

History of Most Significant Buddhist Archaeological Sites in Gandhāra (Pakistan) Discovered During the 20th Century

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Gandhāra is an ancient name of the region which presently comprises on the surrounding area of Peshāwar Valley in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province of Pakistan. The spread of Buddhism in ancient times followed the path of the Silk Road and one of the main routes of the Great Silk Route passed through the Karakorum linking Kashgar with Kashmir and Gandhāra. About 1,000 years, countless people travelled along this Silk Route. Their evidences are depicted on the rocky cliffs on the way sides and on rough boulders, strewn in the upper valley of the Indus River and its tributaries. The region of Gandhāra, due to its prime position, therefore served as a gateway to Silk Route giving access to Central Asia and to the countries of East and West. While Magadha was known as the first holy land of Buddhism, whereas Gandhāra served as second holy land of Buddhism, which was a centre of Buddhist religious practices. The Buddhist sanctuaries generally have statues of the Buddha or Bodhisattvas to shrine. A large number of antiquities which were discovered during the 20th century by the course of excavations from the different archaeological sites in Gandhāra are now pride procession of Museums both at home and abroad. This paper presents an investigation about the history and sterling discovery of the some outstanding and remarkable archaeological sites in Gandhāra region (Pakistan) during the 20th century carried out mainly by Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), which was established in 1860 by the British Government in India.

Keywords: Gandhāra, Archaeological Survey of India, archaeological excavations, Buddhist archaeological sites

Introduction

The word “Gandhāra” is an ancient Sanskrit name of the region which is presently the area of Peshāwar (Skt. Purusapura) Valley in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province of Pakistan. It is first mentioned in *Rigveda* (Hinduism [Religion]-Britannica Online Encyclopedia, 2014)¹, the earliest of the Indian sacred texts (2nd Millennium BCE), which describes a region located on the northwest frontier of India. The text from Achaemenian, Hellenistic, and Roman periods indicates a region on the northwestern frontier of India (Ingholt & Lyons, 1957). This word is well described by Greek historians, such as Herodotus, Hekataios, Ptolemy, and Strabo who records it in different forms, such as Gandarioi, Gandarae, and Gandaritis (Ali & Qazi, 2008). The ancient region of Gandhāra was however a very important part of the later Kushan Empire

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¹ The Vedas (knowledge) are the oldest Hindu Texts. Hindus regard the Vedas as having been directly revealed to or “heard” by gifted and inspired seers (rishis) who memorized them in the most perfect human language, Sanskrit. Vedic literature ranges from the *Rig-Veda* (c.1500 BCE) to the Upanishads (c.1000-600 BCE) and provides the primary documentation for Indian religion before Buddhism and the early texts of classical Hinduism. The most important texts are the four collections (*Samhitas*) known as the Veda or Vedas: the *Rig-Veda* (Wisdom of the Verses), the *Yajurveda* (Wisdom of the Sacrificial Formulas), the *Samaveda* (Wisdom of the Chants) and the *Atharvaveda* (Wisdom of the *Atharvan* Priests), the *Rig-Veda* is however the oldest.

(Young, 2009). In this context, Swāt is one of the most important regions in the northern parts of Pakistan. It is called as “Uḍḍiyāna” (Tucci, 1977, pp. 9-85)² which is a centre of great archaeological interest and rich in cultural remains of the past. Alexander, the Great, came to Swāt, Ora in 327 BCE. Arrian, the historian of Alexander, made distinct mention of three flourishing towns in Swāt, among them one was Ora-the modern Udegram (Government of Pakistan Karachi, 1968; Rahman, 1996). Geographically, the boundaries of Gandhāra encircle Jalalabad (Afghanistan), Khyber and Mohmmmand Agencies in the north and towards the south Kohat, Minawali, Salt Range down to the banks of River Jhelum, in the east Taxila Valley (Khan, Ashraf, & Lone, 2005).

During the middle half of 20th century, Government of British India established “Archaeological Survey Circles” in order to carry out its legal obligations for the proper preservation of cultural heritage in the sub-continent. The whole territory of British India at that time was divided into five Archaeological Survey Circles, namely: Madras with Coorg; Bombay with Sindh and Berar; the Punjab with Balochistan and Ajmer; the United (then North-West) Provinces with the Central Provinces; and Bengal with Assam. Later on in 1901, Kashmir, Rajputana, and the Punjab States as well as Dir, Swāt and Chitral were added to the charge of the Surveyor of the Punjab-Baluchistan-Ajmer Circle (Cumming; 1939). In 1902, Viceroy Lord Curzon decided to reorganize the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) and Sir John Marshall was appointed its new director general who reorganized all the activities of the archaeological survey, excavation, exploration, conservation, epigraphy, numismatics, and publications in a befitting manner. The conservation of ancient monuments became one of the prime responsibilities, with the re-organization of Archaeological Survey of India which was earlier shifted between local administrations and provincial governments. During this period, the Central Government created two circles namely, Frontier Circle and the Northern Circle (Khan, 1990).

Sir John Marshall’s outstanding contribution, as Director General of Archaeological Survey of India, escorts the activities of Archaeological Survey of India, such as preservation of monuments, archaeological excavations, epigraphy, and other related fields of archaeology. He was the real architect of archaeology in the Sub-Continent and his discoveries added new and put the Archeological Survey of India on a sound footing. After the retirement of Sir John Marshall in 1928, his successors served Archaeological Survey of India and continued his policies and archaeological researches. His successors who served for Archaeological Survey of India were Herald Hargreaves (1928-31), Daya Ram Sahni (1931-35), J. F. Blakiston (1935-37), K. N. Dikshit (1937-44) then Sir Mortimer Wheeler (1944-1948) before the independence of Pakistan.

The British Rule in sub-continent was ended in 1947 by dividing the country into two new independent states, namely, Pakistan and India. At the time of the partition of India in 1947, a new Department of Archaeology & Museums was created. It was carved out of the pre-independence days of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) which comprises on a small unit having its two offices, one each in the East and West Pakistan with its Headquarter in the capital. The West Pakistan Circle was however, the real successor to the British Indian Frontier Circle and the East Pakistan Circle was a part of colonial Eastern Circle. After the separation of East Pakistan in 1971, the West Pakistan Circle was divided into two circles, i.e., Northern Circle of Archaeology with its headquarters at Lahore and with a Sub-Regional Office at Peshawar. The other Circle was named as Southern Circle of Archaeology with its headquarters at Hyderabad and a Sub-regional Office with headquarters at Quetta.

² Uḍḍiyāna was known in India from ancient times for its fine woolen blankets (kambala).

Earlier, the Frontier Circle of Archaeological Survey was established at Peshawar in 1904 for the protection of monuments in the former North West Frontier Province (now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) including Balochistan. There were two other circles, namely, Northern Circles one at Lahore and another at Agra. The Lahore Circle was established to look after the Hindu and Buddhist monuments in areas of west and East Punjab, Delhi, U.P., Central India and Rajputana. The Agra Circle was to manage the Muslim and British monuments in the west and East Punjab, Delhi, Central India, and Rajputana. The two headquarters of the former Frontier Circle were, however, shifted to Lahore in 1928 when the Muslim and British monuments in former Punjab were also transferred to that circle. However, the circle dealing with the Hindu and Buddhist monuments at Lahore was abolished and transferred to the former Frontier Circle in 1931. Later on with the establishment of Pakistan, this circle was reorganized and re-named as West Pakistan Circle and all the monuments located in West Pakistan were put under its control (Mughal, 2011).

The main sites of Gandhāra which were excavated by world famous archaeologists however, played a significant role to bring into light the hidden aspects of Gandhāra in its true perspective. The names of such worth mentioning sites include (Hargreaves, 1986, pp. 109-110):

1. Charsada excavated by Gerrick (1882), Vogel & Sir John Marshall (1903), Sir Mortimer Wheeler (1958), Dr. A. H. Dani (1963-64);
2. Seher-e-Behlol excavated by Sr. Spooner (1907, 1909, & 1910), Sir Aurel Stein (1911-12);
3. Takht-i-Bahi excavated by Below (1870), Wilcher (1871), Sir Alexander Cunningham (1873-75), Spooner (1907-08), H. Hargreaves (1910-11), Sir Aurel Stein (1911-12);
4. Shah-jī-ki-Dheri excavated by Spooner & Sir John Marshall (1908-09);
5. Jamalgarhi excavated by H. Hargreaves (1920-21) at Tokardara by Aurel Stein, (1939), Barger & Wright (1955-56).

The archaeological excavation/exploration reports carried out in Gandhāra region during the British Colonial Period were published by the Archaeological Survey of India mainly during the first half of 20th century, such as:

1. Excavations at Sahri Bahlol by D. B. Spooner, published in the Annual Report of 1906-07 (ASIR).
2. Excavations at Shah-jī-ki-Dheri by D. B. Spooner, published in the Annual Report of 1907-08 (ASIR).
3. Excavations at Sahri Bahlol by D. B. Spooner, published in the Annual Report of 1909-10 (ASIR). It also includes a report on "Mathurā School of Sculpture" by J. Ph. Vogel.
4. Excavations at Shah-jī-ki-Dheri by H. Hargreaves published in the Annual Report of 1910-11 (ASIR).
5. Excavations at Takht-i-Bahi by H. Hargreaves published in the annual Report of 1910-11 (ASIR).
6. Excavations at Sahri Bahlol by Sir Aurel Stein published in the Annual Report of 1911-12 (ASIR).
7. Explorations at Mathurā by J. Ph. Vogel published in the Annual Report of 1911-12 (ASIR).
8. Excavations at Takht-i-Bahi by D. B. Spooner published in the annual Report of 1912-13 (ASIR).

Description of Significant Buddhist Archaeological Sites in Gandhāra

A brief description of some of the important Buddhist city sites discovered in Gandhāra which played as a model role as well as served as a melting pot, for cultural diffusion between east and west civilizations in ancient times is presented as under:

1. Puskaravati: Puskaravati means "town of lotus", it was capital of Gandhāra before Purusapura which had undergone many survey. Alexander Cunningham explored the site in 1870 and Sir John Marshall

conducted a trial dig at the beginning of the 20th century. In 1958, The Department of Archaeology, Pakistan, investigated Charsadda (Nishikawa, 2011)³ under the supervision of Sir Mortimer Wheeler. They dug a trial trench stretching east to west on the southeast cliff of Bala Hissar. It was the capital until somewhere between the 2nd century BCE and the 1st century CE (Wheeler, 1962).

2. Shaikhan Dheri: There is a low wide hill called Shaikhan Dheri in the northeast of Bala Hissar. Dr. A. H. Dani, from Peshawar University investigated the site and revealed that it was established by Greco-Bactrians in the 2nd century BCE and that even though alterations and reconstruction of the city was carried out, the original city layout has been adhered to. The city had been the capital until the Kushanas dynasty of Vasudeva—I moved it in the beginning of the 3rd century BCE. Shaikhan Dheri is the second city of Charsadda and has similar structures and characteristics to Sirkap, which is the second city of Taxila. The capital of Gandhāra was moved Purusapura by King Kanishka, it became the capital of the Kushan Empire (Dani, 1965-66).

3. Purusapura: Purusapura or the modern city of Peshawar is central city of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province of Pakistan. The Kanishka grand stupa of “shah-ji-ki-Dheri” (Peshawar) was mentioned by Chinese monk, Fa Xian, Xuan Zang, and Song Yun in their accounts and was considered as architectural marvel because of its height. The stupa was investigated by D. B. Spooner’s mission from 1909 to 1910. A relic casket with the name of the King Kanishka was excavated from the site which is now preserved in the Peshawar Museum.

4. Mekhasanda: The remains of Mekhasanda Temple are located to the northeast of Shahbagzarhi, on the southeast ridge of Mount Karamar. Foucher excavated the eastern half of the center of this site including the main stupa between the years 1895-97. Then, in 1902, an expeditionary team headed by Kozui Otani visited this site and collected the artifacts. The Kyoto University Scientific Mission for Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan conducted a detailed survey from 1962 to 1967 (Mizuno, 1989). The main stupa is located at the center of the site whereas the small stupas surround the main stupa on all four sides. According to Koji Nishikawa, many of the excavated relics were stucco sculptures along with a few stone reliefs. This site in the late Gandhāran Temple uses the style of the 3rd-5th centuries.

5. Thareli: To the northeast of Jamalgarhi, lies the Utomankhel mountain range that borders the north of the Gandhāran Plain. Many Buddhist sites scatter across the southern slop of this mountain range. The Thareli Temple (early Gandhāran Temple) site stands on the ridge of a mountain, which stretches to the southeast. The Kyoto University Scientific Mission for Iran, Afghanistan, and Pakistan conducted an extensive investigation on this site from 1963 to 1976 (Mizuno & Higuchi, 1978). Among the excavated relics, the ratio of stone reliefs was higher than that of stucco. In addition, coins excavated from the site date back to the time when Kushan dynasty was flourished during the reign of Kings Kanishka, Huvishka, and Vasudeva.

6. Chanaka-dheri: The result of the archaeological excavations (carried out from 1959-1967) showed that this site consist of secular buildings with giant base stones, indicating that it was built somewhere between 1st-3rd century.

7. Kashmir Smast: Kashmir Smast is the name of a historic period cave located some 50 km north-east of Mardan and about 20 km north of Shahbagzarhi, Pirsai village a further 16 km to the north. Many

³ Charsadda and Taxila were important regional cities with unique functions, but at the same time they had structural similarities to Puskaravati as “Ramayana” described. Both cities were located on the main road between Persia/Afghanistan and the Indian subcontinent, as well as on the expeditionary route of Alexander the Great. Their locations were key points for traffic between the East and the West and they were constructed in Hellenistic city planning style, which consisted of a basic grid pattern.

archaeological sites so far have been discovered in Gandhāra region but the significance of Kashmir Smast can hardly be compared with any other site of the region. *Antiquities*, discovered from the site, that were quite distinct from those found in the area, suggest that the Hindu religion was flourishing in this region at least from the 2nd century CE up to the 10th century CE side by side with other religions of the time. The Kyoto University Mission surveyed this site in 1960. Besides Dr. Muhammad Nasim Khan, Peshawar University has conducted extensive archaeological excavations (Khan, 2006; Mizuno, 1962; Shahab, 2015).

8. Jamalgarihi: This important Buddhist site is located to the northeast of Takht-i-Bahi on a rocky ridge running east-west. Prof. Koji Nishikawa mentions that at the centre of the site is the main stupa built on a circular plinth, surrounded by shrines. The south stairs of the stupa lead down to a courtyard where small votive stupas stand. Most of the structures in the courtyard are shrines. On a level one step lower, small stupas and shrines with niches in them are lined up. There are monasteries in the southern part of the site and a large assembly hall, a canteen, and kitchen on the outer side of the terrace to the east.

9. Shahbagzarhi: Shahbagzarhi, a famous city of ancient Gandhāra is situated about 14 km east of Mardan, on the main highway from Peshawar to Hund, on the main crossing of river Indus. It was also junction of commercial activities in old days. It was graced with the royal edicts of Asoka. These inscriptions permanently recorded for the propagation and preaching among the people, to convey to them the message of pious deeds and the commandments of administration. Among the 14 rock edicts instated by Asoka in subcontinent, two rocks edicts are founded here inscribed with Kharosthi script.

10. Takht-i-Bahi: The Buddhiststupa and monastery of Takht-i-bahi like Jamalgarihi is well preserved which is located about 15 km north east of Mardan district. The main stupa and two courtyards created on different terraces are augmented votives stupas and shrines; cells surround the monastic quadrangle for monks and large square assembly hall. Underground meditations chambers also discovered in the monastery.

11. Sehr-i-Behlol: The Kushan city of Sehr-i-Behlol is located on a mound about 12 km northeast of Mardan. The city was heavily fortified and full equipped with all the meeting amenities of supporting a large Buddhist population. It was a major ceremonial and religious center during the peak period of the Gandhāran civilization. The archaeological site of Sehr-i-Behlol and the Buddhist monuments around the city were extensively explored by Dr. D. B. Spooner in 1907 and by Sir Aurel Stein after a decade later. The excavations yielded a large number of Buddhist sculptures most of which presently housed in the Peshawar Museum.

12. Ranigat: The Ranigat site is named after Ranigat (the Queen's Rock) rock (Nishikawa, 2011)⁴. It is one of the largest Buddhist sites in Gandhāra, covering a hilly area, extending about one km from north to south and 0.7 km from east to west. The site is about 600-650 m above sea level and about 200 m higher than Nowgram. According to Alexander Cunningham (1871), after his visit (1848), he says that this site was the stronghold called Aornos, located in the mountains along the Indus River, which was conquered by Alexander the Great. Ranigat has attracted attention because of the large amount of structural remains which can be found near the small village called Nogram, about 26 km north of Ohind, and 35 km east of Mardan. During 1881-82, Alexander Cunningham investigated the Ranigat site again with H.B. Garrick (Garrick & Cunningham, 1969). Similarly, I. Lowenthal who surveyed the Peshawar District in 1860's mentions that the palace and the temple,

⁴ The rock Ranigat after which the Ranigat site was named has many legends attached to it, since the huge rock stands on top of a conscious peak. As local legend goes, the Queen who once governed this area always sat on this gigantic rock and looked over the Gandhāran plain. When she saw a cloud of sand in the distance, made from passing caravans, she sent soldiers to plunder them. It is unknown whether the same Ranigat was created after this legend or the legend was created after the name of the rock.

where the king lived and prayed, were surrounded on all sides by masonry buildings. He also mentions that the most notable thing on Ranigat hill is the gigantic rock at the top and the caves carved into a large stones dotted around hill. Prof. Koji Nishikawa while quoting him (Lowenthal) mentions as:

that there are many pieces of sculpture scatted around the plateau. Most of them are pieces of Buddhist statues. We saw flat, smooth and serene looking Buddha busts, Buddha's with flowing elegant robes, and Buddha's with long earlobes. Furthermore, halos, pieces of standing Buddhas, Buddhas sitting crossed legged and various types of mudra showing his hands and the undersides of his feet are found. (Nishikawa 2011, p. 365)

In 1864, Bellew conducted survey and said that the Ranigat site is similar to Jamalgarhi, Takht-i-Bahi, and Sahr-i-Behlol in its plan structure and architectural forms, however, the material used were different. In 1883, Cole also visited the Ranigat site and conducted an archeological survey. In December 1891, Sir Aurel Stein visited the site and showed a great interest. The Ranigat site has been scientifically excavated and properly conserved by a research group of Kyoto University, Japan from 1983-1992, under the leadership of Prof. Koji Nishikawa and then by Prof. M. Masui. At the site stone, stucco and terracotta sculptures have been discovered (total number of antiquities comes to 3,659) apart from the coins right from the Scytho Parthian to early Kushan period.

13. Zar Dheri: Zar Dheri is located in Hazara division; district Mansehra in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province. Tokyo National Museum Archaeological Mission carried out survey and excavations here during 1995-2000. This site is a Buddhist complex having significant role in the old days when pilgrims and traders passed through this on Silk Route. In 1999, more than 145 unused stone sculptures, architectural panels have been discovered from a cell. The panels were inscribed with the names of donors or sculptors.

14. Gumbatuna: Swāt (Callieri, Galli, Micheli, Morigi, & Olivieri, 2006)⁵, ancient Savastu "land of fragrance" is located in northern part of Pakistan. According to ancient records, Swāt was filled with about 1,400 imposing Buddhist stupas and monasteries. The cultural potential of this valley goes back to 3000 BCE (Khan, 1993; Rehman, 1968). Gumbatuna site is consisting on a colossal stupa with viharas and stupas, which is located on the right bank of Swāt River about 6 km west of Barikot village. The salvage excavation conducted by Dr. M. Ashraf Khan in 1994 and discovered a large number of stone and stucco objects from this site which belongs to 1st to 3rd century.

15. Dadhara: It is situated about 26 km west of Saidu Sharif on the right bank of Swāt River on Kabul Parri Road and 1 km to the east of modern village of Dadhara. It is a Buddhist establishment consisting of stupas and chapels and belongs to 2nd-5th century. Dr. M. Ashraf Khan excavated this site in 1992.

16. Andan Dheri: It is also a Buddhist monastic complex which stands in the heart of Adin Zai plain about 8 km north of Chakdara (Samad, 2011)⁶. It was excavated by Department of Archaeology and Museums,

⁵ Swat or Uddiyana, as it is called in the Sanskrit sources, is a valley in the mountainous region to the north of the Peshawar Plain at the foot of the mountain range connecting the Hindu Kush with Karakorum: it includes the main valley of the upper course of the River Swat, for a length of about 200 km from the source as far as the gullies through which the river flows down to the plain and the lateral valleys of its tributaries. The valley conquered by Alexander the Great in 327 BCE and over the flowing centuries by the Indo-Greek, Saka, Parthian, Kushan, Sasanians and Hephthalite kings, was a prosperous region. It constituted a trading centre between the plains of Gandhāra Central Asia, and at the same time great centre of Buddhist culture with an ample scattering of Buddhist monasteries, representing an important stop over on the way to the holy places of Buddhism, transverse by numerous Chinese pilgrims.

⁶ It is major Gandhāran city in southern Dir located at the confluence of the Swāt and Panjkora Rivers. During the Gandhāran period, it was center of a large urban cum religious complex, which include about half a dozen sites located within a radius of about 15 km. These sites includes: Damkot, Andan Dheri, Chatpat, Ramora, Jabagai, and Amlukdara.

Pakistan and University of Peshawar in 1966. The main stupa is surrounded by votive stupas and a monastery. A large number of sculptures, coins, and minor antiquities discovered which belongs to 2nd-4th century (Dani, 1968-69a).

17. Chatpat: It is located 2 km west of Chakdara and 4 km from the main Chakdara-Dir road. This Buddhist site has been excavated by Department of Archaeology and Museums, Pakistan and Dr. A. H. Dani Peshawar University. It comprised 37 votive stupas and monastic cells. A number of black schist sculptures, coins, and pottery as well as Kharosthi inscriptions have been discovered from here which are mostly belonging to late 1st-4th century (Dani, 1968-69b).

18. Butkara-I: It is located at the eastern end of Mingora which consist on a complex of very large and wide stupa & monastery. The Italian Archaeological Mission (IsMEO now IsIAO) in collaboration with Department of Archaeology and Museums, Pakistan excavated the site in 1956-58. About 7,000 stone sculptures were recovered from this site. The main stupa and surrounding structures belong to Ca. 3rd century BCE-10th century.

19. Butkara-III: The Butkara-III marks the site of an ancient Buddhist establishment, the actual name of which has long been forgotten. The present name, a corrupted form of the Persian word *butkada* meaning “the house of images” is the name of the area lying adjacent to the town of Saidu Sharif, Swāt to the east. The actual lies astride on the sides of a ravine called NariKhwar—one of the several seasonal streams which drain the northern side of the Latokhpa hill and after meandering through the terraced fields for a short distance join the main stream called Jambil, a tributary of the river Swāt. Dr. Abdur Rahman has conducted archaeological excavation at the site in 1982 and 1985 (Rahman, 1991).

20. Saidu Stupa: This Buddhist complex is located about 1 km south of Swāt Museum. The Buddhist sacred area of Saidu Sharif is situated at the foot of the mountains separating the Saidu River valley from the valley of the River Jambil, not far from the early and extensive built-up area identified by Giuseppe Tucci as *Mengjieli*, one of the major cities of Swāt. The Italian Archaeological Mission and Department of Archaeology, Pakistan had excavated and discovered a large number of stone sculptures representing Gandhāra art & Buddhist cult objects. This stupa belongs to 1st-5th century.

21. Panr: Panr is situated about 2 km east of Mingora Jambilroad. Italian archaeological Mission and Department of Archaeology and Museums, Pakistan excavated the site which consists of two terraces connected by steps. There is a main stupa surrounded by votive stupas and a column made of soapstone. The site belongs to the period after the construction of great stupa-III at Butkara-I.

22. Nimogram: It is a Buddhist stupa and monastery site, located in Shamoza area, north of the streamlet in lower Swāt. It was excavated by the Department of Archaeology and Museums, Pakistan in 1968-69. The three main stupas stand in a row with viharas, 56 votive stupas all around it, over a paved floor with the remains of a monastery in the west. The sacred area was destroyed due to fire and finally it was abandoned.

23. Baligram: It is Buddhist establishment situated about 4 km south of Swāt Museum which was excavated by Dr. M. Ashraf Khan, Department of Archaeology and Museums, Pakistan in 1991.

24. Nawagai: The site of Nawagai is situated about 3 km east of Barikot village on the way to Karakar Pass. The site was excavated by Mian Said Qamar of the Department of Archaeology and Museums, Pakistan in 1992. This site consists of main stupa, chapels, and numerous votive stupas around over a paved floor. A number of stone sculptures, a relic casket, copper objects, and pottery were found which belongs to 2nd-10th century. With the exception of only a few fragments in stucco all the other pieces were carved from blue schist

or green phyllite. Most of the sculptures were found fragmentary and damaged condition which comprises on isolated images, panel reliefs and friezes depicting various scenes from the Buddha's life and also a large number of archaeological elements, such as stupa brackets, cornice parts, umbrella pieces, Corinthian pillars and a large number of stone slabs with floral, vegetal, and geometrical patterns. It was these sculptures that once adorned the decorated walls of the stupa.

25. Shanaisha: The site of Shanaisha is situated about 6 km south of Saidu Sharif, and about 9 km south of Mingora (Swāt). This site was explored by Sir Aurel Stein in 1926 revisited some thirty years later by G. Tucci in 1958. Aurel Stein mentioned this site fairly well preserved while Prof. Tucci found the stupa greatly damaged. He was also told that from this site many sculptures had been dug out and sold in the underground market by treasure hunters. In 1989, the first excavation campaign was conducted by Mr. Nazir Ahmad Khan, the then Curator of Swāt Museum, Department of Archaeology and Museums, Pakistan. In 1990, a joint archaeological investigations was carried out by the University of Peshawar and Department of Archaeology and Museums, Pakistan under the leadership of Dr. Abdur Rahman with the representation of Mian Said Qamar, the then Deputy Director (Rehman, 1993)

26. Marjanai: The site of Marjanai is situated about 21 km northwest of Mingora city in Swāt. Dr. Shah Nazar Khan excavated this site and reported results in "Ancient Pakistan". According to him, the sculptures came from Votive stupa No. 3 which is mostly carved out of green phyllite with the exception of a few pieces moulded in stucco. The stone sculptures are panels, reliefs depicting important incidents from the life of the Buddha.

27. Aziz Dheri: The site of Aziz Dheri has been investigated by Dr. M. Nasim Khan, Peshawar University who has reported that the results shows a complete and uninterrupted cultural sequence at the site starting at least from the Indo-Greek to the Islamic period. The archaeological excavations at the site were carried out during 1993 to 2008. He also mentions that sculptural remains from this site are quite varied representing various themes starting the previous birth stories of the Buddha and from the palace life to the display of his relics etc.

28. Charga-pate: The Buddhist religious site of Charga-pate is located about 2 km to the north of Khanpur village some 15 km to the northwest of Chakdara in District Dir, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. It was explored and excavated by the Department of Archaeology, University of Peshawar in 1981. The site was built on two terraces; an upper and a lower. Executed in grey schist the sculptures from the upper terrace were rough in style and dresses on some of the figures closely resemble those Central Asian. The lower terrace yielded sculptures mostly in green phyllite that exhibit depth in carving, excellence in workmanship and Western influences in their style.

29. Tokardara, Najigram: The Buddhist monastery of Tokardara is located about 5 km on the south of Barikot and about 1 km west of the modern village Najigram at the mouth of a small picturesque gulley. It is surrounded on the west, east and south by hills and on the north by wide strip of agriculture land. The Buddhist sanctuary of Tokardara was first recorded in 1926 by Sir Aurel Stein during his archaeological survey in the Swāt Valley. He was followed by E. Barger and P. Wright, who conducted a small scale test excavation at the site. After small excavation on the site by Barger and Wright, the site was then robbed by antique dealers. Nevertheless the site seems to offer a good opportunity for systematic excavation yielding promising results. The site was revisited by G. Tucci, Italian Archaeological Mission to Swāt, in 1955. Dr. M. Ashraf Khan, Department of Archaeology and Museums, Pakistan carried out archaeological excavations in 1995.

Most of the findings are sculptures, carved in black and grey schist, depicting the life story of the Buddha and architectural elements. One of the stucco fragments depicts the lower part of the Buddha. According to Prof. M. Farooq Swāti, the sculptures collected from the site are fragmentary but some pieces are in good state preservation and exhibit deep and fine carving similar to those excavated from Nawagai, Baligram, Butkara-III, Shanaisha, Marjanai, Butkara-I, Saidu Sharif Swāt, AndanDheri, and Chatpat in Dir. The sculptures date from 1st to 5th-6th century. Further such sculptures embellished the plinth of the stupas as some of them found still *insitu*.

30. Taxila Valley: The archaeological remains of Taxila valley are scattered in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces. Sir Alexander Cunningham, explored the Taxila valley and Sir John Marshall, was the first archaeologist who carried out regular archaeological excavations in the Taxila valley and exposed the buried history of this region. Then Mortimer Wheeler continued the excavations for some time. After independence of Pakistan in 1947, excavations were carried out by Mr. M. A. Halim, Dr. M. Sharif, Mr. G. M. Khan, Dr. M. Ashraf Khan, Mr. Muhammad Bahadur Khan, Dr. Muhammad Arif, of the Department of Archaeology and Museums, Pakistan. A number of some important cultural heritage sites are included; Sarai Khola, Hathial, Bhir Mound, Sirkap, Sirsukh, Jandial Temple, Dharmarajika Stupa, Julian (I & II), Kunala, Giri, Mohra Muradu, Kalawan, Piplan, Jinan Wali Dheri, Lal Chak, Badalpur, Bhalar, Bhamala, Mankiyala, etc.

31. Dharmarajika Stupa Complex: It is the oldest of the Sangharama in Gandhāra. The *Chirtop* site where main Dharmarajika stupa located is a huge complex over a period of about seven centuries from 3rd century BCE to 5th century CE, hundreds of stupas, chapels, and monastic cells were constructed. This construction belongs to Mauryan, Indo-Scythians, Parthians, Indo Sasanians, and KidaraKushan, but its expansion and maintenance were largely done during Kushan period particularly during the reign of Kanishka, Huvishka, and Vasudeva.

Conclusion

The archaeological researches and discoveries carried out during the 20th century of our Era in the different areas now comprising on present Pakistan especially in Gandhāra region had yielded a considerable quantity of data of research work. This earlier archaeological investigations and researches had provided to the scholars a great helping hand in order to re-construct the historical time scale of this area. It was due to British masters and other European scholars for introducing the subject of archaeology in the sub-continent. The worth mentioning and real pioneers who are credited for the introduction of archaeological pursuits in the sub-continent includes; General Sir Alexander Cunningham, who with the help of his colleagues open up the new panorama of archaeology by his publication of Archaeological Survey Reports on annual basis and the British Viceroy, Lord Curzon who appointed Sir John Marshall as Director General of Archaeological Survey of India. Sir John Marshall brings around many civilizations and extended the cultural horizon to the most ancient beginning of human civilizations in the East. Besides, there were Sir Aurel Stein and Alfred Foucher who provided a great source of professional support to Sir John Marshall. Later on, this led to open several research centers pertaining to different fields of archaeological studies in European and American Universities. Another British Master was Brigadier (Sir) Mortimer Wheeler who had entirely new vision of archaeological field researches and explains how to link the archaeology of North India with that of the south east and west regions.

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