

Ancient corridor of Pakistan linkages with rest of other world and its impact on trade culture and pilgrimages

Nighat Aslam¹

Abstract

Geographically in ancient times the term Pakistan applied to the North West region of Subcontinent. Owing to its peculiar geographical location ancient Pakistan had been closer contact with Afghanistan, China, Central Asian and West through Gandhara with many routes. The routes gradually converted into roads and highways. In ancient Pakistan many types of corridors developed such as king highway, caravan routes, pilgrims routes, trade routes and military routes. Grand Trunk road is the best example of king highway which was established by the Achaemenians dynasty. The Uttarapatha was the major rote of commercial and cultural exchange between the North-western borderlands of South Asia and Northern India. It was a Northern route started from Magadha through the Gangetic Basin and passes running through the region of Gandhara to far-away Western Asia as a royal trade route combined with a constant inflow of immigrants from highland Asia. The Silk road (modern Karakoram highway) was a historic road from Taxila to Kashghar via Thaha Kot, Chilas, Gilgit and Hunza. The Silk route mainly a pilgrim route but provided an opportunity to discover the possibilities of trade. Khyber Pass route is the most famous route attracted migrants and armies. Migration of Aryans, Greeks, Scythian, Kushan and Huns developed a new political and cultural history of this region and served as an introduction pad for Buddhist spread across the Hindu Kush and Karakorum mountains. All routes from the highland of Afghanistan, China and Central Asia met at Taxila and it marked an important junction of routes to Kashmir and Chilas. The location of Taxila at the main gate to India has a network of routes connected to ancient Pakistan, Central Asia, Iran, Afghanistan and China. It was mainly responsible for its development into a political economic and cultural Centre. Besides these, there were many routes and roads; between Sindh and Punjab, Gandhara and Northern India, plains of Punjab to Afghanistan and Central Asia and Gandhara to China. These main routes exercised for commercial and cultural exchange between the Northwestern and Northern India to Mathura, Taxila and Bactria in Northern Afghanistan and Western Central Asia and played a significant role in the development of culture and civilization in South Asia. The ancient routes of Pakistan provide different discoveries regarding many cultural values and its phases of expansion in south Asian region. This research paper highlights the different ancient routes of Pakistan linkages with Central Asia China Afghanistan and India. The cultural activities developed different periods linking with ancient route. In this regard 'culture' is concerned with the transaction of political social and economic values. Evidences of these exchanges are linked with the existence of coins and

¹ Assistant professor in History Government College for women Satellite town Bahawalpur Pakistan
nighataslam61@yahoo.com