**“The Story about China and Me”**

I passed 23 out of my 27 years in Pakistan as an Afghan refugee. I neither knew China and nor do had a knowledge that China is our neighbor. As the time passed and when I was in Class 4, ‘Geography’ was included in our curriculum. I still remember when our teacher said that China is one of the sixth country with whom Afghans have a border, the whole class was shocked and didn’t believe. We looked to each other and in utter surprise said “what?” However, our beloved teacher showed us ‘China’ on a map and removed our confusion. Personally for me, it was the beginning to learn and know about China.

Slowly, the more I read and listened about China, the more I gained knowledge and learn Sino-Pakistani relations. Throughout this period in Pakistan, the fascinating thing to note was that unlike western world, Pakistan and Soviet Union, China doesn’t want to intervene in the internal matters of others, and doesn’t want to persuade others to adopt their way of life, norms and values, the style of their government and never strive to get control of the foreign policies of independent states.

After graduation, my family repatriated back to Afghanistan, and I got a job in a think tank. Fortunately, I was assigned to write an exploratory research book about Sino-Afghan ties. It is what I wanted since my university days in Pakistan. Because, since those days, I didn’t found any book written concerning Sino-Afghan ties in the libraries and bookshelves of Peshawar, and Islamabad. Mostly the published literature by the afghan, western and others were greatly related to Afghanistan’s relations with others especially soviets, Indo-Pakistan and others. Unfortunately, there weren’t any literature about China and its relations with Afghanistan. I picked up a bulk of historical books and searched for the historical Sino-Afghan ties to fill the literature gap.

During the data collection process, the more I collected information from here and there, the more the subject became interesting for me, and in the meantime, I was also dejected that how comes the two nations are apart from each other when the historical bonds between them is much stronger? Take for instance, the two superior empires of Afghans namely the Kushans and Hepthalites have actually come from China to Afghanistan; the Buddhism spread to China through Afghanistan; the root cause of the old Silk Road was Quan Chian’s ambassadorship visit to Balkh, and through this Silk Road, there was greater incidents of cultural, economic and religious bonds.

Due to my research on China-Afghanistan, I am a published author and interviewed by international media. Spoke to international conferences, and was given an opportunity to visit China in a think tank exchange programme. China was my first foreign destination. I learned a lot about the rising China and it further influenced me that one can achieve prosperity and move on a path of development through modernization but not westernization.