Tribes of Pakistan

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Cambridge
Scholars
Publishing

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This book first published 2019

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

Lady Stephenson Library, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2PA, UK

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN (10): 1-5275-3251-8
ISBN (13): 978-1-5275-3251-9

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PREFACE

Pakistan's tribal areas in the north are located in a region that has been at the centre of historic power rivalries, known as the Great Game, a term famously coined by Arthur Conolly and described by Toynbee as "the great eastern crossroads of history." Throughout history, the tribes and people of these areas have witnessed invasions by nations from across the world such as the Aryans and the Huns, and have seen armies led by great generals like Alexander the Great, Muhammad bin Qasim the Ummayad General, Mahmud of Ghazni, Tamerlane, and Babur. They have also endured labyrinthine power struggles amongst local warlords. The introduction of Islam from the Arab world led to the integration of local practices into the arriving religion, giving the area a unique flavour and identity.

From the time India was colonized by the British in the nineteenth century until recently, Pakistan's tribal areas, especially the restive and rugged north-west frontier, have evoked thoughts of adventure, mystery, war, and struggle. The subject has been extensively dealt with by Western (mostly British) and Pakistani scholars, who have provided us with an exhaustive account of the tribes and clans of this region. Contemporary researchers such as Caroe, Spain and Mahabat have drawn on the vast amount of data recorded by colonial soldiers, adventurers and administrators to record detailed accounts of the evolution and present status of the tribal societies of Pakistan. They characterize these tribal communities as people with strong bonds of kinship, an adherence to a strict code of honour, a fierce allegiance to Islam, and driven by a powerful instinct to survive in a hostile environment.

Life in the northern tribal areas has historically been one of poverty and deprivation. The region suffers from widespread illiteracy and as a result its people are mostly ignorant. They are extremely suspicious by nature and show little regard for the wider world. Even in contemporary times the people of these regions tenaciously cling to their historical tradition of confronting outsiders and viewing modern ideas with deep suspicion, thereby perpetuating their isolation and backwardness.

While the Pathan tribes in Pakistan's western and northern frontier regions have been immortalized, romanticized and even vilified by a succession of British and Pakistani writers and historians, the tribes that dwell in the other three provinces of the country (Balochistan, Punjab and Sindh) have neither attained similar prominence nor been the subject of comparable academic study. Apart from other factors that might explain this phenomenon, the greater fame of the Pathans could well be the consequence of the strategic nature of their native territory as it straddles almost all the major routes through which historic migrations and invading armies have passed.

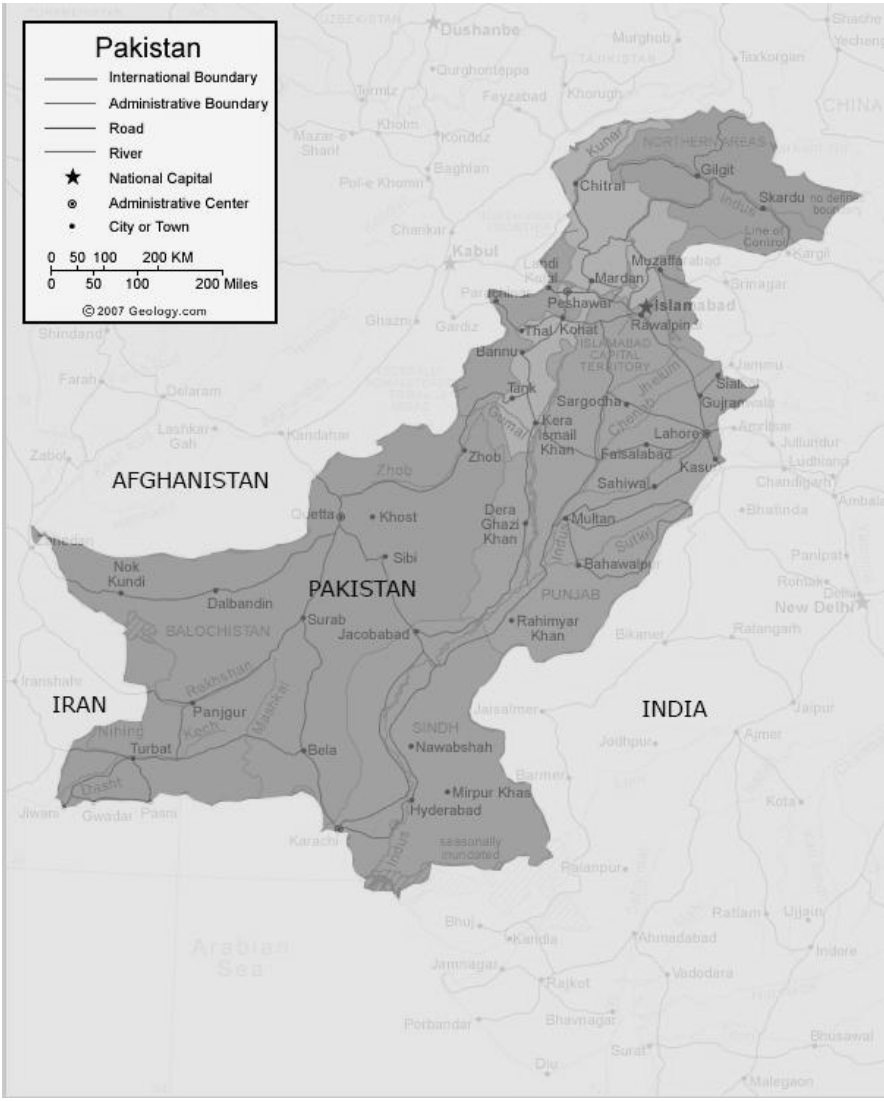
Notwithstanding the reputation of the Pathan tribes, the culture, traditions and values of tribes native to the other three provinces of the country have also had a profound effect in shaping the contours of Pakistani society. Even though each tribe has its own distinct characteristics, it will be shown later in this monograph that all tribes, regardless of their geographical location, have many attributes in common.

In effect, the people and societies of Pakistan are largely a reflection of all the various tribes that inhabit different regions of the country. A detailed study of these tribes will, therefore, be helpful in understanding many of the country's inexplicable idiosyncrasies and palpable societal contradictions.

This monograph describes in some detail the tribal societies of the whole of Pakistan – their origins, history, social profile, and administrative structure. It also discusses issues in the context of the areas' geostrategic significance, historical processes, social ideology, and institutional structure. The narrative attempts to promote an understanding of the disrupting effects of external and internal factors and the distortions caused in these societies by the introduction of institutional, legal, political, and social reforms that failed to take into account their deep-seated cultural sensitivities.

The authors acknowledge and appreciate the efforts of Mr. Hasan Pervez, for the painstaking editing of the manuscript, Mr. Syed Muhammad Mubashir for designing the cover and Ms. Madiha Mubashir for the charts and maps.

Pakistan and Adjacent Countries



Source: Government of Pakistan

CHAPTER ONE

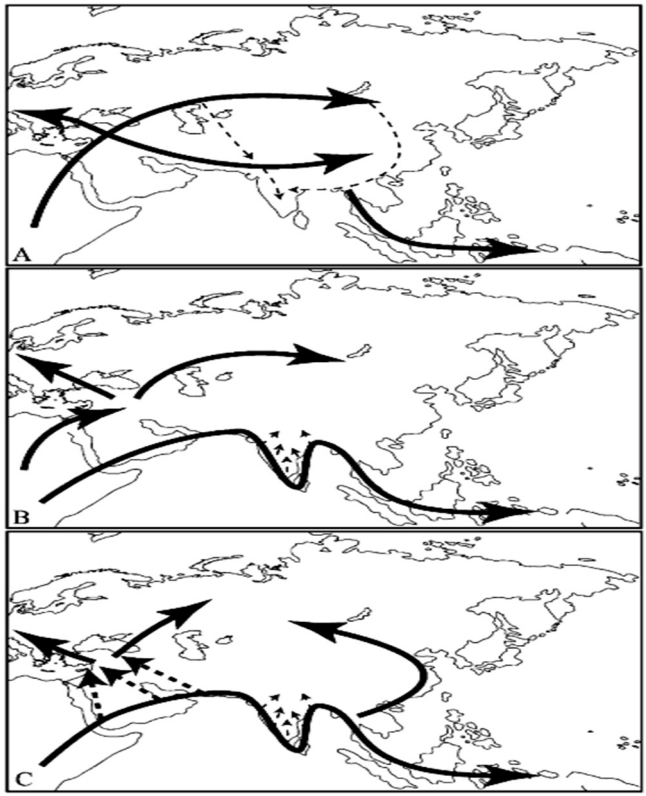
INDUS VALLEY CIVILIZATION: A PRECURSOR TO THE MODERN SOCIAL HIERARCHY OF THE SUBCONTINENT

In a simple direct sense, archaeology is a science that must be lived, must be "seasoned with humanity.'
—Mortimer Wheeler

In palaeoanthropology, the recent hypothesis about the African origin of modern humans, also called the "Out of Africa" theory, is now the most widely accepted explanation of the geographic origin and early migration of anatomically modern humans.[1] The theory argues that modern humans migrated from Africa in waves, gradually replacing older human species.

There is considerable evidence that modern humans left Africa at least 100-90 thousand years before present (BP)[2] using two different routes: through the Nile Valley into Sinai and heading to Levant (modern Syria) (Lahr and Foley, 1994; Klein, 1999), and a second one crossing the Red Sea into the Arabian Peninsula, settling in places like the present-day United Arab Emirates[3] and Oman[4] and then ingressing into the Indian subcontinent and further east to Australia (Lahr and Foley, 1994; Stringer, 2000). The discovery of stone tools in the United Arab Emirates in 2011 indicates the presence of modern humans as early as between 100,000 and 125,000 years ago.[5]

Different Routes Taken by the Early Humans



'Out of Africa'

Endicott et al. (2007). Genetic evidence on modern human dispersals in South Asia: Y chromosome and mitochondrial DNA perspectives**:** The world through the eyes of two haploid genomes.

The geographic location of the Indian subcontinent is central in the early migratory patterns of modern humans, which makes it an important region for the study of the pre-historic movement of humans on the Eurasian continent. The archaeological finds made in South Asia in the last century have established its distinctive historical character, challenging many widely acknowledged theories made on the basis of discoveries in other

parts of the world (Petraglia and Allchin, 2007).[6] With its rich diversity in linguistics, archaeology, genetics, and cultures, South Asia offers important insights into a wide range of scientific disciplines.

Petraglia and Allchin (2007) and Pattanayak (1998) state that within the subcontinent, over 500 languages and dialects are spoken by a population of over 1.5 billion people. Linguists have identified four major language groups, i.e. Dravidian (south India), Indo-Aryan (north and north-west India and Pakistan), Tibeto-Burmese or Sino-Tibetan (north and north-east India, Nepal), and Austroasiatic (east India and Bangladesh).[7]

The vast societal diversity in the Indian subcontinent gives rise to interesting questions about the process by which such a varied human landscape was formed in this region, which at its zenith established a culture now called the Indus Valley Civilization (IVC) or the Harappan Civilization (HC). Considerable research has been carried out in the fields of palaeoanthropology, linguistics, palaeobotany, and microbiology to ascertain the journey of early modern humans in present-day South Asia.

On migrating from the African continent, in all probability via the Red Sea route, the Palaeolithic people gradually settled in the subcontinent but remained hunter-gatherers. Archaeological evidence from Mehrgarh suggests that in approximately ca. 7000-8000 BP, rudimentary farming and domestication of animals started amongst small communities in the north-western regions of the subcontinent (present-day Balochistan in Pakistan). The techniques developed by these Mesolithic communities gradually spread south (Morrison, 2007).

Over the course of centuries, with the advent of new farming techniques, use of metals and climatic changes, these communities developed from small farming villages into towns ca. 5000 BC (Kenoyer, 1998; Possehl, 1999), and then sophisticated cities with complex religious, cultural and socioeconomic attributes ca. 2500 BC (Ahmed, 2014). However, it is important to note that hunting-gathering, as a primary occupation, remains the basic source of livelihood for a significant number of contemporary groups in South Asia, which were rather abstractly and misleadingly called "tribal" by the British colonists upon their arrival in this region.

The rise and fall of these hunter-gatherer communities from the Mesolithic to the agricultural-trader communities of the Chalcolithic phase and the subsequent influx of Aryan populations in the admixture of the South Asian subcontinent until the present day make for an interesting study and

would help in some way to explain the ethnic and cultural diversity of the existing tribes in Pakistan.

The Indus Valley Civilisation

Ahmed (2014) gives a detailed timeline leading up to and beyond the decline of the IVC.

1	Before 7000 BC	Development of Hunter-Gatherer communities and early sedentism
2	7000 – 6000 BC	Neolithic farming communities such as at Mehrgarh-I
3	6000 – 5000 BC	Neolithic farming communities such as at Mehrgarh-II
4	5000 – 4300 BC	Larger Neolithic farming communities, small scale irrigation, limited use of copper
5	4300 – 3800 BC	Wider use of copper by bigger farming communities, development of regional cultures
6	3800 – 3200 BC	Chalcolithic phase
7	3200 – 2600 BC	Early Harappan cultures
8	2600 – 2500 BC	Transition from Pre Urban to Urban. IVC cities start taking shape
9	2500 – 1900 BC	Fully developed Indus civilization at Harappa and Mohenjo daro

Ahmed, M. (2014), *Ancient Pakistan - An Archaeological History: Volume III: Harappan Civilization - The Material Culture* (Foursome Group)

The pre-Harappan urban phase, dating roughly from 3200-2600 BC, is also called the mature phase of the earlier Harappan village cultures. These same village communities then developed into the urban centres of the

IVC after 2600 BC. By this time people had already domesticated many crops, including wheat and barley, and had developed trade networks with neighbouring regions.[8]

Upon its discovery in the nineteenth century,[9] the Indus Valley Civilization (also known as the Harappan Culture), which had its earliest origins in 6000 BCE, was found to be one of the greatest cultures of the ancient world known to us today. At its peak, it covered more than 30 per cent of the present landmass of the Indian subcontinent (Agrawal, 2007). It is so named because many of its settlements were situated along the Indus River. As in Sumer (Mesopotamia), Egypt and other early civilizations in the Middle East, civilizations first developed in South Asia in the vicinity of great river systems. What has come to light since the first excavations suggests that the Indus Valley Civilization was a contemporary of Mesopotamian and Egyptian cultures and was equally impressive in its character and sophistication.[10]

But unlike Sumer and its successor civilizations in the Middle East, the Harappan civilization was "lost" or forgotten even by the people who lived in the vicinity of its sand-covered ruins. Important elements of the Harappan society were passed on to later civilizations in the Indian subcontinent but Harappa did not survive to be the core and geographical centre from which a unified and continuous civilization could develop.

What little is known about the Indus Valley people comes exclusively from archaeological evidence such as the artefacts and seals discovered in the ruins. It is classified as proto-historic since in the absence of deciphered written records it is not possible to create a detailed road map of its evolution (Possehl, 1999). Although experts have as yet been unsuccessful in deciphering the cryptic script found on these artefacts, archaeological evidence discovered so far indicates that the urban phase of the Harappan civilization developed quite rapidly in the middle centuries of the third millennium BCE and ultimately disappeared around 1400 BCE[11] after flourishing for almost two millennia.[12]

At the height of its rudimentary technological advancement and cultural sophistication, this civilization flourished in most of present-day Pakistan (along the Indus River), and parts of India and Afghanistan (see Appendix A). Extensive excavations at the original site and a number of other locations in Pakistan, India and Afghanistan have uncovered hundreds of sites belonging to this culture, dozens of which are large enough to be classified as villages or towns.[13] Possehl (1999) has listed more than 2500

sites in this region, which marks the spread of the Harappan culture at its peak; however, fewer than ten of these sites have an area exceeding half a square kilometre (Joshi, 2008).

The largest and most important of these population centres are known as Harappa and Mohenjo daro. The former is located in the Punjab province of Pakistan near the city of Sahiwal on one of the five great rivers that form the Indus. The latter city is situated on the west bank of the Indus River proper in present-day Sindh province, close to the city of Larkana and about 290 km north of Karachi. Judging by the size and exquisite planning of the excavated cities, they may have hosted a population of several thousand, which signifies thriving trade and peaceful times.[14]

These cities formed the town-capitals of a complex of smaller urban centres and villages that covered an area four times the size of Sumer and twice the size of Egypt in the Old Kingdom. Though hundreds of miles apart, Harappa and Mohenjo daro were remarkably similar in layout and construction. Both were built on a square grid pattern that was divided by main thoroughfares into smaller and precisely measured grids.[15] The city of Harappa emerges as a small isolated cluster of communities that existed around 3200 BC on one of the tributaries of the Indus River, more than 3000 years after the first agriculture in Mehrgarh, and about 1000 km to its west. Other cities of IVC such as Mohenjo daro existed between Mehrgarh and Harappa on the banks of the Indus River around 2500 BC.[16]

Experts have divided the IVC development period into three phases:

a) Early Harappan Phase (3500 BC–2500 BC) – Marked by early signs of sedentary behaviour such as town planning, elementary trade and crafts, etc. The population had already started to transform from a food-gathering to a food-producing group around ca. 6000 BP. This had a profound impact on human behavioural evolution as farming required permanent or seasonally permanent settlements thus resulting in a gradual process of urbanization.
b) Mature Harappan Phase (2500 BC–1900 BC) – Well-developed towns with sophisticated design and infrastructure, extensive trade networks, crafts of various types, the emergence of a complex social strata (priests, artisans, ruling elites, etc.)
c) Late Harappan Phase (1900 BC–1400 BC) – Gradual decline of the IVC with evidence of abandoned cities, disappearance of writing and standard measures. Many scientists have hypothesized about

the decline of the IVC but no conclusive evidence has been presented as yet.

Kenoyer (2008) has suggested that the truly urban period of the IVC should be considered from 2500 BC to 1900 BC. Possehl (1990) has pointed out that in a short period of about 150 years around 2600 BC, the civilization seems to have transformed from pre-urban to a fully established urban society.

The IVC or the Harappan civilization – itself classified as Chalcolithic and ultimately urban in nature – developed gradually from earlier Mesolithic and Neolithic rural cultures (Walimbe, 2007). It is believed that the development of better agricultural techniques in combination with the rich fertile plains of the River Indus might have resulted in an agricultural surplus that would have provided for the non-agricultural sections of a complex society, people such as artisans, administrators, etc.[17] It also helped in the promotion of trading contacts with distant regions, going as far as Mesopotamia (Singh, 2008; Ray, 2003).

Geological evidence shows that 5000–6000 years BP, the Indus delta system, especially at its lower reaches, was not as arid as it is today. The climate was wetter, producing dense forests and an abundance of wild game and domesticated animals. Plant domestication had already started as early as the Mehrgarh people, and by the time of the pre-Harappan phase, people were cultivating rye, wheat and barley. Metal works in bronze, gold and silver were also being practised. Numerous bronze weapons and tools, along with precious jewellery, have been found at these sites. Brick and pottery making had also been mastered by these people and they had developed a standardized set of measurements and weights for their daily routines, which remained unchanged until the disappearance of these sites.

The most interesting urban feature of the Harappan civilization is its town-planning. It is marked by considerable uniformity and standard proportions. The uniformity is noticed in the layout of the towns, the streets, structures, brick size, drains, etc. Almost all major sites (Harappa, Mohenjo daro, Kalibangan, and others) are divided into two parts – a citadel on a higher mound on the western side and a lower town on the eastern side of the settlement. The citadel contains large structures that might have functioned as administrative or ritual centres. The residential buildings were built in the lower town. The streets intersect each other at

right angles in a crisscross pattern, which divides the city into several residential blocks.

The main street is connected by narrow lanes. The doors of the houses opened to these lanes and not the main streets. The houses of common people, however, differed in size from a single-room house in Harappa to bigger structures. The houses were largely built of burnt bricks. The bigger houses had many rooms surrounding a square courtyard. These houses were provided with private wells, kitchens and bathing platforms. The differences in the size of the houses suggest that the rich lived in larger houses whereas the one-room buildings or barracks might have been made for the poorer section of society.

Large-scale structures were built essentially for utilitarian purposes, such as for the Great Bath or raised platforms to set up a whole city. Their water management was sophisticated and far ahead of their period. The drainage system of the IVC people was elaborate and well laid out, suggesting that they were acquainted with the science of sanitation.

A surplus of food products resulting from successful agricultural practices and flourishing internal and external trade ushered in an era of prosperity for the IVC cities. Economic activity helped them develop various crafts and industries. Manufactured gold, silver and bronze artefacts discovered at excavated IVC sites provide ample evidence to support this finding. The most iconic specimen of their craftsmanship is the bronze “dancing girl” figurine discovered at Mohenjo daro.[18] A number of copper tools and weapons have also been discovered, with spearheads, arrowheads, axes, etc. being the most common.

The IVC people developed extensive domestic and foreign trading networks, particularly with Mesopotamia, where their goods were in demand. Various raw materials and semi-processed goods are required to make finished products, and when these are not indigenous they need to be imported from other regions. The presence of non-indigenous raw materials found at IVC sites suggests that these were imported from elsewhere in an economic exchange, and that a demand for such goods existed in the IVC region.

The discovery of Indus Valley artefacts at archaeological sites as distant as Mesopotamia suggests that trade, especially along the Indus River and the Makran coast, played a significant role in its economy and that the IVC cities of Harappa and Mohenjo daro must have been major trading centres.

The inscriptional evidence from Mesopotamia also provides us with valuable information on Harappan contact with Mesopotamia. These inscriptions refer to trade with Dilmun (Bahrain), Magan (Makkan) and Meluhha (Harappa) (Singh, 2008; Ray, 2003).

Archaeologists have established that people of the Indus Valley Civilization engaged in maritime trade with the Middle East. The discovery of numerous pre-historic sites along the Makran coast, some of which are quite close to the present city of Karachi, suggests that the natural harbour of Karachi and its outlying areas close to the mouths of the Indus River must have had some part to play in the trade between the great Indus and Mesopotamian civilizations. Karachi is one of the very few natural harbours on the Makran and Sindh coast and is the only one adjacent to the Indus delta.

No historical records or archaeological or geological evidence exists to show that a great natural calamity might have fundamentally changed the topography of the area, which suggests that the general area of the harbour of Karachi is quite ancient. This assumption is also supported by authentic but oblique references to the location of the Indus River delta, its mouths, and the Karachi harbour when Alexander passed through this area a millennium after the disappearance of the great cities of Harappa and Mohenjo daro. Hence it is reasonable to assume that the place must have featured in the Harappan maritime trade.

Claessen and Oosten (1996) theorize that it is necessary for emerging states to control sufficient territory within which people are able to form a stratified social order, which in turn necessitates a surplus in food and wealth to maintain the elite classes (administrators, priests, artisans). Apart from this, there must also be a defining ideology to explain and justify a hierarchical administrative organization and socio-political inequality (see also Grinin 2003). Research on urban centres belonging to the Harappan culture has produced compelling evidence to suggest that they too went through these stages. The professional diversity and social stratification are evident in the Harappan architecture.

The design, set up and rigid ordering of the architecture and civic planning show the presence of a skilled and efficient administration of the cities and towns of the IVC. The Great Bath in Mohenjo daro and the adjacent infrastructure show that these housed a powerful theocratic elite while the city itself had numerous multi-storied houses, in all probability housing wealthy families. Outside the city limits, the Indus River and its smaller

tributaries provided fertile land for the farmers to produce an agriculture surplus, which was in high demand within the city.

People wore dresses made from finely woven cloth and women decorated themselves with jewellery and makeup, as is evident in the statues and figurines discovered from the IVC sites across Pakistan and India. The ornaments included necklaces, armlets, earrings, beads, bangles, etc., and were used by both genders. The bronze statue of a dancing girl excavated from Mohenjo daro shows the girl wearing bangles all the way to above the elbow. This custom survives until today in parts of Sindh, where women wear white clay bangles in a similar fashion. Beads made of semi-precious stones were also found at Mohenjo daro, providing evidence of the advanced skills of the IVC people in arts and crafts.

Unfortunately, much of the technological and social advancements of the Harappan civilization were lost alongside the disappearance of these cities and had to be rediscovered or redone by later peoples. After the decay of the IVC urban and rural sites, comparable cities did not reappear in South Asia for over two millennia. Civic and societal infrastructures were lost as were the advanced standards of weights and measures and linguistics. The IVC script on the seals excavated from numerous sites remains a mystery and is yet to be deciphered.

Extensive biological evidence in the form of buried skeletons, bones, teeth, cranial specimens, etc. has been discovered in IVC sites. These provide important information about the evolutionary process of humans in the Indian subcontinent. Scholars such as Walimbe (2007) and Hawkey (2002) have studied hundreds of skeletons and concluded that the Harappan population was the natural successor of the early settlers from Africa, who evolved biologically in the process of transforming from hunter-gatherers to an agricultural-sedentary people (decreased mechanical stress, increased nutritional stress, increased vulnerability to infectious diseases, etc.).[19] Misra (2001) says that the IVC developed gradually from the earlier hunter-gatherer and elementary agricultural populations of the Mesolithic and Neolithic / Chalcolithic eras.

Dental inspections of these skeletal remains provide no biological evidence to support the idea that the IVC people were exclusively Dravidians. Hawkey (2002) elaborates that

> The confusing of a linguistically-defined population ('Dravidian') with a biological population (Indus) has plagued Indian population affinity research for many years.

According to Hawkey (2002), dental data shows that the IVC population was multi-racial and multi-linguistic, and a mix of diverse racial elements. This would suggest a very complex and cosmopolitan society that had human and trade links from Africa in the west to the Philippine archipelago and beyond in the east.

Decline of the Indus Valley Civilization

Archaeological investigations in recent decades have established that the IVC reached its zenith by the start of the second millennium BC, beyond which it started to gradually decline. There is no consensus on the exact cause or causes of its eventual disappearance but a number of factors may have been responsible for this phenomenon. The more conventional theory assumes that the civilization ended due to a natural calamity, overexploitation of resources, or the drying up of one of its important rivers, called Ghaggar-Hakra (Sarasvati River), due to seismic events in its northern reaches, or even a foreign conquest.

Wright (2010) attempted to correlate the decay of these cities with changes in climatic patterns. However, the changes appear to have been small and cannot fully account for the end of an entire civilization. It seems that internal reasons rather than external factors might have caused this great civilization to end (Wright, 2010). The fact that this was a decay rather than destruction is highlighted by Kenoyer (2008), who says there is no evidence of any major changes in weather patterns and no one single cause can be pinpointed to explain the extinction of this civilization. At best, each of these factors can explain the decay of certain sites or areas only. Archaeological evidence suggests the Harappan civilization did not collapse in one cataclysmic event but declined gradually and was ultimately lost (Mughal, 1990; Ratnagar, 2000).

Recent scholarship has studied claims of an invasion of the IVC region by an Aryan group. As per Hemphill et al. (1997), anthropological data does not reveal movement of Aryans into the Indus Valley region ca. 3500 BC. Migration by an Indo-European people was first hypothesized in the late eighteenth century when similarities between Western and Indian languages were noted by the linguists who discovered the family of Indo-European languages. Because of these similarities, it has been suggested that these languages may have a common source or origin but were diffused by migrations from the original homeland.

It has been suggested that the Indo-Aryans migrated from the Central Asian steppes into South Asia during the early part of the second millennium BCE, bringing with them the Indo-Aryan languages. Early scholars believed this was an invasion and, following the conquest of IVC, the cause of its collapse. But this theory has been challenged in recent times, with scientists such as Basu et al. (2003) and Kennedy (1995) suggesting that the Aryans migrated and assimilated into the IVC populations in small groups over an extended time frame. Over the course of millennia, Aryan immigrants naturalized and started a sedentary existence, eventually changing the linguistic, socio-cultural and religious landscape of modern South Asia (especially its north and north-western parts).

The Gandhara Riddle

The historic Gandhara region comprises parts of north-western Punjab and KP up to the Peshawar Valley of present-day Pakistan. The extent of Gandhara proper included the Peshawar Valley, the hills of Swat, Dir, Buner, and Bajaur, areas that lie within the northern bounds of the modern-day Pakistan. However, the bounds of Greater Gandhara (or regions where the cultural and political hegemony of Gandhara held sway) extended towards the Kabul Valley in Afghanistan and the Potohar plateau in the Punjab province in Pakistan, in close proximity to the capital city of Islamabad.

The Peshawar Valley was the heart of Gandhara. The Gandharan city of Taxila, which still exists in Pakistan by the same name, was an important Buddhist and Hindu centre of learning from the fifth century BC to the second century. In the nineteenth century, British soldiers and administrators started to take a keen interest in the ancient history of the Indian subcontinent, and in the 1830s, they discovered coins from the post-Ashoka period around Taxila. The translation of ancient Chinese travelogues written by travellers and Buddhist pilgrims from China provided the locations and site plans of Buddhist shrines. Along with the discovery of the coins, these records provided clues enabling the piecing together of the history of Gandhara.

In 1848, Alexander Cunningham, a British army officer and an archaeologist, found Gandhara sculptures north of Peshawar. He also identified the site of Taxila in the 1860s. Subsequently, many Buddhist statues were discovered in the Peshawar Valley. Archaeologist John Marshall discovered Greek, Parthian and Kushan cities and many *stupas* and

monasteries at Taxila. These discoveries helped to piece together much more of the chronology of the history of Gandhara and its art. After 1947, Pakistani archaeologist Ahmed Hassan Dani made a number of discoveries in the Peshawar and Swat Valleys, further expanding the scope of the research work being carried out on the Gandhara civilization and its Buddhist art depicting the life and times of Buddha.

Griffith (1968) cites an ancient Hindu text Rig Veda (circa 1500–1000 BC) as containing the word Gandhara, which is by far the oldest mention of this region by any known text. The text refers to the inhabitants as the "Gandharis".[20] Gandhara is thought to be a composite word loosely translated as fragrant land or land of fragrance.[21] The ancient Gandhara was the most significant region linking the rest of India with the West. It has occupied a significant place in the history of India since the early Vedic times (Bhandarkar, 1989).

Precisely who the people inhabiting these lands were and what their genetic and biological identity or affinity prior to the Vedic periods were are not known. Partial evidence and fragments of historical relevance have helped piece together a rough sketch of the identity of the Gandharan people. The pottery finds of the Gandhara grave culture show clear links with contemporary finds from Central Asia and Iran, and may be linked with the early Indo-Aryan migration to the Indian subcontinent (Kochhar, 2000).

According to Kochhar, the Indo-Aryan culture fused with indigenous elements of the remnants of the Indus Valley Civilization and thus laid the foundation of the Vedic civilization. According to Parpola (1993), in the centuries preceding the Gandhara culture, during the Early Harappan period (roughly 3200–2600 BCE), similarities in pottery, seals, figurines, ornaments, etc. provide evidence of intensive caravan trade between the Indian subcontinent, Central Asia and the Iranian plateau.

As per Rapson (1955) cited by Warraich (2011), Gandhara is mentioned frequently as the northern region in the ancient Hindu scriptures and in the later periods when Buddhism was flourishing in these parts. The travelogues of Chinese pilgrims to Gandhara describe it as a place that enjoyed a very high status, a sacred place in the ancient Buddhist world (Cunningham, 1962).

Its earliest definite reference is found in the Achaemenian inscription of Behistun (520-518 BC), which lists twenty-three satrapies, including

"Gadara" of the Achaemenian Empire of Darius. Apart from the ancient texts, the name is also mentioned by Al-Biruni early in the eleventh century (Sachau, 1992). Historical texts from the times of Alexander and beyond give a definite account of this country's reign changing hands from Achaemenian to Greeks to Mauryans and then to Ashoka the Great (Rapson, 1955; Majumdar, 1980).

Gandhara received Buddhist missionaries sent by Ashoka during his reign to preach Buddhism (Raspson, 1955), a process that would eventually leave an indelible mark on the history and culture of South Asia. A few archeaological remains of that period have been found in north-west Pakistan in the shape of rock edicts stating Ashoka's policy of "dharma", which he propagated throughout the lands under his rule after converting to Buddhism. [22]

After Ashoka, Gandhara was ruled by the Bactrians, Scythians and Kushans. In the middle of the fifth century AD, the Huns appeared in north-west India and swept away the cultural life of Gandhara. Further along in time, local dynasties were decisively defeated by the Ghaznavid forces and Gandhara was gradually assimilated into the larger Indian empire of Muslims, largely forgotten as a historical and cultural hub of Buddhism.

Gandhara is noted for the distinctive style of Buddhist sculpture – a fusion of Greek, Persian and Indian art. This development began during the Parthian Period (50 BC-AD 75). The Gandharan style flourished and achieved its peak during the Kushan period, during the second century AD. It declined and was eventually destroyed after the invasion of the Huns in the fifth century AD.[23]

The foremost contribution of Gandhara art is the portrayal of Buddha in human form. Episodes from his life, starting from his birth up to his death, are depicted in stone in such a sophisticated manner that the viewer is informed not only about the subject (Buddha) but also the prevalent socioeconomic, cultural and religious traditions and conditions of his time.

This brief review of the history of Gandhara shows that except for the prolonged and relatively peaceful rule of the Mauryans, Gandhara kept changing hands from one dynastic rule to the other. The invaders left deep cultural impressions on its art, architecture, language, commerce, and economy. Gandhara assimilated all these cultural diversities and in the

course of time gave them its own colour. This synthesis of many different cultural norms may be termed “Gandharta culture”.

CHAPTER TWO

TRIBES AND TRIBAL STRUCTURES: HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

Tribal History

In historical terms, tribes or clans were socio-ethnic groups which existed either before the development of settled societies or on the fringes of such civilizations. As societies developed, these groups assimilated into the modern network of nation-states but by and large maintained their tribal identities. A number of researchers are of the view that in the social evolution of the human race, tribes symbolize a stage between the period bands of people roamed around in groups and the eventual establishment of nation-states (Sahlins, 1968). However, some scientists theorize that tribes came into being after the creation of nation-states and must therefore be seen in the perspective of their interaction and relationship with these states (Fried, 1975).

Social scientists and anthropologists define the term tribal society as one that is largely based and organized on the basis of common ancestry.The term tribe originated around the time of the Greek city-states and, according to the Oxford English Dictionary, the Latin term "*tribus*" has since been transformed to mean "A group of persons forming a community and claiming descent from a common ancestor" (Gregory, 2003: p.1).

Gregory (2003) maintains that the scope of its meaning has expanded over the intervening years, as, for example, to include "Any of various systems of social organization comprising several local villages, bands, districts, lineages, or other groups and sharing a common ancestry, language, culture, and name."[1] He again cites Morris (1980), who noted that a tribe can also be a "group of persons with a common occupation, interest, or habit" and "a large family." In the context of these definitions, the spectrum of contemporary groups referred to as tribes has widened and though this is of interest to scholars, it could be confusing for ordinary readers.

Tribes and the tribal way of life predate modern nation-states and are commonly perceived as societies which are homogenous, endogamous, geographically bounded, and isolated; in general, tribes are stable societies. Tribes have certain basic attributes that provide the basis on which individual members forge a collective bond for group survival. Fried (1975) differs with this view and cites numerous cases where members of the same tribe speak diverse languages and practice different rituals. He also gives examples of tribes which have shared language and/or cultural traits with other very distinct tribes.

In his view, tribes came about as a result of the interaction between complex, organized states and relatively simple groups of people existing more or less on the fringes of mainstream society. In the preface of his book *The Notion of Tribe*, Fried (1975) argues

> Although we are accustomed to think about the most ancient forms of human society in terms of tribes, firmly defined and bounded units of this sort actually grew out of the manipulation of relatively unstructured populations by more complexly organized societies. The invention of the state, a tight, class-structured political and economic organization, began a process whereby vaguely defined and grossly overlapping populations were provided with the minimal organization required for their manipulation, even though they had little or no internal organization of their own other than that based on conceptions of kinship. The resultant form was that of the tribe.

The social structure of tribes can vary greatly but due to the relatively smaller size of individual tribes vis-à-vis larger societies within which they exist, tribes have a simpler structure, with few (if any) significant social distinctions between individuals.[2]

The Tribal Social Cycle

Fox (2011) relied on Ibn Khaldun's (1332–1406) treatise on the evolutionary social cycle of Arab tribal societies. Tribal regions in northern Pakistan and Afghanistan have much in common with these Arab societies mainly because they subscribe to the same religion, and clearly influenced by Arab culture and language, espouse similar social values.

About the tribes in the Arabian Peninsula, Ibn Khaldun hypothesized the existence of a largely egalitarian tribal society, mostly nomadic, engaged in associated occupations of herding, low-scale agriculture, etc., and always jostling for resources in an extremely hostile environment. They

existed on the periphery of settled civilizations of their times in an uneasy and somewhat rebellious relationship.

Settled cities were ruled by an apathetic ruling clique supported by a lethargic and inefficient administrative system. Occasionally, a tribe or a collection of them would unite under the banner of a charismatic leader, more often on religious-cum-economic matters, sweep down on cities and rule these for a while before becoming decadent themselves and eventually being overthrown by a new set of invaders.

Internecine war among tribes is a constant feature of a tribal society and, according to Ibn Khaldun, an attribute of their autonomy. When tribes are not fighting the rulers or the peasants of settled areas, they remain engaged in a perpetual struggle amongst one another over meagre resources, tribal boundaries and blood feuds.

Fox (2011) takes this idea further and attempted to reconcile it with modern times. He avers that even in the contemporary world where technology, education and settled existence have given cities indomitable superiority and have attracted tribesmen to adopt permanent lives within the urban nucleus, tribalism and a sense of belonging to a shared identity remains strong among them.

Characteristics of a Tribal Society

In sociological terms, a group should have some common features in order to be described a tribe. According to Sharma (2007: p. 178):

(a) A tribe resides within a common topography.
(b) A tribe shares a conscious feeling of unity and mutual bonding.
(c) Members of a tribe speak a common language, which in itself is a unifying factor.
(d) They follow more or less an endogamous system; however, this is changing due to the frequent mixing of populations and increased contacts with others.
(e) There are bonds of kinship, with a common ancestry.
(f) As tribes often live on the periphery of civilizations in inhospitable and often dangerous environments, they feel the need to protect themselves and their kin.
(g) A common religious (and sectarian) identity plays a vital role in the tribal system.

(h) A tribe identifies itself with a common name and submits to a common cultural code.

While these attributes correctly define a tribe, they have still been questioned by anthropologists such as Morton Fried. In a shrinking world which saw increased migrations, a gradual end of the nomadic life in favour of a more settled existence, and the resultant diversity of cultures, rituals and ideas, some attributes of tribes such as endogamy and cultural codes have become fluid; this is also true for the tribal societies of Pakistan.[3]

Tribal Law

Tribes, especially in Pakistan and Afghanistan, are more insulated and independent in their traditional brand of a justice system, which includes arbitration, than, for example, those in India or Bangladesh. The *rivaj* (literally customs or traditions) is the traditional law that regulates the internal justice system of these tribal societies and more often than not takes precedence over religious or state law. To understand the concept of *rivaj*, it is first necessary to understand that in a tribal society where laws are not codified and the adjudicator gets help from what Kakar (2004) describes as "a vague sense of precedence", legislation and authority operate outside mainstream convention.

Therefore, legislation in tribal societies is defined as the enactment of laws that are neither codified nor part of a corpus of state or regional laws, and although some of these laws may form part of the overarching system (e.g. the Pakhtun tribal code of *Pakhtunwali*), they acquire a different setting and meaning for different regions and different social classes (Kakar, 2004).

Rivaj constitutes a comprehensive body of traditions and rituals which over time has assumed the overarching status of the prevalent law. All matters are decided in accordance with the *rivaj*, as interpreted by a *jirga*, which can often be in direct contradiction with the state law or even the Shariah (largely acknowledged as the highest law in an Islamic society).

To illustrate the point, consider the rights accorded to women. Although Islamic jurisprudence clearly stipulates that daughters are to be given a specified share in an inheritance, this stipulation is conveniently ignored under the system of *rivaj*, which deprives women of their due in direct contravention of the injunctions in the Holy Quran. The practice of *riva*j is