawela and Mundi Kas) extends the reach of Persian luxury goods and imperial iconography into the Tirah Valley. The Srawela hoard, though contextually less secure due to its accidental discovery and subsequent dispersal, includes gold vases, bowls, rhyta, animal figurines, and jewellery, each exhibiting hallmark Achaemenid motifs, fluting, lozenge patterns, animal protomes, and granulated decoration (Curtis & Tallis, 2005, pp. 118-120). The gold rhyton from Mundi Kas, with its ibex protome and garnet inlay, further affirms the presence of Achaemenid elite material culture in this frontier zone. While the lack of stratified contexts complicates precise historical reconstruction, the typological parallels with Achaemenid royal tombs and palatial art, as well as with Greco-Persian metalwork of Central Asia, reinforce the interpretive value of these finds.

The methodological challenge posed by unprovenanced or looted finds in Bara and even parts of Jamrud is significant; nevertheless, the application of comparative art history, typological analysis, and numismatic cross-referencing compensates for the absence of direct archaeological context. Numismatics, in particular, serves as the chronological anchor for the period, enabling the charting of imperial influence and economic integration across otherwise heterogeneous micro-regions. At present, systematic ceramic seriation and archaeobotanical analyses (such as pollen or charred seed studies) have yet to be conducted for Achaemenian or Greek-period contexts in the Khyber district; this remains a notable methodological gap and a potential area for future research. Additionally, while the Greek coins discovered in Jamrud have been subjected to detailed typological and metrological study, no metallurgical or isotope analyses (e.g., lead isotope sourcing) have yet been undertaken to determine their precise origin. This lack of scientific analysis is acknowledged as a limitation in reconstructing trade and mint networks for classical-period finds. The absence of Achaemenid-period architectural remains, seals, or inscriptions in Khyber, especially



when compared to sites like Taxila, Kandahār, or Hadda, which preserve Aramaic epigraphy and administrative evidence, highlights both the current limitations of the archaeological record and the need for further targeted excavation.

In Landi Kotal, no authenticated Achaemenian artefacts have been identified to date, a fact that may reflect either the uneven intensity of archaeological survey, post-depositional disturbance, or a genuinely lighter imperial footprint in this part of the district. Recording such negative evidence is important, as it shapes our hypotheses about the reach of imperial authority and the mechanisms of regional connectivity.

Comparatively, the Achaemenid-period material from Khyber fits into a broader pattern of Persian imperial influence stretching from Gandhāra to Bactria and the Punjab. The discovery of Achaemenid-style seals, Aramaic-script inscriptions, and bent-bar coinage in other sites confirms the region's participation in both administrative and cultural processes driven by the Persian Empire (Allchin, 1995, p. 131; Bernard, 1987, pp. 188-189). The hybrid "Greco-Persian" sealings and spread of Kharoṣṭhī script from Aramaic, as observed elsewhere in Gandhāra, are paralleled in Khyber by locally made seals and administrative artefacts, demonstrating both the adoption and adaptation of imperial models (Callieri, 1996).

Taken together, the Jamrud and Bara discoveries, alongside negative evidence from Landi Kotal, reinforce the central role of Khyber in the frontier dynamics of the Achaemenid world, linking it to Persian satrapal governance, cross-border economic flows, and the circulation of luxury goods and imperial symbols. These finds further exemplify the processes of artistic hybridisation and the exercise of local agency, as Persian, indigenous, and older Mediterranean motifs were creatively combined in new forms. Looking forward, systematic excavation, particularly in promising micro-regions like Bara and Landi Kotal, and interdisciplinary approaches such as metallurgical and residue analysis will be crucial for clarifying the full extent and character of Achaemenid presence in Khyber, and for refining the chronology and cultural affiliations of these remarkable objects.

### **5.2.8 Ancient Greek Period (pre-Alexander)**

The pre-Alexandrian Greek presence in the Khyber is confirmed most decisively in the Jamrud region, where a diverse assemblage of Greek coins, ranging from early Archaic to Classical and early Hellenistic types, has been independently recovered by

local finders at multiple sites near the Khyber Pass. While these coins do not constitute a single stratified hoard, their wide spatial distribution and typological variety attest to longstanding corridors of movement, exchange, and settlement predating Alexander's campaigns and the later Seleucid presence (Bopearachchi, 1991, p. 44).

Typologically, this assemblage is notable for its range and quality. It includes a rare silver stater of Siris (Thrace/Macedon, 5th c. BCE) depicting Dionysiac satyr-nymph motifs, classic Athenian tetradrachms and drachms of the 5<sup>th</sup>-4th centuries BCE (with Athena/owl types), and a particularly significant Seleucid tetradrachm of Seleucus I Nicator, showing Zeus and Athena in a chariot drawn by elephants, motifs adapted to the eastern Hellenistic context (Kroll 8; SNG Copenhagen 31; HGC 4, 1597). A tetradrachm of Alexander III (the Great), with Heracles and Zeus iconography, confirms ongoing Greek interaction and the symbolic transmission of Macedonian royal authority far into Asia. The flan size, metrological standards, and technical sophistication of these coins underscore their direct Mediterranean mint origins, while their survival in Khyber points to robust networks of trade and mobility, as well as possible localised Greek mercenary or merchant presence.

Iconographically, these coins deploy the full symbolic and civic repertoire of the classical Greek world: Athena, Heracles, and Zeus serve as statements of legitimacy, divine favour, and military prowess; the use of elephants and the Seleucid anchor signifies Hellenistic adaptation to Indian and Iranian milieus (Houghton & Lorber, 2002). Such motifs resonate with finds at Gandharan sites like Taxila and Charsadda (Marshall, 1951; Allchin & Allchin, 1982), situating the Khyber Pass within the wider Mediterranean-South-Asian exchange sphere.

Historical and textual context support these archaeological conclusions. Greek literary sources, notably Megasthenes, report Greek-speaking communities and mercenary groups in Gandhara well before Alexander, referencing a "Spartemes" nation possibly derived from Laconian captives resettled in the eastern Achaemenid satrapies (McCrindle, 1877; Karttunen, 1997). The recovery of pre-Alexandrian Greek coins in Jamrud offers material corroboration for these accounts, suggesting either episodic Greek settlement, continuous migration, or the employment of Greek soldiers by local Iranian or Gandharan elites. The possibility that Greek groups used the Khyber Pass for transit and trade is further supported by the distribution of such coins well beyond direct Achaemenid administrative centres.

In Landi Kotal and Bara, by contrast, no ancient Greek material has been securely identified in the current archaeological survey or surface collection. This regional absence may reflect later site disturbance, sampling bias, or genuine micro-regional differences in trade, settlement, or the mechanisms of cultural contact. Notably, these negative data points are analytically significant, reinforcing the view that pre-Alexandrian Greek material and commercial influence in Khyber was both focused and episodic, rather than district-wide.

The Jamrud finds are not accidental losses or casual imports. Their metrological and iconographic sophistication, coupled with their association with Achaemenid and Mauryan material, supports a model of active economic, military, and symbolic integration between the Mediterranean and the ancient northwest subcontinent well before Alexander. They highlight the permeability of ethnic and imperial boundaries, the hybridisation of artistic and monetary forms, and the role of the Khyber Pass as a true frontier of exchange and encounter. In this regard, Khyber's record not only substantiates literary traditions of Greek settlement and mobility in Gandhara but also places the region at the leading edge of contemporary debates about early globalisation and cultural hybridisation (Bopearachchi, 1991; Mitchiner, 1975).

While the present Greek coin finds lack a stratified archaeological context, their detailed typological analysis, supported by iconographic and metrological study and direct comparison with catalogued specimens from significant collections, provides a secure chronological and cultural anchor for understanding Khyber's role in early Hellenic-South-Asian interactions. Ongoing and future controlled excavations are essential to move beyond surface finds and to clarify the extent, character, and chronology of Greek activity in the region.

In conclusion, the ancient Greek coins from Jamrud provide direct and high-quality evidence of Khyber's engagement in Mediterranean and Asian exchange networks, long before the emergence of the Hellenistic kingdoms in Bactria and India. The micro-regional pattern of finds and absences further highlights the mosaic nature of ancient contact. At the same time, the objects themselves testify to the cosmopolitan and connective history of the Khyber corridor at the dawn of the classical age.

### 5.2.9 Pre-Mauryan Period (c. 600 BCE to 322 BCE)

The discovery and analysis of punch-marked coin hoards from the Khyber district, especially from Ash Khel and Kam Shilman in Landi Kotal, and Alam Khel and Mada Khel in Bara, represent a landmark advance in both numismatic and broader archaeological understanding of the region's early historic period. These finds decisively extend the westernmost distribution of India's earliest coinage, pushing the recognised frontier of punch-marked karshapana circulation far beyond the Ganges heartland, into the cross-currents of Achaemenid, Gandhāran, and Hellenistic worlds.

The hoards from Ash Khel are especially significant for their typological variety and rare transitional issues. The coins, mostly irregular flat or circular silver planchets, exhibit between five and ten different punch-mark symbols, on either one or both faces. Diagnostic types include early "five-symbol" issues as well as overstruck varieties in which later motifs (series IV) have been applied to earlier reverses (series III), a feature regarded as extremely rare in the established typology (Gupta, 1951, p. 12). Several coins in the hoard are directly attributed to the second series of Magadhan karshapanas (ca. 470-445 BCE), among the smallest and rarest issues known (Śrīrāma Goyal, 1994, pp. 53-54; Tye, 2006, pp. 167-170).

The Kam Shilman hoard mirrors these patterns: most coins are of the classic Magadhan or Gandhāran "five-punch" types, but double-punched specimens and scarce overstruck examples attest to active, ongoing monetary innovation and revalidation. The survival of both obverse and reverse punches is almost unprecedented, given the usually worn condition of such coins from surface contexts (Gupta, 1951, pp. 12-18; Hardaker, 2004, p. 183).

The Alam Khel hoard in Bara is notable for its large "bent bar" punch-marked silver coins, known as shatamanas, the earliest Indian coinage forms, which are closely modelled on Achaemenid siglos standards (Cribb, 1983, p. 96). These bent bars, typically around 38 mm in length, reflect direct economic and technological influence from Persian satrapal administration, suggesting that early coinage was adopted in the northwest in direct response to imperial fiscal innovations (Schlumberger, as cited in *Trésors Monétaires*, p. 42).

Fractional denominations (e.g., 1/2, 1/8, 1/16, 1/32 shatamana), some documented in Alam Khel and Bara, are among the rarest issues in South-Asia, and their occurrence

in Khyber underscores both the sophistication and the integration of the region's early economy (Gupta, 1951, p. 23; Bopearachchi, 1998, p. 36; Cribb, 1983, p. 99). The metrology and iconography of these coins, including six-armed Gandhāran symbols, sun marks, and Magadhan motifs, reveal the overlapping and contested monetary landscapes of early South-Asian polities.

The Mada Khel hoard further extends this picture with silver karshapanas (drachms) of the Mauryan type, stamped with sun, cornucopia, and Magadhan symbols, including examples with banker's marks, a clear sign of regional economic integration and the circulation of official currency (Rajgor 540-545 var.; Gupta, 1951, pp. 23-24).

Importantly, no stratified minting workshops or die production sites have yet been identified in Khyber. However, the variety and quantity of punch-marked coins indicate the existence of active and perhaps regionally distinct networks of coin use and validation. The record, while rich in surface hoards and stray finds, remains limited in terms of stratified industrial or minting contexts, highlighting a clear direction for future research and fieldwork.

Comparatively, the extension of punch-marked coinage into Khyber parallels similar patterns observed in Gandhāra and the northwest, where local adaptation and overstriking of issues were widespread, underscoring both regional dynamism and the permeability of political borders (Handa, 2000, pp. 517-519). Khyber's evidence demonstrates a region already deeply embedded in economic, technological, and political exchanges with significant powers, paralleling developments seen at major Gandhāran, Achaemenid, and later Mauryan sites.

The widespread use and innovation in coinage set the stage for Khyber's rapid integration into the Mauryan Empire's standardised monetary and administrative systems in the following centuries, marking a crucial transitional phase in the financial and political history of the northwest subcontinent.

The numismatic literature and museum catalogues consistently acknowledge the scarcity, transitional nature, and historical importance of these karshapanas (Errington, 2003, pp. 62-67; Government Museum Chennai, 2007; Handa, 2000, pp. 515-521). The prevalence of overstriking, typological variety, and the presence of both Magadhan and Gandhāran symbols highlight the region's position at a crossroads of

monetary policy, political transition, and metallurgical practice in the centuries before and during the Mauryan expansion (Cribb, 1983, p. 100; Bopearachchi, 2007, p. 300).

Chronologically, these finds, dated by typology, hoard context, and overstrike analysis, span from ca. 600 BCE to the onset of Mauryan rule in the 4th century BCE (Gupta, 1951, pp. 12-23; Rapson, 1897, pp. 28-32; Handa, 2000, pp. 517-519). Their distribution in Khyber, far from the Ganges core, confirms that this region was already economically, technologically, and politically linked to the major powers of the period, and that its archaeological record is crucial for understanding the early history of coinage and economic interaction in South Asia.

In sum, the punch-marked coin hoards of Khyber not only illuminate a critical phase in the evolution of South-Asian currency but also offer direct evidence for the region's integration into and negotiation with multiple spheres of imperial, economic, and technological influence. These discoveries further reinforce the Khyber district's role as a frontier of innovation, connectivity, and adaptation, themes that persist throughout its ancient and early historic trajectory (Gupta, 1951, pp. 12-23; Cribb, 1983, p. 100).

#### **5.2.10 Mauryan Period (c. 322-185 BCE)**

The Mauryan period represents a phase of unprecedented integration for the Khyber region into the imperial and cultural networks of the early Indian state. In Jamrud, the discovery of a Mauryan ringstone and discstone at Gudar, objects known from the Mauryan capital at Pataliputra and major centres like Taxila, demonstrates the penetration of imperial ideology and administrative practices (Bennett, 2019, p. 96). The intricate iconography of these artefacts, with floral and faunal motifs and evidence for state rituals, reflects the role of Jamrud as a node for Mauryan governance and possibly Buddhist proselytisation. Additional finds of punch-marked coins, Mauryan ceramics, and polished ware at other Jamrud sites further attest to the expansion of monetisation, standardised weights, and administrative technologies.

In Landi Kotal, notably at Ash Khel and Kam Shilman, a cache of punch-marked coins was found, which are usually considered as Mauryan punch-marked coins. These finds echo the economic integration of the region with the urban heartlands of the empire and suggest a significant degree of participation in both state-sponsored trade and religious transformation (Gupta, 1951, pp. 12-20). The prevalence of punch-marked coins, with their multi-symbol stamps and standardised silver content, provides

important chronological markers for the spread of monetised economies across the northwest.

In Bara, evidence remains more tentative: a few ceramics and possible coins have been recovered but await firm attribution to the Mauryan era. Nevertheless, the presence of any Mauryan material so far west hints at a broader process of imperial outreach and cultural incorporation, even into regions with less dense settlement or more fluid tribal structures.

Critically, the absence of large-scale Mauryan monumental architecture or inscribed edicts in Khyber (unlike sites in Swat, Taxila, or the Indus basin) may reflect the limits of direct imperial control, taphonomic loss, or a strategy of lighter administrative presence in this transregional frontier zone (Allchin, 1995, pp. 222-223). However, the cumulative evidence from all three tehsils situates Khyber as a dynamic contact zone, mediating flows of people, ideas, and technologies between the Ganges basin and Central Asia, and serving as a crucible for the hybrid cultural forms that would define the post-Mauryan world.

Methodologically, the dating of Mauryan strata in Khyber rests on the typology of punch-marked coins, ceramic seriation, and comparative iconographic analysis with securely dated artefacts from the core regions (Gupta, 1951, pp. 12-20; Bennett, 2019, p. 96). Recent scholarship emphasises the role of frontier zones like Khyber in shaping imperial economic policies, religious movements (particularly the spread of Buddhism), and the processes of cultural hybridisation that would culminate in the distinctive art and architecture of post-Mauryan Gandhāra (Behrendt, 2007, p. 24).

In summary, the Mauryan period in Khyber reflects both the reach of South-Asia's first empire and the resilience of local and regional identities, making this era crucial for understanding the foundations of historical complexity in the northwest (Gupta, 1951, pp. 12-20; Bennett, 2019, p. 96; Behrendt, 2007, p. 24).

### **5.2.11 Graeco-Bactrian Period (c. 256-130 BCE)**

The Graeco-Bactrian period marks a transformative chapter in the Khyber district, characterised by the penetration of Hellenistic power and culture into the northwestern reaches of the Indo-Pak subcontinent. In Jamrud, this phase is vividly represented by the discovery of substantial coin hoards at sites like Lala Chena and Bakarabad, which have yielded issues attributed to Diodotus I and II, Euthydemus I and II, Demetrios I

and II, Pantaleon, Agathocles, Antimachus, Eucratides I and II, Plato, and Heliocles I, among others (Bopearachchi, 2023, p. 121; Kosmin, 2022, p. 143). These coins are notable not only for their bilingual legends (Greek and Kharosthi), but also for the variety of artistic motifs: diademed busts, divine symbols such as Zeus and Nike, and intricate royal monograms.

Recent discoveries from Jamrud further deepen this record. A focused hoard of 18 copper coins of Euthydemos I from Lala Chena (comprising both double- and single-unit denominations) provides a tightly dated insight into the monetary practices and political influence of early Graeco-Bactrian authority in the frontier region (Bopearachchi, 2023, p. 86). Moreover, the recovery of a monumental bronze medallion from Bakarabad, bearing a high-relief portrait of Euthydemos I, stands out as the first such ceremonial object reported from the region. Its scale and style indicate use as a presentation or commemorative piece, reflecting both the projection of Hellenistic kingship and local adaptation of royal imagery. Terracotta tokens with Demetrios I are portraits and rare "pedigree" medallions of Agathocles, some with Brahmi inscriptions, further attest to experimentation with non-metallic currency and the local adoption of Greek artistic forms (Bopearachchi, 2023, pp. 51, 56; Holt, 2022, p. 97).

The presence of these coins and objects, frequently in stratified association with both late Mauryan and early Indo-Greek material, suggests an era of overlapping sovereignties and commercial networks rather than a simple cultural rupture (Bopearachchi & Rahman, 1995, p. 44). These hoards often include transitional types, overstruck coins, hybrid legends, and both precious and base metals, which speak to the dynamic economic and political environment of the mid-first millennium BCE (Dani, 1967, p. 15).

Equally significant are new glyptic finds: a royal seal of Eucratides I from Shahi Qilla, Tirah Valley (Bara), with helmeted bust and quadriga iconography matching Attic silver tetradrachms, and a Graeco-Bactrian silver seal from Bara Bazaar, displaying a diademed royal portrait. The appearance of such seals, though lacking inscriptions, indicates either administrative activity or elite ceremonial presence in the mountainous Tirah region. These objects reinforce the strategic importance of Bara as a contact zone and corridor of influence during the Graeco-Bactrian era (Bopearachchi, 1991, pp. 217-221; Narain, 1957, pp. 82-85; Gupta, 1984, pp. 76-77).



In Landi Kotal, multiple sites, including Ghagra, have produced Graeco-Bactrian coins, most notably copper coins of Euthydemus I, confirming the extension of Hellenistic monetary and possibly administrative influence well beyond the core of Bactria (Bopearachchi, 2023, p. 121). The context of these finds, often as surface scatters or shallow deposits, may indicate their use in trade, tribute, or as status symbols within local societies. The recovery of such focused hoards demonstrates not only economic penetration but also the integration of Hellenistic value systems and iconography in the local context.

In Bara, the rare but diagnostically significant presence of Graeco-Bactrian coins, seals, and the royal seal of Eucratides I reinforces the notion that the entire Khyber corridor was implicated in the Hellenistic world's frontier economy. These discoveries confirm that Khyber, far from being a peripheral outpost, was an active participant in transregional networks linking Central Asia, South Asia, and the Iranian plateau (Bopearachchi, 2023, p. 121; Gupta, 1984, p. 76).

What distinguishes the Graeco-Bactrian horizon in Khyber is the near-absence of large-scale architecture or sculptural evidence; instead, coins, medallions, and seals are the principal markers of interaction. This pattern likely reflects the mobility of Graeco-Bactrian garrisons, the use of Khyber as a transit corridor, and the destructive effects of subsequent occupations. Nevertheless, the evidence underscores the importance of the Khyber Pass not only as a route for armies but as a conduit for currencies, art forms, and new models of political legitimacy that would profoundly shape the Indo-Greek kingdoms (Bopearachchi, 2023, p. 121; Dani, 1967, p. 20).

Methodologically, numismatic and glyptic analysis, including typology, die-links, hoard stratigraphy, and iconographic comparison, remains the backbone of this period's chronology and historical reconstruction (Bopearachchi & Rahman, 1995, pp. 3-12; Khan, 2020, pp. 42-43). The detailed recording of coin types, legends, monograms, and metal content enables fine-grained dating of archaeological contexts. At the same time, the study of medallions and seals provides new evidence for the ceremonial, administrative, or elite dimensions of Hellenistic influence in the region.

In summary, the Graeco-Bactrian period in the Khyber district emerges as an era of dynamic connectivity, economic innovation, and cultural hybridisation. The region's rich coin hoards, rare medallions, and newly identified seals situate it as both a

recipient and transmitter of transregional influences, illuminating the pivotal role of the Khyber corridor in the formation of South Asia's first cosmopolitan frontier. Future systematic excavation and scientific analysis, especially in stratified contexts, will be critical for deepening our understanding of the Hellenistic encounter in the Hindu Kush-Indus borderlands (Bopearachchi, 2023, p. 121; Khan & Thomas, 2022, p. 92; Reddy, 2021, p. 318).

### **5.2.12 Indo-Greek Period (c. 200 BCE-10 CE)**

The Indo-Greek era in the Khyber is perhaps the best documented of the Hellenistic phases, thanks to the discovery of extensive and diverse coin hoards, most notably from Jamrud and Landi Kotal. At sites such as Jalal Din Killi, Lora Miana, and Ash Khel, stratified hoards have produced coins of more than a dozen Indo-Greek rulers, including Menander I, Apollodotus I, Antimachus II, Strato I, Philoxenus, Lysias, Antialcidas, Heliocles II, Zoilus I & II, Agathocleia, Amyntas Nicator, and others (Bopearachchi, 2023, pp. 184-185; Pieper, 2021, pp. 34-35). The Indo-Greek record in Khyber is distinguished by the breadth of ruler representation, the iconographic variety, Athena Alkidemos, elephants, thunderbolts, Herakles, and Buddhist symbols, and the high frequency of bilingual (Greek-Kharosthi) inscriptions and overstrikes. These features document both the persistence of Hellenistic identity and the rulers' accommodation to Indian religious and cultural traditions.

The Indo-Greek coinage from Jamrud is exceptionally dense and diverse, including several newly documented hoards from Jalal Din Killi and Gudar (Zoilus II hoard), with coins of Menander I, Strato I, Antialcidas, Philoxenus, Amyntas, and Hermaios, among others. Several of these hoards also contain overstruck and die-linked series, which are helping to clarify the complex chronology and succession of Indo-Greek rulers in the region (Bopearachchi, 2023, p. 184). Notably, a unique discovery at Rai Qila of a silver coin die of Lysias Anicetus, the first of its type from the northwest, offers direct evidence for minting activity and technological sophistication in Khyber during the late Indo-Greek period (Bopearachchi, 2023, p. 209; Pieper, 2022, pp. 112-154).

In Landi Kotal, the large Ash Khel coin hoard (179 coins) provides unparalleled evidence for the circulation of Indo-Greek currency. Menander I dominates the assemblage; however, Apollodotus I, Antimachus II, Heliocles I, Strato I, and

Philoxenus coins are also present, demonstrating both dynastic continuity and the region's robust integration into the broader Gandharan and northwest Indian economy. The variety of types, elephant and bull motifs, helmeted and diademed busts, Athena Alkidemos, Nike, kingly riders, and rare gold staters, underscores the economic vitality and evolving iconography of Indo-Greek power on the frontier (Bop, 1991, pp. 184-256; Mitchiner, 1978, nos. 1754-179).

Bara tehsil, previously seen as peripheral, now emerges as a significant node of elite Indo-Greek presence. The discovery of a hoard of five silver double-decadrachms of Amyntas Nicator at Donga, Tirah Valley, attests to the region's economic and political connections to late Indo-Greek polities (Bopearachchi, 1991, p. 336; Senior, 2001, p. 77). In addition, a remarkable corpus of elite and ceremonial goldwork including the ceremonial gold crown from Dogra Killi, the gold ram figurine, a solid gold lion, a "Trojan Horse" group in gold and bronze, a gold wreath, and a bearded Herakles riding a lion, provides exceptional evidence for the fusion of Greek, Iranian, and local traditions in the material culture of the Bara uplands (Boardman, 2016, pp. 87, 142-143; Curtis & Tallis, 2005, pp. 146-147; Williams, 2012, p. 113). These finds elevate Bara's significance in the study of cross-cultural artistic exchange and the symbolism of Indo-Greek kingship and elite identity.

Notably, the ceremonial gold diadem from Dogra Killi, Ilm Gudar, with its ibex-heads and botanical openwork, parallels Hellenistic royal regalia from the Mediterranean and Black Sea regions (Pfrommer, 1990, pp. 120-123). The solid gold lion and gold ram figurine reflect both Greek mythological themes and South-Asian ritual iconography, providing material evidence of the region's syncretic artistic and religious life (Boardman, 2000, pp. 188-189). The unprecedented gold "Trojan Horse" scene, complete with a hidden warrior, demonstrates the transmission and adaptation of Greek heroic narratives on the South-Asian frontier (Boardman, 2016, p. 92; Stewart, 2023, p. 63).

The Indo-Greek period in Khyber thus stands out not only for the density of numismatic evidence but also for the survival of an exceptional corpus of elite goldwork, ceremonial regalia, and iconographically hybrid objects. The frequency of Buddhist and dharmic symbolism such as the use of the Dharma wheel and lion motifs, and the explicit "follower of the Dharma" (dhramikasa), Zoilus I and Strato I coins confirms the pivotal role, the Indo-Greek rulers have in the transmission and

adaptation of Buddhist patronage and iconography (Kubica, 2023, pp. 108-109, 112-114).

Technologically, the region provides the first confirmed example of an Indo-Greek coin die (iron, for Lysias Anicetus) from Rai Qila, illuminating local minting practices and the spatial geography of coin production in the late Hellenistic period (Bopearachchi, 2023, p. 209; Pieper, 2022, p. 154). The presence of a classical Spartan xiphos sword from Bara, gold-wrapped and with a leaf-shaped blade, adds a martial dimension to the record, confirming the prestige of Greek martial equipment and its long-distance transmission along the frontier (Snodgrass, 1967, pp. 69-72; Sekunda, 1998, pp. 31-32).

In summary, the Indo-Greek horizon in Khyber is marked by:

- The exceptional scale and diversity of coin hoards (including new hoards at Ash Khel and Donga),
- The unique discovery of a coin die and ceremonial goldwork (including diadems, figurines, and ceremonial bowls),
- Iconographic Hybridity (Greek, Iranian, Indian, and steppe motifs),
- The continued fusion of Hellenistic, Buddhist, and local religious symbols,
- And the pivotal role of the Khyber Pass as a centre of exchange, minting, elite display, and ideological negotiation (Bopearachchi, 2023, p. 184; Boardman, 2016, pp. 87, 142-143; Pieper, 2022, pp. 112-154).

These findings revise previous models that saw Bara and the upper Khyber as marginal. Instead, the Indo-Greek material from the district now testifies to deep and sustained economic, political, and artistic engagement, with direct implications for the study of trade, royal symbolism, and religious transformation in the wider Hellenistic world.

### **5.2.13 Indo-Scythian Period (c. 150 BCE-400 CE)**

The Indo-Scythian (Saka) period in Khyber has long been ambiguously defined, with most reconstructions based on textual traditions or isolated finds. Recent stratified discoveries, particularly from Jamrud, Landi Kotal, and Bara, now provide direct, contextually secure evidence that allows, for the first time, an internally coherent periodisation based strictly on archaeological and numismatic data (Senior, 2001, p. 14; Pieper, 2021, pp. 34-35). This marks a significant advance, recasting the Khyber

corridor as a dynamic node of cross-cultural interaction and political transformation between Central and South Asia.

In Jamrud Tehsil, the Saka period is newly anchored by an unprecedented diversity of coin hoards and glyptic artefacts. Multi-type hoards of Maues, spanning Zeus/Nike, Herakles/lion, enthroned Zeus, Poseidon/Yakshi, king on horseback, and horse/bow types, are now attested from both stratified and surface deposits (Senior, 2001, p. 14). All consistently bear bilingual Greek-Kharosthi legends, underscoring both claims to universal kingship and religious/ethnic inclusivity, with several types plausibly featuring some of the earliest numismatic images of the Buddha (Konow, 1929, p. 45; Harmatta, 1999, p. 412).

The 2013 Tatara hoard, 27 billion tetradrachms issued jointly by Azes I or II and the Apraca general Aspavarma, provides a critical chronological and dynastic anchor, documenting not only the transition from Saka to Buddhist vassal dynasties, but also the broader religious and social transformation of the northwest (Salomon, 1996, pp. 391-392; Falk, 2005, p. 132). The Bakarabad hoard of nine Azes II bronze hexachalkons, bearing Indianized humped bull and lion motifs alongside Greek and Kharosthi legends, demonstrates the penetration of Saka monetary systems into daily transactional life (Senior, 2001, p. 111; Pieper, 2021, pp. 47-48).

Methodologically, these finds are securely dated and attributed through typology association, hoard context, typological comparison, and iconographic analysis, with further confirmation from bilingual inscriptions and die-link studies (see Table 5.2.13.1 for summary sequence).

The elite Indo-Scythian gold seal from Bakarabad, attributed to Azes I and bearing a mounted king with a solar emblem, marks a new category of bureaucratic and ceremonial artefact in the northwest (Senior, 2001, p. 139; Pieper, 2023, p. 319; Bopearachchi, 1991, p. 225).

Landi Kotal's sequence is defined by transitional hoards (e.g., Shinpokh: Azes I/II and Gondophares), establishing that the Saka-to-Parthian shift was gradual and negotiated, as seen in the overlap of coin types and adoption of Parthian/Indian religious motifs (Senior, 2001, pp. 61-67; Pieper, 2021, p. 67). The Khuga Khel hoard (Spalirises, Spalahores, Spalagadames) is the first of its kind, clarifying local dynastic succession

and the religious/cultural cosmopolitanism of the late Saka horizon (Rezakhani, 2017, p. 34; Gardner, 1929, pp. 98-101).

Bara Tehsil, while yielding fewer coins, provides critical evidence for Saka-period elite and ritual material culture, most spectacularly in the Alam Gudar gold combs, artefacts directly paralleling the Solokha masterpieces of the Pontic steppe, and the unique Dogra, Ilm Gudar gold medallion, the first of its kind found in Khyber (Artamonov, 1970, pp. 81-82; Rolle, 1989, pp. 58-59).

**The resulting, securely grounded periodisation for the Indo-Scythian (Saka) period in Khyber is as follows:**

1. Early Saka Conquest and Integration (Maues): attested by the earliest Jamrud coin finds (Senior, 2001, p. 14).
2. Dynastic Consolidation and Buddhist Vassalage (Azes I/II, Aspavarma/Apraca): anchored by the Tatara hoard (Salomon, 1996, pp. 391-392).
3. Monetary Expansion (Azes II, Bakarabad hoard): widespread circulation of Saka coinage (Senior, 2001, p. 111).
4. Elite Administration and Prestige Display (Azes I gold seal, Bara combs/medallion): emergence of bureaucratic and ceremonial forms (Pieper, 2023, p. 319).
5. Dynastic Fragmentation and Indo-Parthian Transition (Shinpokh/Khuga Khel): overlapping coins and new iconographies (Pieper, 2021, p. 67; Rezakhani, 2017, p. 34).

These newly documented coin hoards and elite artefacts not only allow for a precise internal periodisation of the Indo-Scythian (Saka) era in the Khyber region, but also fundamentally revise our understanding of its historical trajectory. The evidence demonstrates that Khyber was not merely a passive recipient of external conquest, but an active centre of cultural negotiation, religious transformation, and economic integration between Central Asia and South Asia. The securely anchored archaeological sequence now enables future scholarship to reconstruct the processes of political change, cultural hybridisation, and the development of regional identities with a degree of precision and confidence previously unattainable in the historiography of the northwest subcontinent.

These discoveries revise the historical sequence of Saka rule in Khyber, positioning the region not only as a frontier of conquest but as a centre of enduring cultural, economic, and religious exchange between Central and South Asia.

#### **5.2.14 Indo-Parthian Period (c. 19-226 CE)**

The Indo-Parthian period represents a further stage of imperial transition and cultural Synthesis in Khyber. Jamrud's Sur Kamar and other sites have produced silver and AE drachms of Gondophares and Sanabares, often in direct stratigraphic association with earlier Indo-Scythian and later Kushan issues (Pieper, 2021, p. 117). These coins typically feature Iranian-style busts, tamgha symbols, and bilingual legends, signalling the fusion of Parthian, Hellenistic, and local forms of authority.

Landi Kotal's Indo-Parthian material consists mainly of similar coins, with multiple sites yielding silver drachms in both surface and subsurface contexts. The range of coin types, from early Gondophares emissions to later imitative issues, illustrates the gradual adaptation and localisation of Parthian power in the region. The lack of Indo-Parthian finds in Bara may reflect real historical boundaries or incomplete archaeological coverage.

Notably, the Indo-Parthian phase is marked by a lack of monumental architecture or epigraphy, making coins the primary vehicle for reconstructing chronology and political geography. Numismatic studies, especially the analysis of hoard composition, overstrikes, and iconographic motifs, allow for the mapping of shifting alliances and the tracing of cultural pluralism during a period often defined by imperial competition and hybridisation.

The Indo-Parthian legacy in Khyber thus lies in its mediation between Saka and Kushan horizons, bridging Central and South-Asian spheres and providing a template for the cultural pluralism that would define the later Gandharan tradition (Pieper, 2021, p. 117).

#### **5.2.15 Roman Period (c. 27 BCE-476 CE)**

The Roman period in the Khyber region, previously documented primarily through isolated numismatic evidence, has now been significantly refined through the recent discovery of a Roman gold aureus attributed to Emperor Tiberius Julius Caesar Augustus (14-37 CE) from Khuga Khel, Landi Kotal. This find substantially enriches

the archaeological narrative, shifting the locus of Roman material evidence in Khyber from Jamrud, where previously Roman coins of Augustus and Tiberius were identified as isolated finds (Cribb, 1983, p. 100), to Landi Kotal, providing a crucial chronological anchor for Roman-period economic interactions in the region.

The aureus from Khuga Khel is particularly significant for elucidating the depth and extent of Indo-Roman economic relations. Roman coins found on the northwestern frontier of the subcontinent have historically been interpreted as indicators of long-distance trade, diplomatic exchanges, or mercenary remuneration. The Tiberian aureus aligns precisely with the broader context of Indo-Roman trade, known to have intensified significantly during the late first century BCE and early first century CE, contemporaneous with the early phases of Kushan expansion under Kujula Kadphises (Bopearachchi, 1991; Warmington, 1928, pp. 156-161). Roman gold, entering the region through both maritime and overland trade routes, facilitated transactions involving luxury commodities such as spices, gemstones, textiles, and other high-value items (McLaughlin, 2010, pp. 109-111). Classical accounts vividly corroborate this economic exchange, notably those of Pliny the Elder, who explicitly references the substantial outflow of Roman precious metals to the Indian subcontinent (Warmington, 1928, pp. 149-153).

Methodologically, the Khuga Khel aureus contributes significantly to the historical reconstruction of the Khyber region by providing material confirmation of its integration into the expansive trade networks that stretched from the Mediterranean basin to Gandhāra and Punjab. This coin not only enriches our understanding of the economic history of the area but also underscores the strategic and commercial importance of Landi Kotal within broader Indo-Roman exchange networks.

In contrast, systematic fieldwork in Jamrud and Bara Tehsils has yet to yield additional Roman material, reinforcing Landi Kotal's unique position within Khyber as a key point of contact with Roman economic spheres. The absence of further Roman-period evidence from Jamrud and Bara clarifies the spatial extent and localised nature of Roman influence and trade integration within the region.

Thus, the recent Khuga Khel discovery fundamentally reshapes the understanding of Roman-period dynamics in the Khyber district, providing indispensable material



evidence for transregional connectivity and economic history during the early centuries of the Common Era.

### **5.2.16 Kushan Period (c. 30-375 CE)**

The Kushan period marks a pinnacle in the cultural and archaeological history of the Khyber region, distinguished by the growth of urban and monastic centres, the flourishing of Buddhist art and architecture, and a pronounced cosmopolitan character that underscored the region's role as a vital nexus on ancient trans-Eurasian networks. Recent discoveries have dramatically enhanced our understanding of the scale and depth of Kushan presence in Khyber, moving beyond the broad outlines established by older site lists and stray finds.

In Jamrud Tehsil, a dense constellation of Buddhist monastic complexes has now been mapped, including major sites at Jabba (KH 03), Shagai Lala Chena (KH 04, KH 05), Changai (KH 06), Gudar (KH 07), Ali Baba (KH 08), Murda Dand (KH 09), Zagga (KH 10), Shagai (KH 11), and Jabba Showdani (KH 12). Architectural remains include ashlar and semi-ashlar masonry, monastic courts, assembly halls, and stupa bases. The documentation of multiple Buddhist sites, often damaged by unauthorised excavation but still retaining diagnostic features, confirms that Jamrud was not merely a transit zone but a locus of enduring Buddhist settlement and ritual practice. This granular mapping represents a significant advance over previous generalisations (compare Rosenfield, 1999, pp. 123-124).

Among the most significant new finds is the discovery of a gold repoussé panel at Gudar depicting the *Mahābhiniṣkramaṇa* (Great Departure) of the Buddha, a masterpiece of Gandhāran narrative art dating to the 2nd - 3rd century CE. The panel, found in a stratified context within a monastic compound, provides direct evidence for high-value devotional art, local workshop traditions, and the circulation of Buddhist relics and images (cf. Zwalf, 1996, p. 188). This artefact not only underscores Jamrud's place in the wider Gandhāran Buddhist tradition but also exemplifies the fusion of Hellenistic and Indian motifs at the heart of Kushan-era religious syncretism (Foucher, 1905, p. 49; Coomaraswamy, 1926, p. 165).

Numismatic evidence has expanded exponentially: major coin hoards from Wali Khel (Heraios, Eukratides I), Lashora (Vima Takto/Soter Megas, Vima Kadphises, Kujula Kadphises, Kanishka I), Takhta Baig (Kanishka I, Vasudeva II, Mahi), and Taidi

Bazaar (Shaka) provide a secure basis for the internal chronology of Kushan and transitional rulers. The Lashora seal, a copper alloy royal seal with the bust of Vima Takto, is critical, being the first of its kind securely associated with a Kushan coin hoard and demonstrating the deliberate standardisation of royal portraiture across both coinage and administrative artefacts (Pieper, 1998, pp. 27-30; Mitchiner, 1978, pp. 214-216).

The gold quarter dinar with the Buddha image, found at Takhta Baig, is now the only known example of a securely provenanced Kushan gold Buddha coin from the Khyber region, providing a vital chronological and art-historical anchor (Göbl, 1984, p. 66; Pieper, 1998, p. 133). A broad spectrum of gold dinars, depicting deities from the Iranian, Indian, and Greco-Roman pantheons, including Shiva, Oesho, Serapis, Athsho, Nana, Mithra, Pharro, and Ardoxsho, attest to the multi-religious and multi-ethnic patronage of the Kushan court (Mitchiner, 1978, pp. 368-371; Pieper, 1998, p. 205).

Individual coin finds now clarify the early transitional phases, including previously ambiguous rulers such as Sapalbizes, Arseiles, and Heraios, whose chronological placement is now securely anchored by hoard associations (Senior, 2001). This resolves long-standing debates about the origins and sequencing of early Kushan coinage in the northwest (Cribb, 1993, pp. 123-129).

In Landi Kotal, the monumental Shpola Stupa (KH-65) remains a landmark of the region's Buddhist heritage, despite its partial destruction in the 19th and 20th centuries. The stupa's sheer scale and strategic placement at the Khyber Pass underscore the architectural ambitions of Kushan Buddhism and the region's role in Silk Road traffic (Behrendt, 2007, p. 103). While systematic scientific excavation has been limited, the stupa's documentation by Moorcroft, Trebeck, and later colonial officials provides a baseline for future research and highlights the vulnerability of Gandhāran monuments to modern neglect.

Bara Tehsil has seen the single most important new addition: the discovery of the Tirah Relic Casket at Kuraiz, comprising a multi-chambered stupa burial with associated Kanishka I/ II coin and a miniature stupa containing a gold reliquary (Cribb, 1999, p. 133; Rosenfield, 1967, pp. 102-104; Pieper, 2021, pp. 132-134). This find not only confirms the direct extension of Kushan Buddhist institutions into the Tirah Valley,

hitherto undocumented, but also demonstrates the syncretic iconography (Helios/Mithra and Buddha) typical of imperial Kushan religious politics. The material and typological parallels with relic caskets from Shah-ji-ki-Dheri and Bimaran establish Kuraiz as a key node in the transregional network of Buddhist relic veneration (Marshall, 1951, pp. 281-285; Errington, 2017, p. 64).

The new archaeological sequence for the Kushan period in Khyber thus incorporates:

- A dramatically increased number of securely identified Buddhist monastic and ritual sites (Jamrud, Landi Kotal)
- High-value Buddhist devotional art (Gudar Mahābhiniṣkramaṇa panel)
- Securely provenanced, multi-type coin hoards clarifying early, middle, and late Kushan dynastic succession (including "Heraios", "Sapalbizes", "Shaka", Vasudeva II, and Mahi coins of the Shaka era)
- A unique royal administrative seal (Lashora) and the only secure Kushan gold Buddha coin (Takhta Baig)
- A new, stratified relic casket and stupa burial in Bara (Kuraiz), linking the district to the core zone of Gandhāran Buddhist ritual practice.

Methodologically, this revised sequence is grounded in the integration of stratified archaeological finds, numismatic typology, architectural analysis, and art-historical comparison. The convergence of these datasets allows for the construction of a finely grained, multi-phase chronology that distinguishes local innovation, imperial standardisation, and regional variation (Cribb, 1993, pp. 133-135; Pieper, 2021, pp. 132-134). These advances replace previous reliance on secondary sources or undated finds and provide a model for reconstructing ancient imperial frontiers elsewhere in South Asia.

Regarding the Kushan period, while a rich numismatic corpus is documented, no inscribed epigraphic monuments (Brahmi, Kharosthi, or Bactrian) have yet been recovered from the main Buddhist sites of Jamrud, Landi Kotal, or Bara. However, occasional fragmentary inscriptions may exist in secondary reports. The lack of epigraphic data is a known limitation and a potential avenue for future discovery.

In summary, the Khyber region under the Kushans emerges not as a peripheral corridor but as a vibrant landscape of religious experimentation, economic integration, and imperial power. The discoveries at Jamrud, Landi Kotal, and Bara reveal a spectrum

of Buddhist, Iranian, Indian, and Hellenistic traditions, instantiated in coinage, monumental architecture, relic cults, and the material culture of everyday life. The Kushan period, as now reconstructed from these new finds, is the best documented and most cosmopolitan epoch in Khyber's ancient history, marking the district as a true crossroads of empires, religions, and artistic traditions (Rosenfield, 1999, p. 125; Behrendt, 2007, p. 103; Pieper, 2021, pp. 132-134).

#### **5.2.17 Kushano-Sasanian Period (c. 230-330 CE)**

The Kushano-Sasanian period in the Khyber region is now understood in dramatically sharper focus, owing to new archaeological and numismatic data that have clarified both the geographic distribution and material character of this transitional era. Unlike earlier models, which posited a widespread Kushano-Sasanian presence based on stray and mixed hoard finds, recent research demonstrates that the period is narrowly attested, with positive evidence limited exclusively to Bara Tehsil.

Despite targeted archaeological and numismatic investigations, the Kushano-Sasanian period remains conspicuously unattested in Jamrud. Neither coins nor artefacts diagnostic of Kushano-Sasanian authority have been recovered from any documented site in this tehsil, suggesting either a lack of imperial penetration or subsequent erasure from the material record. This absence is currently based on both a negative surface survey and the lack of stratified excavations revealing such artefacts; no closed contexts or stratified Kushano-Sasanian deposits have yet been identified in these tehsils. This should be read as an evidentiary boundary rather than as proof of total absence, and further targeted excavation is required to confirm these patterns.

Similarly, systematic surveys in Landi Kotal have not yielded any material evidence, numismatic or otherwise, attributable to the Kushano-Sasanian phase. The absence of such finds stands in marked contrast to the rich assemblages from preceding and succeeding periods. It reinforces the conclusion that Landi Kotal lay beyond the effective reach of Kushano-Sasanian power during this interval.

This absence is particularly notable given the density of late Kushan, early Kidarite, and earlier Buddhist-period sites in both tehsils. It suggests that the Kushano-Sasanian authorities either failed to penetrate these sectors of the Khyber region or that their control and economic integration were minimal and possibly indirect. This finding corrects earlier assumptions of continuous imperial succession across the district and

highlights the value of systematic, negative archaeological evidence for refining regional historical models.

### **Bara Tehsil: The Many Sar Gold Dinar Hoard**

In sharp contrast, Bara Tehsil has produced the first and so far, only secure evidence of Kushano-Sasanian activity: the discovery of a closed hoard of thirteen gold dinars at Many Sar. This hoard, recovered by local treasure hunters, comprises coins that are typologically and stylistically definitive for the Kushano-Sasanian period, dating from the early to mid-third century CE (Göbl, 1984, DB vgl. 823 ff.; Mitchiner, 1978, pp. 863-864).

The obverse of these coins displays a standing king, crowned with a pair of ram's horns surmounted by pearls and a floral globe, a diadem, halo, and distinctive Sasanian-style hair and beard. A trident is present in the left field. The reverse features the god Shiva standing with flaming hair, holding a diadem and trident, accompanied by the bull Nandi, a motif that is the most direct Kushan iconographic inheritance. Although the king's name cannot be read due to wear, the coins are closely paralleled by issues of Peroz (ca. 245, 270 CE) and contemporaries (Göbl, 1984, p. 155; Pieper, 1998, pp. 202-203).

The iconographic Hybridity of the Many Sar hoard, Sasanian crowns and regalia on the obverse, but the retention of Shiva-Nandi on the reverse, vividly illustrates the strategies of cultural adaptation and political legitimation adopted by the Kushano-Sasanian rulers as they sought to govern a multi-ethnic frontier. The coins adhere to the Attic weight standard of Kushan and Kushano-Sasanian gold dinars, further confirming their transitional status (Mitchiner, 1978, p. 864).

Significantly, the closed-hoard context at Many Sar marks these coins as high-value, possibly ceremonial or treasury objects rather than circulating currency, an observation supported by parallels across northern Pakistan and Afghanistan (Göbl, 1984; Pieper, 1998). This is the only site in District Khyber with secure Kushano-Sasanian material, underscoring the selectivity and limits of imperial penetration.

The revised distribution pattern of Kushano-Sasanian finds in Khyber demonstrates that this period was marked not by uniform imperial control, but by starkly differentiated zones of influence, with Bara as the only attested node of Sasanian-backed authority or ritual presence. This finding highlights the volatility of late antique

frontiers and the Khyber corridor's shifting role as a borderland between Iranian and South-Asian imperial spheres.

Methodologically, the Many Sar hoard underscores the primacy of contextually secure numismatic evidence for mapping ancient polities and reconstructing the hybridisation of coinage, religious symbolism, and political ideology. The fusion of Sasanian and Kushan elements in the coins' design attests to a deliberate politics of accommodation, in which new dynasts sought both Iranian and Indian legitimacy for local constituencies (Pieper, 1998, pp. 202-203; Göbl, 1984, p. 155).

This significantly revised periodisation and distribution diverges from earlier interpretations, which suggested a broader Kushano-Sasanian presence in Jamrud and Landi Kotal. In contrast, the current evidence restricts this phase to a single, well-documented gold dinar hoard from Bara, thereby fundamentally reshaping the historical and political landscape of the Khyber region during the third and early fourth centuries CE.

This new evidence from Bara compels a reappraisal of the Khyber's role in the Kushano-Sasanian world: not as a uniformly controlled province, but as a selectively integrated periphery, where imperial ambitions, local religious traditions, and economic strategies converged in distinctive, context-dependent ways. The Many Sar gold dinar hoard stands as a critical anchor for understanding the dynamics of power, religious adaptation, and cross-cultural negotiation in the late antique borderlands of (South and Central Asia 123.

#### **5.2.18 Kidarite Period (c. 320-467 CE)**

The Kidarite or "Little Kushan" era in Khyber is represented by both numismatic and, to a lesser extent, architectural evidence. Jamrud's Lashora site produced a hoard of Kidarite coins, characterised by a distinctive tamgha and often depicting the bust of Kidara or his successors. These coins blend Sasanian and Kushan elements, reflecting the adaptive strategies of new Central-Asian rulers who moved into the power vacuum left by the decline of Kushan and Kushano-Sasanian authority (Mitchiner, 1975, p. 375).

Landi Kotal and Bara Tehsils currently lack attested Kidarite material, which may be due to either genuine political boundaries or gaps in site coverage.

The Kidarite period is critical for understanding the transformation of Gandharan society, marking the end of classical Buddhist urbanism and the beginning of a more fragmented, militarised, and ethnically diverse landscape. The adaptation of previous coin iconography and the presence of Kidarite issues in religious as well as commercial contexts illustrate how new regimes sought both continuity and innovation in legitimising their authority (Mitchiner, 1975, p. 375).

#### **5.2.19 Hun/Hephthalite Period (c. 440-670 CE)**

The Recent discoveries have necessitated a significant revision of the Hunnic or Hephthalite period in the Khyber region, shifting the locus of documented activity from Jamrud to Bara Tehsil. Whereas earlier scholarship often presumed Jamrud to be the epicentre of Hun presence, newly attested coin hoards and isolated finds from Bara now provide the first secure evidence for Hephthalite authority or influence within District Khyber (Aram, 2002, p. 35; Cribb, 1999, pp. 149-168). Prior to these discoveries, the region had yielded abundant Gandhāran, Afghan, and North Indian Hun material, but no authenticated finds from Khyber itself.

The Bara coins, including both copper and silver issues, demonstrate a full spectrum of Hephthalite numismatic practice: imitations of Sasanian and Kushano-Sasanian prototypes, distinctive Central-Asian tamghas, Brahmi and Bactrian legends, and recurring fire-altar motifs (Göbl, 1984, pp. 83-88; Frye, 1984, pp. 152-154). Comparative metallurgical and typological analyses place these finds in direct affinity with Hun hoards from Balkh, Kabul, Swat, and Peshawar, confirming their fifth-sixth century CE context (Vondrovec, 2002, pp. 41-46; Carter, 1995, p. 15). Especially notable is the coexistence of classical Sasanian imagery and regional innovations, illustrating both the integration of Khyber into transregional exchange networks and evolving systems of local legitimacy (Grenet, 2002, pp. 61-62).

This newly documented evidence from Bara fills a significant lacuna in the regional archaeological record, demonstrating that the Khyber corridor was not merely a conduit for transregional movement but an area of active engagement and economic integration during the Hun/Hephthalite era (Cribb, 1999, p. 158; Aram, 1996, p. 240). The sequence of standard Sasanian imitations, Nezak Malka types, Alchon Hun drachms, and trilingual Turkic issues provides a robust material framework for

reconstructing the region's fifth-seventh century transitions (Göbl, 1984, pp. 85-87; Grenet, 2002, p. 66).

By contrast, systematic archaeological and numismatic research in Jamrud and Landi Kotal has yielded no securely identified Hun/Hephthalite material. This absence is not merely a gap, but a clarifying boundary for the spatial extent of Hunnic influence in District Khyber, highlighting the localised nature of the Bara discoveries and underscoring their unique historical significance.

Methodologically, the stratified context of the Bara coins, their metallurgical and typological characteristics, and their alignment with broader Gandhāran and Central-Asian material allow for a more precise reconstruction of chronology and cultural dynamics during this pivotal period (Cribb, 1999, pp. 154-158; Göbl, 1984, pp. 83-87). These finds reveal the Khyber corridor as an active frontier of cultural negotiation, economic transformation, and political Hybridity under Hun rule (Afram, 2002, p. 39; Vondrovec, 2002, p. 46).

In sum, the first securely attested Hun/Hephthalite coins from Bara Tehsil fundamentally reshape our understanding of the region's late antique history, moving beyond models of passive transit or absence and establishing Khyber as a participant in the transformative processes of the post-Kushan era (Sims-Williams, 1995, pp. 232-233; Frye, 1984, p. 154).

### **5.2.20 Gupta Period (c. 240-579 CE)**

Recent archaeological discoveries have enabled the construction of a more robust and nuanced chronological sequence for the Gupta period in the Khyber region. Traditionally, this period was considered marginal, based primarily on isolated finds of Gupta gold dinars (Pieper, 2021, p. 171). However, new evidence from Jamrud and Bara Tehsils now allows for a more precise periodisation based on stratified and securely attributable material culture, including numismatic, glyptic, and sculptural data. The sequence outlined below draws upon stratigraphic context, numismatic typology, and comparative iconographic analysis.

#### **Early Contact Phase (early fourth century CE):**

The earliest phase is reflected in rare, stray gold dinars and limited numismatic evidence, indicating initial contacts primarily through trade, exchange, and the



movement of prestige goods (Pieper, 2021, p. 171). This does not indicate sustained political control but establishes the foundation for subsequent Gupta engagement.

### **Chandragupta II Phase (c. 375-413 CE):**

A substantive and securely documented phase emerged under Chandragupta II, marked by the discovery of a significant silver coin hoard at Qadam, Jamrud. These coins, intentionally struck in the typological and stylistic idiom of the Western Satraps, reflect the Gupta dynasty's integration of newly conquered territories into their economic and symbolic sphere (Todd & Fishman, 2022, p. 214; Pieper, 2021, p. 102). The coins' use of Satrapic imagery alongside Brahmi inscriptions asserting Gupta sovereignty and Vishnuite devotion signals deliberate political, religious, and monetary adaptation in the region (Todd & Fishman, 2022, p. 217).

### **Administrative and Artistic Expansion (late fourth to early fifth centuries CE):**

This phase is evidenced by the appearance of a carnelian royal seal from Jamrud, depicting courtly Gupta iconography and inscribed with Brahmi script, indicating formalised administrative or ceremonial centres (Harle, 1994, p. 139; Huntington, 1985, pp. 132-135).

### **Regional Integration and Syncretism (early to mid-fifth century CE):**

Consolidation of Gupta presence is further documented by discoveries from Bara Tehsil, especially at Shahi Qilla in the Tirah Valley. The bronze equestrian figure, syncretic marble slab of Balarama, and a bronze seal with Lajjā Gaurī and trident motifs exemplify the integration of Gupta traditions within local contexts (Huntington, 1985, pp. 184-185; Pieper, 2020, p. 867; Misra, 2019; Khan, 2014, pp. 92-97).

### **Terminal Phase (late fifth century CE):**

The apparent cessation of securely attributable Gupta-period artefacts after the late fifth century, and the absence of such finds in Landi Kotal, mark the terminal phase and the geographic limits of Gupta influence.

In short, this sequence, derived from a convergence of archaeological methodologies and diverse material types, demonstrates the evolution and eventual decline of Gupta engagement in the Khyber region, fundamentally revising earlier peripheral models.

### **5.2.21 Sassanid Period (224-651 CE)**

#### **Jamrud Tehsil**

The Sassanid era in Jamrud is best understood through the accidental discovery of a gold dinar hoard attributed to Shapur I (c. 240-272 CE) at Lora Miana. This group of twenty gold dinars provides important insights into the economic, ideological, and political presence of the early Sasanian Empire along the Khyber frontier. Each coin displays a right-facing, crowned, and draped portrait of Shapur I, surrounded by a Pahlavi inscription proclaiming his divine kingship and Mazdaean legitimacy ("The Mazda-worshipping Lord Shapur, King of Kings of the Iranians, whose essence is from the gods") (Göbl, 1971: Type I/1; Pieper, 2007: 19-21). On the reverse, a fire altar flanked by two attendants is depicted, symbolising both Zoroastrian ritual authority and the king's divine mediation (Curtis, 2007, pp. 123-128).

The remarkable consistency of these coins, both in design and weight, reflects a highly controlled imperial minting process, most likely connected to Ctesiphon or another major Sassanian mint (Gyselen, 2012, pp. 57–61). The presence of such valuable coinage so far east demonstrates the broad reach of the Sassanid Empire, and the site of discovery along Jamrud's historic military-administrative corridor hints at possible ties to Sassanian military outposts, tribute payments, or elite exchanges. As such, the Lora Miana gold dinars are crucial for understanding not only monetary circulation but also the dissemination of Sassanian royal and religious ideology in this border region.

Beyond gold, Sassanian copper and silver coins, particularly fire-altar types featuring busts of Shapur I and other rulers, have also been unearthed at Lora Miana and other locations, indicating active circulation (Göbl, 1971: Type I/1). The recurrence of these finds, often in secondary or mixed contexts, points to sustained commercial and potentially tribute-based links between the Khyber region and Sassanid Iran during the third and fourth centuries CE.

#### **Landi Kotal Tehsil**

In marked contrast, the Sassanid period in Landi Kotal is characterised by the absence of securely attributed Sassanian coins or material culture. While Sassanian coins occasionally surface in mixed hoards, their contexts are ambiguous and may reflect either trade, transient loss, or later depositions, rather than direct Sassanian presence

or control. This absence of primary Sassanid evidence highlights a possible gap in both archaeological investigation and historical integration. It serves to define the geographic limits of Sassanid economic and political penetration within the Khyber corridor.

### **Bara Tehsil**

The Sassanid period in Bara Tehsil is attested most clearly by the Alam Gudar coin hoard, a complex assemblage spanning the late Sassanian and early Islamic periods. The hoard contains standard silver drachms and hemidrachms of Sassanian monarchs, including Peroz I, Kavadh I, and Khushru II, alongside later Tabaristanian issues attributed to Farkhan I (Malek, 2000; Mitchiner, ACW 1011ff.; MACW 1111ff.). The typology is consistent: the obverse shows the crowned and cuirassed king with astral and crescentic motifs, while the reverse features the Zoroastrian fire altar flanked by two attendants, accompanied by Pahlavi inscriptions denoting regnal year and mint (MACW 1111ff., 1212). Particularly notable is the persistence of these Sassanian motifs in the Tabaristanian hemidrachm, minted well into the early Islamic era (Malek 16.5-6).

The Alam Gudar hoard evidences a regional pattern of silver coin hoarding and circulation, reflecting both imperial wealth storage and the volatile conditions of late antique Central Asia (Pieper, 2007; Mitchiner, 1975). The inclusion of multiple mints, Ray, Darabgard, Gundishapur, Tabaristan, highlights Bara's connectivity within wider Sassanian and post-Sassanian economic networks, even as the political authority over the region shifted.

Across the Khyber district, the Sassanid horizon is complex and multi-layered. In Jamrud, the hoards and scattered coins underscore phases of direct Sassanian presence and active circulation of imperial currency, likely linked to military or tribute mechanisms. In Bara, silver hoards show both the persistence of Sassanian monetary models and their pragmatic adaptation under early Islamic rule. In Landi Kotal, by contrast, the absence of primary Sassanian material delineates a real historical frontier. The overlapping presence of Kushano-Sasanian, Arab-Sassanid, and imitative issues further complicates the regional numismatic landscape, attesting to fluid boundaries, shifting sovereignties, and evolving economic structures in late antiquity (Göbl, 1971: Type I/1).

Collectively, these findings underscore the pivotal role of the Khyber corridor as both a commercial, socio-cultural channel between Iran and the Indo-Pak, sub-continent, and the continued circulation of Sassanian coinage into later periods speaks to the enduring influence of Persian economic models and the gradual transformation of frontier society, culminating in the region's integration into the Islamic world.

#### **5.2.22 Arab-Sassanid Period (Umayyads) (c. 632-712 CE)**

The 2016 discovery of the Arab-Sassanid silver drachm hoard at Bacha Mena, Torkham (Landi Kotal Tehsil), stands as a watershed moment for the archaeology and chronology of the Khyber region. Unlike earlier generalised models of the Arab-Sassanid period, often based on single finds or distant parallels, this stratified and well-documented hoard provides direct, contextually secure evidence for the region's integration into the shifting political and monetary landscape at the moment of the early Islamic expansion.

For the first time, the Bacha Mena coins allow the Khyber corridor to be placed on the map of late Sassanian and early Islamic fiscal systems with precision. The presence of late Sassanian issues of Balash, together with early Arab-Sassanid drachms in the name of Ziyād b. Abī Sufyān, each bearing a local stratigraphic context and photographic documentation, means we are no longer extrapolating from stray finds or literary accounts. In comparative perspective, this stands in marked contrast to other key regions of the northwest, such as Swat, Gandhara, and Balouchistan, where the Arab-Sassanid transition remains either archaeologically elusive or poorly contextualised. In this respect, the Bacha Mena hoard sets a new methodological benchmark for the integration of numismatic, archaeological, and stratigraphic data in South-Asian frontier studies (Aram, 2012, pp. 146-147).

This hoard serves as a chronological anchor for the transitional decades c. 650-700 CE. It demonstrates that Khyber was not simply a zone of military passage but a region of active monetary adaptation and early Islamic administrative engagement. Its significance is further underlined by its incorporation as a fixed reference point in the master chronological table (see Table 5.2.1, Site Entry Bacha Mena) of this dissertation, providing a secure temporal marker for correlating other late Sassanian and early Islamic materials in the Khyber dataset. [Integration with Chronological Framework]

This evidence is particularly critical for your thesis, as it closes a longstanding gap: until this discovery, the Khyber's Arab-Sassanid phase was, at best, a hypothesis, not an archaeologically grounded reality. Now, the actual use, circulation, and deposition of Arab-Sassanid coinage in Khyber can be documented, not merely inferred, a methodological advance of primary importance for reconstructing local sequences (Malek, 2001, pp. 61-65; Alram, 2012, pp. 145-147).

The documentation of Ziyād b. Abī Sufyān's coins in a secure archaeological context from Khyber prove that the Umayyad caliphate's eastward expansion had not only a military but also a monetary and symbolic presence at the very gateway between Iran and South Asia. It transforms the way we understand the practical realities of early Islamic governance, taxation, and economic integration in the region (Cribb, 1983, p. 77; Alram, 2012, p. 146). Nonetheless, it must be acknowledged that the current corpus, while robust in its stratigraphic integrity, remains limited in size and is not yet supplemented by associated settlement, inscriptional, or architectural evidence. This limitation invites further targeted fieldwork at Torkham and comparable sites, as well as metallurgical analysis of the hoard to elucidate patterns of silver sourcing and reminting in the early Islamic fiscal sphere (Alram, 2012, p. 147).

In summary, the Bacha Mena, Torkham hoard is transformative for the historical and archaeological narrative of the Khyber region. It replaces hypothetical or generalised accounts with personalised, material, and stratified evidence, allowing the Arab-Sassanid period to be woven into the region's chronological sequence with a new level of specificity and confidence. This dissertation thus positions the Bacha Mena hoard as a model for integrating stratified numismatic finds into broader chronological and cultural frameworks. As an explicit point of comparison for regions where such securely dated evidence remains absent, this hoard not only enriches the material record but also validates a methodological model for reconstructing local cultural and economic change during one of South Asia's most critical transitional epochs (Malek, 2001, pp. 61-66; Alram, 2012, p. 147).

### **5.2.23 Abbasid Period (c. 750-1258 CE)**

The Abbasid period in the Khyber region, previously attested primarily by isolated numismatic discoveries, is now substantially clarified and refined by recent archaeological findings, providing a nuanced understanding of regional interactions

during the Abbasid Caliphate (750-1258 CE). The evidence, significantly enriched from Landi Kotal and notably absent in Jamrud and Bara, underscores the differential extent and nature of Abbasid-period influence within the district.

Extensive surveys and targeted fieldwork in Jamrud Tehsil have produced no numismatic or archaeological material dating to the Abbasid period. The absence of Abbasid-period coins or artefacts from this area is particularly noteworthy, suggesting either minimal economic contact with Abbasid-controlled territories or the dominance of local currencies and trading networks independent of Abbasid monetary systems. Another explanation could be the limited scale of settlement activity or poor archaeological preservation conditions in Jamrud during the Abbasid period.

In contrast, the Abbasid coin hoard from Dalkhad, Charbagh in Landi Kotal Tehsil, constitutes an important numismatic corpus, attesting to robust trade and economic integration between the Abbasid Caliphate and the Hindu Shahi territories, despite the absence of direct Abbasid political control. The hoard includes seventeen silver dirhams issued under caliphs such as Al-Mahdi (c. 775 CE - 785 CE), Abu Jafar Al-Mansur (c. 754 CE - 775 CE), Al-Ma'mun (c. 809 CE - 833 CE), and Harun al-Rashid (c. 786 CE - 809 CE). These coins, characterised by their well-preserved Arabic inscriptions, including the Islamic creed (Kalima), caliphal titles, mint locations, and Quranic excerpts, vividly illustrate the Abbasid Caliphate's extensive economic reach into the northwest frontier of South Asia (Pieper, 2021, p. 199). Although the region was politically autonomous under the powerful Hindu Shahis, such numismatic discoveries underscore the dynamic transregional economic exchanges facilitated by the Khyber corridor.

Additionally, Landi Kotal is home to the historically significant Taimoor Fort (Timur Fort), traditionally associated with Timur's late 14th-century campaigns into South Asia. Although primarily attributed to the Timurid rather than the Abbasid period, the fort's strategic location overlooking the Khyber Pass emphasises Landi Kotal's long-standing significance as a node of cultural and military interaction across historical periods. The continued use of this corridor underscores its central role as a conduit for the flow of goods, people, and ideas between Central and South Asia, providing contextual depth to the Abbasid-period numismatic findings.

Remarkably, despite the broader historical significance and abundant archaeological discoveries from earlier periods, no coins or artefacts related to the Islamic period (622-1857 CE), including the Abbasid era, have been documented in Bara Tehsil. Given Bara's otherwise rich and diverse archaeological record, the absence of Islamic-period artefacts is striking and warrants careful consideration. Several explanations can be proposed:

As of the latest surveys, no diagnostic glazed wares or Islamic-period pottery has been identified in surface or stray finds from Bara, Jamrud, or Landi Kotal in association with Abbasid or later Islamic material. This absence is acknowledged and highlights the need for a systematic ceramic survey and stratigraphic excavation targeting medieval levels.

To date, the Abbasid silver dirhams from Dalkhad, Charbagh (Landi Kotal), have not been subjected to metallurgical or isotopic analysis. Such studies would be valuable in distinguishing between locally sourced and imported silver and could illuminate broader patterns of Abbasid monetary circulation in the region.

- **Settlement and Economic Patterns:** Bara may have experienced demographic shifts or economic transformations after the Gupta and post-Gupta periods, leading to either reduced settlement activity or significantly diminished trade interactions with Islamic territories.
- **Local Autonomy and Currency Systems:** The region may have maintained localised economies that relied heavily on barter or indigenous currency systems, reducing reliance on broader Islamic monetary networks.
- **Geopolitical Isolation:** Bara could have been politically isolated or strategically bypassed by major Islamic empires, resulting in minimal cultural or economic interactions and leaving few archaeological traces.
- **Archaeological Preservation and Recovery Bias:** Sites corresponding to the Islamic period may remain buried, unexplored, or poorly preserved. No Excavations have been conducted since the beginning of archaeology in this region; thus far, they have been insufficiently comprehensive, possibly overlooking remains from this period.
- **Tribal Dynamics and Social Structure:** Tribal or semi-nomadic societal structures dominant in the region during the medieval period may have produced fewer

permanent settlements and artefacts, particularly coins and ceramics, that typically mark Islamic-era archaeological layers.

- **Research Limitations:** The absence of Islamic artefacts could reflect gaps in current archaeological surveys, highlighting the need for more systematic exploration and excavation in future research initiatives.

In sum, recent discoveries have significantly refined the understanding of Abbasid-period interactions in Khyber, revealing substantial evidence of Abbasid economic influence in Landi Kotal, yet none in Jamrud or Bara. This differential presence underscores variations in regional economic integration. It highlights the importance of continued archaeological exploration to fully uncover the complex historical dynamics of the Islamic period in the broader Khyber district.in regional history.

#### **5.2.24 Chach Period (c. 632-712 CE)**

The Chach period represents a crucial transitional era in the history of the Khyber region, as evidenced by an expanding collection of numismatic finds. Most notable among these are the silver dammas of Sri Yashaditya (c. 679-712 CE), which shed light on Khyber's role as a vital link within the extensive trade networks connecting Sindh, Punjab, and Central Asia, during the late 7<sup>th</sup> and early 8<sup>th</sup> centuries CE.

Recent excavations in Jamrud have significantly deepened our knowledge of the Chach period's influence on the region. Two hoards discovered at Shah Kas in Jamrud Tehsil, containing fourteen and eight silver dammas respectively, display the typical iconography of the Yashaditya series, a crowned ruler on the obverse and a trident with a Brahmi inscription on the reverse (Sharma, 1966, p. 106; Wink, 1991, pp. 146-147). The proximity of these finds to major caravan routes underscores Jamrud's close integration into interregional trade, reaffirming the Khyber Pass's longstanding role as a principal commercial thoroughfare, especially when compared to riskier alternatives such as the routes through Balochistan (Afram, 2012, pp. 151-153; Dani, 1969, pp. 86-89).

Landi Kotal emerges as a crucial hub for Chach-period economic activity, evidenced by four major coin hoards, one from Charbagh (thirty-seven dammas) and three from Ghagra (twenty, twenty, and twenty-five dammas, respectively). The repetition of hoard discoveries within a confined area strongly suggests deliberate concealment of merchant capital, likely in response to chronic insecurity along the Khyber corridor,



including threats from tribal raids or political volatility (Dani, 1969, p. 88). This pattern of deposition reflects Landi Kotal's enduring status as a strategic entrepôt facilitating transregional trade between Sindh, Multan, and Central Asia (Sharma, 1966, p. 106; Wink, 1991, pp. 146-147).

In contrast, no Chach-period coins or related artefacts have been documented from Bara. This absence may result from a combination of factors: localised economic systems that employed alternative means of exchange, more limited integration into major caravan networks, preservation biases, or simply gaps in archaeological recovery. It also raises the possibility that Bara occupied a marginal position vis-à-vis the core trade and administrative circuits favoured by contemporary polities.

The spatial distribution of Chach-period coins in Khyber is best understood within the framework of prevailing political geography. During this era, the region was bounded by two powerful Hindu dynasties, the Kabul Shahis to the north and west, and the Chach dynasty (with offshoots in Multan and the Punjab) to the south and east. These kingdoms exercised robust administrative, military, and economic control, which shaped patterns of trade, settlement, and coin circulation along the Khyber corridor (Aram, 2012, pp. 151-153; Wink, 1991, pp. 146-147).

Several interrelated factors may account for the observed archaeological patterns:

- **Security-Driven Hoarding:** The concentration of coin hoards in Landi Kotal and Jamrud likely reflects the strategies of merchants and caravan operators, who deposited wealth in response to real or anticipated threats in this politically contested borderland.
- **Selective Economic Integration:** The region's function as a "buffer zone" or point of contact between rival Hindu powers may have concentrated economic activity and coin circulation in specific nodes, particularly those most securely connected to trade and administrative networks.
- **Archaeological Gaps:** The lack of Chach-period evidence in Bara may point to under-exploration, site preservation issues, or shifting boundaries of political and fiscal integration at different times (Wink, 1991, p. 147).
- **Administrative and Religious Policies:** State patronage and religious endowments may have prioritised specific routes or sites for commerce and pilgrimage, further reinforcing spatial disparities in material culture (Aram, 2012, p. 153).

In sum, the expanding corpus of Chach-period coin finds in Jamrud and Landi Kotal, set against their absence in Bara, offers a nuanced portrait of Khyber as a dynamic frontier shaped by commercial opportunity, political contestation, and evolving patterns of cultural interaction at the crossroads of the Hindu-ruled domains of Sindh and Kabul. These discoveries serve as a critical proxy for understanding regional power, trade, and economic adaptation on the eve of the Islamic conquest (Sharma, 1966, p. 106; Dani, 1969, p. 88; Alram, 2012, pp. 151-153).

#### **5.2.25 Hindu Shahi Period (c. 843-1026 CE)**

The Hindu Shahi period represents a pivotal turning point in the political and cultural development of the Khyber region, initiating an era of indigenous state formation, religious consolidation, and commercial growth in the aftermath of Turk Shahi decline (Rehman, 1979, pp. 88, 95). Recent archaeological and numismatic findings have, for the first time, provided chronological precision and regional specificity for this epoch, allowing for a detailed reconstruction of Shahi governance across the Khyber district.

#### **Jamrud Tehsil: Numismatic Assemblages and Minting Technology**

The archaeological landscape of Jamrud Tehsil has yielded an unprecedented corpus of Hindu Shahi coinage and minting implements. The Gudar hoard, for instance, comprises sixteen silver Jitals, attributable to the reigns of Samanta Deva, Sri Spalapati Deva, and Khudarayaka. These coins adhere to the archetypal "Horseman and Bull" motif, with Sharada and occasional Bactrian inscriptions, a testament to the persistence of Sanskritic literacy and cosmopolitan contacts in the late first millennium CE (Rodger, 1894, p. 487; Pieper, 2021, p. 139).

Notably, the dominance of Samanta Deva's issues, characterised by highly standardised iconography, closed-mouthed zebu bulls, ornamented jhuls, and tridents, attests to the operational scale and bureaucratic efficiency of the Shahi minting apparatus (Mitchiner, 1979, pp. 263-264). The appearance of coins in the name of local figures such as Sri Spalapati Deva and Khudarayaka suggests a nuanced, perhaps federal or delegated, administrative system, wherein subordinate commanders or governors were empowered to issue currency, an interpretation supported by comparative numismatic studies of Shahi-period governance (Pieper, 2021, pp. 137-139).

Of particular methodological significance is the discovery of a terracotta coin die at Gudar, which provides rare direct evidence for mass-production techniques and the hybridisation of casting and striking technologies. The presence of such artefacts not only confirms the technical sophistication of Shahi mints but also enables fine-grained periodisation of local coinage, a point often unattainable in earlier research reliant on unstratified or surface finds (Pieper, 2021, pp. 134-136; Mitchiner, 1979).

The Shahkas hoard, also in Jamrud, mirrors the typological repertoire of Gudar and further corroborates the interpretation of the region as a stable node of monetary circulation and state authority into the late ninth and early tenth centuries (Tye & Tye, 1995).

### **Landi Kotal Tehsil: Absence as Historical Data**

In contrast, systematic surveys in Landi Kotal Tehsil have produced no securely stratified Hindu Shahi coins or associated artefacts (Nasim Khan, 2006, pp. 133-199). Rather than merely a lacuna, this absence constitutes a meaningful historical datum. It suggests either a genuine lack of sustained Shahi presence or a shift in settlement and administrative priorities, possibly driven by geopolitical pressures or evolving patterns of long-distance trade. This finding compels future research to reassess the spatial variability of state integration and the possibility of culturally differentiated zones within the broader Shahi polity.

### **Bara Tehsil: Frontier Networks and State Expansion**

The expansion of the Hindu Shahi state into Bara Tehsil, particularly the Tirah valley, is now attested by several major coin hoards (Bootan Sharif, Lali Kas, Saidan Killi), which collectively bridge a significant gap in the district's early medieval record. The Bootan Sharif hoard, comprising well-preserved Jitals attributed to Samantadeva, provides rare, stratified evidence for the integration of this mountainous frontier into Shahi economic and administrative systems immediately prior to the Ghaznavid incursions (Mitchiner, 1979, pp. 260-267; Pieper, 2021, p. 139).

These discoveries not only confirm the administrative reach and fiscal capacity of the later Shahi state but also underline the role of religious iconography in asserting dynastic legitimacy. The recurring motifs of the bull and trident, emblematic of Shaivite tradition, and the use of the Sharada script anchor the region within the Sanskritic and Hindu ecumene, even as Bactrian inscriptions and typological nuances

point to ongoing commercial and diplomatic exchanges with Central-Asian polities (Rodger, 1894, p. 487; Pieper, 2021, p. 139).

### **Synthesis: State Formation, Religious Patronage, and Methodological Innovation**

The cumulative impact of these findings is transformative for the historiography of Khyber. For the first time, the sequence and territorial extent of Hindu Shahi rule can be mapped using stratified, contextually secure numismatic and technological data, superseding earlier models that relied heavily on textual conjecture or unprovenanced coins (Nasim Khan, 2008, pp. 71-122).

No architectural remains related to the Hindu Shahi period, such as temple fragments, fortifications, or administrative buildings, have yet been identified in situ in Khyber, despite the rich numismatic record. This negative evidence suggests either that such structures have not survived, remain unexcavated, or have not yet been recognised in the field. The documentation of Hindu Shahi-period architecture is identified as an important priority for future field research.

Methodologically, the recovery of stratified coin hoards, terracotta dies, and epigraphically diverse coinage from securely dated contexts enables a multidimensional reconstruction of Shahi-era monetary policy, minting technology, and political authority. It is now possible to demonstrate not only the administrative and economic integration of Khyber into the Shahi state, but also the region's function as a cultural and commercial interface between the Indian subcontinent and Central Asia (Rehman, 1979, p. 95; Pieper, 2021, p. 139).

These discoveries compel a reevaluation of the Hindu Shahi period as a phase of innovation, resilience, and regional agency. The material record attests to the enduring legacies of Shaivite religious culture, the adaptability of local mints, and the dynamic interplay of local and imperial forces in one of South Asia's most strategic corridors. The Hindu Shahi presence in Khyber must therefore be viewed not as a peripheral epilogue to Buddhist Gandhara or a prelude to the Ghaznavids, but as a formative, creative chapter in the region's *longue durée* (Nasim Khan, 2006, p. 199; Rehman, 1979, p. 95).

### **5.2.26 Islamic/Muslim Period (from 11th century CE onward)**

The Islamic period in the Khyber district, extending from the 11th century CE through the Durrani era, is distinguished by substantial variability in archaeological and numismatic evidence across Jamrud, Landi Kotal, and Bara tehsils. Recent archaeological discoveries, notably from Jamrud and Landi Kotal, enable a nuanced and chronologically coherent narrative, while Bara's material silence highlights uneven Islamic integration along the frontier.

The absence of Umayyad and Abbasid artefacts supports the hypothesis of delayed Islamic integration, primarily following the decline of Hindu Shahi dominance (Pieper, 2021, p. 191). Early Islamic presence is robustly evidenced by the Seljuk gold dinar hoard from Ali Masjid, representing significant economic and political linkages with Central Asia during the 11th and 12th centuries (Mitchiner, 1979, pp. 472-474; Pieper, 2021, p. 198).

Subsequent Ghaznavid silver dirhams associated with Mahmud Ghaznavi (998-1030 CE) further establish Jamrud's integration into the eastern Islamic economic system, marking critical chronological anchors in local sequences (Tye, 1995, pp. 103-105). The Ghurid period, illustrated by the Shah Kas hoard of bearing mixed Islamic and Indic inscriptions, demonstrates cultural Hybridity and complex political interactions on the frontier (Chattopadhyaya, 1977, pp. 132-133).

Delhi Sultanate-era findings remain sparse yet significant, notably Khalji coins of Qutb al-Din Mubarak Shah I and the attributed White Fort (Spena Qalla) constructed under Alauddin Khalji. These provide tangible evidence of sultanate attempts at administrative and military control (Jackson, 2003, pp. 201-202; Dani, 1995, p. 108).

The Mughal era presents abundant numismatic data. Babur's silver Shahrukhi hoard discovered at Warsak validates historical narratives concerning Mughal penetration into the Khyber Pass via secondary routes (Babur, 1922, pp. 206, 250). The rarity of Humayun's coins indicates limited Mughal authority until Akbar's robust economic integration. Akbar's diverse gold and silver coinage, inscribed with Islamic kalima and Ilahi calendar dates, signals economic and ideological consolidation within Jamrud (Mitchiner, 1979, pp. 660-664).

Jahangir and Shah Jahan's coins illustrate a sustained Mughal presence, notably Shah Jahan's extraordinary ceremonial 200-rupee silver coin, emphasising high-value

diplomatic or ceremonial exchanges along strategic trade routes (Krause & Mishler, 2009, p. 1162). Aurangzeb's administration is confirmed by royal seals and extensive coin hoards, underscoring sustained imperial control into the late 17th century (Eaton, 2019, p. 124; Mitchiner, 1979, pp. 820-860).

A late 18th-century Qur'anic amulet discovered at Ghundi underscores local religious identity and traditions linking regional populations to historical narratives of migration and divine protection, indicative of socio-religious dimensions of frontier life (Stewart, 2019, pp. 184-185).

Durrani-period artefacts, including Ahmad Shah Durrani and Shah Shuja al-Mulk's gold and silver coins, reflect the continuing economic significance and political reach of Afghan dynasties into Khyber (Tye, 1995, p. 288).

Landi Kotal's early Islamic presence is evidenced through Abbasid silver dirhams hoarded at Dalkhad, Charbagh, notably minted under Al-Ma'mun. These coins, despite predating direct Islamic political control, substantiate sustained commercial interactions linking Central Asia with northern India (Tye, 1995, p. 103). The Taimoor Fort, although modest archaeologically, symbolises the region's enduring strategic importance.

Remarkably, systematic surveys in Bara tehsil yield no significant Islamic period artefacts, reflecting irregular integration into wider Islamic imperial and economic networks, likely due to geographical or sociopolitical barriers (Pieper, 2021, p. 199).

Numismatic analysis remains the core method, supported by stratigraphy, architectural typology, and epigraphy. Despite persistent challenges from unscientific excavations, coins provide precise chronological markers facilitating synchronisation with regional chronologies (Pieper, 2021, p. 197).

The present research emphasises interactions between imperial structures and local autonomy, complexities in monetary circulation, and frontier identity transformations resulting from archaeological discoveries, including hybrid coinage and frontier seals (Eaton, 2019, pp. 312-315; Stewart, 2019, p. 188).

Recent archaeological insights significantly enhance understanding of Khyber's historical dynamics, illustrating cycles of imperial influence, economic integration, and cultural continuity and transformation. Khyber emerges not merely as a transit zone but as a crucial site of cultural interaction and political assertion, providing

invaluable perspectives on regional processes of Islamization, state formation, trade dynamics, and frontier identities.

### **5.2.27 Sikh Period (1799-1849 CE)**

The Sikh period in the Khyber district, though brief, left a significant and evident imprint on the region's archaeology and built environment. In Jamrud, the erection of Jamrud Fort by Hari Singh Nalwa in 1836 remains the most significant military landmark in the northwest frontier. It was at this very site that Hari Singh Nalwa was killed on the 19th of Visakh, Samvat 1894 (1837 CE).

Today, both the gurdwara and the samadh (memorial) honoring this renowned general are located within the walls of Jamrud Fort, built at the entrance of the Khyber Pass, the fort, a key point of control and a symbol of the Sikh Empire's determination to hold the frontier against Afghan and British forces (Singh, 2021, p. 335). In addition to its military significance, the site has yielded Sikh coinage, typically inscribed in Gurmukhi and Persian, as well as medals, badges, and administrative seals, attesting to the institutionalisation of Sikh authority in the region.

Landi Kotal's Sikh heritage is represented by the Shalman Tunnel and a series of minor Sikh relics, including coins and possibly military encampments or roadworks. These artefacts document the presence of Sikh garrisons and logistical operations aimed at maintaining control over the high passes and transit routes of the district.

In Bara, evidence for the Sikh period includes the remains of forts, coins, and scattered relics associated with Sikh military and administrative activity. The adaptation and reuse of earlier fortifications by Sikh forces illustrate both strategic continuity and the practical exigencies of frontier warfare.

The Sikh period is particularly instructive for its demonstration of layered sovereignty and the rapid succession of ruling powers in Khyber. Methodologically, the period is reconstructed through a combination of architectural analysis, numismatics, and archival records, including contemporary Sikh and British sources. The Sikh legacy, while short-lived, set the stage for the British colonial encounter and the final transformation of the region's political landscape (Singh, 2021, p. 335).

### 5.2.28 British Period (c. 1849 - 1947 CE)

The British colonial presence in Jamrud is distinguished by its enduring military, infrastructural, and administrative legacy, underpinned by a remarkable concentration of surviving sites and structures. The most prominent among these is the Shagai Fort (constructed in 1927), a major frontier bastion strategically situated to monitor and control movement along the Khyber Pass. Built at an elevation of 839 meters near Shagai Lala Chena, the fort served as a linchpin in British defensive policy, safeguarding the principal route between Peshawar and Landi Kotal. Its continued use by Pakistan's security forces attests to the durability of colonial military architecture (Gazetteer, 1932, pp. 121-141).

Across from Shagai Fort stands a historical fort, likely predating the British period, whose obscure origins and robust, multi-roomed structure highlight the area's deeper martial traditions. The British era also saw the construction of a network of military bunkers, notably at Ali Masjid and Kata Kushta, reflecting the region's importance in both World Wars. These concrete bunkers, reinforced with stone casings and equipped with sniper observation points, were meticulously designed for surveillance and defence of the Khyber trade route (Stevens, 2012, p. 120; Gazetteer, 1932, p. 134).

The most transformative infrastructural project was the Khyber Railway, an engineering feat realised through the construction of numerous stations (Jamrud, Medanak, Changai, Shagai), tunnels (notably the 1403-foot Madanak Tunnel III), and bridges (e.g., the iron Kafir Tangi Bridge, constructed by West Wood Baillie & Co, London, in 1879). The railway was envisioned as both a military and economic artery, though geopolitical constraints and tribal resistance shaped its operational span. Associated infrastructure, such as the Water Tanker Stand at Malik Abad, testifies to the logistical innovations of the period, supporting steam-powered transport essential for military and trade movement (Tandon, 2021, p. 68).

Archaeological finds include a spectrum of British coinage, from the earliest East India Company rupees (William IV, 1835) through the rules of Victoria, Edward VII, George V, and George VI, alongside military medals and administrative paraphernalia. These materials, frequently encountered in stratified deposits linked to colonial installations, provide crucial chronological markers and document the deep economic penetration



of British rule into the Khyber frontier (Chattopadhyay, 1977, p. 45; Pieper, 2009, p. 225; Sharma, 2008, p. 77).

The British period in Landi Kotal is epitomised by Michni Fort, constructed in 1925 as a high-altitude outpost for monitoring the Afghan border. Carved emblems and insignias of various military units reflect the continuity of their martial function, and the symbolic addition of the monumental gate by the Frontier Constabulary in 1962 links colonial heritage to post-independence security regimes (Gazetteer, 1932, pp. 138-139).

The Shalman Railway Tunnel, initially constructed for the abortive Shalman-Torkham route and later repurposed as a British army supply depot, embodies the fluctuating ambitions and logistical challenges of colonial infrastructure development in response to Afghan opposition. Landi Khana Railway Station, inaugurated in 1926 at Torkham, marked the terminus of the Khyber Pass Railway. The unique story of its inaugural train, driven by Mrs. Victor Bayley to placate local tribal sensitivities, underscores the complexities of colonial engagement in the region. The railway itself, an immense financial undertaking, ultimately succumbed to geopolitical pressures, ceasing operations between Landi Kotal and Landi Khana in 1932 (Metcalf & Metcalf, 2006, p. 156; Allen, 2012, p. 53).

Numerous British and Indian coins, medals, and the architectural remains of forts and railway stations further document Landi Kotal's integration into the colonial system, particularly as a node of frontier defence and imperial ambition.

In Bara, the British period is marked by key military and infrastructural sites. Bara Fort, situated near Sheikhan, served as a garrison and administrative centre, consolidating imperial authority in the area. The Bara Water Supply system, an engineering marvel (19<sup>th</sup> - 20<sup>th</sup> CE), provided potable water to Peshawar and its environs. Its gravity-fed network, featuring tunnels, sedimentation tanks, and the Pishtakhara Filtration Station, was a direct response to recurring cholera outbreaks and stands as a testament to colonial public health and civil engineering (Gazetteer, 1932, p. 127).

The Bara River's historical reputation for purity and fertility, celebrated in Mughal gardens and treaties, found renewed significance under British administration through innovations in water management and distribution (Roy, 2012, p. 139; Mishra, 2017,

p. 201). The gradual replacement of open channels with iron pipes and the commissioning of comprehensive filtration systems reflected broader patterns of colonial modernisation.

#### **5.2.28.1 The Numismatic Sequence of British Monarchs in Khyber: Archaeological Evidence and Historical Significance**

A distinctive feature of the British period in Khyber district is the abundant presence of coins bearing the effigies of successive British monarchs, found in stratified archaeological contexts throughout Jamrud, Landi Kotal, and Bara tehsils. The evolving portraiture, inscriptions, and iconography of these coins not only reflect transitions in metropolitan authority but also offer precise chronological markers for the reconstruction of colonial phases in Khyber's material culture (Pieper, 2009, p. 225; Stevens, 2012, p. 32).

##### **A. William IV (r. 1830-1837 CE)**

The coinage of William IV marks the earliest phase of uniform East India Company issues in India. Silver rupees featuring the right-facing bust of the king, with legends in both English and Urdu, are regularly recovered from Khyber, especially in contexts associated with early colonial installations. These coins exemplify the shift from presidency to imperial motifs, and their discovery in the district underlines the penetration of new economic regimes following the annexation of the northwest (Mitchiner, 1979, p. 1034; Pieper, 2009, p. 225; Craig, 1981, p. 312; Sharma, 2008, p. 77).

##### **B. Victoria (r. 1837-1901 CE)**

Coins of Queen Victoria are the most prolific British colonial numismatic finds in Khyber, issued in multiple denominations (one rupee, half rupee, quarter rupee, two annas). Early coins bear the legend "VICTORIA QUEEN," later shifting to "VICTORIA EMPRESS" after 1877 by imperial policy changes (Allen, 2012, p. 53; Stevens, 2012, p. 64). The left-facing effigy of Victoria, surrounded by bilingual inscriptions and decorative wreaths, became a ubiquitous symbol of the Raj. The typological diversity and volume of Victorian coins found in both urban and rural sites across Khyber provide primary chronological markers for the high colonial era, and

their overstruck/restruck varieties sometimes hint at unique frontier circulation dynamics (Tandon, 2021, p. 68; Rhodes, 1979, p. 65; Goenka, 2000, p. 95).

### **C. Edward VII (r. 1901-1910 CE)**

Edward VII's short reign produced coinage distinguished by a bust of the king with the English legend "*EDWARD VII KING & EMPEROR*". Obverse portraits and the bilingual reverse, showing denomination in English and Urdu, lotus sprays, and a crown, reflect continuity and adaptation in colonial iconography (Pieper, 2009, p. 275; Stevens, 2012, p. 91). Though less common than Victorian issues, Edward VII's coins are valuable for demarcating the dawn of the twentieth-century monetary regime. They frequently appear in late colonial archaeological strata across the district (Mitchiner, 1979, p. 1097; Sharma, 2008, p. 81).

### **D. George V (r. 1910-1936 CE)**

The reign of George V saw a dramatic increase in coin production and iconographic diversity. The crowned, left-facing bust dominates the obverse of these coins, with the legend "*GEORGE V KING EMPEROR*." Reverse motifs, denominations in English and Urdu, circlets, and a wreath of imperial flora emphasise unity across the British Empire. These coins, struck in rupees, two annas, and 1/12 anna, are among the most common finds in Khyber, serving as key chronological indicators for the late colonial period and illustrating both the scale and reach of imperial currency (MACW, 2016, p. 118; Stevens, 2012, p. 102; Allen, 2012, p. 102; Sharma, 2008, p. 85; Mitchiner, 1979, p. 1115).

### **E. Edward VIII (r. January-December 1936 CE)**

Edward VIII's reign was so brief that although dies and patterns were prepared, no coins bearing his portrait were officially released or found in archaeological contexts in Khyber. This absence itself serves as a proper chronological boundary for numismatic and stratigraphic interpretation (MACW, 2016, p. 136; Pieper, 2009, p. 355).

## **F. George VI (r. 1936-1947 CE)**

The coinage of George VI, with his left-facing bust and the legend "GEORGE VI KING EMPEROR," marks the final phase of British imperial rule. Silver rupees and half-rupees maintain the established motifs of bilingual denominations and imperial wreaths. These coins are ubiquitous in proto-independence and late colonial contexts throughout Khyber, often associated with British military installations, railway sites, and administrative buildings (Stevens, 2012, p. 136; Pieper, 2009, p. 364; Craig, 1981, p. 421).

The sequence, abundance, and typology of British coins found in Khyber provide not only an unbroken chronological framework for the district's colonial archaeology but also a window into the economic, administrative, and ideological penetration of British rule. The standardised imagery, monarchs' effigies, bilingual inscriptions, and imperial iconography served as instruments of power, asserting sovereignty and facilitating the economic integration of Khyber into the broader empire (Metcalf & Metcalf, 2006, p. 156; Roy, 2012, p. 139).

Comparative analyses with finds from Punjab, Bengal, and Sindh confirm both the wide circulation and local particularities of British coinage in frontier regions. In Khyber, their recovery from fort complexes, railway sites, and military posts underscores the deep entanglement of monetary, military, and administrative strategies in colonial governance (Sharma, 2008, p. 78).

## **G. Conclusion and significance**

The British period in the Khyber district is thus characterised by a dense constellation of military, administrative, and infrastructural sites, many of which remain well-preserved and functionally integrated into contemporary life. The archaeological record, complemented by abundant archival sources, enables a highly resolved reconstruction of colonial strategies, technological innovations, and their socio-economic impacts. The continued visibility of British-era forts, railways, tunnels, and coins in the built environment and material culture of Jamrud, Landi Kotal, and Bara attests to the enduring legacy of this final phase of external imperial rule in the Khyber corridor (Stevens, 2012, p. 136; Gazetteer, 1932, pp. 121-141).

### 5.2.29 Transitional Summary of the periodisation

The preceding Synthesis of archaeological and numismatic evidence from District Khyber has established, for the first time, a cohesive and multi-stratified chronological framework for the region's cultural and historical development. Commencing with the earliest human occupations attested at sites such as Nanawar Cave and Chottra Rock, the prehistoric and protohistoric sequences are anchored by surface collections of lithic artefacts, petroglyphs, and isolated cist burials, situating District Khyber within the broader context of Northwest South-Asian patterns of adaptation, mobility, and symbolic expression. The region's protohistoric mortuary landscape, most notably the Shahkas Gandhāra Grave Culture burial, expands the southern extent of early Iron Age traditions, underscoring Khyber's function as a dynamic corridor of innovation and intercultural contact.

The Achaemenid and early Greek periods are represented primarily through numismatic and luxury finds, including Achaemenid gold darics, ceremonial vessels, and pre-Alexandrian Greek staters, with the most significant concentrations found in Jamrud and Bara. Although many of these discoveries derive from unstratified contexts, they nonetheless affirm the economic and political integration of Khyber within larger imperial systems and Mediterranean, Asian interaction spheres. The methodological emphasis on typological and art-historical analysis, in light of the persistent absence of systematic archaeobotanical studies or ceramic seriation, defines both the current strengths and inherent limitations of the dataset.

Successive phases from the Pre-Mauryan and Mauryan, through the Graeco-Bactrian, Indo-Greek, Indo-Scythian, Indo-Parthian, and Great Kushan periods are reconstructed through a substantially expanding corpus of coin hoards, seals, and, in rare instances, monumental or religious architecture. The density, stratigraphic context, and typological diversity of coinage, particularly from the Kushan and Indo-Greek eras, enable a fine-grained internal periodisation, revealing District Khyber as a persistent hub for monetary circulation and cultural exchange. Recent discoveries, such as the stratified gold Mahābhiniṣkramaṇa panel and the Kushan relic casket, securely anchor Buddhist devotional and institutional activity in the region, decisively challenging earlier historiographical models that depicted Khyber solely as a transit corridor.

Notably, the transitional phases, such as the Kushano-Sasanian and Kidarite horizons, are now distinguished by their highly localised or even exclusive material profiles (e.g., the Many Sar gold dinar hoard in Bara), significantly revising earlier, overly broad models and underscoring the interpretive value of both negative evidence and site-specific survey methodologies.

The late antique and early medieval periods, encompassing the Hunnic/Hephthalite, Gupta, Sassanid, and Arab-Sassanid horizons, are characterised by a convergence of numismatic and glyptic evidence, supplemented, albeit infrequently, by sculptural and epigraphic sources. The recently discovered Bacha Mena, Torkham Arab-Sassanid hoard serves as a methodological benchmark, providing contextually secure evidence for the early Islamic expansion and the adaptation of monetary systems along the Khyber frontier.

The early medieval and Islamic periods display pronounced variability in material signatures across different tehsils. The emergence of Chach and Hindu Shahi coin hoards in Jamrud and Bara, contrasted by their absence in Landi Kotal, reflects the divergent trajectories of political and economic integration within the district. Likewise, the substantial presence of Abbasid and Ghaznavid coins in Landi Kotal, coupled with their notable scarcity in Bara, further highlights the spatially contingent nature of Khyber's integration into wider imperial systems.

The Sikh and British periods are among the best documented in both archaeological and archival records, featuring extensive military, infrastructural, and numismatic remains, including forts, tunnels, railways, and coins representing every British monarch. These stratigraphic layers attest to the district's enduring strategic centrality and the profound imprint of successive regimes.

Methodologically, this chapter demonstrates the pivotal importance of integrating stratified hoards, adverse survey outcomes, coin typology, technological artefacts, and art-historical comparison. It also underscores persistent gaps, most notably the lack of stratified settlement excavations, comprehensive bioarchaeological datasets, and scientific dating frameworks, while identifying significant potential for future multidisciplinary collaboration.

Taken collectively, the periodisation advanced here recasts Khyber not simply as a corridor of transit, but as a dynamic, interactive zone, repeatedly reshaped by cycles

of cultural innovation, economic integration, and political transformation. This analytical framework establishes the foundation for the thematic interpretations and broader historical arguments articulated in the concluding chapter.

## CHAPTER-VI

### 6 CONCLUSION

#### 6.1 Introduction and Research Objectives

This thesis has endeavoured to produce the first truly comprehensive and chronologically robust archaeological and historical reconstruction of the Khyber district, with focused analysis on the three principal tehsils: Jamrud, Landi Kotal, and Bara. The central research objectives can be summarised as follows:

- (1) to construct a periodized framework for Khyber's cultural and historical development, extending from the earliest traces of human occupation through to the British colonial period;
- (2) to synthesise, critically evaluate, and interpret the region's material record in the context of both regional and transregional dynamics; and
- (3) to elucidate Khyber's role within broader South and Central-Asian historical processes by deploying rigorous methodological tools and engaging actively with contemporary scholarly debates.

Throughout the course of this research, these aims have been both addressed and expanded through an integrated methodological strategy, which combines archaeological survey, stratigraphic excavation, typological analysis, and numismatic study. The resultant chronological sequence not only addresses significant gaps in our understanding of Khyber's historical trajectory but also establishes a new paradigm for the integrated Synthesis of archaeological and historical evidence in this strategically significant region (Rosenfield, 1999, p. 123; Pieper, 2021, p. 199).

#### 6.2 Chronological Reconstruction: From Prehistory to Colonial Modernity Prehistoric Foundations:

The research conclusively demonstrates that Khyber's earliest inhabitants were neither culturally peripheral nor socially isolated. Petroglyphs at Chottra Rock and Sher Bridge in Jamrud, along with painted ceramics and figurines from Omari Camp in Landi Kotal, and additional petroglyphs as well as cave assemblages in Bara, collectively attest to a sophisticated prehistoric presence. These assemblages reflect intricate symbolic systems and patterns of landscape utilisation, exhibiting direct parallels to the Indus Valley and the broader Eurasian steppe (Kenoyer, 1998, pp. 162-



164; Possehl, 2002, pp. 34, 133). Such evidence directly challenges earlier narratives that characterised Khyber as culturally backwards or historically absent, instead providing concrete proof of its status as a dynamic frontier of innovation, ritual activity, and mobility.

The systematic study and detailed cataloguing of stone tools and surface assemblages from Nanawar Cave (Tirah) now contribute a critical dataset, establishing the cave not only as an ecological and symbolic site but also as a locus of multiperiod occupation extending from the Paleolithic onward, with emerging evidence for both seasonal and ritual use (Fosse, 2005, p. 440). The interdisciplinary integration of ecological, geological, and archaeological data at the site signals both the promise of future stratified excavation (in partnership with international teams) and highlights the methodological limitations inherent in current surface-based research.

The wide array of site types and artefact classes from painted bowls to bronze figurines and stone implements underscores the diversity and complexity of early lifeways in the region, necessitating a fundamental reconsideration of Khyber's position within the prehistory of South Asia.

### **6.2.1 Protohistoric and Early Historic Trajectories:**

The identification, excavation, and analysis of the Gandhāra Grave Culture (GGC) cist at Shahkas in Jamrud represent a landmark contribution to the archaeology of Khyber. The discovery of complex funerary practices, along with typologically diagnostic ceramics and spatial associations that link the site with Swat and Dir cultural zones, collectively establish Khyber as a crucial conduit for north-south cultural interactions and diffusion (Zahir, 2016, pp. 12-13). In Landi Kotal, protohistoric ceramics reflect a nuanced pattern of adoption and adaptation of external influences, suggesting either indirect participation in the GGC sphere or the persistence of distinctive local traditions. The absence of GGC material in Bara is, in itself, archaeologically instructive, highlighting micro-regional variation within the district and demonstrating the interpretive value of negative evidence.

During the present survey, neither bioarchaeological (burnt or ashed bone) nor paleopathological material from these periods has yet been recovered or subjected to scientific analysis, such as radiocarbon dating, primarily due to technical limitations. This gap underscores the imperative for future multidisciplinary research to

incorporate advanced bioarchaeological and chronometric methods, which will be essential for refining regional chronologies and understanding population histories.

### **6.2.2 Imperial Frontiers and Crossroads:**

From the Achaemenid through the Greek and Mauryan periods, the material record of Khyber demonstrates the district's persistent entanglement with imperial strategies, long-distance trade networks, and processes of cultural negotiation. The substantial presence of Achaemenid gold darics and administrative coinage in Jamrud, together with Greek staters and Athenian tetradrachms, attests to Khyber's early and sustained integration within transregional economic and political systems (Carradice, 1987, p. 24; Bopearachchi, 1991, p. 44).

Nevertheless, the absence of stratified Achaemenid or Greek settlement mounds, as well as the lack of archaeobotanical data (such as charred seeds or pollen), underscores the incompleteness of the current archaeological picture; in particular, systematic ceramic seriation has yet to be applied to these periods in the region. Additionally, no metallurgical or isotopic analysis has been performed on Greek or Achaemenid coins to confirm their provenance, representing a significant avenue for future research.

The spatially uneven distribution of these materials, most notably their scarcity in Landi Kotal and Bara, emerges as a critical finding, indicating that imperial integration was not homogeneous but instead mediated by local ecological, political, and economic variables.

The Mauryan and Graeco-Bactrian periods further underscore Khyber's liminal position at the interface of empires. The identification of Mauryan ringstones and punch-marked coins in Jamrud and Landi Kotal, as well as the occurrence of Graeco-Bactrian and Indo-Greek coin hoards across multiple sites, collectively reveal a dynamic, multi-ethnic landscape characterised by interaction, adaptation, and contestation (Bennett, 2019, p. 96; Bopearachchi, 2023, p. 121).

### **6.2.3 Hybridisation and Cosmopolitanism:**

The Indo-Greek, Indo-Scythian, Indo-Parthian, and Kushan periods constitute an age of exceptional hybridisation. Collectively, these eras represent a period of exceptional cultural hybridisation in the Khyber region. Through numismatic evidence (coin hoards from Jalal Din Killi, Lora Miana, Tatara, Bakarabad, Sur Kamar, etc.),

stratigraphy, and emerging art-historical analysis, this thesis reconstructs the processes by which Hellenistic, Iranian, Indian, and local traditions coalesced in Khyber (Bopearachchi, 2023, pp. 121, 184; Pieper, 2021, pp. 34-35). Drawing upon numismatic evidence, including coin hoards from sites such as Jalal Din Killi, Lora Miana, Tatara, Bakarabad, and Sur Kamar, stratigraphic data, and recent art-historical analysis, this thesis further elucidates the processes through which Hellenistic, Iranian, Indian, and indigenous traditions converged and evolved in Khyber. The prevalence of bilingual inscriptions, overstruck coins, and joint emissions reveals a political landscape defined by flexibility, negotiation, and accommodation rather than abrupt conquest. The frequent occurrence of bilingual inscriptions, overstruck coinage, and joint emissions signals a political and cultural landscape marked by negotiation, adaptation, and accommodation, rather than abrupt conquest or uniform dominance. Khyber emerges as both a frontier of empires and a crucible for the formation of new identities, economies, and artistic vocabularies. In this context, Khyber emerges not merely as a frontier of empires but as a dynamic crucible for the formation of new social identities, economic structures, and artistic vocabularies.

The Kushan period, as reconstructed in this study, is rightly seen as the apogee of Khyber's ancient prosperity. Within this broader framework, the Kushan period as reconstructed in the present study stands as the zenith of Khyber's ancient prosperity. Buddhist monastic complexes, coinage with multi-lingual legends and images of Greek, Iranian, and Indic deities, and a wealth of architectural and sculptural evidence from Jamrud, Landi Kotal, and Bara together anchor Khyber firmly within the cosmopolitan world of the Silk Road (Rosenfield, 1999, pp. 123-125). Buddhist monastic complexes, coinage featuring multi-lingual legends and iconography of Greek, Iranian, and Indic deities, and abundant architectural and sculptural evidence from Jamrud, Landi Kotal, and Bara together position Khyber firmly within the cosmopolitan networks of the Silk Road (Rosenfield, 1999, pp. 123-125). This research confirms that the district was not a passive recipient of external influence, but a formative actor in the transmission of Buddhism, the movement of trade, and the negotiation of imperial identities. The findings of this research decisively demonstrate that the district was not a passive recipient of external influences but rather an active agent in the transmission of Buddhism, the facilitation of transregional trade, and the ongoing negotiation of imperial and local identities.

#### **6.2.4 Medieval Fragmentation and Resilience:**

The study reveals that even amidst the political fragmentation and invasions of the Kushano-Sasanian, Kidarite, Hun/Hephthalite, Gupta, and Sassanid periods, Khyber maintained patterns of economic continuity, local adaptation, and selective absorption of new political forms (Cribb, 1993, p. 123; Mitchiner, 1975, p. 375; Dani, 1999, p. 210). Even during periods of profound political fragmentation and repeated invasions, such as those marking the Kushano-Sasanian, Kidarite, Hun/Hephthalite, Gupta, and Sassanid horizons, this study demonstrates that Khyber exhibited persistent patterns of economic continuity, adaptive resilience, and selective adoption of external political forms (Cribb, 1993, p. 123; Mitchiner, 1975, p. 375; Dani, 1999, p. 210). Kidarite coins, Hephthalite imitations, and Sassanid dinars, often recovered from mixed hoards, speak to the region's ongoing engagement with wider Eurasian systems and its resilience in the face of imperial decline. The presence of Kidarite coins, Hephthalite imitations, and Sassanid dinars, frequently found in mixed hoards, attests to Khyber's ongoing integration within broader Eurasian networks and its ability to persist in the face of imperial decline and transformation. The occasional appearance of Roman coins is especially noteworthy, attesting to the extraordinary reach of global trade into the Khyber corridor during antiquity (Cribb, 1983, p. 100). Particularly noteworthy is the sporadic discovery of Roman coins, which provides rare but concrete evidence of the remarkable penetration of long-distance trade into the Khyber corridor during antiquity (Cribb, 1983, p. 100).

The discovery of the Arab-Sassanid silver drachm hoard at Bacha Mena, Torkham (Landi Kotal) is a watershed for this period: for the first time, the Khyber region can be securely placed within the fiscal and administrative frameworks of the late Sassanian and early Islamic (Umayyad) worlds, providing stratified, contextually robust evidence rather than relying on stray or poorly provenanced finds. The identification and secure context of the Arab-Sassanid silver drachm hoard at Bacha Mena, Torkham (Landi Kotal) marks a significant methodological and historical breakthrough for this period: for the first time, the Khyber region can be unequivocally situated within the fiscal and administrative systems of the late Sassanian and early Islamic (Umayyad) empires, relying on stratified and contextually robust evidence rather than on stray or poorly provenanced material. This hoard now serves as a chronological anchor for the c. 650-700 CE transition, and its integration into the

thesis's master chronological table is explicitly referenced (see Table X). This hoard now provides a crucial chronological anchor for the c. 650-700 CE transition, and its inclusion in the thesis's master chronological table is specifically referenced (see Table Appendix-I). No associated settlement or architectural evidence has yet been recovered from this site, and this is noted as a priority for future research. At present, no associated settlement or architectural remains have been documented at the site; identifying such evidence is highlighted as a priority for future field investigation.

### **6.2.5 Islamization, State-Building, and Colonial Transformation:**

The Islamic period marks another major transformation in Khyber's historical landscape. Extensive coinage (Ghaznavid, Ghorid, Delhi Sultanate, Mughals, Durrani), the spread of mosque and tomb architecture, and continued use of fortifications across all three tehsils illustrate the profound social, economic, and religious changes wrought by the expansion of Islamic polities (Pieper, 2021, p. 199). The stratigraphic association of Islamic coins with earlier Hindu Shahi, Sassanian, and local types underscores both the complexity of conversion and the layered nature of power in the frontier.

The advent of Islam marks a profound transformation in Khyber's historical landscape. The prolific coinage, encompassing Ghaznavid, Ghorid, Delhi Sultanate, Mughal, and Durrani issues, the architectural spread of mosques and tombs, and the enduring use of fortified structures across all three tehsils, collectively testify to the scale of social, economic, and religious reorganization introduced by expanding Islamic polities (Pieper, 2021, p. 199). Notably, the stratigraphic association of Islamic coins with earlier Hindu Shahi, Sassanian, and indigenous types highlights the complexity of both conversion and frontier governance, revealing a layered and contested power dynamic.

A recent systematic survey has revealed that while Jamrud and Landi Kotal have yielded robust Islamic-period numismatic assemblages, including Seljuk, Ghaznavid, Ghurid, Delhi Sultanate, Mughal, and Durrani coins, Bara tehsil is strikingly absent in Islamic-period material, despite its otherwise rich archaeological record. Multiple possibilities are explored: limited economic integration, preservation bias, or unexcavated settlement mounds. No Abbasid or Umayyad coins, Islamic ceramics, or architectural fragments have been identified in Bara. This lacuna is now foregrounded

as a research priority, with the potential to reshape understandings of Islamic penetration and tribal autonomy in the Khyber region.

Recent systematic surveys have demonstrated that, while Jamrud and Landi Kotal have produced extensive numismatic assemblages from the Islamic period, including Seljuk, Ghaznavid, Ghurid, Delhi Sultanate, Mughal, and Durrani coins, Bara tehsil is conspicuously lacking in Islamic-period materials, despite its otherwise abundant archaeological record. Possible explanations for this absence include limited economic integration with the wider Islamic world, preservation biases, or the presence of unexcavated settlement mounds. Crucially, no Abbasid or Umayyad coins, Islamic-period ceramics, or architectural fragments have yet been documented in Bara. This evidentiary lacuna is foregrounded as a key research priority, with the potential to significantly revise current models of Islamic expansion and the persistence of tribal autonomy in the Khyber region.

The brief but significant Sikh period left a material imprint in the form of central military installations (notably Jamrud Fort and Shalman Tunnel), Sikh coinage, and administrative relics (Singh, 2021, p. 335). The British colonial period, finally, transformed the region's landscape, infrastructure, and political economy through the construction of forts, the Khyber Railway, and the introduction of modern coinage and legal-administrative frameworks (Gazetteer, 1932, pp. 121-141). These periods, though relatively short-lived, nonetheless reconfigured Khyber's internal dynamics and its relationship to the broader colonial world.

The relatively brief but historically consequential Sikh period left a distinct material legacy, most evident in the construction of central military installations (such as Jamrud Fort, Ali Masjid forts), Sikh coinage, and administrative paraphernalia (Singh, 2021, p. 335). Subsequently, the British colonial era fundamentally reshaped the region's physical and administrative landscape through the establishment of forts, the Khyber Railway's construction, along with the introduction of modern coinage and legal and administrative systems (Gazetteer, 1932, pp. 121-141). Although these colonial and Sikh phases were comparatively short, they nonetheless fundamentally reconfigured Khyber's internal dynamics and its integration within the wider colonial and imperial systems.

It is also now explicitly noted that, in addition to architectural and numismatic data, the British period is documented by British archival photographs of the District (see Appendix II). These have been cross-referenced in the main text and cited as new visual evidence for the transformation of the Khyber built environment and infrastructure in the 19th-20th centuries.

In addition to architectural and numismatic evidence, the British period is further documented by a wealth of archival photographs, architectural blueprints, and detailed railway engineering drawings (see Appendix II). These visual records are now systematically cross-referenced in the main text and serve as critical new evidence for the transformation of Khyber's built environment and infrastructural landscape during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

### **6.3 Critical Analysis of Archaeological Significance and Broader Historical Implications**

The comprehensive archaeological record recovered and synthesised in this thesis establishes the Khyber district as a crucial zone of interaction and transformation in the broader context of South and Central-Asian history. Rather than serving merely as a passageway, Khyber's role as a "gateway" was not merely metaphorical: it functioned, across all periods, as a vital corridor for the movement of people, goods, artistic forms, religious ideas, and imperial ambitions. The diversity and density of the material record from prehistoric petroglyphs and cist burials, to Graeco-Bactrian and Kushan coin hoards, to Islamic and colonial-era fortifications, demonstrate persuasively that Khyber was repeatedly reconfigured by wider processes of cultural contact, trade, and state formation (Zahir, 2016, pp. 1-3; Pieper, 2021, p. 199).

A central insight of this research is how archaeological sequences in Khyber both reflect and challenge prevailing models of frontier dynamics. Traditional scholarship has tended to treat the Khyber Pass and its environs as peripheries, buffer zones, or "margins" of greater empires, including the Achaemenian, Mauryan, Greek, Kushan, or Mughal worlds. However, the detailed site-by-site analysis conducted here demonstrates that Khyber's communities were often agents in their own right, mediating, appropriating, and at times resisting the forms and symbols of external power (Shani, 2012, p. 83). Local production of coinage during the Indo-Greeks and Hindu Shahi periods, as well as the adaptation and transformation of architectural

forms across successive empires, illustrate not only the complexity of cultural Hybridity but also the operation of significant local agency and innovation.

The most recent site-level periodisation now provides a robust framework for identifying both unique discoveries, such as the first southern Gandhāra Grave Culture cist at Shahkas in Jamrud or the gold seal of Azes I at Jamrud, and zones of "archaeological silence." These include, for instance, the total absence of Sassanid, Achaemenid, or Greek coins in certain tehsils, or the lack of stratified Islamic material in Bara. Such silences are now interpreted not simply as absences in the record, but as potentially meaningful indicators of historical boundaries, shifting trade routes, episodes of depopulation, or the effects of preservation and research bias. These patterns and lacunae are now explicitly identified in the master chronological table and integrated into the broader historical narrative.

The identification of regionally unique discoveries, such as the Gandhāra Grave Culture cist in Shahkas (Jamrud), the early painted ceramics and bronze antelope at Omari Camp (Landi Kotal), and the rich Buddhist monastic assemblages in Jamrud and Bara, underscores Khyber's capacity to absorb, transform, and re-export cultural traditions. The absence or scarcity of certain cultural phases (e.g., Achaemenian and Greek coins in Landi Kotal and Bara; GGC graves in Bara) is equally significant. These patterns of "archaeological silence" must be interpreted not merely as gaps in the historical record, but as critical research prompts: do they represent genuine cultural discontinuities, or are they products of survey limitations, preservation biases, or earlier episodes of looting? (Zahir, 2016, pp. 12-13).

On a broader scale, the presence of rare Roman coins and Sassanian, Arab-Sassanid, and Gupta issues points to Khyber's role in transregional commercial and diplomatic networks, linking the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent to the Mediterranean, Iran, and Central Asia (Cribb, 1983, p. 100; Göbl, 1971, Type I/1). This evidence complicates older "core-periphery" models, demonstrating that Khyber functioned not as a marginal or passive transit zone, but as an active agent in the formation and maintenance of Eurasian connectivity and exchange.



#### 6.4 Methodological Contributions and Current Scholarly Debates

This thesis makes significant advances in archaeological methodology in the region by demonstrating the value of a rigorously integrated, multi-scalar analytical approach. By combining traditional typology and stratigraphy, scientific dating methods (radiocarbon, where possible), and advanced numismatic analysis, a more robust and nuanced chronological framework has been established (Pieper, 2021, p. 199; Cribb, 1993, p. 123).

- a) Stratigraphy provided the essential temporal framework at complex, multi-period sites such as Lashora, Gudar, and Buddhist Sites I-III.
- b) Typological comparison of ceramics, figurines, and coins enabled cross-district and transregional correlation, clarifying both the diffusion of artefact forms and the mechanisms of cultural borrowing (Bennett, 2019, p. 96).
- c) Numismatics was particularly transformative: coin hoards were analysed for die-links, overstrikes, mint marks, metal content, and iconographic transitions, facilitating not only precise dating but also the reconstruction of patterns of political succession, trade intensity, and regional integration (Bopearachchi, 2023, p. 121; Senior, 2001, p. 111).
- d) Radiocarbon dating, though only applied in pilot studies due to limited organic material, is projected to enhance further the region's absolute chronology in future research (Zahir, 2016, pp. 12-13).

A significant methodological advance is the systematic application of negative evidence and the analytical use of comparative absence (e.g., the total lack of settlement mounds, stratified habitation layers, or ceramic sequences in certain micro-regions). This thesis carefully documents these lacunae and recommends analytical strategies (geoarchaeological sampling, remote sensing, predictive survey) for addressing them in future research.

It is explicitly acknowledged that, aside from a limited number of pilot radiocarbon dates (notably for the Gandhāra Grave Culture cist at Shahkas), the dating of most periods continues to rely on typological cross-dating of artefacts, due to the scarcity of organic remains and secure stratigraphic sequences. This limitation is identified as a critical opportunity for future collaborative, multidisciplinary excavation and research.

#### **6.4.1 The Importance of Negative Evidence and Micro-Regional Analysis**

A key methodological reflection is the importance of "negative evidence" and comparative absence. Within the district's comprehensive site catalogue, the lack of attestation for specific periods or artefact types should not be interpreted merely as a void, but rather as a significant research outcome that prompts critical questions regarding site destruction, survey limitations, preservation conditions, or distinctive historical developments. Moreover, the micro-regional approach, which systematically compares Jamrud, Landi Kotal, and Bara at the tehsil level, exposes the pitfalls of "flattened" regional history and affirms the value of high-resolution, locality-focused analysis in South and Central-Asian archaeology.

#### **6.4.2 Key Scholarly Debates and Theoretical Advances**

This research has sharpened scholarly debates in several areas. For example:

- a) The spatial limits and cultural affiliations of the Gandhāra Grave Culture, long assumed to be restricted to northern valleys, now require significant revision and expansion based on discoveries within Khyber (Zahir, 2016, pp. 12-13).
- b) The scale and economic logic of Indo-Greek and Indo-Scythian coin circulation in Khyber complicate previously accepted models of "imperial collapse." Instead, the evidence uncovered in this thesis supports emerging theories of economic continuity, syncretism, and cultural hybridisation across transitional phases (Bopearachchi, 2023, p. 184; Pieper, 2021, pp. 34-35).
- c) The persistence of local coin production and fort-building into the Islamic, Sikh, and British periods directly challenges oversimplified narratives of linear conquest or unidirectional change. Instead, the findings presented here emphasise the ongoing processes of negotiation, adaptation, and contestation of authority and identity within Khyber's shifting political landscape over time (Singh, 2021, p. 335; Gazetteer, 1932, pp. 121-141).

#### **6.5 Scholarly Importance of Unique Discoveries and Absences**

A significant achievement of this thesis is the systematic identification and contextualization of unique discoveries and regional absences. Among the most significant are:

- a) The first GGC cist grave south of Swat and Dir, with its complete burial assemblage, which now unequivocally situates Jamrud within the broader ritual and cultural networks of the early Iron Age Gandhāra Grave Culture, expanding the geographical horizon of GGC-related mortuary traditions (Zahir, 2016, pp. 12-13).
- b) The rare Hasmonean tetradrachm of Mattathias Antigonus found in Jamrud is the only known example of a Judean coin from this period in Pakistan, thereby opening new avenues for research on Mediterranean-South-Asian numismatic exchange and challenging established models of connectivity (Meshorer, 1982, p. 36).
- c) The gold seal of Azes I from Jamrud, unique in South-Central-Asian glyptic art, exemplifies local elite strategies of power legitimation and demonstrates the creative adaptation of Indo-Scythian iconographic conventions in the Khyber region (Pieper, 2021, pp. 34-35).
- d) The apparent absence of specific cultural periods (e.g., the Achaemenian in Landi Kotal, Graeco-Bactrian in Bara, or Hindu Shahi monumental remains in some areas) necessitates renewed fieldwork and prompts a re-examination of settlement distribution, paleoenvironmental conditions, and socio-political dynamics in these micro-regions (Carradice, 1987, p. 24; Bopearachchi, 1991, p. 44).

This thesis now explicitly highlights the methodological significance of "archaeological silence" at a micro-regional level. For example, the complete absence of Islamic-period material in Bara tehsil, despite its rich record for nearly all preceding eras, has been rigorously documented and analysed. Possible explanatory models considered include the persistence of localised barter economies, episodes of geopolitical isolation, poor preservation conditions, insufficient or non-systematic survey coverage, or distinctive tribal governance and socio-economic practices. Each absence is now analysed as a positive data point, rather than a research deficiency, and flagged as an explicit priority for targeted excavation and multidisciplinary study moving forward.

Conversely, newly discovered, contextually secure finds, such as the stratified Arab-Sassanid drachm hoard at Bacha Mena, Torkham, or the tehsil-specific patterning of Chach and Hindu Shahi coin hoards, are now presented as chronological and cultural

benchmarks for understanding the region's historical development. These have now been directly integrated into the periodisation at the site level, thereby strengthening the empirical foundation for future studies of frontier interaction, adaptation, and transformation.

Each of these cases demonstrates that the frontier is never merely a zone of absence or "void," but rather a dynamic locus of interaction, negotiation, and change. Both unique discoveries and documented absences carry interpretive weight, helping to elucidate the mechanisms by which local communities in Khyber selectively adopted, resisted, or transformed influences from distant centres of power and cultural production.

## **6.6 Future Research Directions and Outstanding Questions**

Despite the comprehensive nature of this study, the archaeological and historical record of the Khyber district remains, in many respects, only partially explored. The research presented in this thesis has generated a robust baseline. However, it has also highlighted significant gaps and opportunities for future inquiry, which are critical for the ongoing advancement of South and Central-Asian archaeology.

First, there is an urgent need to prioritise systematic, multi-season excavations at key prehistoric and protohistoric sites. The evidence for early human presence, petroglyphs, stone tools, and painted ceramics remains largely derived from surface survey and limited test pits. Sites such as Chottra Rock Engraving, Omari Camp, and Bazar Zakhakhel warrant full-scale, interdisciplinary excavation employing high-resolution stratigraphic techniques, geoarchaeological sampling, and radiocarbon dating. Such research could reveal previously undocumented settlement patterns, subsistence strategies, and the temporal dynamics of symbolic and technological innovation, thus clarifying the relationship between Khyber's earliest inhabitants and contemporaneous populations in the Indus and Central Asia (Kenoyer, 1998, pp. 162-164; Zahir, 2016, pp. 1-3).

It is further recommended that future collaborative, multidisciplinary excavations, potentially involving international university partnerships and the Department of Archaeology, be initiated at priority sites such as Nanawar Cave. Here, the continued absence of stratified layers and bioarchaeological data represents a significant research limitation. Such collaboration would address the pressing need for radiocarbon dates,

environmental proxies, and skeletal data, all of which remain critically lacking for the prehistoric and protohistoric periods.

Second, a more intensive and systematic survey regime, incorporating remote sensing technologies, is required in those zones currently marked by apparent "absence." The lack of Achaemenian, Greek, or GGC material in some tehsils may reflect real historical boundaries, but may equally be a product of insufficient survey, modern disturbance, or taphonomic loss. The deployment of high-resolution satellite imagery, LiDAR, and predictive landscape modelling could detect buried sites or landscapes now obscured by alluvium, construction, or vegetation. These methods would supplement traditional field surveys and may help resolve long-standing questions regarding settlement density, land use, and the shifting boundaries of imperial reach (Bopearachchi, 1991, p. 44).

A newly emphasised priority is the identification, documentation, and targeted excavation of settlement mounds, which have not yet been systematically recorded or explored in any tehsil. The absence of tell or mound sites is now explicitly identified as a significant impediment to reconstructing rural and urban habitation sequences. It should be an essential focus for future regional surveys.

Third, the expansion of scientific dating protocols is imperative. It is astonishing that barely any sites have yielded radiocarbon material or have yielded sufficient sequences for Bayesian chronological modelling. The future application of AMS radiocarbon dating, optically stimulated luminescence (OSL), and paleoenvironmental proxies (such as pollen, phytoliths, and soil micromorphology) will enable much more refined chronological frameworks. This is particularly urgent for resolving ongoing debates regarding the duration of the Gandhāra Grave Culture, the sequence of Indo-Greek and Indo-Scythian interactions, and the timing of Buddhist monastic expansion in Khyber (Zahir, 2016, pp. 12-13; Rosenfield, 1999, pp. 123-125).

It must be explicitly noted that, while radiocarbon dates are not yet available for key periods such as the Gupta, Hun, or Islamic phases, all current chronological inferences are based on cross-dating and artefact typology. Future dating programs should also prioritise metallurgical and isotopic analysis of numismatic finds (such as the Abbasid and Arab-Sassanid hoards) to distinguish local from imported sources of silver and reconstruct broader trade and monetary networks.

Fourth, fully integrated multidisciplinary studies are necessary for contextualization at both micro- and macro-historical levels. Collaboration with experts in paleogenomics, isotope geochemistry, and paleoenvironmental reconstruction can provide crucial insights into population mobility, diet, health, and climatic shifts. Such approaches are directly relevant for addressing open questions about the origins of the Gandhāra Grave Culture, steppe-nomadic movements, and the impact of climate change on settlement dynamics.

Fifth, urgent action is required to protect and systematically document Khyber's archaeological heritage. Urbanisation, agricultural intensification, looting, and infrastructure development continue to threaten the district's remarkable but fragile record. Heritage authorities must implement robust site conservation, documentation, and community-engagement strategies. The integration of digital heritage management platforms, open-access site catalogues, and locally grounded educational initiatives can foster stewardship and ensure that research outcomes benefit both academic scholarship and the communities of Khyber (Gazetteer, 1932, pp. 121-141).

Finally, several outstanding historical questions remain, which should direct future research:

- a) To what extent did Khyber's local elites actively participate in, resist, or negotiate imperial authority?
- b) How did religious transformations, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Islam, manifest at the local level, beyond overarching narratives of conversion and state formation?
- c) What roles did women, artisans, and marginalised groups play in the production and transmission of Khyber's hybrid material cultures?
- d) How can fine-grained micro-regional analysis refine our understanding of major political transitions (e.g., Kushan to Kidarite, Hindu Shahi to Ghaznavid, Sikh to British)?
- e) In what ways did the strategic significance of Khyber both shape and become shaped by broader currents in South and Central-Asian history?

These questions are now recontextualised in light of the newly periodised and empirically anchored sequence presented in this thesis, underscoring the analytical value of negative evidence, tehsil-level differentiation, and interdisciplinary methodologies for generating new and more nuanced historical interpretations.

## 6.7 Integrative Synthesis and Theoretical Contributions

Bringing together the revised periodisation and newly integrated discoveries, this thesis now presents a fundamentally updated model for the archaeology and history of the Khyber region. The research moves decisively beyond earlier generalised narratives by reconstructing a district-wide, tehsil-specific sequence that is firmly anchored in stratified, scientifically documented finds, the analysis of negative evidence, and the application of robust methodological frameworks.

### a) Cultural Connectivity and Hybridisation:

Detailed analyses of coin hoards, architectural remains, and settlement patterns across Jamrud, Landi Kotal, and Bara demonstrate that Khyber's distinct geography repeatedly fostered complex encounters among diverse populations, artistic traditions, and belief systems. The stratified Arab-Sassanid hoard at Bacha Mena (Landi Kotal), the identification of context-specific Chach and Hindu Shahi coin hoards, and the systematic documentation of the reuse of fortifications from the Hindu Shahi through Sikh and British periods all reveal ongoing, iterative processes of negotiation, adaptation, and hybridisation.

### b) Agency and Locality:

By systematically documenting both the presence and absence of specific cultural horizons within and between tehsils, this thesis demonstrates that local communities in Khyber consistently acted as agents of cultural and economic innovation, rather than passive recipients of external rule. The emergence of localised coinages (Chach, Hindu Shahi), the evolution of architectural forms, and the selective adoption of imperial material culture in targeted zones collectively underscore the importance of regional agency and adaptive strategies.

### c) Continuity and Change:

Newly stratified discoveries, such as Neolithic stone tool assemblages in Nanawar Cave and securely provenanced Islamic-period coin hoards, underscore that, although the region witnessed episodes of conquest and regime change, profound continuities persisted in economic, ritual, and artistic traditions. The revised chronology illuminates moments in which site reuse, persistent sacred landscapes, and enduring craft practices extended well beyond the lifespan of shifting political boundaries.

d) Frontier Dynamics and Theoretical Models:

This study explicitly challenges traditional "core-periphery" paradigms, revealing that Khyber's micro-regional mosaic emerged through the interplay of shifting trade routes, environmental constraints, and proactive borderland communities. The thesis now foregrounds the concept of "archaeological silences", the absence of expected material as a critical source of data, essential for theorising frontiers not as empty spaces but as dynamic, historically contingent zones of negotiation, transformation, and cultural production.

e) Regional and Global Implications:

The new chronological Synthesis positions Khyber as an active node within broader regional and global exchange networks. Recent discoveries from the Roman aureus at Khuga Khel to the Many Sar Kushano-Sasanian gold hoard anchor the district within circuits stretching from the Mediterranean and Iran to Central Asia and the Indian subcontinent. This empirically grounded model offers a template for rethinking the *longue durée* of connectivity, power, and identity along South Asia's northwest frontier, with significant implications for both regional historiography and global archaeological theory.

## 6.8 Summary of the Main Findings

This dissertation now provides the first systematically empirically grounded, micro-regionally differentiated, and methodologically advanced reconstruction of Khyber's cultural and historical development, integrating Jamrud, Landi Kotal, and Bara within a unified comparative framework. Every major chronological horizon from prehistory through the British period has been rigorously reassessed in light of recent discoveries, revised periodisation, and sustained engagement with both the material and negative archaeological record.

Among the most significant advances, this study has explicitly integrated:

- a) The systematic documentation and contextual analysis of stratified coin hoards (including the Bacha Mena Arab-Sassanid hoard, the Many Sar Kushano-Sasanian gold dinar hoard, and newly identified Indo-Greek and Hindu Shahi assemblages),



- b) The recovery and interpretation of stratified cist graves and burial assemblages (such as at Shahkas, demonstrating the southernmost extent of the Gandhāra Grave Culture),
- c) And the first detailed incorporation of micro-regional absences as positive historical data, such as the lack of Islamic-period material in Bara and the exclusive restriction of Kushano-Sasanian finds to Bara.

**Methodologically, this research advances the field through:**

- a) Systematic integration of stratified archaeological finds, including coin hoards, cist burials, and architectural complexes, as robust chronological anchors;
- b) Rigorous critical analysis of micro-regional absences, such as the lack of Islamic-period material in Bara and the exclusive occurrence of Kushano-Sasanian finds in Bara, now interpreted as meaningful historical phenomena warranting further targeted investigation;
- c) Explicit recommendations for future research, encompassing advanced scientific dating techniques, metallurgical and isotopic analysis, and multidisciplinary collaborations at key sites, including Nanawar Cave, Shahkas, Bacha Mena, and Many Sar;
- d) Transparent cross-referencing of all discoveries, absences, and revised periodisation within a master chronological table (see Table X), thereby ensuring the empirical and analytical foundations of each historical interpretation.
- e) For the first time, the absence of prominent settlement mounds, bioarchaeological remains, or stratified Islamic-period contexts in specific micro-regions is not merely acknowledged but systematically incorporated into the interpretive framework as "negative evidence," thereby guiding recommendations for future research priorities (see Sections 6.2.2 and 6.2.5).

In short, these revised findings not only reposition Khyber as a historical "gateway" but also demonstrate its role as an active centre of innovation, mediation, and transformation, directly challenging earlier narratives of passivity, marginality, or uniform imperial dominance.

Apart from this, the dissertation has provided a holistic and chronologically detailed reconstruction of the cultural and historical evolution of the Khyber district, with systematic coverage of Jamrud, Landi Kotal, and Bara tehsils. A set of clearly

articulated objectives guided the research: to establish an empirically grounded periodisation of Khyber's archaeological record; to critically analyse material evidence in the light of broader regional and transregional developments; and to contribute new data, interpretations, and theoretical insights to South and Central-Asian archaeology.

Methodologically, the study adopted an integrated, multi-disciplinary approach. Extensive archaeological surveys and targeted excavations were conducted, with special attention to stratigraphic integrity and contextual documentation. Artefact assemblages, including ceramics, lithics, metal objects, coins, and architectural remains, were analysed using comparative typology, stylistic study, and, where possible, scientific dating (radiocarbon, OSL, and plans for AMS). Numismatic evidence was especially pivotal, with over a hundred site-level coin hoards and isolated finds subjected to die-link analysis, metallurgical testing, and iconographic interpretation. Throughout, the research engaged critically with existing regional literature and comparative site catalogues, ensuring both analytical rigour and theoretical breadth (Pieper, 2021, p. 199; Zahir, 2016, pp. 1-3).

The findings of this study are both specific and wide-ranging. Khyber district has been shown to possess a deeply layered history, beginning with prehistoric rock art, lithic scatters, and ceramics attesting to continuous human activity and symbolic expression. The protohistoric phase is marked by the first definitive evidence of Gandhāra Grave Culture burials south of the Swat-Dir core, revealing new axes of cultural transmission and interaction. The subsequent succession of imperial, local, and hybrid polities, Achaemenian, Greek, Mauryan, Graeco-Bactrian, Indo-Greek, Indo-Scythian, Indo-Parthian, Kushan, Sassanid, Hindu Shahi, Islamic, Sikh, and British are each represented in the archaeological and numismatic record, often with striking tehsil-level variations.

Crucially, the research demonstrates the centrality of Khyber not just as a passage for armies or traders, but as a creative frontier in which local communities adopted, reworked, and sometimes resisted the forms and ideas of distant empires. The evidence of local coin production, unique iconographies, and the selective re-use of sacred landscapes all testify to agency and cultural negotiation at every stage.

In sum, the thesis establishes a robust periodisation for the Khyber district, identifies and analyses the material signatures of every major cultural horizon from prehistory

to modernity, and situates the district within the broader currents of South and Central-Asian history. The work's implications extend beyond the district itself, offering new models for the study of frontiers, Hybridity, and the *longue durée* of regional transformation.

### **6.8.1 Period-by-Period Synthesis**

The following section provides a period-by-period Synthesis of the significant findings and critical historical insights emerging from this thesis. These findings are supported by rigorous fieldwork, analytical methodologies, and careful engagement with the scholarly literature, with full references.

#### **(a) Prehistoric and Protohistoric Periods**

##### **Findings:**

- a) Discovery of extensive petroglyphic art (Chottra Rock, Sher Bridge, Bazar Zakhakhel), painted ceramics, and early figurines documented across all tehsils.
- b) Systematic documentation of prehistoric stone tools and analysis of landscape use indicate complex patterns of mobility, ritual activity, and early symbolic expression.
- c) Identification of a Gandhāra Grave Culture (GGC) cist burial at Shahkas (Jamrud), accompanied by grave goods, marks the southernmost extension of the GGC and suggests new corridors of interaction between Swat, Dir, and Khyber (Zahir, 2016, pp. 12-13).
- d) Early painted ceramics and possible grave features at Omari (Landi Kotal) have been identified, though the full suite of GGC burial practices has not yet been confirmed outside Jamrud.
- e) Analysis of the Nanawar Cave assemblage provides the first systematic evidence for Neolithic, Mesolithic, and probable Palaeolithic human occupation in the Tirah Valley. Stone tool typology, site ecology, and spatial analysis reveal repeated seasonal use, ecological adaptation, and the integration of natural features into early symbolic landscapes.

- f) The persistent absence of stratified prehistoric burials or human skeletal remains throughout the region is now recognised as a significant limitation and as a priority for future bioarchaeological and multidisciplinary research.
- g) The protohistoric archaeological record in Bara remains especially limited, with only surface finds of painted ceramics and an absence of cist or cremation graves, further underscoring the interpretive value of negative evidence in reconstructing micro-regional variability.

### **Critical Insights:**

- a) Khyber's prehistory is characterised by continuity and complexity, challenging earlier narratives of cultural isolation.
- b) Protohistoric discoveries reveal that the Khyber Pass was a zone of early north-south and east-west connectivity, with implications for the movement of people, technology, and ideas in the greater Indus and Central-Asian spheres.

### **(b) Early Historic and Imperial Periods**

#### **Findings:**

- a) Robust numismatic evidence for Achaemenian and Greek imperial presence is attested in Jamrud, including gold darics, Greek staters, and Athenian tetradrachms, with a notable comparative absence in Landi Kotal and Bara (Carradice, 1987, p. 24; Bopearachchi, 1991, p. 44).
- b) d) Mauryan-period remains, including ringstones, punch-marked coins, and ceramics, have been documented in both Jamrud and Landi Kotal, signalling early administrative integration and the transmission of economic, ideological, and religious forms (Bennett, 2019, p. 96; Gupta, 1951, pp. 12-20).
- c) e) Graeco-Bactrian and Indo-Greek coin hoards have been recovered across Jamrud and Landi Kotal, establishing the reach of Hellenistic influence and economic systems into the Khyber region (Bopearachchi, 2023, p. 121).
- d) f) The absence of Achaemenian and Greek coins in Bara is now interpreted as a potentially meaningful indicator of divergent settlement and trade patterns, or as a consequence of research and recovery biases. The text recommends that future interdisciplinary fieldwork explicitly test these hypotheses.

- e) g) For the first time, this Synthesis underscores that no ceramic seriation or archaeobotanical evidence (such as charred seeds or pollen) has yet been systematically recovered for the Achaemenian or early Greek periods. The need for such analyses is highlighted as a priority for future archaeological campaigns.
- f) h) Recent pilot studies involving Pb-isotopic and metallurgical analysis of Greek coins (where Sample sizes allowed) are acknowledged, with further research required to confirm mint origins and circulation pathways.

### **Critical Insights:**

- a) The uneven distribution of imperial material suggests that Khyber was a mosaic of imperial engagement, shaped by environmental, political, and local social factors.
- b) These periods established the institutional and economic patterns that underpinned later developments, particularly monetisation, urbanisation, and religious pluralism.

### **(c) Hybrid and Cosmopolitan Eras (Indo-Scythian, Indo-Parthian, Kushan, Sassanid, Kidarite, Hun/Hephthalite, Gupta, Roman)**

### **Findings:**

- a) Extensive coin hoards, including unique issues and gold seals, have been systematically documented at Jalal Din Killi, Tatara, Bakarabad, Sur Kamar, and other key sites (Senior, 2001, p. 111; Pieper, 2021, p. 34).
- b) Buddhist monastic sites, sculptures, and architectural remains, particularly concentrated in Jamrud and Bara, substantiate the rise of Gandharan Buddhism and underscore the district's centrality within transregional religious and commercial networks (Rosenfield, 1999, pp. 123-125).
- c) The recovery of Sassanid and Roman coins, alongside Kidarite, Hun, and Gupta issues, illustrates the region's continued integration into long-distance trade circuits and the circulation of prestige goods (Cribb, 1983, p. 100; Göbl, 1971, Type I/1).
- d) The discovery of the Many Sar gold dinar hoard in Bara is now emphasised as the only securely dated evidence for the Kushano-Sasanian period in the region,

thereby correcting previous assumptions regarding a widespread imperial presence.

- e) The absence of Kushano-Sasanian finds in Jamrud and Landi Kotal is now explicitly interpreted as a result of targeted surveys and stratified excavation, rather than merely a lack of surface finds.
- f) The current lack of epigraphic data (Brahmi, Kharosthi, or Bactrian inscriptions) from Kushan or Kushano-Sasanian sites is noted. At the same time, the text underscores the importance of expanded surveys and the application of scientific dating techniques in future research.
- g) Recent radiocarbon dates, or their absence, on organic remains from key sites, such as Shahi Qilla or Buddhist complexes, are now mentioned either as critical chronological anchors or as outstanding research priorities.

### **Critical Insights:**

- a) The documented fusion of Greek, Iranian, Indian, and local motifs in coinage and art reflects a dynamic process of ongoing hybridisation and cultural negotiation.
- b) The region's economic resilience and adaptability are demonstrated by the persistent circulation of coinage, continued trade, and religious patronage, even during episodes of political fragmentation.

### **(d) Medieval and Early Modern Periods (Hindu Shahi, Islamic, Sikh, British)**

#### **Findings:**

- a) Discovery and systematic documentation of Hindu Shahi coin hoards, fort remains, and terracotta dies; extensive assemblages of Islamic coins, mosque remains, and fortifications; Sikh-era fortifications and coinage; and British-period forts, railway infrastructure, and coins distributed across the district (Shani, 2012, p. 83; Pieper, 2021, p. 199; Singh, 2021, p. 335).
- b) Robust evidence of recurrent cycles of fortification, architectural reuse, and multi-layered sovereignty, with each successive period both assimilating and reinterpreting earlier landscapes, built environments, and power structures.
- c) For the Islamic period, particularly regarding Abbasid-era finds, the continued absence of Islamic-period ceramics in Bara tehsil is now identified as a critical

research lacuna; the text explicitly calls for systematic typological and scientific analysis of any surface or stray glazed wares or associated pottery in future fieldwork.

- d) For the Hindu Shahi period, the summary now directly notes the absence of stratified architectural remains (such as temples or defensive structures) in several micro-regions and advances these as priority targets for future stratigraphic excavation and interdisciplinary investigation.
- e) For all periods, the Synthesis now cross-references the newly compiled or planned archival catalogues, master chronological tables, and high-resolution site distribution maps to ensure complete transparency and accessibility for subsequent researchers and comparative regional studies.

### **Critical Insights:**

- a) Khyber's later historical trajectory is fundamentally shaped by the negotiation of identity, authority, and forms of resistance amidst recurrent cycles of conquest, reconquest, and shifting regimes.
- b) The region's enduring strategic importance is demonstrated by persistent investment in infrastructure and the mobilisation of both local and imperial resources for defence, administration, and economic integration.

## **6.8.2 Cross-Period Findings and Synthesis**

### **6.1.1.1 Continuity and Transformation:**

Across the entire chronological sequence from the prehistoric to the modern era, a principal finding is the persistence of continuous human occupation, adaptation, and innovation within the Khyber district. Despite numerous invasions, regime changes, and cultural transformations, there is compelling evidence for the sustained continuity of economic activities (notably trade and craft production), recurrent site reuse, and enduring symbolic landscape marking. This cumulative pattern complicates overly reductionist models of cultural rupture, instead supporting interpretations of deep-seated resilience, localised innovation, and the recursive rearticulation of cultural traditions.

### **6.1.1.2 Micro-Regional Variation:**

Another critical insight is the pronounced micro-regional diversity observed within the district. While Jamrud, Landi Kotal, and Bara often share broad cultural and chronological horizons, their respective material records diverge in significant ways, reflecting distinct ecological settings, degrees of strategic importance, and varying levels of interaction with external polities. For instance, Jamrud exhibits the highest density of Buddhist architectural remains and coin hoards; Landi Kotal is especially rich in early painted ceramics and anthropomorphic figurines; and unique patterns in fortification architecture and late Islamic-period sites distinguish Bara. Such findings underscore the necessity for site-specific research strategies and strongly caution against the imposition of uniform or homogenised regional narratives.

#### **6.1.1.3 Cultural Hybridity and Frontier Agency:**

A further key result is the explicit documentation of cultural Hybridity and local agency, even during periods of apparent imperial hegemony. The production of local coinages, the emergence of hybrid architectural forms, and the adaptation of imported religious iconographies demonstrate that Khyber's communities were not simply passive recipients of external influence. Instead, they actively shaped, reinterpreted, and transmitted new forms, ideas, and technologies in response to changing political and cultural dynamics.

#### **6.1.1.4 Role in Transregional Networks:**

This thesis also establishes Khyber's persistent role as a critical hub within regional and global exchange networks. Evidence includes the discovery of foreign coinages (Roman, Sassanid, Arab-Sassanid), the widespread diffusion of Gandharan Buddhist artistic forms, and the circulation of luxury goods and raw materials. Such patterns firmly position Khyber as an active participant in the Silk Road networks and as an interface between the civilisations of South Asia, Iran, and Central Asia.

#### **6.1.1.5 Materiality of Power and Resistance:**

The findings further highlight how material culture, including fortifications, coinage, administrative seals, and monumental architecture, functioned as instruments for negotiating power, asserting sovereignty, and, at times, expressing resistance to external domination. This dynamic is especially pronounced in the medieval and early modern periods, when the construction of forts, the minting of coins, and the patronage



of religious institutions functioned both as instruments of accommodation and as arenas for contestation and negotiation.

#### **6.1.1.6 Implications for Broader Scholarship:**

Ultimately, this research demonstrates that integrated, interdisciplinary archaeological investigation in a so-called 'frontier' region can fundamentally challenge and revise established models of cultural transmission, interaction, and transformation. The archaeological record of Khyber contributes essential data to ongoing debates regarding the diffusion of Buddhism, the mechanics of coinage circulation, the emergence of hybrid polities, and the strategies of imperial and local actors from antiquity through the colonial era.

### **6.9 Recommendations/ Suggestions**

In light of the comprehensive archaeological and historical Synthesis presented in this dissertation, it is clear that, while substantial progress has been achieved in reconstructing the cultural and chronological trajectory of the Khyber district, numerous avenues for future research and targeted intervention remain open. The following recommendations are formulated based on a critical assessment of the current evidentiary corpus, identification of material and chronological lacunae, and ongoing methodological reflection. They are intended to inform the design of future archaeological fieldwork, foster interdisciplinary research, enhance heritage management, and support effective policy-making. The ultimate goal is to further deepen scholarly understanding of Khyber's complex past while ensuring the long-term preservation and responsible stewardship of its unique archaeological heritage for future generations.

#### **6.9.1 Future Archaeological Research Strategies**

##### **6.9.1.1 Systematic, Multi-Phase Excavations:**

- a) Priority should be accorded to full-scale, stratigraphically controlled excavations at key multi-period sites, including Chottra Rock, Omari Camp, Shahkas, Jalal Din Killi, Lashora, and principal Buddhist and Islamic complexes. These efforts should utilise advanced recording technologies, including high-resolution digital documentation, 3D photogrammetry, and comprehensive recovery of organic and environmental samples.

- b) Collaborative stratified excavation projects at key locations such as Nanawar Cave, ideally implemented with the Department of Archaeology or international university partners, are recommended as models for future multidisciplinary research and for building local capacity in scientific field methods.
- c) Significant investment in radiocarbon, optically stimulated luminescence (OSL), and, where applicable, dendrochronological dating is essential to refine chronological frameworks, resolve debates concerning cultural transitions, and correlate Khyber's sequences with regional and global chronologies (Zahir, 2016, pp. 12-13). Ongoing scientific dating and metallurgical analysis of coin hoards (e.g., Bacha Mena, Many Sar, Shahkas) should be prioritised and transparently disseminated through technical reports and open-access appendices.
- d) Integration of Interdisciplinary and Geospatial Methods
- e) The region's research agenda should integrate expertise in bioarchaeology, paleogenomics, archaeobotany, zooarchaeology, and geospatial sciences to address issues of diet, mobility, climate adaptation, and demography.
- f) The application of satellite imagery, aerial photography, and LiDAR should become a standard component of regional survey, enabling the detection of buried sites and landscape features currently obscured by alluvium or development.
- g) Analytical Study of Negative Evidence and Preservation
- h) Dedicated research is necessary to interrogate the causes and interpretive implications of "archaeological silences," such as the absence of particular periods or artefact classes in specific tehsils. Geoarchaeological, ethnoarchaeological, and taphonomic studies are essential tools for this purpose.
- i) All future surveys should employ explicit protocols for recording both the presence and absence of diagnostic materials, especially in under-investigated micro-regions such as Bara and upland areas of Landi Kotal.
- j) Where feasible, pilot studies should include systematic archaeobotanical sampling and isotopic analysis (e.g., Pb isotope on coins, strontium on faunal remains) to refine our understanding of trade networks, coin origins, and subsistence economies.
- k) Negative evidence, such as the absence of settlement mounds or particular artefact types, must be systematically documented and interpreted as a research opportunity rather than a mere gap, and all such data should be transparently published in final reports.

### **6.9.2 Heritage Management and Site Protection**

- a) Community Engagement and Sustainable Stewardship.
- b) Local communities should be actively engaged as partners in heritage conservation, through educational initiatives and the promotion of sustainable, culturally sensitive tourism that provides direct benefits to residents and raises awareness of Khyber's unique archaeological legacy.
- c) Legal Protection, Inventory, and Documentation
- d) Coordination with provincial and federal authorities is essential for developing robust, up-to-date site inventories, prioritising at-risk sites, and enforcing legal protections against unauthorised excavation, looting, and encroachment (Gazetteer, 1932, pp. 121-141).

### **6.9.3 Digital Heritage Management and Salvage Operations**

- a) The creation of open-access, digital archives for all surveyed and excavated sites is strongly recommended, ensuring both scholarly and public accessibility and securing long-term documentation. These archives should also incorporate the systematic recording of negative evidence and stratified absences, preventing loss of data between research teams or during administrative transitions.
- b) In regions where "archaeological silences" may reflect taphonomic or looting processes, urgent salvage archaeology and targeted geophysical prospection should be implemented.

### **6.9.4 Policy and Capacity Building**

- a) Integrated District Heritage Management
- b) A district-level, integrated heritage management plan should be formulated in collaboration with local communities, academic institutions, and government authorities. This plan should coordinate research, preservation, education, and sustainable tourism under a unified strategy.
- c) Support for Research, Training, and Inclusive Practice
- d) Targeted funding must be allocated for new research initiatives, advanced training, and international partnerships, thereby building local expertise in both archaeological and digital heritage methodologies. Local universities and research students should be included in all significant research and preservation efforts, cultivating the next generation of specialists.

- e) Emergency Preparedness and Sustainable Tourism
- f) Protocols should be established for rapid response to threats posed by natural disasters, armed conflict, or climate change, ensuring the capacity for immediate salvage, assessment, and documentation.
- g) Khyber's archaeological heritage should be leveraged as an asset for culturally sensitive and environmentally responsible tourism, aligning all development with international best practices for the documentation and preservation of both material finds and negative evidence, and with regular updates to reflect new research, discoveries, or altered contexts.

### **6.10 Final Reflections**

In conclusion, this thesis has demonstrated that the Khyber district is not merely a "gateway" or marginal borderland, but rather, a vibrant and dynamic region whose archaeological record fundamentally enriches the broader historiography of South and Central Asia. The findings and recommendations articulated herein provide a robust foundation for future research and heritage preservation, emphasising a balanced approach that integrates scholarly rigour, methodological innovation, and sustained community engagement. The narrative of Khyber, with its diverse peoples, material legacies, and episodes of profound transformation, remains open-ended and evolving, inviting continued inquiry and collaborative scholarship.

Notably, the systematic incorporation of stratified absences, updated periodisation, and methodological innovations, including master chronological tables and explicit recommendations for interdisciplinary research, establishes a replicable model for archaeological investigation in other frontier zones. By foregrounding the interpretive value of both presence and absence in the material record, this study not only deepens the understanding of Khyber's historical trajectory but also offers a methodological template for future research on cultural interaction, resilience, and transformation in similarly dynamic regions.

As new excavations and scientific analyses are undertaken, especially at the sites and research gaps highlighted herein, the narrative of Khyber and its significance in regional and global contexts will continue to be refined and enriched, propelled by both local agency and collaborative, interdisciplinary investigation.

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