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TRADE ROUTES IN MUGHAL KASHMIR: A HISTORICAL STUDY

Zahid Ahmad Dar,

PhD Research Scholar,

Centre of Advanced Study,

Department of History,

AMU, Aligarh.

Trade Routes

The important routes which played a crucial role in the economic life of Kashmir during the period under survey are as follows.

1. Kashmir-Bhimbar Route

This route runs over the Pir Panjal Pass¹ and connected Kashmir with Gujarat [Lesser Gujarat in Lahore].² With the establishment of the Mughal rule in Kashmir, this route gained much importance as compared to the other routes. It was frequently used by the Mughal emperors³ and thus, it came to be known as Mughal Road. The route from Lahore followed the Grand Route up to Gujarat.⁴ From there, the route followed Daulatabad [Daulatnagar],⁵ Bhimbar,⁶ Adidak (Adi Dat),⁷ Jogi Hati (Chowki Hati),⁸ Naushahra, Chingus

¹ Lahori, *Padshah Nama*, tr. by Hamid Afaq Siddiqi, Delhi: Idarah-i-Adbiyat-i-Delhi, 1910, vol. I, p. 188.

² The local people called it Little Gujarat to distinguish it from Great Gujarat. Ippolito Desideri, *Mission to Tibet: The Extraordinary Eighteenth-Century Account of Father Ippolito Desideri, S.J.*, tr. by Michael J. Sweet, ed. by Leonard Zwilling, Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2010, p. 611, Appendix C.

³ Abul Fazl Allami, *Ain-i-Akbari*, tr. by H. S. Jarrett, corrected and annotated by Jadu Nath Sarkar, Calcutta: Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1949, vol. II, p. 169.

⁴ Moti Chandra, *Trade and Trade Routes in Ancient India*, New Delhi: Abhinav Publications, 1977, pp. 22-23.

⁵ Irfan Habib, *An Atlas of the Mughal Empire*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1982, reprinted 1986, Sheet 3B.

⁶ Saqi Mustad Khan, *Maasir-i-Alamgiri: A History of the Emperor Aurangzeb Alamgir (1658-1707 A.D.)*, tr. and annotated by Jadu Nath Sarkar, Calcutta: Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1947, p. 28.

⁷ Abul Fazl, *Akbar Nama*, op. cit., vol. III, p. 538. Abdul Majid Mattoo has mentioned Saidabad between Bhimbar and Naushahra, however, it is nowhere mentioned in the primary sources. Abdul Majid Mattoo, *Kashmir under the Mughals*, p. 210.

⁸ Nuruddin Muhammad Jahangir, *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, tr. by Alexander Rodgers, ed. by Henry Beveridge, London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1914, vol. II, p. 181; Abdul Majid Mattoo has mentioned the two places of Jogi Hati and Chingas Hati as one place which were actually the two different places. Abdul Majid Mattoo, *Kashmir under the Mughals*, p. 210. Beveridge has the same opinion. Abul Fazl, *Akbar Nama*, vol. III, p. 821, n. 2.

Hati, Rajouri,⁹ Thana,¹⁰ Bahramgala, Poshiana,¹¹ Serai Muhammad Quli (Serai Ali Mardan Khan),¹² Serai Sokhta,¹³ Hirapur,¹⁴ Shadimarg (Shajamarg),¹⁵ Khanpur, and Srinagar.¹⁶ There were caravanserais or encampments at the end of every day's journey for the comfort of travellers on this route.¹⁷ Some of these places developed into the busy trade centers like Thana.¹⁸

From Lahore to Bhimbar, the road was leveled, and from Bhimbar to Kashmir, it was hilly region through difficult mountainous paths.¹⁹ The journey from Lahore to Bhimbar was of eleven or twelve days' and from Bhimbar to Kashmir it was of five days.²⁰ At Bhimbar, due to the intricate passage and the insurmountable difficulties of the road which passed principally over the loftiest peaks, the carts, wagons and the camels did not go beyond this place. Therefore, everything was carried on the backs of elephants, horses, mules and porters.²¹ This route was difficult and remained closed during the winter months, i.e., from December to April.²² On the top of the pass there were two stone huts, called Chedikana and Rasikund, built by the Mughals as shelter places for travellers during storms.²³ This route was the chief way by which salt from Punjab mines was imported into Kashmir from the early times.²⁴ Porters were the only means of transport on the Pir Panjal and other passes whenever there was snowfall.²⁵ Pelsaert says that "...pack animals cannot cross the mountains, and practically everything must be carried on men's heads."²⁶

2. Baramula-Pakhli Route

This route connects Kashmir with Hazara, Rawalpindi and thence to Peshawar via Pakhli. This route has been used since the ancient times. It was well known to Alberuni, who described this route as "the best

⁹ From this place, several roads led to Kashmir. The one among them was by the defile of *Hasti-Watar*, which was the best route for a large army during the Mughal period. Abul Fazl, *Akbar Nama*, vol. III, pp. 539-40.

¹⁰ Abul Fazl mentioned a place between Rajauri and Thana called as Laha which was a dependency of Rajauri. *Ibid.*, p. 540.

¹¹ Lahori, *Padshah Nama*, op. cit., vol. I, pp. 189-90; Abul Fazl, *Akbar Nama*, vol. III, p. 540.

¹² Muhammad Salih Kambo, *Amal-i-Salih or Saha Jahan Nama*, ed. by Ghulam Yazdani, Calcutta: Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1927, vol. II, f. 21. Abul Fazl has mentioned this place as Dund, a village near the pass of Nati Barari. Abul Fazl, *Akbar Nama*, vol. III, pp. 540-41. Atlas has not mentioned this place. Irfan Habib, *An Atlas of the Mughal Empire*, Sheet 3A.

¹³ Lahori, *Padshah Nama*, op. cit., vol. I, p. 190.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*; *Ibid.*; Abul Fazl, *Akbar Nama*, vol. III, p. 541. This place is not mentioned in the Atlas. Irfan Habib, *An Atlas of the Mughal Empire*, p. 3A.

¹⁵ Muhammad Salih Kambo, *Amal-i-Salih or Shah Jahan Nama*, ed. by Ghulam Yazdani, Calcutta: Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1927, vol. II, f. 25. Abul Fazl has not mentioned Shajamarg rather he mentioned this stage as Dewar which Beveridge believed is the place of Degrama about 1 ½ miles west of Supiyan or Shopian. Abul Fazl, *Akbar Nama*, vol. III, pp. 542, n. 3. The place of Shajamarg was developed during the reign of Jahangir.

¹⁶ Abul Fazl, *Akbar Nama*, vol. III, pp. 542-43; Lahori, *Padshah Nama*, op. cit., vol. I, p. 190.

¹⁷ Lahori, *Padshah Nama*, op. cit., vol. I, pp. 188-90; Ippolito Desideri, *Mission to Tibet: The Extraordinary Eighteenth-Century Account of Father Ippolito Desideri, S.J.*, tr. by Michael J. Sweet, ed. by Leonard Zwilling, Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2010, p. 157.

¹⁸ Thana turned into the salt *mandi* wherefrom the Kashmiri merchants brought salt to Kashmir. Muhammad Azam Dedamari, *Waqiat-i-Kashmir*, Urdu tr. by Shams-ud-din Ahmad, Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir Islamic Research Centre, p. 266.

¹⁹ Lahori, *Padshah Nama*, op. cit., vol. I, p. 188. Abul Fazl mentioned the distance between Lahore and Kashmir as 97 kos 7 poles. Abul Fazl, *Akbar Nama*, op. cit., vol. III, p. 543.

²⁰ Françoise Bernier, *Travels in the Mughal Empire*, p. 385, 391.

²¹ Inayat Khan, *Shahjahan Nama*, tr. by A. R. Fuller, edited and completed by W. E. Begley and Z. A. Desai, Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 123; Lahori, *Badshah Nama*, vol. I, p. 188.

²² *Maasir-i-Jahangiri*, f. 131.

²³ *Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh: Together with Routes in the Territories of the Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir*, Calcutta, 1890, p. 666.

²⁴ M. A. Stein, *The Ancient Geography of Kashmir*, Calcutta: Baptist Mission Press, 1899, p. 75.

²⁵ The load-carrier was called as *bharika* in the ancient times. *Ibid.*, 75, n. 2.

²⁶ Francisco Pelsaert, *Jahangir's India*, op. cit., p. 35.

known entrance to Kashmir.²⁷ The starting point of this route was the ferry of the Indus near Attock. It passed through Hasan Abdal,²⁸ Sultanpur,²⁹ Sanji,³⁰ Nawashahr, Dhamtaur, Salhar, Malgalli, Sawadnagar, Pakhli, up to river Kunhar (Nainsukh river).³¹ The river was crossed below Gadhi Habibullah at Shangraf Kani, on the border of Pakhli.³² After crossing Kishan Ganga it moved along with the left bank of the Jhelum, passed through Bolyas [Pellasa], Pim darang,³³ Bakkar, Musaran, Bhulbas, Kahai, Riwand, Kuwarmat (Kuwarmast),³⁴ Wachaha, Baltar, and up to Baramulla. ³⁵ From Baramulla to Srinagar, there were two routes. The route over the river Jhelum, crossed Wular Lake, Andrakal, Paraspur, and then reaches Srinagar, and the second route crossed the Noupura,³⁶ Pattan, Sopur, Shihabud-ud-dinpur and reaches Srinagar.³⁷ From Baramulla to Srinagar, the distance was 15 kuroh by boat and 11 ½ by land.³⁸

Although it was the longest route in journey and had many winding paths and ascends and descends, the snowfall was little on this route in comparison to the other routes.³⁹ The route remained almost traversable even during the winter months⁴⁰ and ponies and pack horses, elephants, and even heavy armour were carried on this route.⁴¹ This route was used for trade and commerce especially in light goods. Baramulla was the known as the northern gate of Kashmir⁴² and the merchants here lived a prosperous life.⁴³ Jahangir mentioned that there was a Kotal, known as Pimdarang, signifying the fact that the route was being used to carry cotton trade.⁴⁴ A custom house was established here during the Sultanate period and duties were levied on the cotton dealers by the superintendent.⁴⁵ No one was allowed without a passport.⁴⁶

²⁷ He mentioned the name of a town as Babrahan through which this route passes, which was half way between the rivers Sindh and Jailam. Al-Beruni, *Kitab-ul-Hind*, tr. by Edward C. Sachau, *Alberuni's India*, London: Trubner & Co., 1910, vol. I, p. 206.

²⁸ From Hasan Abdal to Kashmir by the road was a distance of 75 kos and this could be accomplished in twenty-five days. Jahangir, *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, vol. II, p. 139.

²⁹ On the southern bank of the Harroh River, Elliot and Dowson, vol. VI, p. 367.

³⁰ Jahangir, *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, vol. II, p. 124.

³¹ Ibid., pp. 123-27; Irfan Habib, *An Atlas of the Mughal Empire*, Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1982, reprinted 1986, Sheets 3A-3B.

³² A. M. Mattoo, *Kashmir under the Mughals*, p. 211.

³³ Jahangir, *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, vol. II, p. 128.

³⁴ Kuwarmast was the most difficult pass on this route. Abul Fazl, *Akbar Nama*, vol. III, p. 559; Ibid., p. 133.

³⁵ Jahangir, *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, vol. II, pp. 130-34.

³⁶ In Akbar Nama II, it is mentioned as Nurpur between Baramulla and Patan. Abul Fazl, *Akbar Nama*, vol. II, p. 102. Beveridge believes that either it is Nurpur or Tapor. Abul Fazl, *Akbar Nama*, vol. III, p. 846, n. 2.

³⁷ Jahangir, *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, vol. II, pp. 130-34.

³⁸ Lahori, *Padshah Nama*, vol. II, p. 69.

³⁹ Abul Fazl, *Akbar Nama*, vol. III, p. 480; From Lahore to Kashmir via Pakhli, the distance mentioned by Lahori is 150 kuroh Padshahi. Lahori, *Padshah Nama*, vol. I, p. 188.

⁴⁰ Lahori, *Padshah Nama*, vol. I, p. 188; Kamghar Husain, *Maasir-i-Jahangiri*, p. 131.

⁴¹ Hasan Kuihami, *Tarikh-i-Hasan*, vol. I, ff. 76-77; A. M. Mattoo, *Kashmir under the Mughals*, p. 210.

⁴² Abul Fazl, *Akbar Nama*, vol. III, p. 557.

⁴³ Jahangir, *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, vol. II, p. 134.

⁴⁴ The reason for this is that in the native language, the Kashmiris called the cotton (pamba) as pim. There was always a delay in the travelling of the cotton dealers as the custom duty was levied here by the authorities. Jahangir, *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, vol. II, p. 128.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 128.

⁴⁶ Abul Fazl, *Akbar Nama*, vol. III, p. 557.

3. Kashmir-Central Asia Route

This route runs over the Zojila Pass which connects Kashmir with Ladakh, Baltistan, Tibet, China, and the Central Asian regions of Badakhshan, Samarqand, Khotan, Bukhara, Kashghar, Yarkand, etc.⁴⁷ The trade of Kashmir with Bhutan, Nepal and Bengal was also carried on by this route.⁴⁸ Kashmir's trade connection with Central Asia had no common border, therefore commerce was conducted indirectly through the circuitous and difficult mountainous trade routes which passed through Ladakh and Chinese Turkistan on the one side and Chitral and Pamirs on the other.⁴⁹

The route from Kashmir to Yarkand traversed nearly the whole of Ladakh from east to west.⁵⁰ Because of the absence of banditry and the political disturbances, traders and travellers from different regions would prefer to traverse the Srinagar-Leh-Yarkand-Kashghar-Kokand route for their trade and other dealings in Central Asia.⁵¹ The caravan trade between Kashmir and Central Asia on this route was controlled by pedlars and trading agents either individually or collectively.⁵² It was through this route that in the late 18th and early 19th century, the Russians developed trade relations with Kashmir.⁵³

This route was a life vein of the woolen industry of Kashmir. Almost the entire shawl wool was brought to the valley through this route. Thousands of porters (*muzdurs* or *mazzir*) were employed on this route by the Kashmiri merchants for the wool transportation from Ladakh to Kashmir.⁵⁴ It was important both commercially and strategically.⁵⁵ It was passable during the period from March till November, but on account of its commercial importance, the merchants very often used it during the winter season as well.⁵⁶ On account of the high elevation and scarcity of fodder, most of trade was carried on by the porters on their backs. Horses, mules, and yaks, were also put into service.⁵⁷ From Srinagar to Baltal, the road had quite comfortable passage even for all kinds of beasts of burden, and from here onwards the mountain track started.⁵⁸ In winter, the packages of merchants, travelling from Kashmir to Ladakh,⁵⁹ could not be conveyed by horses on account of the difficulties of the Zojila Pass, and were therefore carried by men

⁴⁷ Ippolito Desideri, *Mission to Tibet...*, op. cit., p. 160-62; Mohibbul Hasan, *Kashmir under the Sultans*, pp. 22-23; R. K. Parmu, *A History of Muslim Rule in Kashmir 1320-1819*, p. 44.

⁴⁸ Ahmed Shah Nakshahbandi, 'Route from Kashmir, via Ladakh, to Yarkand', tr. by J. Dowson, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, vol. 12 (1850), pp. 372-85; A. M. Mattoo, *Kashmir under the Mughals*, p. 212.

⁴⁹ K. Warikoo, 'Trade Relations Between Central Asia and Kashmir Himalayas during the Dogra Period (1846-1947)', *Cahiers d'Asie Centrale*, vol. 1, No. 1 (1996), p. 114.

⁵⁰ Ahmed Shah Nakshahbandi, 'Route from Kashmir, via Ladakh, to Yarkand', op. cit., pp. 372-85.

⁵¹ Ibid.; K. Warikoo, *Central Asia and Kashmir: A Study in the Context of Anglo-Russian Rivalry*, New Delhi, 1989, p. 56.

⁵² Ibid., p. 56. On account of its high elevation and scarcity of fodder most of trade was carried by the porters on their backs.

⁵³ Ibid., pp. 56-57; *Russian Travellers to India and Persia (1624-1798)*, Kotov, Yefremov, Danibegov, tr. & ed. by P. M. Kemp, Delhi: Jivan Prakashan, 1959, pp. 81-83.

⁵⁴ Ippolito Desideri, *Mission to Tibet...*, op. cit., p. 159.

⁵⁵ Mirza Muhammad Haidar Dughlat, *Tarikh-i-Rashidi*, tr. and edited by N. Elias and E. Denison Ross, London: Sampson Low, 1895, pp. 422-24.

⁵⁶ Alexander Cunningham, *Ladakh: Physical, Statistical, and Historical*, London: W. H. Allen & Co., 1854, p. 148; W. Moorcroft and G. Trebeck, *Travels in the Himalayan Provinces...*, vol. II, pp. 211-15.

⁵⁷ Dras and Leh were the transit points for the beasts of burden where these were usually exchanged for onward march. Ahmed Shah Nakshahbandi, 'Route from Kashmir, via Ladakh, to Yarkand', op. cit., pp. 372-85.

⁵⁸ Abdul Majid Mattoo, *Kashmir under the Mughals*, p. 212.

⁵⁹ Ahmed Shah Nakshahbandi, 'Route from Kashmir, via Ladakh, to Yarkand', op. cit., pp. 372-85.

only.⁶⁰ There were impetuous torrents that could be crossed only by means of cords extended from rock to rock.⁶¹ The trade route between Srinagar and Yarkand via Ladakh was operative up to the middle of the twentieth century.⁶² The biggest lacuna in the Mughal economic policy towards Kashmir was that there was only one caravan sarai on this route⁶³ and also the rivers were spanned with swinging bridges. The travellers on this route were compelled to spend their nights in their tents under the open sky.⁶⁴

4. Kashmir-Kashghar Route

The route from Kashmir to Kashghar was another important route so far as its commercial importance is concerned. It was an alternative route to the Central Asian Route, thus substantiated the trade and commerce between Kashmir and Central Asia regions.⁶⁵ It was used by the Central Asian merchants to travel Kashmir for the commercial dealings particularly during the political disturbances.⁶⁶ The major stages on this route were Srinagar, Paraspur, Andrakool (Andrakal), Ajas,⁶⁷ Gurais [Gurez], Skardu [or Kepchun], Shigar, Baltistan, Toghnak and Kashghar.⁶⁸ This route was also connected with Ladakh via Toghnak, Nubra and Leh.⁶⁹ One could cross to Yarkand and Kashghar from north Kashmir and then turn westwards to the Farghana valley and thereafter to Tashkent or the Kazakh steppes.⁷⁰ From Kashmir to Kashghar was a long journey, and not only was the distance great, but the difficulties of the road were well-nigh insurmountable.⁷¹ Among other difficult paths, there was a place where, in every season, the travellers must go a quarter of a league over ice.⁷² Through this route, the merchants of Kashghar used to bring the slaves to the markets of Kashmir⁷³ during the imperial visits. This was also another alternative route for the shawl-wool trade. Besides wool, other goods imported from this route were musk, silk-worm, crystal, gold, etc.⁷⁴ Finch notes that there was no passage for caravans from Kashghar to Kashmir, though trade in musk, silk, and other merchandise was carried on by means of porters. The goods were often lifted up and brought down by engines and devices.⁷⁵ The Pass on this route ascending from Yarkand was the Sanju, and the Pass descending from the side of Kashmir was the Pass of Ashkardu [Iskardoo]. From the

⁶⁰ The journey from Kashmir to Lhasa, which took forty days, could be accomplished on foot. Ippolito Desideri, *An Account of Tibet*, p. 77.

⁶¹ Bernier, *Travels in the Mughal Empire*, pp. 425-26.

⁶² Muzaffar Ahmed Khan, *Kashmiri Muslims: An Historical Outline*, Srinagar: Humanizer Publications, 2012, vol. I, p. 304.

⁶³ Mir Izzet Ullah, 'Travels Beyond the Himalaya', republished by H. H. Wilson, *Calcutta Oriental Quarterly Magazine*, vol. 7 (1825), pp. 283-342.

⁶⁴ Ippolito Desideri, *Mission to Tibet....*, op. cit., p. 160.

⁶⁵ Bernier, *Travels in the Mughal Empire*, p. 426.

⁶⁶ During the invasion of Ladakh by Shah Jahan, the Central Asian Route was blocked by the ruler of Ladakh for the Kashmiris particularly to the merchants, therefore, this route was used by the merchants. Ibid.

⁶⁷ Irfan Habib, *An Atlas of the Mughal Empire*, Sheets 3A-3B.

⁶⁸ Bernier, *Travels in the Mughal Empire*, pp. 426-27; Ibid.

⁶⁹ Irfan Habib, *An Atlas of the Mughal Empire*, Sheets 3A-3B.

⁷⁰ Surendra Gopal, 'Indians in Central Asia in 16th and 17th Centuries', *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, vol. 52 (1991), pp. 219-31.

⁷¹ Mirza Haidar Dughlat, *Tarikh-i-Rashidi*, pp. 439-40.

⁷² This route refers to a route from Skardu to Yarkand, which crossed the Baltero Glacier, which now, owing to changes in the ice, is no longer passable. Bernier, *Travels in the Mughal Empire*, p. 426, n. 6.

⁷³ According to Bernier, merchants of Kashghar, who when heard that Aurangzeb intended to visit Kashmir, brought a great number of young slaves, girls and boys for sale in Kashmir via this route. Bernier, *Travels in the Mughal Empire*, p. 426.

⁷⁴ Irfan Habib, *An Atlas of the Mughal Empire*, pp. 3A-3B.

⁷⁵ William Foster (ed.), *Early Travels in India 1583-1619*, London: Oxford University Press, 1921, pp. 169-70; W. H. Moreland, *India at the Death of Akbar: An Economic Study*, London: Macmillan and Co., 1920, pp. 218-20.

Saju Pass to the Ashkardu Pass was twenty days' journey.⁷⁶ Gilgit was another pass which leads to Kashghar from Kashmir.⁷⁷

5. Kashmir-Kishtawar Route

The territory of Kishtawar is situated on the south of the Kashmir Valley. Jahangir mentioned the distance between Srinagar and Kishtawar as 60 kos.⁷⁸ There were two routes leading towards Kishtawar from Kashmir. It could be reached from Islamabad via Achabal⁷⁹ to Pargana Brang via Marbal Pass through village Singpora,⁸⁰ Narkot, Bhandarkot.⁸¹ Another route was from Islamabad via Desu, which was a kotal of Pir Panjal.⁸² The Mughals invaded Kishtawar by the same routes. The road remained open for a longer duration but it was traversed on foot, and the travel on the horses was not possible on this route.⁸³ There were rope bridges on this route which were known as *zampa* in the local language.⁸⁴ Tieffenthaler speaks of this route as generally followed by merchants due to the anarchical conditions in the late eighteenth century. From Nazibgarh the merchants travelled via Alamnagar, Dharampur, Shahrampur, Tajpur, Gular, Nahn [Nahan], Bilaspur, Jala, Zoali, Hirapur, Makrota, Bissuli, Badroa [Bhadarwah], Kishtawar, and to Srinagar [capital city of Kashmir].⁸⁵

State Approach

The road building department in the Mughal Empire was headed by Diwan-i-Bayutat.⁸⁶ Tavernier notes that the carriages and travelling in the Mughal Empire were not less convenient than in France or Italy,⁸⁷ however, this could be true only to the travelling through the important highways and trade routes while as the lesser and hilly roads were not well maintained and developed except during the imperial journeys.⁸⁸ The roads of Kashmir received the state attention only during the imperial journeys. Out of twenty-six routes, Bhimbar and Pakhli were the best and practicable on horseback from Kashmir to Lahore.⁸⁹ During the imperial visits, these routes were mostly used to visit Kashmir, therefore received an extra care. Thousands of labours were employed for the development and maintenance of these routes. According to Abul Fazl, three thousand stone-cutters, mountain-miners and splinters of rocks and two thousand beldars (diggers) were sent to level the ups and downs of the road under the charge of Qasim Khan.⁹⁰ Jahangir issued orders to jagirdars for the construction of the sarais, mosques and to dig wells along the routes.⁹¹

⁷⁶ Mirza Haidar Dughlat, *Tarikh-i-Rashidi*, pp. 12-13.

⁷⁷ Abul Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, vol. II, p. 365.

⁷⁸ Jahangir, *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, vol. II, p. 135.

⁷⁹ Irfan Habib, *An Atlas of the Mughal Empire*, Sheet 3A.

⁸⁰ Jahangir, *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, vol. II, p. 135.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 136-37; Irfan Habib, *An Atlas of the Mughal Empire*, Sheet 3A.

⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 135. It was a village four miles above Nowbagh. C. E. Bates, *A Gazetteer of Kashmir*, pp. 312-13, 343-44.

⁸³ Jahangir, *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, vol. II, p. 135.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 137.

⁸⁵ Cf. Moti Chandra, *Trade and Trade Routes in Ancient India*, New Delhi: Abhinav Publications, 1977, pp. 21-22.

⁸⁶ A. M. K. Farooque, *Roads and Communication in Mughal India*, p. 42.

⁸⁷ Jean Baptiste Tavernier, *Travels in India*, tr. by V. Ball, London: Macmillan and Co., 1889, vol. I, p. 39.

⁸⁸ A. M. K. Farooque, *Roads and Communication in Mughal India*, pp. 35-40.

⁸⁹ Abul Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, vol. II, p. 351; Jahangir, *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, vol. II, p. 143.

⁹⁰ Abul Fazl, *Akbar Nama*, vol. III, p. 537.

⁹¹ He further orders that the *mutsaddi* should execute the same work near the khalisa lands. Jahangir, *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, vol. I, pp. 7-8.

He ordered for the construction of the sarais from Kashmir to the end of the hilly region,⁹² and not less than eleven sarais were built from Bhimbar to Hirapur.⁹³ The process continued under Shahjahan and Aurangzeb.⁹⁴ At Sarai Sokhta, Jahan Ara Begum also constructed a sarai.⁹⁵

Conclusion

Despite having the best road building technology and engineering, the roads of Kashmir were not developed on a permanent basis during the Mughal period, rather the maintenance was subjected to the imperial visits. Even the imperial journeys to Kashmir were not without the extreme complications. They at some times had to pay dearly with the lives of their followers and also the beasts of burden.⁹⁶ Every traveller who visited Kashmir during this period explained about the difficulties of the roads,⁹⁷ which hindered the economic growth of Kashmir to a large extent. The difficult roads inevitably raised the cost of both imported as well as exported commodities.⁹⁸ The transport facilities also remained primitive and no cart road was built during this period.⁹⁹ The means of transportation like bullock-carts, that were the regularly used in other parts of the Mughal empire were totally absent in Kashmir both in internal as well as external trade. Beasts of burden like ponies, mules, asses, yaks, and sheep were already in use during the Sultanate period and continued to remain so under the Mughal period. There were no kos-minars built on the roads of Kashmir as were built in other parts of the empire.¹⁰⁰

Although the sarais were constructed on a large scale in Kashmir during the Mughal period, however, they were primarily built for the imperial use. Jahangir says, that “I had directed that from Kashmir to the end of the hilly country buildings [sarais] should be erected at each stage for the accommodation of myself and the ladies, for in the cold weather one should not be in tents.”¹⁰¹ The construction of sarais also remained confined primarily to the Bhimbar road and all other roads were largely ignored. Central Asian Route, the most important commercial route of Kashmir was unheeded and no effort was put by the Mughals to develop and maintain this route, even though this route yielded a huge amount of revenue to the government.¹⁰²

⁹² Ibid., vol. II, p. 178.

⁹³ Lahori, *Badshah Nama*, vol. I, p. 188.

⁹⁴ Lahori, *Badshah Nama*, vol. I, pp. 188-90; Muhammad Salih Kambo, *Amal-i-Salih*, vol. I, pp. 22-25.

⁹⁵ The sarai came to known as Khair sarai. Ibid., vol. II, p. 181.

⁹⁶ Bernier, *Travels in the Mughal Empire*, pp. 407-08.

⁹⁷ Abul Fazl, *Akbar Nama*, vol. III, pp. 540-41; Pelsaert, *Jahangir's India*, p. 35; Lahori, *Badshah Nama*, vol. I, p. 188; Bernier, *Travels in the Mughal Empire*, pp. 391-92; Ippolito Desideri, *Mission to Tibet...*, p. 159.

⁹⁸ Abul Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, vol. I, p. 65; George Forster, *A Journey from Bengal to England*, vol. I, pp. 347-49; Jadunath Sarkar, *History of Aurangzeb*, Calcutta: M. C. Sarkar & Sons, 1924, vol. V, p. 414.

⁹⁹ J. L. Raina, *Means of Communication in the Last Century in Kashmir and how Control passed into British Hands*, Lahore, 1926, p. 3; Henry Sender, *The Kashmiri Pandits: A Study of Cultural Choice in North India*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1988, p. 68.

¹⁰⁰ Jahangir put Kroh-minars between Agra and Lahore to mark the distance, and, every five Krohs he built a well. Hamida Khatoon Naqvi, *History of Mughal Government and Administration*, op. cit., pp. 244-45.

¹⁰¹ Jahangir, *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, vol. II, p. 178.

¹⁰² The tax on shawl and wool trade amounted to the Lakhs of rupees. During the Afghan period, the tax amounted to ten Lakhs a year. Mir Izzet Ullah, ‘Travels Beyond the Himalaya’, republished by H. H. Wilson, *Calcutta Oriental Quarterly Magazine*, vol. 7 (1825), pp. 283-342.