

BAOLIS, BRIDGES AND CARAVAN SARAIS ALONG THE GRAND ANCIENT TRUNK ROAD IN N.W.F.P.

Taj Ali

1. The Ancient Grand Trunk Road: A Brief History

This study describes only a small portion of the ancient route followed by kings, invaders, traders and merchants since remote antiquity. Roads and communication system under a competent administration and management play a vital role in the socio-economic development of a country.

When this Grand Trunk Road came into being? We do not know. Earlier study conducted on the subject has collected and explained many literary references about its existence in the pre-Islamic period (1). We have scant information about the administration of ancient routes and the roadside facilities provided for the convenience and comfort of travellers and traders during the early Islamic period. Since early Islamic period, it remained the foremost duty of the king to construct and maintain roads, bridges and sarais and to provide safe travelling to every one. The earliest reference to sarai on the main routes occurs during the reign of Muhammad Bin Tughlaq (1324-51). He ordered that a sarai should be built after each stage between Delhi and his new capital Daulatabad.(2). His successor, Firoz Shah Tughlaq (1351-87) who is styled as the builder king of India constructed as many as 120 hospices and inns only in Delhi. These houses were, indeed, intended for the comfort of the travelers who were allowed free boarding and lodging for three days (3).

Sher Shah Suri surpassed all his predecessors in providing roadside facilities to the travelers and merchants throughout his kingdom. He also ensured safe and comfortable travelling along the major routes. The fourth and eleventh *farman* explain the administration and management of road and communication system during his reign. In the fourth *farman*, the administration is directed to construct and maintain roads in good condition. Moreover, he also intended to link the capital with other parts of the kingdom and to provide safe journey to traders and travelers.

In the Eleventh *farman*, the superintendents of roads are directed to maintain roads in proper order. Trees should be planted on both sides of the roads. Sarais should be built on these roads at regular intervals for the comfort of travelers. Sher Shah Suri is

said to have constructed as many as 1700 sarais along the major routes. He constructed a sarai at a distance of every two *kuroh* for the maintenance of peace and for the convenience of homeless travelers.

Each sarai provided lodging facilities both for Muslims and Hindus, and at the gate of every sarai big jars full of water were kept for the distribution of water among Hindus as well as Muslims. Near every sarai Muslims were settled for the entertainment of Muslim travelers and Brahmans for the Hindus. Their duty was to provide them with cold and hot water, bed and food and ripe grain for their horses. It was his rule that whoever came to these sarais was supplied with provision according to his rank and grain and fodder for his cattle from government store. Markets were established near every sarai for sale and purchase. By the side of each sarai a village was founded and in every sarai there were built a well and a congregational mosque of burnt brick. An *imam* and a *muazzin* were appointed in the mosque and a custodian (*shahna*) and several watchmen were appointed to look after the sarai. They were all maintained from the income of the land near the sarai. On both sides of the road, shady fruit trees were planted, so that travelers might travel under the shade, while hot winds blow and might also take rest and repose under the trees when they got tired by their journey. During their stay at a sarai, they tethered their horses under the trees. Two writers were deputed at the gate of every sarai. Their duty was to record the particulars of every passerby (his name and the name of his residence) who came to the sarai, and then supply him provisions. A physician was stationed at every sarai to look after the health of the people of the locality. Bakers were also settled in the sarais and guard posts were created in the same places for the safety of travelers".(4)

For the protection of the road from thieves and highway robbers, Sher Shah Suri acted on the theory of local responsibility. Abbas Khan Sarwani records Sher Shah Suri's regulations in this context:

"For the protections and safety of the road from the molestation of the thieves and robbers etc, rules were framed as follows. He strictly ordered his governors that if a theft or robbery occurred in his *Mamlakat*, and the culprit was not detected, whatever the thief and

highway robber might have robbed would have to be compensated by the *muqaddam* of the place of occurrence and if it had occurred in such a place the jurisdiction of which was not known, then the muqaddams of the surrounding villages would have arrested the local inhabitant and compelled them to pay restitution. If after the payment of fine the muqaddams produced the thief and robber ensure their hunting places, the muqaddam of the village where the offenders lived, was liable to pay the amount taken as restitution previously from them and the thief and robber were to be punished severely in accordance with the holy religious law. If there was a murder case and the assassins absconded, the muqaddams were arrested in the above mentioned process and were put to prison and given a period within which they were to produce the murderers. If they produced the assassins or showed the place of their residence, the muqaddams were set free and the murderers were killed. But if the muqaddams of a village in the jurisdiction of which murder was committed, failed to this, they were put to death".(5)

Following the policy of Sher Shah Suri, his son and successor Islam Shah Suri issued orders that as "the sarais of Sher Shah were two miles distant from one another, one of similar form should be built between them for the convenience of the public; that mosque and a reservoir should be attached to them and that vessels of water and of victuals, cooked or uncooked should be always kept in readiness for the entertainment of Hindu as well as Muslim travelers". He further ordered that the sarai which Sher Shah had built and gardens he had laid out, should not be alienated and that no change should be made in their limits (6).

Emperor Akbar paid great attention to the construction and maintenance of sarais, baolis and roads. Qasim Khan, his Architect and Engineer, suggested that sarais (rest houses) should be established on the routes through out the empire so that the travellers might obtain repose (7). Akbar issued orders that poorhouses (sarais) should be erected in the various quarters of the capital and make them over to benevolent and generous persons so that poor and needy of the world might have a home with out having to look for it. In a short time orders were carried out and those without resources enjoyed the comfort of a home in a foreign country (8). Akbar ordered the dispatch of advance parties for the improvement of roads and construction of bridges over the rivers. On one occasion, while he was proceeding to Kashmir, he sent Qasim Khan along with 3000 stone cutters, mountain miners and splitters of rock and 2000 diggers to level the road (9). On his return journey from Kashmir, Akbar

halted near Nain Sukh river and Qasim Khan was sent in advance to look after the bridging of the Indus river (10). For the comfort and convenience of travelers, he (Akbar) ordered that every kos of the way from Agra to Ajmir, a *minar* should be built for the comforts of travelers. The *minar* should be adorned with deer-horns so that those who lost their way might have a mark (11).

Jahangir (1605-1628) issued special regulations regarding highway robbery and theft. He directed his administration that a sarai, a masjid and a well should be constructed on those portions of road which are far away from habitation, the *jagirdar* of the neighborhood were to build a sarai, a masjid and they were to dig a well to be the means of promoting cultivation and to induce and encourage people to settle them. If these places were near to Khalisa lands, the government official was to carry out these provisions (12). To encourage trade and commerce throughout his empire, Jahangir remitted the transit duties on merchandise on all commercial places on the way between Kabul and Hindustan which amounted to 123,00,000 *damas* (13). Emperor Shah Jehan (1628-58), the engineer king of India is famous for his building activities. He embarked on grand projects of royal buildings at Lahore, Delhi & Agra. His nobles such as Wazir Khan and Ali Mardan Khan are known for patronizing public buildings. Construction and maintenance of roads were properly looked after. During his march towards Qandahar, it is mentioned that Sadullah Khan crossed the Nilab with the royal forces and prince Aurangzeb reached from Multan and also crossed the river and accompanied his Royal Highness train (14). In this march Khalil Beg was sent in advance to level the roads and construct bridges on their way.

Following the footsteps of his father, Aurangzeb ordered that in all such places where there are not sarais and *rahats*, permanent and commodious sarais should be constructed at government cost. Each new sarai was provided with a *bazar*, a mosque, a well and a *hamam* inside it. Moreover, the older sarais were repaired and maintained in good condition (15).

After the decline of the Mughal dynasty and subsequently under the Sikh government, there was a political chaos in the region. Road and communication system declined to its lowest level due to insecurity. The roads and the roadside facilities were almost non-existent. Sarais were abandoned and gave a deserted look. With the arrival of the British in the middle of the 19th century, a revival of the route system took place. The British realized the significance of an excellent communication system and it was their necessity to have a

network of roads in the sub-continent for the establishment of their rule. They started the construction of metalled roads, bridges and railway lines for an easy and smooth movement of their forces to each and every corner of their domain. The highway from Lahore to Peshawar and Kabul was laid out in almost in the same alignment of the ancient medieval route.

The roads have remained almost the same, but the only change that occurred is in the communication system and advanced transport facilities. Time is moving very fast and the introduction of information technology has further improved and made easy the transaction of trade and commerce. It is the only reason of the decline of sarais, *baolis* and *kos-minars*.

References

1. Verma, H.C., Medieval Routes to India: Baghdad to Delhi. A study of trade and military routes, n.d., Lahore.
2. Dar, S.R., Caravanserais and Related Buildings in Pakistan: Systems and Structures. In: Journal of Asian Civilisations, Vol.XXII/1, P.104-125. Islamabad, 1999. On page 107. he states that F.A Khan has interpreted an E-shaped building to the east of the mosque at Bambhore as Serai.
3. Ibid., P. 107.
4. Khan, H., Sher Shah Suri, p. 332-33, Lahore, 1987.
5. Ibid. p.334
6. Elliot and Dow son, History of India as told by its own Historian, vol.v, p.486-87.rep. Lahore ,1976.
7. Abul Fazal, Akbarnama , (Eng. Trans. H. Beveridge) Vol. III, p.559, n.d., Rep. Lahore.
8. Ibid. p. 381
9. Ibid. p. 817
10. Ibid. p. 851
11. Ibid. p. 156
12. Elliot and Dowson, op.cit.Vol.VI, p.284-85,494
13. Ibid. p. 290-91
14. Elliot and Dowson. op.cit. Vol.VII. p. 95.
15. Dar, S.R., Op.cit, P.109.

2. The Ancient Grand Trunk Road in the NWFP

The ancient road in the NWFP only covers a small portion of the Grand Trunk Road between Delhi and Kabul. Prior to the arrival of the Mughals, our information about this route is sketchy and incomplete. With the arrival of the Mughals the picture becomes a little clear, as they have mentioned important halting stations, sarai etc. between Attock and Peshawar. Babar and his successors have left us valuable information about their itinerary between Attock and Peshawar. Their main halting stations were Attock (1), Sarai Bara (2), Sarai Daulatabad (3), Bagh-i-Sardar Khan (4) and Bagh-i-Peshawar or Bagh-i-Zafar (5). Babar, on the second occasion in March 1519, crossed river Indus on boats which were brought from Nilab. Next day he reached Bigram (Peshawar) and visited Gor-Khatri (6). Akbar the great on his way to Kabul crossed Indus River several times. In 1588, he encamped at the meeting point of the Indus and Kabul rivers. He left the main camp with an immense quantity of baggage on the banks of the Indus River and entrusted that area to Qasim Khan in order to subjugate the rebellions and to construct a bridge (on the Indus River). The standard moved forward and stopped on the bank of Kabul River. Next he reached to Daulatabad (7). Marching towards Kabul he stayed near Bigram and spent some time in Gor-Khatri, which is a shrine of Jogis (8).

Jahangir is more explicit in his itinerary and says "I encamped near the fort of Attock on the bank of river Nilab. In these days the Nilab was very full, insomuch that the bridge consisted of eighteen boats, over which people passed with great ease and security.... I embarked with the prince and a few attendants on a raft, and passing over the Nilab in safety, landed on the bank of Kabul River.... From that ground we moved, one march intervening, to my camp near Sarai Bara. on the opposite side of river Kabul, there is a fort built by Zain Khan Koka.... It is called Naushahra.... I moved to Sarai Daulatabad. (Next day) I arrived at the garden of Sardar Khan near Peshawar. Gor-Khatri, a famous place of worship amongst the Jogis, is in this neighborhood." (9)

Shah Jahan stayed in Peshawar on several occasions. In the first reference it is recorded that on 1st Rabi-us-Sani 1056 H. he crossed the Nilab River. On the 5th, he stayed in the building constructed by Amir-ul-Umra in the fort of Peshawar (10). On another occasion, it is stated that on the 23rd Ramazan 1059H. he encamped in Bagh-i-Zafar, Peshawar and on the 26th he crossed the Indus river (11). In 1062 H when he was coming back from Kabul, he

stayed in Bagh-i-Peshawar. On the eight Shawal, he left Peshawar and on the 11th he embarked on the bank of the Indus River. Due to heavy rains, the river was in high floods. The boat bridge constructed on fore mentioned river by Saifullah was washed away and later on he crossed the river at the ferry of Jalalia, where a bridge was constructed of forty boats (12).

Describing the advance of the imperial army towards Qandahar, it is mentioned that Saadullah Khan crossed the Nilab River with the royal forces and prince Aurangzeb reached from Multan and crossed the same river and accompanied His Royal Highness. In this marched Khalil Beg was sent in advance to level the road and construct bridges (13).

Historical literature is full of references that confirm that this ancient route remained almost unchanged during the succeeding centuries. Hugel in his travels reported that "at a little distance beyond the fort (of Attock) is the bridge of boats, formed of nineteen immense vessels, built singularly enough, with fine carved work both fore and aft" (14).

Even the British followed the same route and keeping in view its significance, a permanent bridge was constructed on the Indus River near Khairabad.

Reference

1. Tuzuk-i Jahangiri (Urdu Trans. Quddusi, I. H. and S.H.D., Rashidi), Vol. II P.200- 01 Lahore 1968; Elliot & Dowson, History of India as told by its own Historians, Vol. VI, P. 312ff. Rep. Lahore, 1976.
2. Bid, Op.cit.
3. Op.cit: Abul Fazl, Akbarnama (Eng. Tran. H. Beveridge) Vol. III, p. 524, nd, Lahore.
4. Tuzuk-i- Jahangiri, Op.cit. Elliot and Dowson, Vol. VI, Op.cit.
5. 5. Kamboh, Muhammad Salih, Shahjehannama, (Per. Trans. G. Yazdani, et. el.), Vol. II, p. 391, Vol. III, p. 79, 115.
6. Babar, Zaheer ud Din Muhammad, Babarnama (Eng. Tran. A.S. Beveridge), p. 394. Rep. Lahore, 1987.
7. Abul Fazl, Akbarnama (Eng. Tran. H. Beveridge) Vol. III, pp. 523-24, nd, Lahore.
8. Ibid, Op.cit, p. 528.
9. Elliot and Dowson Op.cit, Vol. IV, p. 312-14.
10. Kamboh, Muhammad Salih, Op.cit, Vol. II, p. 391.
11. Ibid, Op.cit, Vol. III, P.79.
12. Ibid, Op.cit, Vol. III, P.115.
13. Elliot & Dowson, Op.cit, Vol VII, P.95.
14. Hugel, H.C. Travels in the Kashmir and the Panjab, P.216-17, rep. Lahore 1976.

3. Architectural Remains Along the Grand Trunk Road in the NWFP

The architectural remains, which flourished on the Grand Trunk Road between Peshawar and Khairabad, can be described under the following headings.

3.1. Baolis

Water is one of the most important commodities of life and every living thing is alive due to it. It is life giving and it also cleans and purifies things. During the Muslim period, due care was taken to provide water facilities to people and great emphasis was laid on the construction of wells on the frequented routes. The construction of roads, bridges and wells are considered the works of religious merit, and those who have rendered such services for the welfare of the people, shall receive their rewards in the life after death.

In pre-Islamic India, wells and baolis have temple association. Owing to their utilitarian character they are usually located within or on the periphery of villages and towns. On the trade and caravan routes, they occur at regular intervals or in the immediate vicinity of caravan sarais. The establishment of wells and Baolis is an ancient pre-Islamic tradition (1).

In Hindu architectural canons, four types of baolis and wells of ten varieties depending on their dimension have been mentioned. The most characteristic examples of wells, baolis and well houses have survived in Gujrat. The elaborate well houses have not only provided a cool retreat to the people in the hot summer but have also been the main source of water supply (2).

During the early Islamic period, we have no information about such wells and baolis. Some earliest step-wells are mentioned in Delhi. The first is ascribed to the reign of Sultan Shamsuddin Iltutmish (1210-36) called Gandak ki Baoli near *dargah* Qutb shah. The second example is dated in the Tughlaq period, called Ugrasan ki Baoli. Daulat Khan, a noble of Sultan Sikandar Lodhi is believed to have constructed a baoli like structure in 1516, called Rajon ki Bain. Such stepwell like structures were also constructed in the fort of Agra and outside the main building complex of Fatehpur-Sikri (3).

The baoli architecture reached its perfection in Gujrat during the reign of Ahmed Shahi dynasty. The most significant examples of the baolis of this period are Bai Harir's Baoli at Asarwa and the baoli at Adalaj, about 17 km from Ahmedabad. The Bai Harir's Baoli, built in 1499 is almost an underground structure and the only portion above the ground

being the Kiosks one at each end of the complex. The Adalaj baoli is more elaborate than Bai Harir's stepwell. It is a complex structure and consists of several storeys, platforms, pillar chamber and well-proportioned steps (4).

Began in the pre-Mughal India, it was in Gujrat that baoli construction received great attention and became the most popular public building of matchless artistic workmanship.

The Mughal period marked a new era in the history of architecture of the subcontinent and it is in this period that a stepped well usually consisted of three constituent parts:

1. A vertical shaft with arrangement of hauling up water by buckets.
2. Starting from the ground surface a flight of steps or stepped corridor leads down several steps to the water level.
3. The entrance in the shape of an arch or an open square pavilion.

The open pavilion is usually a simple structure of square shape raised on a high platform with a flight of steps on three sides, while the fourth side leads down to the well. In cases where the square pavilion is not present, several steps give access to the stepped corridor descending to the water level. In some cases, a simple archway marks the entrance to the stepped corridor or by lateral gate-towers leaving the space between them as an entrance (5).

The following wells and baolis are located along the ancient grand trunk road between Peshawar and Khairabad and once contained sweet cold water and had quenched the thirst of many soldiers, traders and merchants on their way either to Kabul or Punjab.

3.1.1. Chamkani Baoli

This baoli stands in the middle of cultivated lands to the north of Kichauri road near Daman village. It is constructed of small Mughal style bricks and consists of an almost square pavilion, a flight of steps descending to the water level and the circular shaft of the well.

The square chamber is provided with an arched entrance on each side and each façade differs in architectural details. The eastern side is slightly longer than the other sides and projects beyond the alignment of the square chamber. The arched opening on the east side is 1.30 m in width and is enclosed by another cusped arch worked out in lime plaster. On each side of the main archway is a rectangular panel, which contains two decorative arches, placed one above the other.

The northern façade has an arched entrance with a tall arched panel on each side. The western arched panel accommodates steps executed in the thickness of the wall masonry leading to the upper storey. The remaining two sides, i.e., south and west is similar in elevation and are provided with arched openings. A stringcourse worked out in lime plaster runs below the parapet of the square chamber.

Internally, the square chamber has a domical ceiling supported on corbelled pendentives. The lower square pavilion is surmounted by a second storey, which is actually its replica in small size. A low flat dome covers the upper storey with an inverted flower at the crowning. The square chamber was lime plastered both externally and internally with an additional coat of *pacca qalai* (glazed plaster).

The western archway of the square chamber opens into a flight of steps descending down to the water level. These steps worked out in brick masonry, are well proportioned in their execution. An arch marks the end of the steps, which demarcate the outline of the circular shaft of the well.

Neither historical nor inscriptional evidence is available to assign a precise date to this structure. However, its architectural style and decoration suggest a date contemporary with the adjacent bridge constructed over the Bara River.

3.1.2. Baoli in Tarnab

About five Kilometers east of Chamkani is the Agricultural Research farm, Tarnab. Mr. Zakirullah, one of ex-graduates in Archaeology, who hails from the same village, informed me that there used to be a baoli also in his village. Presently, it is completely filled in and it is difficult to know its actual plan and other architectural details. Keeping in view the local style of construction, we can assume that its composition did not differ from the other baolis in the area.

3.1.3. The Baoli at Azakhel

This baoli lies to the south of the main high way at the back of Allied Flour Mills. It is constructed in brick masonry laid in lime mortar. The bricks are small in size and are similar to the bricks used in other buildings of the Mughal period. From the existing remains it seems that it was identical to the Baoli in Chamkani in layout and construction.

It was composed of three parts:

- a) a square pavilion on the east side,
- b) a flight of steps partly covered by a vault descending to the water level and
- c) the circular shaft of the well.

What remains of the square pavilion now is only the arched entrance, which gives access to the flight of steps. Most probably the square pavilion was provided with arched entrance on all sides and had a domed ceiling. The surviving arched entrance on the western side is cusped in outline and directly opens towards the stepped corridors. The total length of the corridor is 19 m. and measures 4.00 m. in width excluding the walls. Presently, 15 m. of the corridor is open to sky and the remaining 4-m. has a vaulted ceiling. The steps, which once provided access to the water level below, are destroyed and submerged in water. Moreover, there are two depressions in the walls of the corridor opposite to each other. Most probably these were designed in the shape of arched niches and were approximately 1.40 m. in width. The circular shaft of the well, presently filled with water upto its brims is 5 m. in diameter excluding the walls.

As a whole, the baoli is in a very bad state of preservation. The provincial Directorate of Archaeology and Museums in this direction has made a beginning. The archway has been strengthened and consolidated to a great extent and the work should be continued to strengthen the structure from further decay. The rise in water table and salinity of the soil are major threats to the existence of the monument. Effective measures must be taken to arrest its further decay and to prolong its life with regular maintenance and look after.

2.1.4 Well in Akora Khattak

This ancient well was located to the left of the grand Trunk road. In 1993, it was recorded and documented but now it is completely filled and even its location is not easily traceable due to the rapid construction along the main road.

It was constructed of rubble stone masonry laid in lime mortar. The circular shaft of the well had three concentric rings on the top and the entire structure was covered with a thick layer of lime plaster. A drain in the shape of a cascade was provided at the northeastern corner of the well that suggests that water was drawn from it also by a "Persian wheel".

2.1.5 Baoli at Huwai (Awai)

This baoli lies about 6 Km south west of Akora Khattak. It is constructed of stones laid in lime mortar. The depression marking the circular outline of its shaft and an exposed dilapidated portion of the steps reveal its composition. The available evidence suggests that the builder had taken advantage of the natural springs and a baoli was constructed. Although the shaft of well is completely filled and wild growth has covered it but water is still gushing out from here. The exposed stepped corridor is 3 meter in width including the walls. The exposed wall surface suggests that it was once covered with lime plaster.

2.1.6 Baoli at Esori Bala near Akora Khattak

It is situated about 6 Km south of Esori Payan from the G.T. road. It is the only baoli, which is complete in all respects and in the best state of preservation. River pebbles and irregular blocks of stone laid in lime mortar have been used in its construction. The baoli is constructed in three parts:

- a. Shaft of the well.
- b. Flight of steps covered by a vaulted passage.
- c. An arched entrance.

The shaft of the well is square in shape at the bottom and circular above, and has a diameter of about 5.20 m. including the walls. It is full of crystal clear water and its depth is 14 m. from the surrounding ground level. A flight of 60 steps covered by a vaulted corridor supported on arches lead down to the water level. The water level has arisen and has submerged 8 steps. A beautifully constructed arch way give access to the covered corridor. The arch way is supported on two pillars and is 1.25 m. in width. The steps are well placed and proportionally balanced . Each step constructed of rectangular stone slabs is 0.40 m. wide and 0.35 m. high.

The total length of the passage is more than 28 m., half of which is open to sky, and the remaining portion is covered by a vaulted ceiling. The arched entrance is lime plastered at a later date. According to local information, the baoli was constructed by Ghulam Farooq Khan, an elite of the area in the first decade of the present century. Recently the Provincial Directorate of Archaeology and Museums has protected this specimen of our cultural heritage and enclosed it by a barbed wire fencing with cement concrete posts to ensure its safeguard

from human hazards. However, the fencing and the concrete posts deeply embedded in the ground have recently been dislodged and demolished which reflect unawareness of the general public towards our glorious cultural property.

3.1.7. Baoli at Esori Payan

The baoli at Esori Payan near Akora Khattak is located on Peshawar-Islamabad highway immediately to the east of the Pakistan State Oil filling station. It consists of two parts: a) circular shaft of the well and b) a flight of steps that descends to the water level. The baoli is constructed of rubble masonry from river pebbles laid in lime mortar. The covered corridor including the walls is 3.20 m. wide and about 8.00 m. long. The circular shaft of the baoli (5 m. according to the measurement of the circular depression) is completely filled in with debris and presently a depression, marking its circular outline is only visible. The vaulted corridor covering the steps is constructed on arches and now only the arch and the broken steps exist. It is in a very dilapidated condition. Following the visible structure, its complete layout is needed to be traced out and properly exposed. After exposure the missing portion should be restored and the whole structure be consolidated in its original plan.

3.1.8 Baoli at Adamzai

This baoli, which has now completely disappeared from the ground surface due to human neglect, was once located a few meters short of Nowshera glass sheet factory. The only portion, standing a few years ago, was its entrance. This gateway was constructed of bricks laid in lime mortar. After the establishment of the Provincial Directorate of Archaeology and Museums, Govt. of NWFP, initial clearing of the baoli was under-taken that resulted in the exposure of steps leading down to the water level. From the exposed structural remains, it was concluded that it consisted of the usual three parts: (a) circular well. (b) flight of steps and (c) the entrance. Today nothing exists except a circular depression marking the outline of the well and some traces of the wall foundations.

3.1.9 Baoli inside F.P. Textile mills, Jahangira

The baoli is situated in the premises of Frontier Punjab Textile Mills, Jahangira on the main G.T. road. It is complete and constructed of river pebbles of irregular shapes and sizes laid in lime mortar. It consists of two parts: (a) a circular shafts of the well and (b) an open flight of steps descending down to the water level. The F.P. Textile Mill authorities have carried out some restoration work in brick masonry, which has distorted its historical significance. The repair work executed in bricks should be removed and replaced with stone masonry to set it in its true historical perspective. When the mill was in running condition, an electric water pump was installed here to provide drinking water to the complex. Owing to the growth of wild plants, the steps are badly damaged. The authorities should take immediate measures to arrest its further deterioration.

3.1.10. Well in Khairabad

Two wells relating to old times have been recorded. The first well lies a few meters to the left of the road in the main bazar. It is constructed of stone blocks of various shapes and sizes laid in lime mortar. It has a circular shaft having a diameter of 3.30 meter. The thickness of the wall is about one meter and is filled with debris of all kind. The existing depth of the well is more than 13 meters.

There is another circular well constructed of stone blocks to the west of the town on the ancient route. It has a diameter of 2.20 meters excluding the wall which is 1.60 meters thick. Presently it is five meters deep.

References

1. Jain – Neubauer, J., The Stepwells of Gujarat. In: Art Historical Perspective, p.3, Delhi, 1981
2. Nath, R., Account of a Typical Mughal stepwell (Baoli) and a Well -House(Kupagar), In: Some Aspects of Mughal Architecture, p.22, Delhi, 1976
3. Jain – Neubauer, J. op.cit., p. XIII
4. Nath, R., op.cit., p.23, Brown, P., Indian Architecture (The Islamic Period), p. 60
5. Jain_ Neubauer, J.. op. Cit. P.2. Nath, R., op.cit. p.22-23

3.2. Bridges and River Crossings

Since the introduction of trade and communication system, rivers were the main obstacles in the free and smooth movement of rulers, traders and invaders. During the medieval period rivers were usually crossed at fords, ferries or by boat bridges. At such places, large and small settlements had developed where the sailors used to lead the people across the river.

During the medieval period we have frequent references to the construction of bridges and river crossings. We are informed that, Alauddin Khilji, after the occupation of Chitor in 1303, constructed a bridge over the Gambini River (1). Firoz Shah Tughlaq is said to have constructed about 150 bridges (2).

During the Mughal period, we have frequent references to boat-bridges. Babar crossed the Indus River with the help of boats. He issued orders that boats should be brought for crossing the Indus River. So, six boats were made available there for the purpose (3). Similarly, Akbar crossed the Indus River on boat-bridges on several occasions (4).

3.2.1. The so called Sethi Bridge

The so called Sethi bridge at Chua Gujar, a marvelous and unique example of trade and travel architecture is constructed on Bara river about five kilometers east of Peshawar city. The bridge is associated with the Sethis, a noble and trading family of Peshawar City who had enjoyed great commercial contacts with Central Asia and Afghanistan before the British domination. They built beautiful luxurious villas in the city as seen at Mahallah Sethian, which forms one of the main centers of attraction for tourists.

The bridge is built of small size Mughal style bricks laid in lime mortar. It is 7.10 meters in width and covers a span of 74.20 meters excluding the stays. The body of the bridge consists of four visual composite segments and each segment is provided with three arched passages raised on solid and massive piers. The most impressive and dominative feature of the bridge is its cylindrical columns. Five tall, slightly tapering, columns topped by low ribbed cupolas are provided on each side of the bridge that rise above its level. Each column is about 14.10 meters high and alternate with two identical smaller columns, which terminate at the level of the bridge. A string course running on both the sides marks the floor of the bridge and the parapet measuring about one meter in height is raised on it. These magnificent and

majestic columns are constructed as integral part of the bridge and add not only strength and support to the bridge but also enhance its beauty and elegance. The entire bridge was covered with thick lime plaster and was further strengthened with a thick layer of glazed plaster.

According to local tradition the bridge was built by the Sethi family. The Sethis had spiritual relation with Hazrat Mian Umar Sahib of Chamkani, a great Sufi of his age. During the Sikh destruction and plunder of Peshawar city, the Sethis migrated to Chamkani and took refuge with the renowned saint. They held Mian Sahib in deep reverence and great high esteem.

It seems likely that the bridge was built during the Mughal period but later on the Sethis repaired it in the late Mughal time. However, no solid evidence is available about the actual date of its construction.

A rectangular marble slab (90 x 45 cm) with carved inscription is fixed in the first column on the north western side. The slab is badly damaged and the entire inscription is flaked off except a few linear designs at corners.

Another inscription now preserved in the Peshawar museum is believed to have been brought from a bridge over Bara River (5). It records the construction of a bridge during the reign of Shah Jehan. According to the chronogram of the inscription, the bridge was constructed in 1629 AD. The inscription also mentions three other names: Lashkar Khan, the Mughal governor of Peshawar, Abdul Latif, the founder of the bridge, and Daud, the architect. Whether this inscription belongs to the same bridge described above or to another on the same river is difficult to say. However, according to our investigations and survey of the surrounding areas, we were unable to trace even the foundation of any other bridge and the local traditions are also silent about some other bridge on the Bara River. If the inscription in the Peshawar museum belongs to the so called Sethi bridge, then it should not be ascribed to the Sethis but to the period of Emperor Shah Jahan. The bridge not only represents the solitary example of trade and travel architecture in N.W.F.P. but also in Pakistan. The bridge has survived the turbulent floods and other natural hazards and still majestically stands on the Bara River and reflects the competency and engineering skill of the grand Mughal period.

3.2.2. The Bridge at Chamkani link Road

This bridge also constructed over the Bara River can be approached from the G.T. Road and is located at a distance of 200 m towards Chamkani. It is constructed on a single massive arch of small size bricks with supporting stays which gently curve down in either side. The parapet of the bridge is marked by a low wall and below it runs a moulding worked out in pre-shaped bricks. On either side the curve of the arch is decorated with a freize of acanthus leaves executed in brick masonry and the spandrels are provided with embossed sun-flower motifs. The solidity and compactness of the bridge can be judged from the fact that it still sustains the load of modern heavy traffic passing over it and the turbulent tides of the Bara River passing through it. This unique and marvelous example of bridge architecture is believed to be constructed by the Sethi family. However, its architecture and decoration suggest a date in the post-Mughal period, most probably the Durrani dynasty.

3.2.3 Pillars of the Boat-bridge

Several tall and massive stone pillars constructed in a line remind us the site of the ancient boat bridge. Several wooden boat/rafts were fastened together by means of strong ropes connecting west bank with the Kabuli gate of the Attock fort.

Water flour mill or watch tower (?). Immediately to the south of the new Khairabad bridge on the Indus river stand two huge massive circular towers. Both these structures are raised on solid rocky formation and are erected from stone blocks of various shapes laid in lime mortar. The eastern one is 34 meter in circumference and is provided with a flight of fourteen steps from the south side. Each step is 1.85 m in length and .30m in width. Some later additions have almost changed its circular outline. A stone wall of a later period has been added to it which has incorporated almost the steps except the first five. On the top, fragmentary walls constructed in large bricks still survive. The size of the brick used is 31x15x6cm. Also one can see the basis of four pillars on the solid walls at the top, which suggest that a second story was also added. On the west side, an arched opening was provided, which seems to have been filled at a later stage.

The western tower is 42 m in circumference and has an attached wall about 4.60 in length on the north side. In between these two towers, there is an open space of 1.00m. in the

shape of an aqueduct. A similar aqueduct is provided to the east of the eastern tower. A complex of ruined structures is scattered far and wide to the west of these towers. No concrete evidence historical or archaeological is available to explain and define these towers satisfactorily. It appears that these structures were used for grinding corn/cereals and the later addition suggest that these were used as watch towers for the smooth running of trade caravan across the river.

References

1. Brown,P., Indian Architecture (The Islamic period) p.19,n.d.Bombay
2. Verma,H.C., Medieval routes to India, Baghdad to Delhi,p.193, Lahore .n.d.
3. Babar Zaheeruddin, Tuzuki Babari (Eng. trans. A.S. Beveridge), p. 392, Rep. Lahore, 1987. Dar,S.R., op.cit. On p.116, he records that a good number of them (bridges) still survive in different parts of the country but mentions their location.
4. Abul Fazl, Akbarnama (Eng. trans. H. Beveridge), Vol. III, p. 545, 867, 523-24, 851,nd, Lahore.
5. Wasiuddin. A Persian Inscription in Peshawar City. In: Archaeological Survey of India (Annual Report) p. 201-204, Delhi, 1908-09. Shakur, M.A, A Handbook to the Inscription Gallery in the Peshawar Museum, p. 34-37, Peshawar, 1946.

3.3 The Ancient Mosque

Standing in the middle of green fields and fruit gardens and in the immediate neighborhood of the so-called Sethi Bridge, are the remains of an ancient masjid. The history is silent about this masjid. This small structure is constructed of small size Mughal bricks laid in lime mortar. Other buildings in the immediate surroundings of this masjid have vanished with the passage of time. The courtyard of the masjid has disappeared since long and the only portion that still survives to the height 2.60m is the prayer chamber which is precariously dilapidated. It is rectangular in outline and measures 8.20x5.0 meters externally. The prayer chamber was covered by three domes, the central one, larger in size, is raised on high octagonal drum. The drum is provided with arched windows on the eastern and western octagonal sides for cross ventilation. The central dome is flanked by two smaller low domes, one on each side. The crown of the dome was once adorned with a finial embedded in an inverted flower.

The façade of the prayer chamber is pierced with three arched entrances and two more archways, one each on the shorter, side also gives access to the interior of the prayer chamber. The central archway is larger in size than the side arched openings. Between the main and side arched ways is a decorative niche executed in the wall masonry. The wall surface above the side arched ways is parceled out into square and rectangular panels. On the western side, a prominent projection is visible which marks the back of the mehrab. On its either sides are provided two waterchutes to throw off rainwater from the roof. Adjacent to these waterchutes, the back wall also carries two decorative arched niches wrought in the wall masonry.

Internally the prayer chamber is rectangular in outline (7 x 3 m) and composed of three parts. The central square bay is provided with a mehrab (1.20 meter wide), which is flanked by small arched niches on either sides definitely for keeping the holy Quran and the oil lamp. The central square chamber is converted into an octagon by means of arched squinches, which rests on a prominent cornice worked out in brick masonry. The side chambers are provided with corner pendentives which support the smaller low dome above.

Both externally and internally, the masjid was lime plastered and a final layer of glazed plaster was also applied which have not survived the vicissitudes of time. Most probably the plaster surface was further decorated with frescos and other geometric decoration according to the taste of the time.

No historical or inscriptional evidence is available to assign a precise date to this masjid. Taking into account and consideration the style of construction of this masjid and its comparison with related examples in the area, we can date this masjid contemporary with the so called Sethi Bridge on the Bara River. If however, immediate steps are not taken for its repairs and conservation, the masjid is feared to fall down, and this piece of sacred architecture will sink into oblivion forever.

3.4 Caravan Sarais

During the medieval period, sarais were built at regular intervals along the main trade route and effective measures were taken to guarantee safe journey for traders and travellers. These sarais were great centres of cultural, social and commercial importance, where traders and travellers used to exchange goods and ideas. They were intended not only for the use of ordinary trade caravans but also served as halting stations for the travellers and were even used by imperial rulers. Most probably they also served the purpose of post stations (1).

Merchants, traders and travellers, all needed places for rest and also protection from robbery and bad weather both in the cities as well as in the inhospitable areas of a certain region. This necessity led to the construction of caravan sarais along the major trade routes as well as in the cities, where a trader was safe at night, basic facilities of food and fodder for him and his animals were provided and also offered shopping facilities of daily necessities and for the onward journey (2). Ibn Battuta who travelled on the main road connecting Egypt with Palestine and Syria stayed not in colleges or convents as was the custom in north Africa, but in caravan sarais. At each of these stations between Cairo and Gaza there is a hostelry which they call a Khan, where the travellers alight with their beasts, and outside each Khan is a public watering place and a shop at which they may buy what they require for themselves and their beasts (3). This statement clearly marks the main features and functions of the classic Islamic caravan sarais. Almost every caravan sarai is either square or rectangular in outline with a massive surrounding wall and a single entrance wide enough to permit large or heavy laden beasts such as camels to enter. The central courtyard is always open to the sky and along the inner side of the enclosure wall are built a number of rooms to accommodate merchants and their servants, animals and merchandise. Some of the caravan sarais were provided with mosques and bath establishments (*hammam*). From the earliest period fodder

for the animals and the stables were separate from the lodgings for the travellers and traders. Later and larger caravan sarais had special rooms or suites in the entrance block for important guests, and a resident staff of caretakers was permanently housed in the small rooms in the portal block (4).

In Pakistan many caravan sarais still exist on the medieval trade routes in varying state of preservation (5). Some of them are in a good condition, others are in ruin and reveal only their ground plan, many more have been either completely removed from the earth surface and some of them have retained their antiquity in the shape of modern towns. Natural calamities and human neglect have accelerated their destruction. Modern communication system, large scale market facilities and expansion of towns and cities have put an end to trade and travel architecture.

3.4.1. Gor Khatri

Historical Background

Gor Khatri, a typical Mughal sarai is one of the most important monuments of Peshawar. It can be approached either from Chowkyadgar via Ghantaghar or from the Hashtnagari gate. The earliest reference to Gor Khatri occurs in Babarnama, the autobiography of Zaheeruddin Muhammad Babar, the founder of the Mughal dynasty. Babar writes : “Next Morning ,we reached Bigram and went to see Gor Khatri. This is a smallish abode after a fashion of a hermitage (*Sauma’at*) rather confined and dark. After entering the door and going down a few steps, one must lie full length to get beyond. There is no getting in with out a lamp. All around the building there is an enormous quantity of human hair (of the head and beard which men have shaved off) there. There is a great many retreats (*hujra*) near Gor Khatri like those of a rest house or a college.” (6).

The description of Babar is confirmed by Abu Fazal, the court historian of Akbar who too had the opportunity to visit the site personally in company with Emperor Akbar. He states that: “on the 14th July 1581, he stayed near Bigram. He spent some time in Gor Khatri which is a shrine of the jogis. There is a great cave in this place. Babblers say that no one knows how deep it is. In the midst of the cave is the way to the secret chamber of the saint of old times. On account of the difficulty and darkness and its tortuousness, one cannot get there. As it was the prayer spot of the great one of God, he entered it alone by the light of wisdom,

and some of his servants, one after the other. Who also had this blessing. This least of men was one of them the road was very long it was necessary to sit down and to lie down and to trust God. Many brave men had not the courage to do so, and turned back when half way (7).

Jahangir also visited Gor Khatri but he did not have a good impression of it. It is clear from the following passage given in Wakiat-Jehangir. He says that, “on 26th Muharram in 1016 A.H. (13 May 1607). I arrived at the garden of Sardar Khan near Peshawar. Gor Khatri, a famous place of worship amongst the Jogis, is in its neighbourhood and I went to see it in the possible chance of seeing some Fakir, from whom society, I might derive advantage, but such a man is as rare as the philosopher’s stone or the “Anka” and all that I saw was a small fraternity without any knowledge of God, the sight of whom filled my heart with nothing but regret” (8).

Shah Jehan visited Peshawar several times. He stayed in Peshawar fort and has mentioned Bagh-i-Peshawar and Bagh-i-Zafar Khan but has not referred to Gor Khatri . However, during the reign of Shah Jehan, his daughter Jehan Ara Begum converted Gor Khatri into Caravan sarai and named it sarai Jahanabad. She also constructed a Jamia Masjid, a hammam and two wells inside the sarai for the convenience and comfort of the travelers. This information is based on a Shahi Farman (royal decree) and two sanads (Certificates). These documents of great historical significance inform us that the sarai Jahanabad was built by Jahan Ara Begum, the eldest daughter of Emperor Shah Jahan.

According to the Shahi Farman referred to above, the sarai and its pertinent structures were richly endowed. The endowment comprised of the income from the adjoining land and the shops in the eastern and western bazars. Mullah Muhammad Sadiq was authorized to collect the income of the endowment and to spend it regularly on the maintenance of the care-takers and up-keep of the sarai. According to one of the Sanads Mullah Nizam-ud-Din was the Mutawalli (Guardian), Khatib and Imam of the masjid and was granted a suitable allowance from the *Diwan-i-Buyutat* for the maintenance of his family(9).

The masjid was destroyed during the Sikh period when Avitabile was the Governor of Peshawar and a Shiva temple was erected on its site. Gopal Das records that “ during the reign of Avitabile, the mosque gradually decayed owing to the weakness of Islam (Muslim power) and the house of Gorakh Nath appeared there” (10).

H.G.Raverty visited the site of Gor Khatri and he gives a complete description of the building. He says that, “the most considerable public building is the Gor Khatri formerly the residence of the Sikh Governor. It is in the form of square, 700 feet in length and the same in breadth. One side is occupied by building containing large and spacious rooms, which during the time of Sikh was used as the residence of the Governor of the province, and contain numerous offices for the use of different departments of the Government. These were built by General Avitabile in the Hindu style. It is ornamented on both sides and outside, with grotesque figures, painted in most brilliant colours, in a manner similar to the embellishments of most of the Hindu temples. It was at first called *Sarai-i-du-dar* “the jun of the two gates” and after the death of the founder went to ruin). Hence with the passage of years it was badly destitute of its past splendour (11).

According to the old Gazetteer of Peshawar District, a very good idea of Peshawar life can be obtained by a bird eye view from the Gor Khatri which stands on an eminence to the east of the city.

It records that the building worthy of notice is Gor Khatri, original place of Hindu pilgrimage. They described it as below. When Avitabile was Governor of Peshawar, he resided there and erected a pavilion on the top of the western gate, which does not exist now. The upper portion of the gateway is used as a Tehsil. The eastern gate is used as a Government Guest House for the native officers. The Northeast corner is occupied by a house belonging to the missionaries (12).

Architecture

Gor Khatri, one of the most important monuments in the historic city of Peshawar has the plan of a typical Mughal caravan sarai. It is almost square in shape and measures 153x193 m from east to west and 164x162 m from north to south. Enclosed by a high surrounding wall, it was once provided with an engaged octagonal turret at each corner. The foundation of a turret at north-east corner still survive in its original shape, while others have disappeared with the passage of time. The original fabric of the surrounding wall still survives in original shape to a considerable height at certain points but its major portion has been reconstructed in later period.

The monument has two arched gateways, one on the western and the other on the eastern side. These gateways lead into a central courtyard. Standing in the middle of the courtyard, one can easily recognize buildings of the Mughal, Sikh, British and modern periods. All around the inner side of the surrounding wall were constructed square rooms which opened to the central courtyard. Each room, almost square (3.15x3.25m) in shape with a domical ceiling was provided with a vestibule or portico in the front and communicated with the main room through an entrance. On the southern side, 21 rooms of equal size and shape still exist in original shape except the central one, which is provided with a tall parapet and marks the center of the southern wing. This room is larger in size (4.20x4.00 m) and slightly projects from the alignment of the surrounding wall. It has also a vestibule in the front (4.00x1.25 m) and is covered by a shallow dome. It can be assumed that a similar room was also constructed on the northern side for symmetry, a characteristic feature of the Mughal architecture.

The western gateway in itself is a very impressive building and rises to a height of 15.25 m upto the top of the merlons. This monumental gateway is a three storey complex building with guardrooms on either side in the arched passage and accessory chambers for administrative purpose. The arched opening of this gateway is 13.10 m long, 4 m wide while the height of the central archway is 9.60 m. Brown has rightly remarked that “of all the architectural production of the Mughals, their gateways were the most successful achievements, whether these were the bold entrance to fortresses, the more humble doorways to Sarais, the elegant portals to tombs, the porticoes to palaces, or the civic archways of the cities, they were invariably not only satisfying examples of the building art but each one admirably fulfilled its purpose”(13).

The façade of the western gateway is composed of three planes, a large central face and a lesser one on each side receding at an angle. The central plan is rectangular in shape, the greater part of its surface is occupied by an arched entrance while the narrower faces on its sides are divided into three phases, the two lower one are provided with arches and the upper most one with a rectangular panel. The most striking feature of the gateway is the tall archway which passes through the entire gateway block and opens into the central courtyard. The parapet of the gateway is crowned with a row of well-proportioned merlons. The floral decoration on the outer façade, in the spandrels and along the intrados of the central archway

is executed in lime plaster and most probably belongs to the Sikh period. The western gateway is provided with guard rooms on either side which opens into the arch passage. The inner façade of this gateway is a solid mass of brick masonry and its monotony is broken by the central archway enclosed by a rectangular frame. The spandrels of this archway are beautifully decorated with very fine floral design in high relief worked out in stucco tracery. The worth mentioning feature of these spandrels is that along with the foliated motifs two back looking animals (foxes) with long tails one at each end are depicted.

Above the archway is a wooden window executed in the shape of a cusped arch. The remaining space on each side of the archway is divided into three vertical zones provided with arches or arched windows.

Second Storey

From the central courtyard, steps are provided on either side of the gateway which proceed to the second storey. The second storey consists of three rooms on northern side and three on the southern side. The central being larger in size, all these rooms have domed ceilings, varying in size from one another.

Third Storey

The third and the upper most storey is accessible from the second storey by a flight of steps on either side. This storey has several rooms, a small vestibule and a large central hall. On northern side of the main hall are three rooms and a portico. These rooms are covered with a flat roof and each room has a window. The surface of the walls are decorated with stucco tracery in floral pattern, which probably belong to the Sikh period. These rooms flank a large spacious hall in the centre. This hall communicates with these rooms through archways. The main hall has a wooden *Jharoka* in the west wall over looking the city. On the opposite side is a wooden screen in shape of a cusped arch which gives a view of the enclosed courtyard. According to historical literature and oral traditions, it was this gateway complex where the Sikh Governor of Peshawar, Avitabile (1838-42) used to sit and disposed off his official duties.

Eastern Gateway: Outer Facade

The eastern gateway is comparatively of smaller size and less spacious than the western gateway. It is a double storey building and the third storey is destroyed with the passage of time. It closely resembles the western gateway in shape and is composed of three planes, i.e., a central one and a lesser one on each side receding at an angle. The central face is pierced with a tall archway about 8.70 m high. The main archway enclosed by a rectangular frame is 7.90 m high. A room on each side opens into the archway from either side. The surface of the wall on either side of the archway is divided into rectangular and square arched panels. Each side wing has two arched panels constructed one above the other.

Eastern Gateway: Inner Facade

The inner façade of the eastern gateway presents a different appearance. The entire façade is divided into three vertical zones. The central portion accommodates the archway and the side portions flanking it are constructed in two storeys. Each side has two arches constructed one above the other.

The upper storey can be approached from the inner courtyard. At the northern and southern end of the gateway complex, a flight of steps leads to the upper storey. These steps built during the British period have replaced the original constructed during the Mughal period. The upper storey consists of two rooms, one at each side.

The arched entrance is composed of three parts and constructed in the form of an arcaded vestibule. There are three arches which support the superstructure. Entering from the inner courtyard, one comes to the first portion of the archway, which has a vaulted ceiling. The construction of the outer portion is similar to the preceding one in every respect.

The central portion is covered with a domical ceiling raised on pendentives. The pendentives as well as the soffits of the arches have painted decoration. The painting is executed in tempera technique. The colours used are white, deep red, light red, blue, yellow green and black. In all these paintings four and eight petalled flowers are depicted with a central sun or lotus design having stylized leaf decoration. Three of the pendentives have painted designs while the fourth one seems to have been defaced due to the ravages of time. All the paintings of the pendentives and soffits depict similar motifs, probably, dating from the Sikh period.

3.4.2. Sarai Daulatabad

Both Akber (14) and Jahangir (15) have mentioned this sarai in their accounts and was situated between Nowshera and Peshawar. Its exact location has not been identified and no structural remains exist today to help us in this connection. However, Moorcroft (16) in his travelogue reports that the road to the city (Peshawar) passed over tolerably level and cultivated plain. Towards the end of the march we passed the remains of the wall of the ancient city of Shahabad upon over right and encamped, on the evening of the 8th at the village of Jahangirabad. Raverty (17) in his notes records that one *kuroh* to the west of Pabbi is Shahabad, an extensive rabat (sarai) built of bricks, but now in ruins. Keeping the above references under consideration, one is inclined to believe that Daulatabad and Shahabad represent the one and the same sarai as both lies half way between Nowshera and Peshawar.

3.4.3 Sarai Bara

As mentioned earlier that Jahangir after crossing the Nilab river landed on the bank of river Kabul. From there he left, one march intervening, to his camp near Sarai Bara. On the opposite side of the river Kabul is a fort (Noshera) built by Zain Khan Koka. Neither later historians and travellers have referred to this sarai nor the archaeological explorations and surveys conducted in this area have alluded to surviving structural remains of this Sarai in and around Nowshera. We can assume that because of the extensive cultivation in the area, this sarai has been razed to the ground.

3.4.4 Sarai Khairabad

Khairabad, a historic town on the west bank of the Indus is situated opposite to the famous Attock fort built by Emperor Akbar for the subjugation of the Yusufzais. It remained the first halting station for invaders, merchants, traders on their way to Peshawar and further west to Kabul. The crossing on the Indus river (Nilab) has been mentioned by the Mughals on their way to Kabul. Abu-Fazal, the court historian of Akbar, records that, "there are five routes from Hindustan into the Sarkar or province of Kabul.... The next is the Khyber and formerly it was extremely difficult, but, by the Badshah's (Akbar) command, it was improved by Kasim Khan (sic.).... In 997 H. (1589), Akbar, after the road had been built (finished) proceeded to Kabul. He crossed the Sind (sic) river at Khairabad sarai and marched to garhi

Ilyas, then to Gur Khatri (of Peshawar)” (18). Raverty has further mentioned that on the west bank of Nilab (Indus river) is a stone-built fort named Kahoa or *Kahoah* (the Kaho of Afzal Khan Khattak, grandson of Khushal Khan Khattak (19).

From the above accounts, we come to know that there was a caravan-sarai or fort constructed at Khairabad. Today no trace of the sarai can be recognized. However, some ancient architectural remains still exist which narrate the story of the past glory and historical significance of this forgotten town.

References

1. Taj Ali, Medieval Architectural Remains near Kabirwala, Multan, In: Ancient Pakistan, Vol. VII, p. Peshawar, 1992.
2. Michell, G.(ed), Architecture of the Islamic world, London, p.97, 1978. A broad street with rows of shops, the brick foundation of which were still visible during our visit to the site might have served the same purpose.
3. Op cit, p.101.
4. *ibid*.
5. Rodgers, Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri (Eng. trans.), Lahore, Vol.1, pp.98-102, 1974. Emperor Jahangir on his way to Kabul has given complete itinerary of his halting stations. Only among the halting station between Rawalpindi and Peshawar he has mentioned Sarai Kharbuza, Sarai Kalapani, Sarai Bara and Sarai Daulatabad.
6. Babar, Zaheeruddin Muhammad, Tuzuki Babari (Eng. trans. H. Beveridge), P. 230, Rep. Lahore, 1975.
7. Abul Fazl, Akbarnama (Eng. trans. H. Beveridge), Vol. III, P. 528, n.d., Lahore.
8. Jahangir Nuruddin, Tuzuki Jahangiri (Urdu trans. Quddusi, I H and S.H.D., Rashidi) Vol. II P.200-01 Lahore 1968. Elliot and Dowson., History of India as told by its own Historians, Vol.VI, P.314
9. Jaffar, S.M., Peshawar, Past and Present , p.104-06, Peshawar, 1946
10. Gopaldas, M., Tarikh- e- Peshawar, p.153, Lahore, 1874
11. Raverty, H.G., An Account of the City and Province of Peshawar, In: Transaction of the Bombay Geographical Society, Vol. X, P.22-23, Bombay, 1952

12. Gazetteer of the Peshawar District, P. 363, Lahore, 1897-98.
13. Brown, P., *Indian Architecture- The Islamic Period*, p.104-05, Bombay, 1949
14. Abul Fazl., *Akbarnama* (Eng. Trans. H. Beveridge), Vol.III,p.524, nd. Lahore
15. Jahangir, Nuruddin Muhammad., *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri* (Urdu Trans. I.H.Quddusi et.el.), vol.I,p.200,rep.Lahoe,1970., Elliot and Dowson., *History of India as told by its own Historians*, vol.Vi,p. 314, rep. Lahore,1976
16. Moorcroft, W and G. Trebeck., *Travels in the Himalayan provinces of Hindustan and the Punjab, in Ladakh and Kashmir, in Peshawar and Kabul, Kunduz and Bukhara*,p.335 rep. Lahore 1977
17. Raverty, H.G., *Note on Afghanistan and parts of Baluchistan*, p.34,rep. Quetta 1977
18. Ibid. op.cit. p.39
19. Ibid. op.cit. p.447

4. Conclusion and Suggestions

The ancient Grand Trunk Road, known as Sher Shah Suri road passes through the fertile valley of Peshawar which is drained by Bara and Kabul rivers. The Bara river is the main source of fertility of the plain. The river has its origin in the valley of the same name lying to the south of the Khyber hills but receives a greater part of its water from Tira Toi (stream). After rains, the water brings down a rich alluvial deposit of red clay, the main fertilizing agent for the crops. According to local traditions, the Bara water is sweet and digestive. The countryside through which the ancient routes pass, has a fascinating landscape. It traverses through lush green fields, fruit gardens and helmets of mud houses all along which offered a delightful journey to the travelers in the bygone ages.

The ancient monuments are the manifestation of our cultural heritage and every living nation feels proud of its culture and tries to project it in a most befitting manner to the outside world and preserves it for the present and future generations. The Peshawar valley has a rich and diverse cultural heritage. Numerous monuments are scattered far and wide in the region and the present study describes only those which have been studied and investigated on the ancient Grand Trunk Road in the North West Frontier Province. The proper maintenance and structural stability of the historical and cultural property is a national duty and, in fact, Pakistan is bound under the international convention to take necessary measures for its

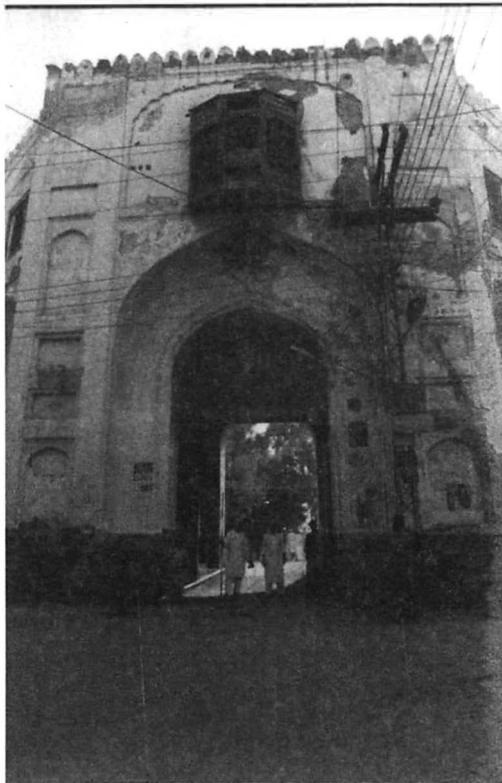
preservation. A country is not the sole owner of the cultural heritage it possesses, but it is sacred legacy of the entire humanity which makes it obligatory to ensure its safety and security. Therefore, the survey and documentation of the cultural property in Pakistan especially in the Northwest Frontier Province which is replete with ancient sites and monuments, and considered as a tourist's paradise, is of vital significance. In view of this importance initial work on the enlistment and documentation of the monuments situated on the ancient trade route from Peshawar to Khairabad, has been conducted. With the hope to provide fresh information to the students and tourists and stimulate further interest for study and research in the province.

The conservation and rehabilitation of these buildings will be used as a model project for the proposal "strategies for the development of tourism and cultural heritage, NWFP" initiated by Sarhad Provincial Conservation Strategy, IUCN and PMU, NWFP.

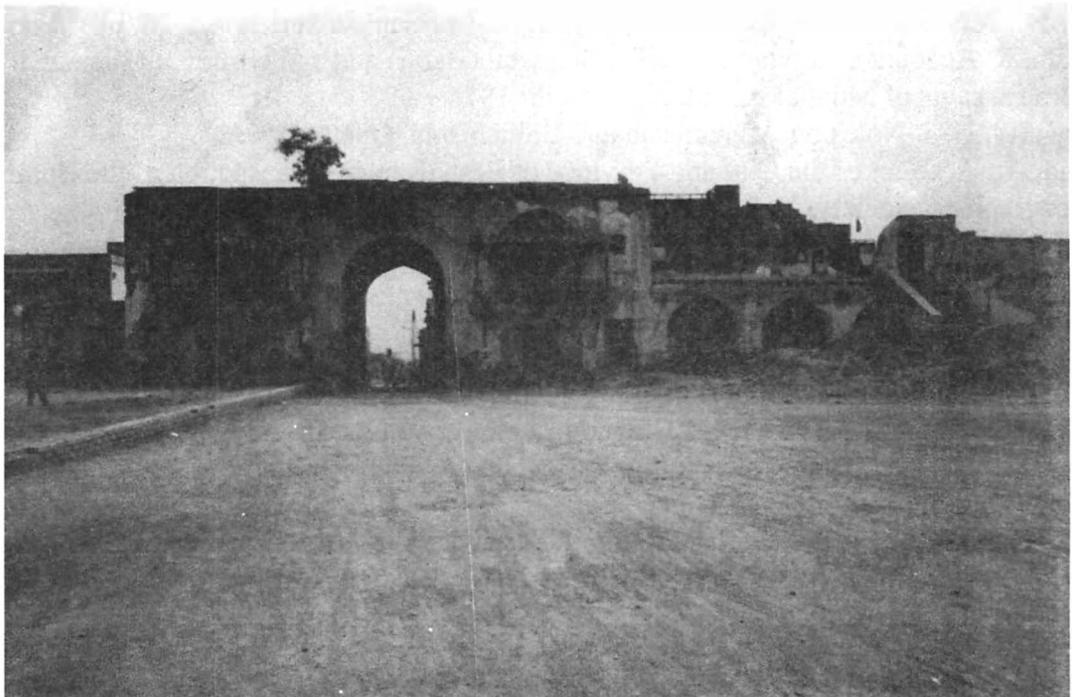
After conservation the monuments will be structurally consolidated and preserved for the posterity. They will serve as the primary source of history, art and architecture for scholars and students both at home and abroad. Moreover, they will stimulate and promote cultural tourism and consequently will ensure a permanent source of income for the province. The Govt. of NWFP has launched a Safari train between Peshawar and Landikotal and has received a very positive response from national as well as International visitors. On these lines a cultural heritage trail of the ancient Grand Trunk Road can be initiated by Sarhad Tourism Corporation and the related Departments, which will definitely bear fruitful results.

Bibliography

1. Abul Fazl, Akbarnama (Eng.Trans. H. Beveridge) , Vol. III, n.d. Lahore
2. Afif, Shams Siraj , Tarikh-i- Firozshahi (Urdu Trans. S.Fida Ali Talib), Karachi, 1965
3. Babar, Zaheeruddin Muhammad, Babar-nama (Eng.trans. A.S.Beveridge),rep. Lahore
4. Brown, P. Indian Architecture (The Islamic period),Bombay 1949
5. Dar, S.R., Caravanserais and Related Buildings in Pakistan: Systems and Structures, In: Journal of Asian Civilisations, Vol.XXII/1, P.104-125, Islamabad, 1999.
6. Elliot and Dowson , History of India as told by its own Historians, Vols.IV-VII, rep.Lahore,1976
7. Firishta, M. Qasim Hindu Shah, Tarikh-i-Firishta(Trans. Abdul Hayee Khwaja), Lahore 1976
8. Gazetteer of the Peshawar District n.d. Peshawar.
9. Gopaldas, Tarikh-i-Peshawar, Lahore, 1874
10. Hugel, H.C. Travels in the Kashmir and the Panjab, rep. Lahore1976
11. Jain-Neubauer, J. The Stepwells of Gujarat. In: Art Historical Perspective, Delhi,1981
11. Jaffar, S. M. , Peshawar- Past and Present, Peshawar 1946
12. Kamboh, M.S.Shahjehan-Nama (Per.Trans. G.Yazdani et.el.) Vols.I-III, rep.Lahore, 1976
13. Khan, H.Sher Shah Suri, Lahore, 1987
14. Michell, G.(ed.), Architecture of the Islamic World, London 1978
15. Moorcroft, W and G. Trebeck, Travels in the Himalayan provinces of Hindustan and the Punjab, in ladakh and Kashmir, in Peshawar and Kabul, Kunduz and Bukhara, rep. Lahore 1977
16. Nadvi, A.S. Raza-i-Ama ke Kam (Urdu), Darul-Mussanifin Series, No. 23, nd. Azamgarh.
17. Nath, R. Account of a typical Mughal Stepwell (Baoli) and a Well-house (Kupaghar), In: Some aspects of Mughal Architecture, Delhi 1976.
18. Raverty, H.G. Notes on Afghanistan and Baluchistan, Quetta, 1976.
19. Ibid, An Account of the City and Province of Peshawar, In: Transaction of the Bombay Geographical Society, Vol. X, 1852.
20. Rodgers, A. (Trans)., The Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, Lahore, 1974.
21. Shakur, M.A. A Handbook to the Inscription Gallery in the Peshawar Museum, Peshawar, 1946.
22. Taj Ali, Medieval Architectural Remains near Kabirwala Multan, In: Ancient Pakistan Vol. VII, Peshawar, 1992.
23. Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri (Urdu Tran. I.H. Quddusi et. el), Vols. I, II, Lahore, 1968.
24. Verma, H.C. Medieval Routes to India: Baghdad to Delhi. A Study of Trade and Military Routes, nd, Lahore.
25. Wasiuddin Mian, A Persian Inscription in Peshawar City. In: Archaeological Survey of India (Annual Report), Delhi, 1908-09.



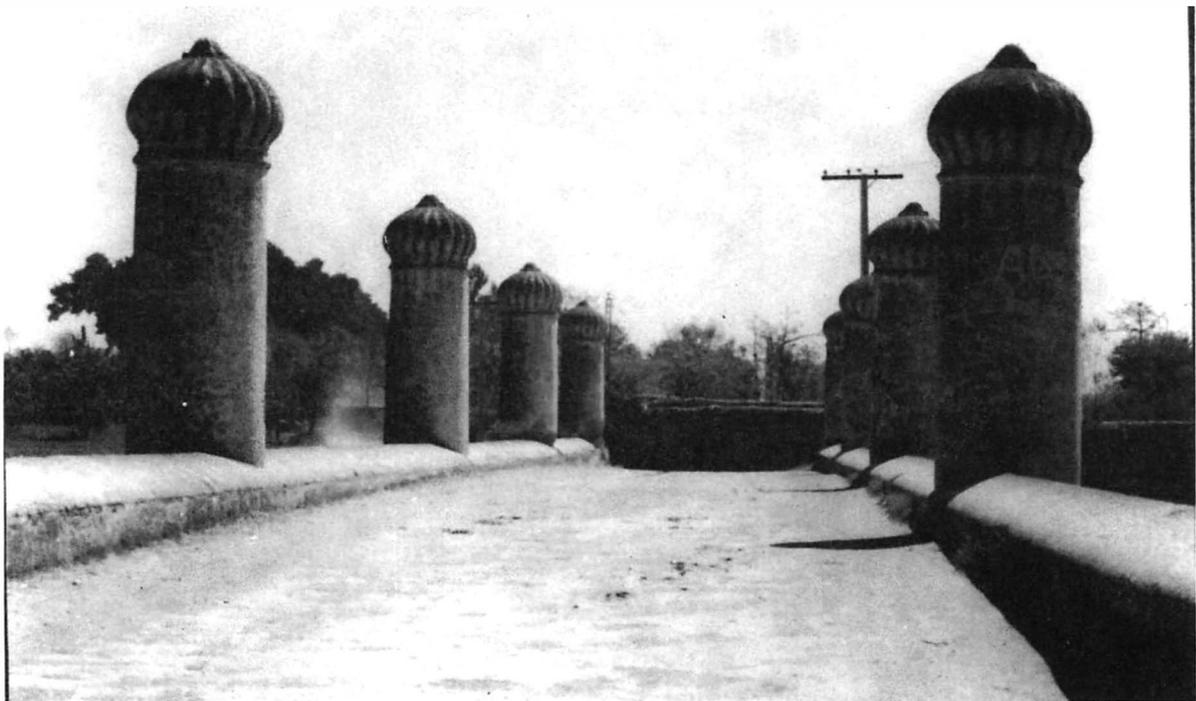
Pl 1. Gor- Khatri :Western gate



Pl. 2. Gor-Khatri : Eastern gate



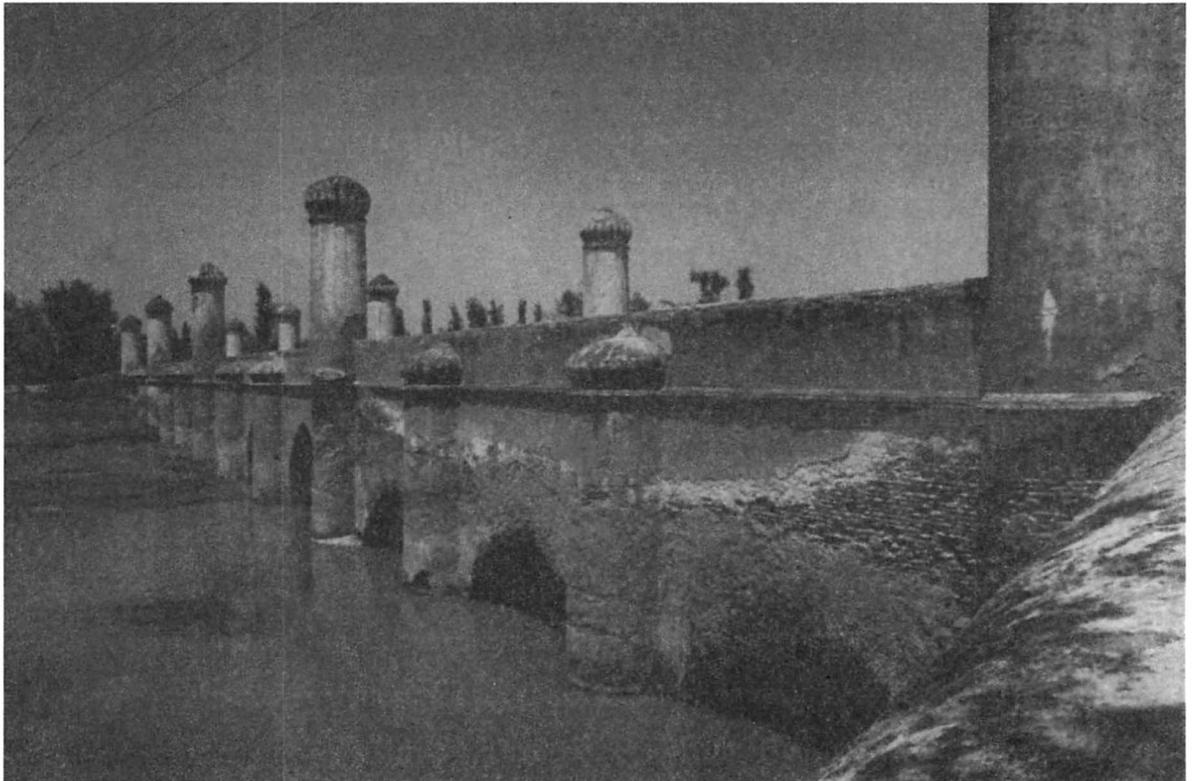
Pl: 3. Choa- Gujar Bridge: Front View



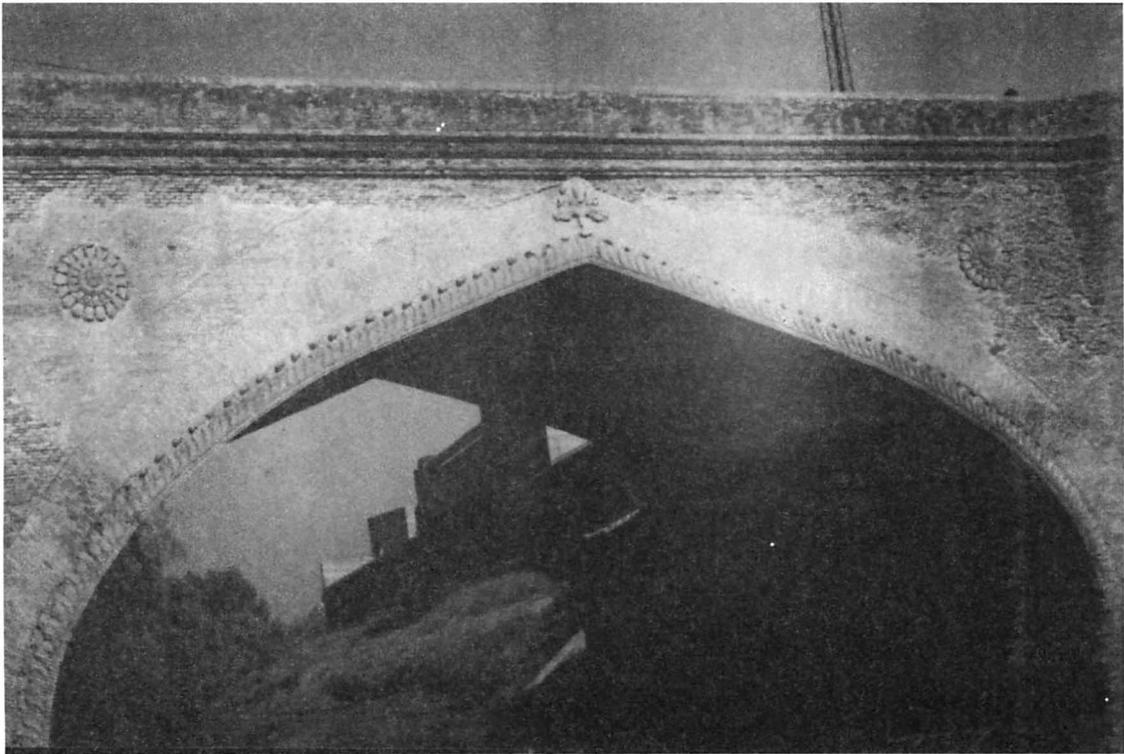
Pl. 4 . Choa-Gujar Bridge: Side View



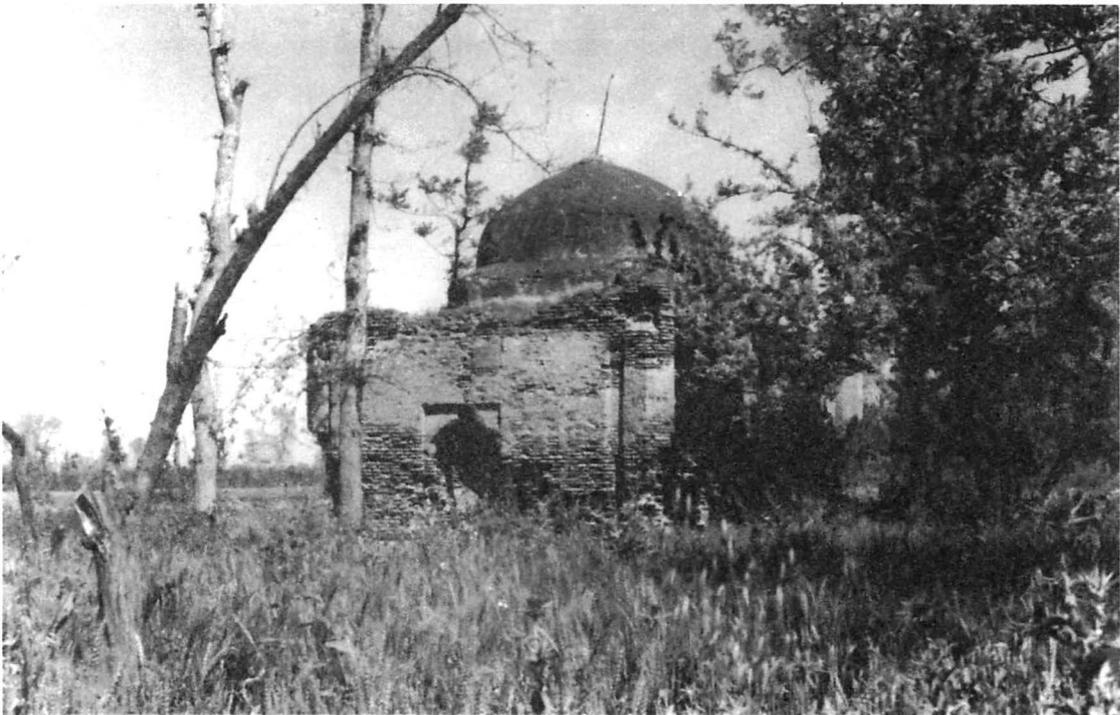
Pl. 5. Choa- Gujar Bridge: Detail View



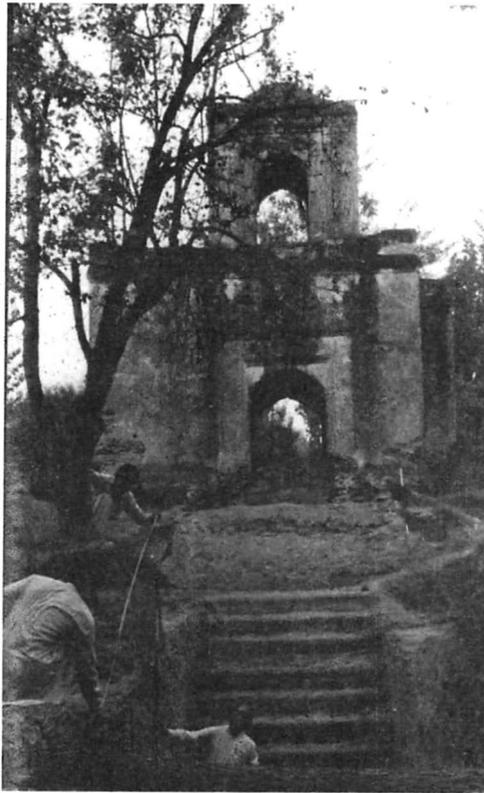
Pl. 6. Choa- Gujar Bridge: Cross View



Pl. 7. Chamkani Bridge : Front View



Pl. 8. Choa- Gujar. The Ancient Mosque: Front View



Pl. 9. Chaamkani Baoli: Southern View



Pl. 10 Aza Khel Baoli: General View



Pl.11. Aza Khel Baoli: Arched entrance



Pl. 12. Adamzai Baoli: Arched entrance



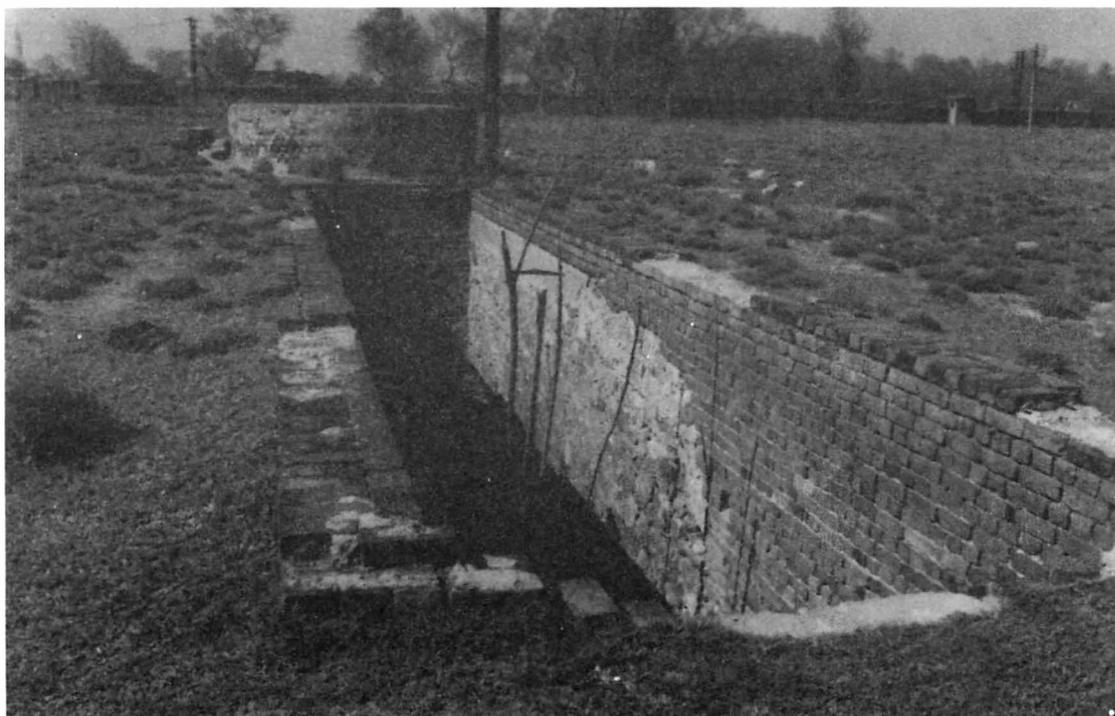
Pl. 13. Awai (Huwai) Baoli : General View



Pl. 14. Esori payan Baoli: General View



Pl. 15. Esori Bala Baoli : General View



Pl. 16. Jehangira Baoli: General View



Pl. 17. Khairabad : Water Mill (?): General View