

## RECENT SURVEY AND DOCUMENTATION OF TANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE OF DISTRICT CHAKWAL, PUNJAB, PAKISTAN

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### ABSTRACT

*Chakwal has great importance since prehistoric time. This area is significant from archaeological perspective as it is possessing marvelous tangible cultural heritage in the form of archaeological mounds, Hindu temples, Sikh Samadhis, ancient bazaars, Havelis, old houses, Shmashana ghat (Cremation ground with nearby pond) and baolis (Stepped wells). All of these structural remains show that this area had strong cultural ties with the people of different religions and sects. Some of the heritage sites have been demolished as a result of natural and human vandalism. But a large number of heritage sites still exist in different parts of this particular area.*

**Keywords:** Archaeological Mounds, Hindu Temples, Samadhis, Havelis, Shmashana ghat, Baolis (Stepped wells).

### INTRODUCTION

Chakwal lies in Potohar plateau. It is situated at a distance of 123 km from federal capital Islamabad. It is a large district with various villages, towns and slums. Total area of Chakwal is 6524 km<sup>2</sup>. Its land is uneven overlaid with mountains, hills, dry rocky patches and fertile plains. Numerous events had been related to the history of Chakwal. A Mughal king Zahir-ud-Din Babar addressed his army at the place of Kallar Kahar when he wanted to attack Perwala fort of Ghakhars (Beg 2007: 117). It is also known that Al-Behrni found the circumference of earth at Nandana. Historically speaking, Alexander the Great selected Bhoun as a halting place when he had been at war with Raja Poras. Still today a considerable number of heritage sites in Chakwal have native and foreign culture influences which are the depiction of shared lives of foreign invaders and Muslims in this region.

## PREVIOUS ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH

The archaeological sites of district Chakwal have been reported by various scholars including Alexander Cunningham (Cunningham 1875: 185-192), Aurel Stein (Stein 1937: 36-44), Saifur Rehman Dar (Dar, Saifur Rehman 2001), Sadeed Arif and Sabeena Iqbal (Sabeena et al 2006: 163-183).

## FRESH ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH

For the sake of fresh research, authors has conducted a survey for the archaeological documentation of the unreported archaeological sites and monuments including an archaeological mound, Hindu temples, *Samadhi*, ancient Hindu bazaar, *havelis*, old houses, *Shmashana Ghat* (Cremation ground), a Baoli (stepped well) and an old Railway Station.

## METHODOLOGY

Current research is of exploratory and descriptive nature. Researchers have used both the primary as well as secondary sources collection of data. For the collection of data field visits have been carried out. All the cultural heritage sites have documented scientifically by filling the questionnaires/performa The data collected during the field work were later on analyzed at Taxila Institute of Asian Civilizations Quaid-I-Azam University. The artifacts collected during the survey were scientifically documented and preserved in the lab of the same Institute. Brief description of the sites have been presented below.

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL MOUND

### 1. *PIND*, TOWN BHOUN (PL. 1-2, FIG. 1-8)

Tehsil:	Kallar Kahar, District: Chakwal, Province: Punjab
Nature of Site:	Mound
Measurements:	Length: 100 m, Width: 133 m, Height: 2 m
Location:	The ancient remains of the Pind are present about 3 km in northeast of town Bhoun.
Approach:	Bhoun to Keryala road

## DESCRIPTION

This mound is found on the periphery of town Bhoun. It is a huge uncultivated mound located on the bank of road. Over there trees as well as bushes are in abundance. It has ashy soil which shows traces of fire. Southern and western sides of the mound are badly eroded due to rain as well as by the local ones because they use to carry clay from here as a binding material of buildings. But northern and eastern sides are plain. Its surface is covered with potsherds. There is a holy shrine of a saint on the surface of this archaeological mound.

## FINDINGS

A large number of potsherds with red and orange wares have been recovered from its surface. Its pottery comprised of rims, body shards, bases, spouts, lids and handles of pottery vessels, bowls, grinding stones and bones. The bones are in amorphous state. But the local people informed that they found precious as well as semi-precious stones from the same mound.

**Period:** 6<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> Century CE

**State of Preservation:** Site is ideal for excavations and investigations.

## HINDU TEMPLES AND SAMADHI

### 2. TEMPLE IN MOHALLAH KOAT, TOWN BHOUN (PL. 3, FIG. 9)

Tehsil:	Kallar Kahar, District: Chakwal, Province: Punjab
Nature of Site:	Temple
Measurements:	Height: 8 m
Location:	This temple is located in Mohallah Koat.
Approach:	On right bank of Sargodha road leading towards Kallar Kahar

## DESCRIPTION

This temple is present in the courtyard of a government primary school Bhoun in front of a small *Samadhi*. A temple with rectangular drum decorated with beautiful pilasters on all of the four sides. The drum is superposed with an elongated fluted *shikara* with finial at the top. At the base of the *shikara* there is a series of upright lotus petals. Its *ardhamandapa* is visible from outside. This temple is topped by a huge *Banyan* tree.

**Period:** British

**State of Preservation:** Abandoned

### 3. TEMPLE WITH A POND IN MOHALLAH NAKA, TOWN BHOUN (PL. 3, FIG.10-13)

Tehsil:	Kallar Kahar, District: Chakwal, Province: Punjab
Nature of Site:	Temple
Measurements:	Height: 10 m
Location:	This temple is located in Mohallah Naka.
Approach:	250 m away from main Sargodha road in northern direction

#### DESCRIPTION

This temple is situated at a locally known place called *Pind* in town Bhoun. This area has abundance of vegetation and away from the main population. A small Hindu temple is present in the center of it. This temple has an octagonal drum superposed with simple *shikara*. An inverted lotus flower with tiny *amalaka* and finial are present at its top. In front of this temple, *ardhamandapa* has been found although its *mandapa* and *garbhagriha* are enclosed. This temple is circumscribed from all sides. But the temple is suffering from great damage due to human and natural catastrophism. On back side of the same temple, there is a huge pond overshadowed by vegetation. But the steps leading towards an interior of the pond<sup>68</sup> are still intact.

It is an encroached suburb. Nowadays a person Mr. Bahadur Khan claimed to be its honor. He has constructed a cemented building in the vicinity of this temple where he uses to rear his cattle.

<b>Period:</b>	British
<b>State of Preservation:</b>	Deteriorated

### 4. TEMPLE, CHAKWAL CITY (PL. 4, FIG. 14)

Tehsil:	Kallar Kahar, District: Chakwal, Province: Punjab
Nature of Site:	Temple
Measurements:	Height: 12m
Location:	Near Government High School on Bhoun road.
Approach:	This temple can be accessed through left bank of Bhoun road in Chakwal city.

<sup>68</sup> In ancient times, it was called *Suthry Wali Ban*. Specifically, Hindu females used to visit this pond everyday early in the morning along with their offerings which they devote to the temple.

**Description**

This Hindu temple is octagonal in plan. It is beautifully designed with blind arches on all sides. The base of its *shikara* is adorned with lotus petals. At the top of *shikara*, there is an inverted lotus flower with finial. Its *mandapa* and *garbhagriha* are unharmed. The main entrance of the temple has two concentric pointed-foiled arches. At some places naked bricks can be seen due to deteriorated lime plaster. Now, this temple is using as a cattle pen by the local people.

**Period:** British

**State of Preservation:** Deteriorated

**SAMADHI****5. SAMADHI, TOWN BHOUN (PL. 4, FIG. 15)**

Tehsil: Kallar Kahar, District: Chakwal, Province: Punjab

Nature of Site: *Samadhi*(Hindu tomb)

Measurements: Length: 7 m, Width: 4 m

Location: This *Samadhi* is located near Mughal mosque.

Approach: It can be accessed through Sargodha road in eastern direction.

**DESCRIPTION**

This *Samadhi* is stationed in a small locality. It is deserted. It has square plan with reduced bulbous dome. The dome of *Samadhi* is ornamented with petals of lotus flower. The finial of the dome is absent. It is plastered with lime but from corners it has been greatly damaged. A multi-foiled arch serves as a main entrance of this Hindu tomb.

**Period:** British

**State of Preservation:** Abandoned and Damaged

**ANCIENT BAZAAR****6. SMALL BAZAAR, TOWN BHOUN (PL. 5, FIG. 16-17)**

Tehsil: Kallar Kahar, District: Chakwal, Province: Punjab

Nature of Site: Bazaar

Measurements: Length: 350 m

Location: This bazaar is located in the center of town Bhoun.

Approach: 30 m away on right bank of Bhoun road

### DESCRIPTION

This is a small bazaar of Hindus in town Bhoun. Ancient shops with carved wooden doors, beautiful *verandas* with carved facade and several wooden balconies with different styles of arches like pointed, trefoil and multiple-foiled arches have been found there. Blind arches are still seen on the walls of the bazaar. In ancient time, it was a sole market in town Bhoun owned by Hindu community before partition.

**Period:** British

**State of Preservation:** Slightly Damaged

## HAVELIS

### 7. HAVELI, TOWN BHOUN (PL. 5, FIG. 18)

Tehsil: Kallar Kahar, District: Chakwal, Province: Punjab

Nature of Site: *Haveli*

Measurements: Length: 30 m, Width: 15 m, Height: 5 m

Location: This *haveli* is located main bazaar.

Approach: 30 m away on right bank of Bhoun road

### DESCRIPTION

This was a large *haveli* in main bazaar of town Bhoun. It was a triple storey building consisting of eight rooms. But now the upper two have been completely dismantled. It has a main wooden gate encased in multiple rectangular, pointed and foiled arches. Main door is flanked by two Corinthian pilasters. Multi-petalled rosettes are carved on the spandrels of a multiple-foiled arch and on the dado of the main gate. Two alcoves are also present on both sides of the door. Main gate is superimposed by a *jharokha*<sup>69</sup> with three arches and supported with a lotus flower. Three small windows are found on right side of the main door.

**Period:** British

**State of Preservation:** Good Condition

### 8. HAVELI, TOWN BHOUN (PL. 5, FIG. 19)

Tehsil: Kallar Kahar, District: Chakwal, Province: Punjab

<sup>69</sup> A kind of overhanging enclosed balcony used in *Rajasthani* architecture

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Nature of Site:	<i>Haveli</i>
Measurements:	Length: 25 m, Width: 15 m, Height: 12 m
Location:	This <i>haveli</i> is located in Mohallah Nandon Wali Deodhi
Approach:	200 m away from Sargodha road in southern direction.

### DESCRIPTION

This is another ancient *haveli* with various storeys. Exteriorly this *haveli* is beautifully adorned with *jali* work and circular blind arches. All the pilasters at the upper four corners of the *haveli* are ornamented with five petalled lotus flowers. A sculpture of a lion is present at the front wall of top storey.

<b>Period:</b>	British
<b>State of Preservation:</b>	Good Condition

## OLD HOUSES

### 9. HOUSE, TOWN BHOUN (PL. 6, FIG. 20-21)

Tehsil:	Kallar Kahar, District: Chakwal, Province: Punjab
Nature of Site:	House
Measurements:	Length: 20 m, Width: 10 m, Height: 10 m
Location:	This house is located in Mohallah Qazidan.
Approach:	100 m away from Sargodha road in northern direction.

### DESCRIPTION

This house was owned by a Sikh named as “*Jasvant Sigh*”. A house with large wooden balcony and doors present on its exterior. This house has various rooms. Small windows, alcoves and blind arches can be seen inside the house walls. A big wooden door is carved with vine scrolls, geometric designs and rosettes. The floor of the house is paved with bricks. There is a small *veranda* and few rooms on upper storey. The northern side of this house has been replaced with modern style house.

<b>Period:</b>	British
<b>State of Preservation:</b>	Slightly Damaged

**10. HOUSE, TOWN BHOUN (PL. 6, FIG. 22)**

Tehsil:	Kallar Kahar, District: Chakwal, Province: Punjab
Nature of Site:	House
Measurements:	Length: 21 m, Width: 10 m, Height: 12 m
Location:	This house is located near Government High School Bhoun for Girls.
Approach:	25 m away from Sargodha road leading towards Kallar Kahar.

**DESCRIPTION**

This is a double storey Hindu house. It has five rooms, verandas and a rectangular courtyard in the center. The house is constructed with standard size bricks. Exteriorly, it is embellished with a wooden balcony, windows, ventilator as well as a carved wooden door flanked by two Corinthian pillars with round-stepped base. A frontal wooden balcony is also supported by two Corinthian pilasters on both sides. “Brick screen work”<sup>70</sup> is present at top of this house.

**Period:** British

**State of Preservation:** Good Condition

**SHMASHANA, SHMASHANA GHAT AND BAOLI****11. SHMSHANA, TOWN BHOUN (PL. 6, FIG. 23)**

Tehsil:	Kallar Kahar, District: Chakwal, Province: Punjab
Nature of Site:	<i>Shmshana</i>
Measurements:	Length: 40 m, Width: 35 m
Location:	This Shmshana is located Mohallah Jhamat.
Approach:	It can be accessed through Sargodha road in southern direction.

**DESCRIPTION**

This cremation ground is situated near main road leading towards Kallar Kahar. Previously two *Samadhis* were found in this ground. But now one has been completely abolished and the other one is intact. An intact *Samadhi* present in his *Shmashana* has a

<sup>70</sup> An abstraction from Indian perforated “jail work”.



circular dome with tiny alcoves residing on all sides. The finial is absent. A damaged arch with broken pilasters in front of this *Samadhi* serves as a main entrance.

**Period:** British

**State of Preservation:** Deserted

## 12. SHMSHANA GHAT, TOWN BHOUN (PL. 7, FIG. 24)

Tehsil: Kallar Kahar, District: Chakwal, Province: Punjab

Nature of Site: *Shmshana Ghat*

Measurements: Length: 20 m, Width: 15 m

Location: This *Shmshana Ghat* is located Mohallah Jhamat.

Approach: It can be accessed through Bhoun to Khai road.

### DESCRIPTION

This *Shmshana Ghat* is locally known as *Sabhu Wali Ban*. *Shmshana Ghat* is overlaid with a pipal tree. Still today the water is present in it. The stairs of the *Shmshana Ghat* are also intact. This ancient pond is surrounded with abundant vegetation. In Hindu mythology, it was used to dispose off the ashes of deceased.

**Period:** British

**State of Preservation:** Slightly Damaged

## 13. BAOLI, CHAKWAL CITY (PL. 7-8, FIG. 25-26)

Tehsil: Kallar Kahar, District: Chakwal, Province: Punjab

Nature of Site: *Baoli*

Measurements: Length: 25 m, Width: 3 m

Location: This *Baoli* is located at Shah Multani, Chakwal.

Approach: It can be accessed through Bhoun to Kallar Kahar road in western direction.

### DESCRIPTION

This is a deteriorated *baoli*. It is constructed with naked brick masonry. A circular row of square recesses have been created on its inner walls for ornamentation. The mouth of this *baoli* is still intact. But the steps/stairs leading towards its bottom are completely destroyed due to natural disaster.

**14. RAILWAY STATION, CHAKWAL CITY (PL. 8, FIG. 27)**

Tehsil:	Kallar Kahar, District: Chakwal, Province: Punjab
Nature of Site:	Railway Station
Measurements:	Length: 50 m, Width: 40 m
Location:	This Railway Station is located near Allied Park, Chakwal.
Approach:	It can be accessed through Chakwal to Rawalpindi road in eastern direction.

**DESCRIPTION**

This railway station is located in main city Chakwal. Now it is pulverized. This railway section was opened between Chakwal and Bhoun on 15 January 1916. Its building is still in standing position but it has not been properly protected. Bushes are profoundly present in its surroundings. It comprised of ticket room, waiting room, office of railway in-charge, servant quarters, store rooms and a kitchen.

**Period:** British

**State of Preservation:** Abandoned

**CONCLUSION**

District Chakwal lies in Rawalpindi division which is important for archaeology. It covers numerous ages starting from Stone age to British period. Presently, there are a great number of villages, towns and slums are found in district Chakwal. Most of the villages in Chakwal were of Hindus and Sikhs. In the same way their sacred buildings i.e. temples and *samadhis* can be seen. Beside their religious monuments, their fortress, *havelis* and houses are also found in Chakwal which are the depiction of the governance and domination of Hindus and Sikhs in this region. Like Bhoun, Koat Chaudriyan, Mulhal Muglan, Keryala, Dhudiyal, Jabairpur are renowned town/villages which are housing various archaeological sites and monuments. Bhoun is the most significant town in district Chakwal which is known for marvelous Hindu temples, *Samadhis*, *havelis*, Hindu cremation grounds (*Shmshana*) and crematoriums (*Shmshana Gaut*). Architecture of all these monuments has been greatly influenced by the foreign and local cultures including Persians, Greeks and Romans. This shows that its inhabitants lived shared lives with foreigners. In this way they had inserted the foreign cultural elements in their tangible and intangible heritage. Still the local houses in district Chakwal have been constructed with foreign architectural styles which delineate the communication of cultures. But the tangible heritage of district Chakwal is suffering from natural as well as human vandalism.

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**PLATE 1**

Fig. 1, A general view of *Pind*,



(Photo by Researcher) Fig. 2, Another view of *Pind*, (Photo by Researcher)

**PLATE # 2**

Fig. 3, Bowl in-situ



Fig. 4, Pottery in-situ



Fig. 5, A broken bowl



Fig. 6, A fragment of bone



Fig. 7, Potsherds in-situ



Fig. 8, Rim in-situ

(Photos by Researcher)

## PLATE # 3



Fig. 9, A temple in Mohallah Koat



Fig. 10, A temple in Mohallah Naka



Fig. 11, Main entrance with Hindu script

Fig. 12, Fresco paintings  
inside *mandapa* of the temple

(Photos by Researcher)

**PLATE # 4**

Fig. 13, Pond near a temple in Mohallah



Fig. 14, A temple in Chakwal city Naka



Fig. 15, A general view of *Samadhi*

(Photos by Researcher)



## PLATE # 5



Fig. 16, A general view of ancient Hindu bazaar



Fig. 17, Another view of the same bazaar



Fig.18, An entrance of *haveli* in main bazaar



Fig.19 Another *haveli* with lion sculpture

(Photos by Researcher)

## PLATE # 6

Fig. 20, A house of *Jasvant Singh*

Fig. 21, A view of second storey of the same house



Fig. 22, A house near bus stop of Bhoun

Fig. 23, A *Shmashana* (Cremation ground)

(Photos by Researcher)

**PLATE # 7**

Fig. 24, A *Shmashana Ghat* (Crematorium)



Fig. 25, A external view of a degenerated *Baoli* on Bhoun road, Chakwal - (Photos by Researcher)

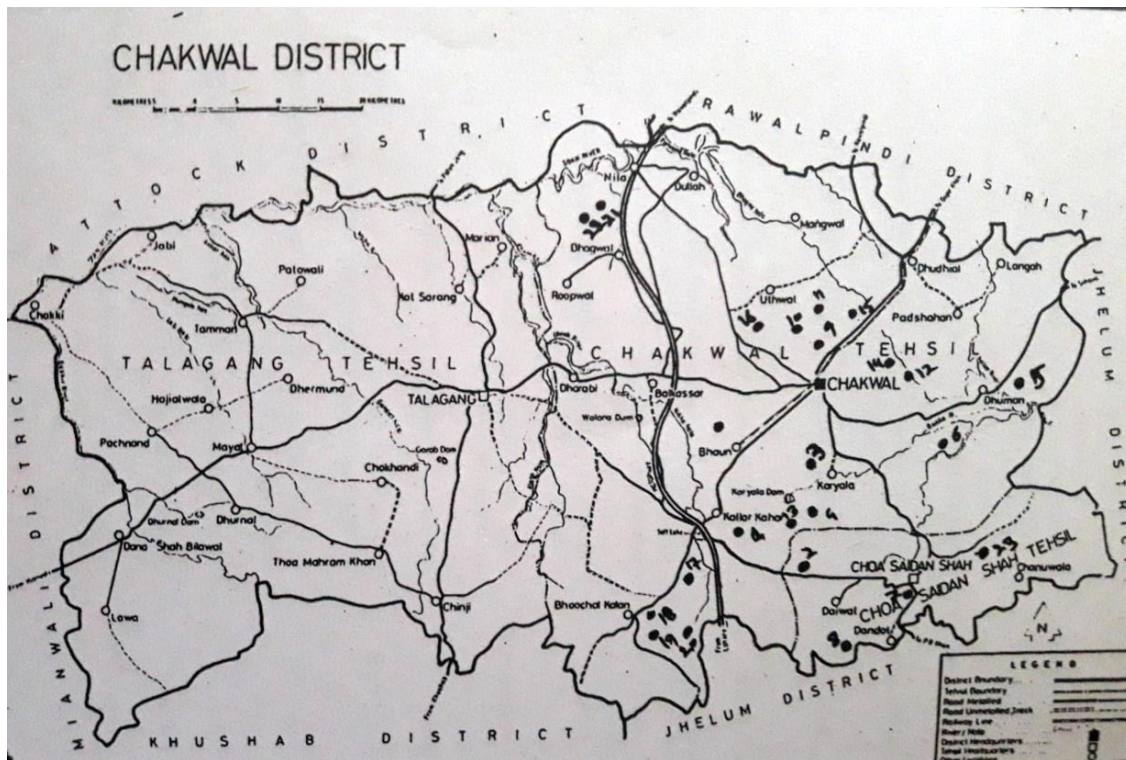
**PLATE # 8**

Fig. 26, Internal view of the same *Baoli*



Fig. 27, An ancient Railway Station in Chakwal city (Photos by Researcher) - (Photos by Researcher)

## PLATE # 9



Map. 1, Map of District Chakwal, Punjab, Pakistan (Iqbal Sabeena et al 2006: 176)