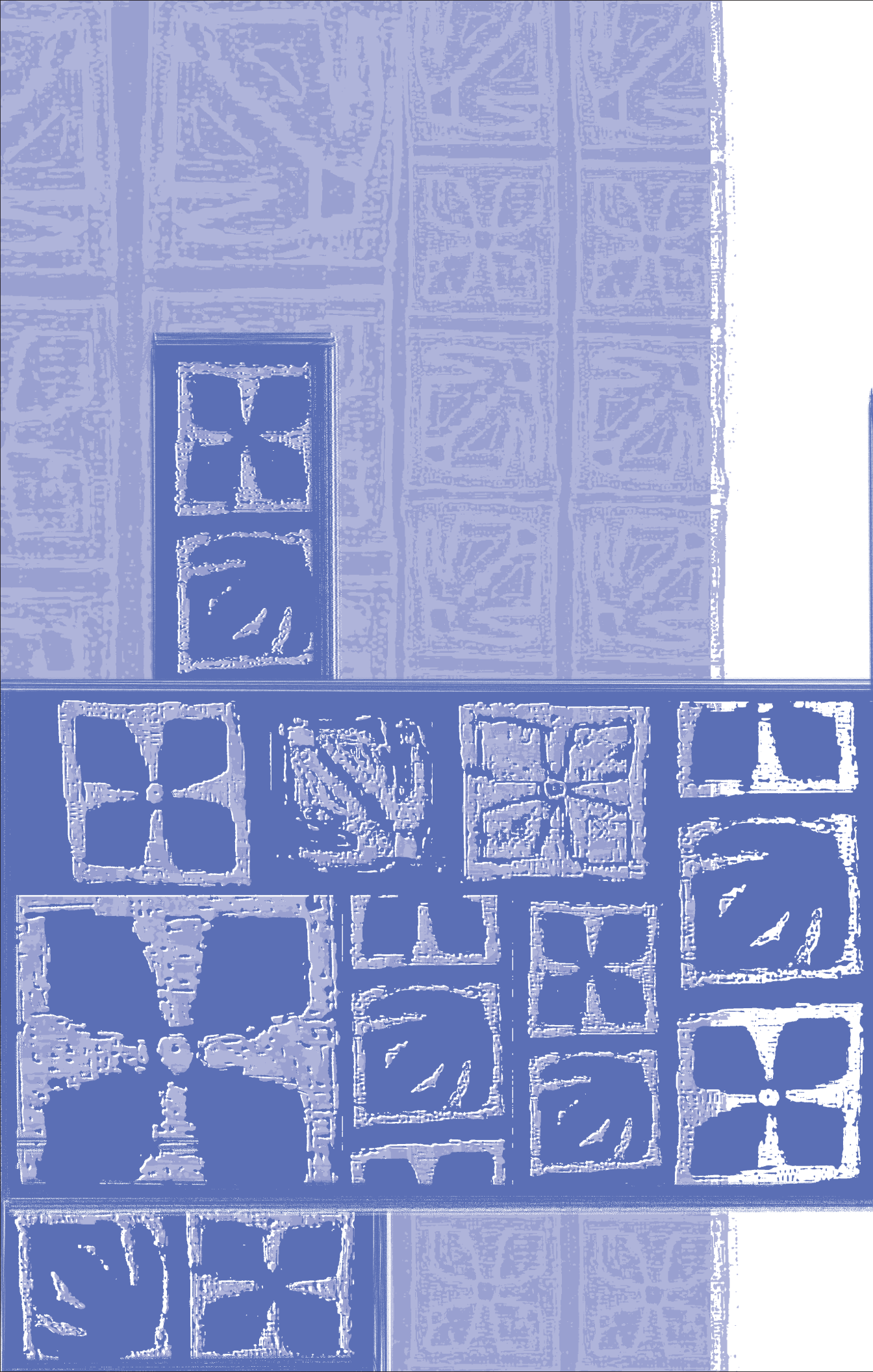
CHITRAL

A Study in Statecraft (1320–1969)



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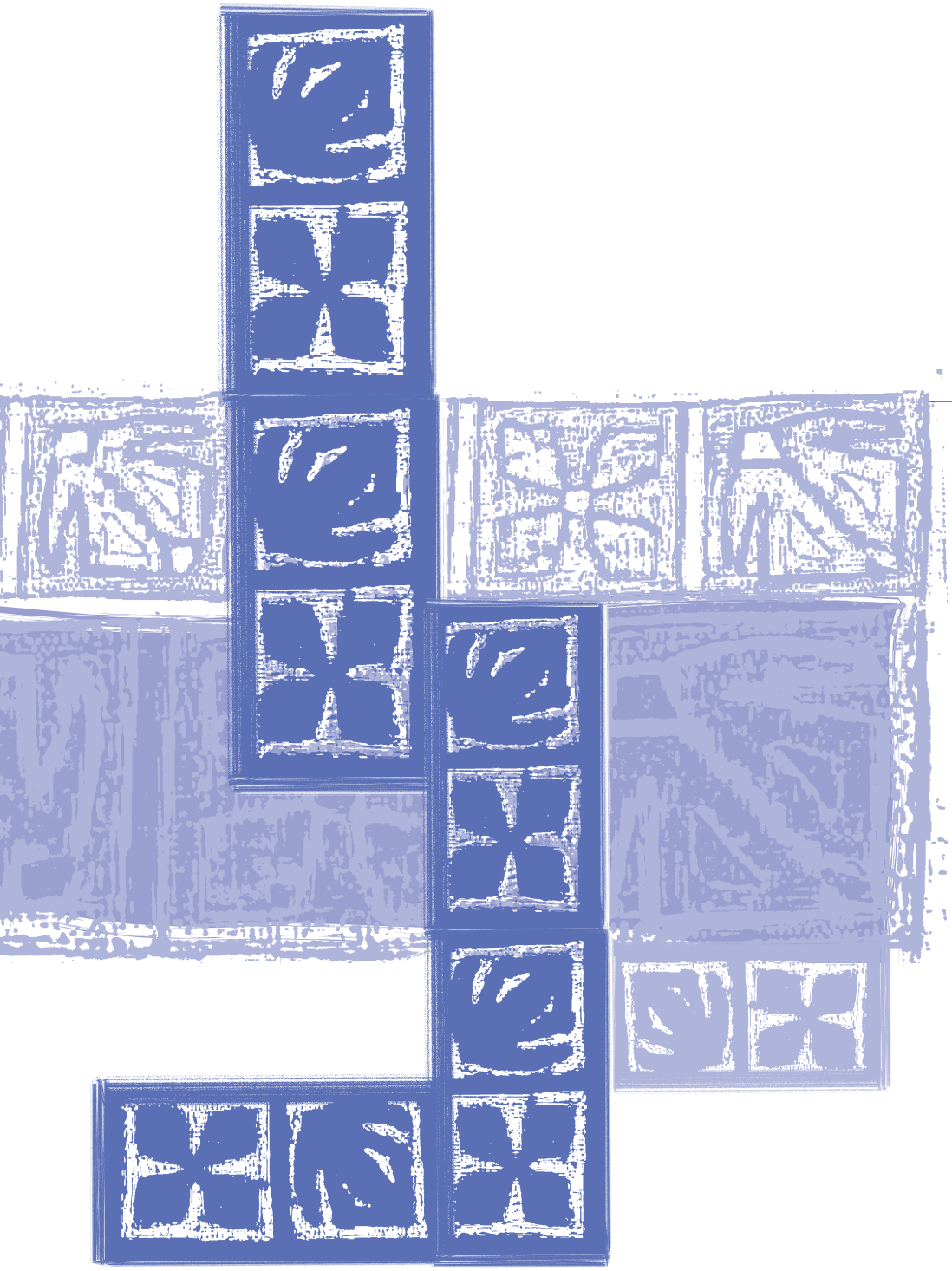
Acknowledgements

The mountainous region of Chitral is renowned for its rugged landscape and unique culture. What is perhaps less well known is that the area possesses a rich tradition of customary law and indigenous statecraft. This heritage, spanning a period of more than 700 years, encompasses a wide range of subjects from defence and civil administration to land tenure systems and natural resource management.

Documents concerning traditional statecraft in Chitral are located in the provincial Department of Archives and Libraries as well as the provincial Home Department's Tribal Research Cell. These files and records, many of which corroborate folk knowledge handed down from generation to generation, are difficult to access and navigate. This makes it all the more important to study traditional mechanisms of governance in the area, not only to preserve this knowledge for posterity but also to serve as a vital resource for future scholars. By helping to create a better understanding of the history of the Chitral region, moreover, such research should prove useful to development agencies, conservation organisations and knowledge-based institutions working in the district.

In taking on this challenge, I benefited from the support of many friends including Professor Israruddin, Chairman, Geography Department, University of Peshawar; and Professor Dr. Wolfgang Holseworth, Reader, History Department, University of Bonn, Germany. The Government College Chitral and the former District Administration Chitral also provided invaluable assistance. I am indebted as well to IUCN-The World Conservation Union for their keen interest in the subject of Chitral's traditional statecraft. Shuja ur Rahman, Manager Sarhad Provincial Conservation Strategy, Peshawar, deserves a special vote of thanks for initiating this project and enriching it with his meticulous observations, which helped me to achieve coherence in the arrangement of the data. I am grateful to Dr. Inayatullah Faizi, Project Manager, Chitral Conservation Strategy (CCS), Chitral, for his guidance and to Sarfaraz Shah, Secretary-cum-Accountant, CCS Support Unit, Chitral, for his diligence, interest and cheerful disposition throughout the tedious process of compiling my complicated draft.

Rehmat Karim Baig



Introduction

The mountain state of Chitral covered a greater area than the modern district, located in Pakistan's North-West Frontier Province, which goes by the same name today. During the ten centuries for which written accounts of the region are available, the borders of Chitral state reached as far as Badakhshan and Bashgal in the north-west and the Kunar valley in the south, all the way to Bailam and Chaghansarai.

These areas are now part of Afghanistan.[1] On its north-eastern front, meanwhile, the state extended up to Sherqilla, which today lies in the Gilgit region of Pakistan.[2] These borders were seldom stable, however, and fluctuated with the fortunes of Chitral's rulers, the Mehtars.

Nothing definitive is recorded about the area's first settlers. In the 3rd century AD, Kanishka, the Buddhist ruler of the Kushan empire, occupied Chitral. But this was a difficult land to govern for long stretches of time. The princes of Chitral were forever embroiled in border skirmishes—and the occasional full-blown battle—with the tribes of Gilgit and Kashmir as well as warlords from neighbouring Afghanistan.

In the 4th century AD, the Chinese overran the Chitral valley, imposing upon the area a rigid system of administration. To wield control over the local population, it is said that the Chinese would capture a few hundred local people and deploy them as forced labour. According to folklore, these prisoners would be released after a few years, when a fresh batch of locals was taken.

Over the next 300 years, various parts of Chitral were ruled by local chiefs who offered tributes either to the shahs of Persia, the Kushan rajas or the emperors of the Tang dynasty in China. In the 7th century, the Chinese once again invaded Chitral. By this time, the Kushan and Tang dynasties controlled different parts of Chitral, each aiming to expand its own hold in the area. This struggle continued for some decades, with the Chinese pushing in from the north and Gandharans moving up from the south.[3]

By the beginning of the 8th century, China's hold over the area began to weaken, allowing local chieftains to rise to power. By the 10th century, Kalash tribes had established their own principalities in lower Chitral while upper Chitral was ruled by a legendary figure, Bahman-e-Kohistani ('lucky man from the mountains'), who is remembered for his heroism. Bahman-e-Kohistani established a stable and prosperous state. His seat of government was situated at Muzhgol, in a strong fort supplied with water by means of a unique distribution system constructed from interconnected ibex horns. Under his rule, which lasted some 50 years, a water channel was dug from Banggol in the Yarkhun valley all the way to the Kaghlasht plateau (Ghufran 1962: 26).

In the year 980, after conquering vast swathes of Central Asia, the Arabs marched on upper Chitral. The invaders did not remain long in the area and returned to Khurasan, their base of operations in the east, appointing Bahman-e-Kohistani as their agent.[4] Although the Arabs preferred to rule indirectly, their invasion led to the arrival of Muslim missionaries who brought the teachings of Islam to upper Chitral. In the lower valleys, the Kalash princes continued to rule largely uninterrupted until 1320.

Somewhere between the years 1005 and 1010, Sumalek, originally from

1 Badakhshan is a province in north-eastern Afghanistan. Bashgal is a region in Afghanistan's Kunar province, situated to the south-west of Chitral. In 1896, Bashgal was renamed Nuristan by the Afghan Amir, Abdur Rehman Khan. Today, it lies within the borders of Afghanistan and continues to be known as Nuristan. The town of Bailam is now known as Narai. It is situated some 20 kilometres south of the present-day town of Arandu and lies within the Kunar province of Afghanistan. The modern name for Chaghansarai is Asadabad.

2 The Gilgit region, which includes Astore, Baltistan, Chilas, Ghizar, Hunza and Yasin, is today part of Pakistan's federally administered Northern Areas.

3 Gandhara, the name of a region that now covers parts of Pakistan and Afghanistan, lay at the heart of the Kushan empire. The Gandhara civilisation flourished is what is today the Peshawar valley in Pakistan's North-West Frontier Province.

4 Khurasan was part of Persia (present-day Iran).

Charkh, became the supreme ruler of upper Chitral as well as Chilas, Ghizar, Gilgit, Hunza and Skardu.[5] According to folklore, Sumalek's pagan beliefs were similar to those of the Kalash. His reign is said to have brought progress and prosperity to the valley. Instead of establishing and consolidating a centralised state, Sumalek divided the territory between his sons, who succeeded their father as independent rulers. The rule of the Sumaleki princes ended in the early 14th century, following the emergence of another adventurer, Shah Nadir Raees (1320–1341).

The Raees Period (1320–1590)

The Raees family subjugated the Kalash tribes and the Sumaleki rulers of Chitral, establishing a larger unified state in the area. Shah Nadir, who founded the Raees dynasty, was originally from eastern Turkistan.[6] In 1320 he invaded Chitral and proceeded to occupy a handful of villages in the lower Chitral river basin near Booni. The Sumalekis managed to hold on to the Mulkhow and Torkhow regions for a short while thereafter, putting up stiff resistance.

Less than a year after Shah Nadir's first push into the area, the Sumaleki prince Yari Baig was murdered during a 'friendly' polo match. Yari Baig's death allowed Shah Nadir to occupy the whole of upper Chitral. Contributing to his success was the fact that a large section of the local population, which was Muslim, supported the Muslim conqueror. After strengthening his hold over these parts, Shah Nadir invaded southern Chitral. Following a series of battles with local princes, Shah Nadir emerged victorious and occupied Chitral's main valley, killing Bulasing, the Kalash ruler of lower Chitral.

While Islam had already been introduced to the region following the Arab invasion in the 10th century, the religion spread far and wide under Raees rule. In the wake of Shah Nadir's military successes, some two thirds of the Kalash population converted to Islam. The remainder fled to Kalash valleys further south, settling in areas such as Birir, Bomboret and Rumbur (Ghufran 1962: 37).

Raees rule over Chitral began in 1320 and came to an end in 1590. During this period, nine Raees Mehtars occupied the throne. Most pursued a policy of expansionism, pushing the Kalash tribes further south and taking over more and more territory.

Chitral's population during Raees rule was by no means homogenous. The area's inhabitants belonged to a number of different ethnic groups and tribes, each of which was expected to serve the state by performing specific duties such as farming, hunting or military service (Ghufran 1962: 44). Soon after annexing the main valley, Shah Nadir Raees called a meeting of tribal chiefs to discuss administrative measures for the new state. The chiefs volunteered to provide for the upkeep of the Mehtar by introducing a system of taxation that would be binding on all tribes. This arrangement proved so successful that it continued to operate, albeit with minor alterations, well into the Katoor period (1590–1969).

5 Charkh is a town situated in the north of the Farghana valley, now part of Uzbekistan. Skardu is today part of Pakistan's federally administered Northern Areas.
6 Eastern Turkistan, also called Chinese Turkistan, is today known as the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, China.

The Chitral valley lies in the heart of the majestic Hindukush mountains.

It was during Raees rule that Islamic jurisprudence was introduced to the region. The Raees Mehtars established Islamic courts which were presided over by Islamic judges and jurists. A system of land endowment was gradually introduced along with Islamic inheritance law, a system of land revenue, and taxes on shops, professions and herding. The Kalash tribes, who had suffered religious persecution in the early days of Shah Nadir's rule, were in later years allowed to live in peace.

With a system of revenue collection in place, as well as a complex hierarchy of state servants, the Raees managed to retain the loyalty of their subjects for close to 300 years. At the end of the 16th century, however, dissension within the ruling family arose over the issue of succession. In 1531 Shah Tahir Raees (1520–1531) died, leaving as his successor Shah Nasir Raees (1531–1574) who was less than 10 years old at the time. Towards the closing years of the 16th century, a bitter power struggle was under way within the ruling family, creating the perfect opportunity for insurgents to challenge Raees authority.

The Katoor Period (1590–1969)

Baba Ayub, the patriarch of the Katoor family, hailed from Herat in Afghanistan

and settled in Chitral in 1520. As the Raees princes fought amongst themselves, Baba Ayub's son and grandsons mounted an attack on the ruling family. After a series of battles, in 1590 the insurgents entered the capital victorious and assumed control of the state. Backed by a number of prominent local tribes, the Katoors did not hesitate to crush their opponents (Ghufran 1962: 44–45).

In 1590, Baba Ayub's grandson Muhtaram Shah (1590–1630), later known as Katoor I, ascended the seat of power in Chitral after ousting the Raees family and its supporters. In this struggle, Muhtaram Shah had been joined by his brothers, Khush Ahmad, Khushwakht, Mohammad Baig and Mohammad Raza, who took part in the fighting, sustained injuries and were even subjected to torture at the hands of Raees forces. In recognition of their sacrifices, and to pre-empt dissent, Muhtaram Shah divided the state between his brothers. In an arrangement arrived at through mutual consultation, Muhtaram Shah held the main valley of Chitral while his brothers were handed charge of Drosh in the south, Innjigan in the west, Mastuj in the north-east and Mulkhow in the north. Over the years, all but two of the brothers lost control of their respective areas; Muhtaram Shah continued to hold Chitral while Khushwakht remained in power in Yasin. Their heirs were to become rivals in the battle for the Chitral throne over the next 400 years.

In the early days of Katoor rule the Raees princes twice managed to regain power. The first challenge came in 1629 and saw Shah Mahmood Raees (1630–1660) regain the throne the following year. Shah Mahmood ruled for the next 30 years before Chitral reverted to the Katoor family. Between 1660 and 1697, the Katoors once again held Chitral.

The second successful Raees challenge came in 1697. The rule of Shah Abdul Qadir Raees (1697–1698), however, was short lived and the Katoors retook Chitral the following year. From 1698, the Katoors retained their hold on the area. Although the Katoors were in turn ousted twice by their traditional rivals, the Khushwakhte family, they regained power on both occasions and eventually ruled Chitral well into the 20th century. During their rule, the structure of the state machinery—civil, military, judicial and financial—followed more or less the same pattern as that which had existed under the Raees.

Resources

Chitral lies in the heart of the majestic Hindukush mountains which stand some 6,000 metres high. From the highest peaks (7,690 metres), vast glaciers feed the Chitral river and its tributaries, providing abundant water for irrigation. The valleys below are rich in wildlife, and served as state game reserves during both Raees and Katoor rule. These reserves were granted as *jagirs* (estates) to various tribes and individuals.

For several months each year the Chitral valley was cut off from the rest of the world—a situation that persists to this day. The mountain passes leading into the area—Boroghil in the north, Durah in the west, Lowari in the south and Shandur in the east—were blocked in the winter, owing to heavy snowfall. Meanwhile the Kunar valley route through Afghanistan, which provided the only all-weather access to the area, could not be relied upon because Chitral's relations with the

kingdom of Kabul were seldom cordial. As a result, communication with other parts of the region became next to impossible in the winter, when trade and commerce activities were also curtailed.

While the climate may at times be inhospitable, nature has endowed the valley with fertile soil capable of bearing high-quality fruit and vegetables. Since the area receives no monsoon rains, however, agriculture can only be sustained by means of irrigation. Sowing a double crop, though, is only possible in lower Chitral where barley, corn, rice and wheat are favoured. Under the Mehtars, the state economy depended almost entirely on agriculture, even though farming was practised largely at a subsistence level. Traditionally, the farmers of Chitral grew enough to meet domestic needs and little or no trade in food items was necessary.

Although the import and export of agricultural produce was rare, goods intended for everyday use, such as cloth, salt, shoes and rugs, as well as horses, were traded by caravans travelling to the region from neighbouring states in the summer.

The Chitral area was also rich in minerals, while the hills of lower Chitral supported dense deodar (cedar, *Cedrus deodara*) and oak forests. The mineral wealth of the state was first exploited in the Raees period, when orpiment was discovered in upper Chitral and iron ore found in the south. In the late 19th century, Chitral's timber was exported by river to Afghanistan. Also around this time, trade caravans from neighbouring areas began purchasing orpiment from Chitral.

With the increase in population, pressure on natural resources grew. Over the generations, land and water became highly valued assets, serving at the same time as markers of social status. Competition between individuals, clans and tribes, all scrambling to increase their landholdings, intensified during early Katoor rule. In the 18th and 19th centuries, bids for the excavation and use of natural resources led to vicious rivalries within both the civil administration and the general population, becoming an integral part of court politics.

Statecraft in Chitral revolved around the ownership, allocation and use of land and other natural resources, all of which were controlled by the Mehtar. He used this power to secure the loyalty of tribal chiefs, bestowing land on his favourites and punishing insurgents by confiscating their property. But land endowments carried a price. The larger the tribal or individual share in resources, the more onerous the obligations they were expected to shoulder in service of the state.

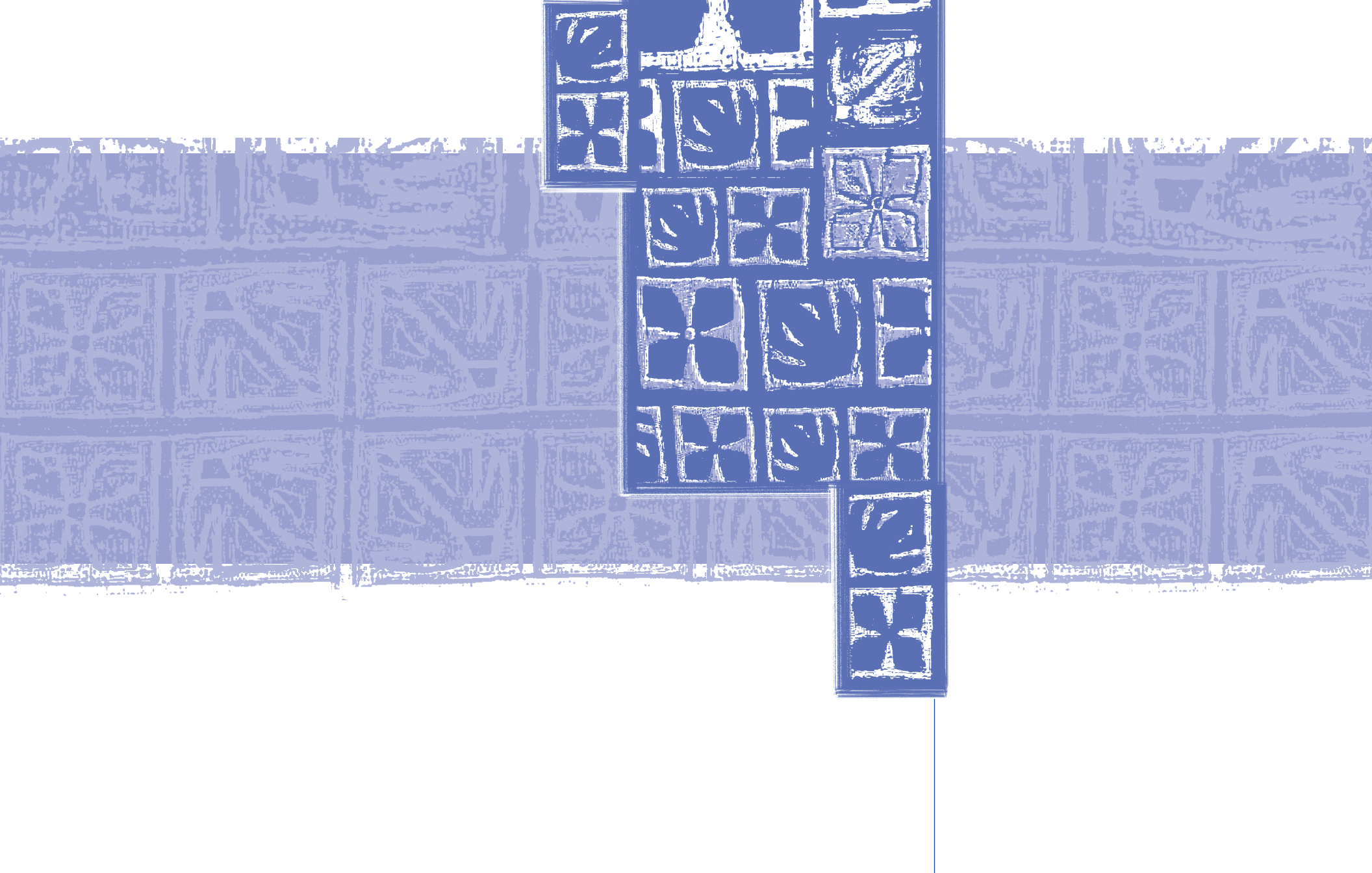
Customary Law

In stamping their authority on the region, the Raees and Katoor Mehtars did not rescind customary laws that had evolved over centuries of Persian, Gandhara, Chinese and Arab rule. These laws continued to govern social relations within Chitrali society well into the reign of the Raees and Katoor Mehtars, who recognised their practical value and relevance. At the same time, Islamic law was introduced to govern matters not covered by customary law.

One unique aspect of customary law was the concept of collective accountability. If a crime was committed

and the offender remained at large, the entire village was held responsible and fined or required to pay compensation. This system of joint responsibility and punishment kept crime to a minimum and helped ensure public security (Mulk 1971: 58).

Matters related to natural resource use and sharing were for the most part governed by customary law. Committees of notables decided civil disputes between individuals and communities or clans, and in most cases their decision was final and binding on all parties. In more serious cases, such as those involving high-value property or capital crimes, an appeal before higher authorities was permitted. Misuse of natural resources was not condoned and violators were fined by the tribe or village where the offence had occurred. Matters involving resources held in common, such as pasture, forests and water channels, were decided by the elders of the community.



Finance

Before Shah Nadir Raees conquered Chitral, the area was home to a number of small principalities. As such, Shah Nadir did not enjoy the benefit of inheriting a well-knit administration. Nor, for that matter, was an organised mechanism in place for the collection of revenue. To raise funds to sustain the royal household and finance the operations of the new state, Shah Nadir would have to introduce a system of taxation. In 1320–1321 the chiefs of the major tribes agreed to the introduction of a system of land revenue known as *thangi* (Mulk 1971: 49).

Each tribe also gave up part of its landholdings. In this way, the Mehtar gained control of vast tracts of cultivatable land which was then parcelled out to tenant farmers for sharecropping. This arrangement served as the main source of food grain for the ruling family.

With the requirements of the royal household taken care of, the Mehtar was free to attend to more important matters of state. Meanwhile, by surrendering property and agreeing to the *thangi* tax, the tribal chiefs earned the right to participate in the business of government (Ghufran 1962: 44–45). They formed an assembly of elders to advise Shah Nadir who, as a native of eastern Turkistan, was not well acquainted with local custom and tradition.

In addition to the *thangi* tax, the Mehtar received gifts during his visits to various parts of the state. Valuables offered included horses, bulls, sheep and goats. By the early 15th century, this practice was formalised in the shape of a tax which was due even if state visits were not undertaken for several years (Biddulph 1977 [1880]: 63). It was also at this stage that other formal taxes were introduced. Initially, duties were levied only on land and revenue was collected in kind (Barth 1956: 81). Small units weaving woollen cloth, carpets and rugs, and other cottage industries were exempted from the payment of tax (Government of India [GoI] 1928: 50).

By surrendering property and agreeing to the *thangi* tax, the tribal chiefs earned the right to participate in the business of government.

The system of taxation introduced at the beginning of Raees rule was based on the amount of land held by each tribe or clan as well as the class to which an individual belonged. The larger an individual's holdings, the greater his burden of tax (Ghufran 1962: 149). In addition to taxes, all citizens were obliged to perform state service. Members of the elite were expected to participate in the defence of the state, while common citizens were required to work on the construction of water channels, forts, roads and bridges.

Currency

Until the late 19th century, currency was not used in Chitral and the economy functioned instead on the basis of barter. Officials, public servants and those who performed labour for the state were paid in the form of land endowments and grain while ordinary people traded livestock (Biddulph 1977 [1880]: 68; Mulk 1971: 24). Taxes too were levied in kind. Dues such as *ashimat* and *thangi* were collected in the form of livestock, grain, cloth and cooked food.

The year that Amanul Mulk (1856–1892) gained power, the Afghan kabuli came into use in Chitral and remained the sole currency of the state for nearly three decades. In 1885, when the British first stationed troops in Chitral, the Indian rupee went into circulation. Thereafter, for more than 30 years, both currencies were used.

The year 1919 marked the third Anglo-Afghan war. Chitral, by this time a British protectorate, broke off ties with Kabul. After 1919, the Indian rupee became the sole currency of Chitral and remained so until 1947, when the British quit India, dividing the country into two new states, Pakistan and India. Following independence, Chitral acceded to Pakistan and switched to the Pakistani rupee.

Organisation

Under the Raees Mehtars, a formal system of revenue collection gradually took shape. Matters related to finance, trade and taxation were handled by a *duwanbegi* or revenue officer (Ghufran 1962: 146). District taxes were collected by lower-level officials in the civil administration, who kept an oral record of revenues from their respective areas, while a written record of payments was maintained centrally. This system was not entirely free of corruption (Ghufran 1962: 217).

In 1898, during the rule of Shujaul Mulk (1895–1936), the state's finance machinery was reorganised under the command of British colonial officers. A comprehensive register was compiled, listing the names of all landowners, their area of residence and the fixed amount of revenue they were liable to pay. This procedure allowed more accurate records to be maintained and updated, reducing the incidence of tax evasion (Ghufran 1962: 217). In 1903, a separate department of trade and commerce was established (Ghufran 1962: 218).

A number of taxes were introduced over the course of Raees rule in Chitral, from 1320 to 1590. These were later augmented by the Katoors who controlled the state until 1969.

Early Taxes and Sources of Income

Land

State land was allotted to tenant farmers for sharecropping. Agricultural produce from this land was the earliest source of income for the ruling family. The Mehtar's share of the harvest was carried to the capital, Chitral town, by the tenant (Scott 1937: 18). State lands in the vicinity of the Chitral fort were under the direct control of the Mehtar.

Thangi

Thangi was one of the earliest taxes to be levied in Chitral and served as the largest source of income for the state. Introduced at the beginning of Raees rule to provide for the ruling family and finance the day-to-day operations of the state, it was collected from lower-status tribes with smaller landholdings who were exempt from performing state duties such as *shadari* and *boli* (Ghufran 1962: 148). Under the *thangi* system, the less prominent tribes were required to provide grain, meat, clothing and other goods to the royal household by way of a land tax (Mulk 1971: 49). The value of the tax increased over time. Initially, chickens were counted as items of *thangi*. Later, higher-value goods such as sheep were added to the list, which grew to include woollen overcoats, blankets, woollen fabric, cotton cloth, and wooden bowls and plates. These items were collected annually by various state officials including the *charvelu*, *baramush* and *chharbu*.

Ashimat

This tax, generally regarded as more burdensome than *thangi*, actually contributed nothing directly to the state (Mulk 1971: 35). Instead, it was paid in the form of meals served by the middle class to the visiting Mehtar or other members of the ruling family. In most parts of Chitral, royal visits occurred more than once a year, giving the state ample opportunity to collect *ashimat* (Ghufran 1962: 35). But such visits were less frequent in remote areas where an occasion to offer *ashimat* might not arise for years at a time (Biddulph 1977 [1880]: 63). This fact did not go unnoticed and *ashimat*-payers in such areas were required to pay their dues annually in the form of sheep (GoI 1928: 135). The tax was collected by the *chharbu*, who maintained an oral account of all transactions (Mulk 1971: 35).

Ashimat-payers inhabiting more accessible parts of the state continued to serve food to visiting royals. They were required to provide not only for the Mehtar but also his official entourage and other travelling companions. If only one such visit occurred during the year, *ashimat*-payers of the area would share the burden of catering to the Mehtar and his party. When multiple visits were made throughout the year, *ashimat*-payers took turns at fulfilling their obligations (Mulk 1971: 35).

Minerals

The exploitation of Chitral's mineral wealth had begun in the time of the Raees, with the mining of orpiment in the Terich valley (Biddulph 1977 [1880]: 62). Other minerals extracted locally included silver, crystallised quartz, lead, potassium nitrate and antimony (Din 1987: 19–20). Iron ore and copper deposits were also discovered (Biddulph 1977 [1880]: 62). Before currency came into use, payments for minerals were made in kind, using slaves as well as horses, bulls and yaks. In the 20th century, orpiment was exported to China and turned a tidy profit for the state (GoI 1928: 49; Curzon 1926: 134). By 1914, the annual income from orpiment averaged 20,000 kabulis, although this amount fell in later years (Tribal Research Cell [TRC] 18: 7).

Shujaul Mulk took a keen interest in exploiting the mineral wealth of the state (Ghufran 1962: 183). During his reign, entire families were employed to pan the Chitral river for gold dust, generating cash for the state coffers (GoI 1928: 49).

Octroi

In the summer, a variety of goods was brought to Chitral from Badakhshan and the Pathan-dominated areas of Dir, Nowshera and Peshawar, over the Durah and Lowari passes (GoI 1928: 50; Din 1987: 21).[7] Traders carting merchandise into and out of the Chitral market, as well as those in transit, were required to pay octroi. Initially, the tax was calculated not on the quantity of goods being transported but rather on the number of animals carrying the load (Ghufran 1962: 143). Octroi charged in 1876 amounted to two kabulis per horse, one kabuli per mule and one kabuli for every three donkeys (Lockhart ca. 1896: 4). In later years, octroi was collected in cash. In 1919, total earnings from octroi stood at 4,000 rupees (Din 1987: 39). This income increased manifold in subsequent years.

7 The Durah pass in western Chitral lies on the Chitral–Afghan border.

Between 1932 and 1936, for instance, the average annual income from octroi stood at 19,680 rupees (TRC 18: 7).

In the Raees and the early Katoor periods, octroi was levied in a variety of locations. Katoor princes across the state imposed a tax on traders and pocketed the amount that was collected (Ghufran 1962: 218). In the later Katoor period, this system was reviewed and improved. Tolls were collected at Drosh, from traders travelling over the Lowari pass, and at Chitral, from traders arriving from Badakhshan over the Durah pass. Printed receipts were issued in an attempt to curb corruption. This new system served to increase the state's annual income from 4,000 rupees in 1919 to nearly 20,000 rupees by 1936.

Slavery

As in many other parts of Central Asia, the slave trade flourished in Chitral. Slaves from Chitral and other areas were taken to the main regional slave market in Badakhshan, and from there to Kabul (Shahrani ca. 1979: 29).

In the Raees and early Katoor periods, an individual could be sold into slavery for any number of reasons. Those hapless enough to incur the displeasure of the Mehtar were consigned to the *duwanbegi*, whose agents were forever on the lookout for individuals whose conduct might furnish a pretext for being captured and sold. When additional slaves were required, the numbers were made up by forcible seizure (Biddulph 1977 [1880]: 67; Mulk 1971: 50; Ghufran 1962: 83, 150).

Before currency came into use, slaves were paid for in kind, with items such as carpets, copper utensils, swords, shields, saddles and reins. After the introduction of currency, the slave trade was conducted in cash. The price of slaves varied according to the age and beauty of the individual. In the late 19th century, young, attractive men and women were sold for 290 and 300 kabulis, respectively, while children fetched anything from 100 to 300 kabulis, depending on their appearance (Lockhart ca. 1896: 4). This practice declined in the 1880s, during the reign of Afghan Amir Abdur Rehman Khan (1878–1901), when slavery was banned and the slave market in Kabul was closed (Lockhart ca. 1896: 4; Curzon 1926: 154). In India itself, the slave trade continued until 1895 before it was banned by the British colonial administration (Curzon 1926: 134; Din 1987: 39).

Tributes

As a show of allegiance to the ruler of Chitral, every year the people of Bashgal made a generous offering to the Mehtar. Items offered as tribute included butter, honey, cattle and woollen blankets, as well as children to serve as slaves (Lockhart ca. 1896: 4; Biddulph 1977 [1880]: 132–133). The Mehtar also received an annual tribute, including horses, blankets and goats, from the people of Bashqar in the Kalam valley.[8]

Fines

Fines were collected primarily as a means to facilitate the payment of compensation to the aggrieved party in a dispute. During his rule, though, Shujaul Mulk decreed that a certain portion of the fines collected would go to the exchequer (Biddulph 1977 [1880]:

8 The Kalam valley is now part of upper Swat.

218). Chitral under the Mehtars was by and large a law-abiding society, with the result that crime was low and the income derived from fines was generally meagre.

Later Taxes and Sources of Income

The year 1885 saw a 'pact of friendship' forged between Mehtar Amanul Mulk and the British colonial administration of India. Thereafter, a small contingent of British troops was stationed in Chitral, ostensibly to bolster the Mehtar's power. Chitral was to serve as a rampart in the British empire's bid to counter the ambitions of Russia to the north and Afghanistan to the west. To sweeten the deal, the colonial authorities provided Chitral with subsidies and plied the Mehtar with gifts.

The Kashmir Subsidy served as a token of 'friendship' between the ruler of Chitral and the British colonial administration, brought into contact through the Maharaja of Kashmir.

Subsidies

Following an exchange of emissaries, and tours of inspection carried out by British officers such as Lockhart and Biddulph, the colonial government of India in 1876 introduced a subsidy for the Mehtar. Known as the Kashmir Subsidy, this payment served as a token of 'friendship' between the ruler of Chitral and the colonial administration, brought into contact through the Maharaja of Kashmir, Ranbir Singh (1857–1885). This subsidy initially amounted to 98,000 rupees annually but was doubled in 1881, with additional allowances paid to the sons of the Mehtar (Curzon 1926: 4).

The 1885 treaty between Chitral's Mehtar and the British colonial government of India was also brokered by Maharaja Ranbir Singh. Following this agreement, a second subsidy was introduced. Known as the British Subsidy, this annual payment of 6,000 rupees was first received by Amanul Mulk in 1889. Two years later, the amount was raised to 12,000 rupees (Scott 1937: 4; GoI 1928: 1).

By 1895, the two subsidies jointly amounted to 30,000 rupees annually (TRC 13: 65). After 1895, the Kashmir Subsidy was cut to 3,000 rupees but the British Subsidy stood unchanged at 12,000 rupees (TRC 8: 266). In the years that followed, the British Subsidy was raised three times. In April 1928, to fund the State Bodyguards, the payment was increased by 30,000 rupees, totalling 42,000 rupees (TRC 120). Later, the sum was raised by another 65,000 rupees, amounting to 107,000 rupees annually (Ghufran 1962: 235). Following his succession to the throne, Mohammad Nasirul Mulk (1936–1943) negotiated a further increase, after which the British Subsidy stood at 130,000 rupees (Ghufran 1962: 235).

Ushr

The system of *ushr* (tithe) was introduced to Chitral relatively late. In the Raees and early Katoor period, tithes in the form of wheat and barley were only collected from villages where the land was fertile enough to support two crops a year (Ghufran 1962: 218). This tax was paid in addition to other levies that landholders were required to fork out.

It was Shujaul Mulk who first contemplated the state-wide introduction of *ushr* after consulting with court theologians. Taking his cue from their religious sanction, the Mehtar decided to impose *ushr* on a wide range of agricultural produce across the state. Introduced in 1910, the move encountered stiff resistance in the districts of Lotkuh and Mastuj (Ghufran 1962: 218). Nevertheless, it was forcibly imposed throughout Chitral in 1918.

Between 1914 and 1926, before the system of *ushr* collection and utilisation was formalised, the grain collected was not used by the state but instead went directly to the *qazis* of the villages concerned (Ghufran 1962: 55). After 1926, however, *ushr* grains were used by the state to make payments to nobles and princes, who received no other remuneration for their services.

From 1926 to 1969, some 3,676 maunds (1 maund is equivalent to 40 kilograms) of grain from the state *ushr* stock was handed over each year to five governors while another 3,676 maunds was distributed to 11 nobles, including princes, their relatives and other favourites (Scott 1937: 14–17). State officials, including bodyguards and carpenters, also received grains from the *ushr* stock.

Grain collected as *ushr* was stored in state granaries. Detailed accounts were kept in the *malia* (revenue) office, recording the amount collected and the total held in each granary (A. Khan 1998). According to records for the year 1928, the combined stock in state granaries stood at 6,610 maunds.

Contracts

British Indian troops were first stationed in Chitral in 1885, when the 'friendship' pact came into effect. Ten years later, as Chitral became a protectorate of the British crown, this military presence was formalised. Rather than continuing to bear the exorbitant cost of sending provisions over the Lowari pass, the British authorities eventually awarded the Mehtar a contract to supply the troops (Scott 1937: 8). The first such contract was signed in 1902. Over the years, this arrangement allowed the state to earn a substantial income which, between 1932 and 1936, averaged 218,800 rupees annually (TRC 18: 7).

Charas and Opium

Until the early 20th century, traffic in narcotics was not regulated by the state. This changed in 1902 when the British decided to capitalise on the informal trade, establishing a bonded warehouse at Boroghil.[9] Soon thereafter, Chitral received its first official consignment containing 70 maunds of *charas* (cannabis) from Yarkand in China.[10] State

9 Boroghil is a border post located in northern Chitral.
10 Yarkand is a town situated in China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region.

revenue officials at the time estimated that only 20 maunds of this shipment was consumed in Chitral itself while the remainder was sold in markets as far afield as Bombay, Kabul, Lahore and Peshawar (TRC 106: 1, 2). The British oversaw operations of the warehouse until 1926 when, under the Charas Agreement, a sum of 15,000 rupees was paid to the Mehtar to manage the warehouse. In 1928, this fee was raised to 30,000 rupees (TRC 18: 225).

Gradually, cannabis began to be cultivated in Chitral and became widely available in the local market. Opium from Afghanistan was also brought into Chitral. The flourishing business in narcotics led to the imposition of octroi in 1938 when printed forms for revenue collection were introduced. This proved to be a handsome source of income for the state.

Timber

The Chitral river, a natural asset shared with neighbouring Afghanistan, provided a channel for the commercial transport of timber which was sold to traders from Afghanistan and Peshawar (Ghufran 1962: 143). Since the Mehtar enjoyed de facto rights over all forests in Chitral, revenue from the sale of timber accrued to the treasury. The men employed to cut and float timber were paid no wages, while labour charges were included in the cost, thereby maximising the state's earnings (GoI 1928: 50).

This trade, which started after currency came into use, did not generate a regular income for the state. Sales peaked during the reign of Amanul Mulk, amounting to 40,000 kabulis annually, but the average income from timber was generally lower (Lockhart ca. 1896: 3; Din 1987: 39; Ghufran 1962: 134). In what amounted to a partial barter system, two thirds of the payment from Afghan and Peshawar traders was taken in cash and the rest in kind (Lockhart ca. 1896: 3).

Trade with Afghanistan came to a grinding halt in the wake of the Anglo-Afghan war of 1919, when the river transport route was closed. Subsequently, income from the sale of timber plummeted, averaging a mere 500 rupees annually (TRC 18: 7). This situation persisted for close to two decades, until a trade delegation from Chitral was sent to the court of King Zahir Shah. The emissaries arrived in Kabul in 1937 and engaged in talks to reopen the river route through Afghanistan. As a consequence, the Afghan government lifted the embargo on Chitral's timber for the first time since 1919 (Ghufran 1962: 225).

Besides trade with neighbouring states, timber was also used locally for infrastructure projects initiated by the British colonial administration. In 1904, when the British installed telegraph lines between Chitral and Gilgit, trees were felled and a royalty amounting to half a rupee per pole was paid to the Mehtar (TRC 77: 28). To manage this valuable resource, the British established a forestry department in 1908, implementing measures to control the use of timber by local communities. A tax was imposed on the felling of trees and on the sale of firewood (Ghufran 1962: 219).

Market and Shop Rent

In the summer, Chitral bazaar became the hub of business activity in the region. To meet the growing needs of

the commercial sector, Shujaul Mulk ordered new shops to be built along with a caravanserai for travelling traders. An officer was appointed to control the supply of goods and regulate prices (Ghufran 1962: 223). Rent from shops in Chitral and Garam Chashma bazaars was paid into the state treasury, while rent from Drosh bazaar went to the governor of Drosh (Scott 1937: 15). From 1901 to 1946, shop rents stood at 270 rupees a year, sarai fees were 400 rupees per annum and supply tax was levied at the rate of 2,200 rupees annually (TRC 18: 7).

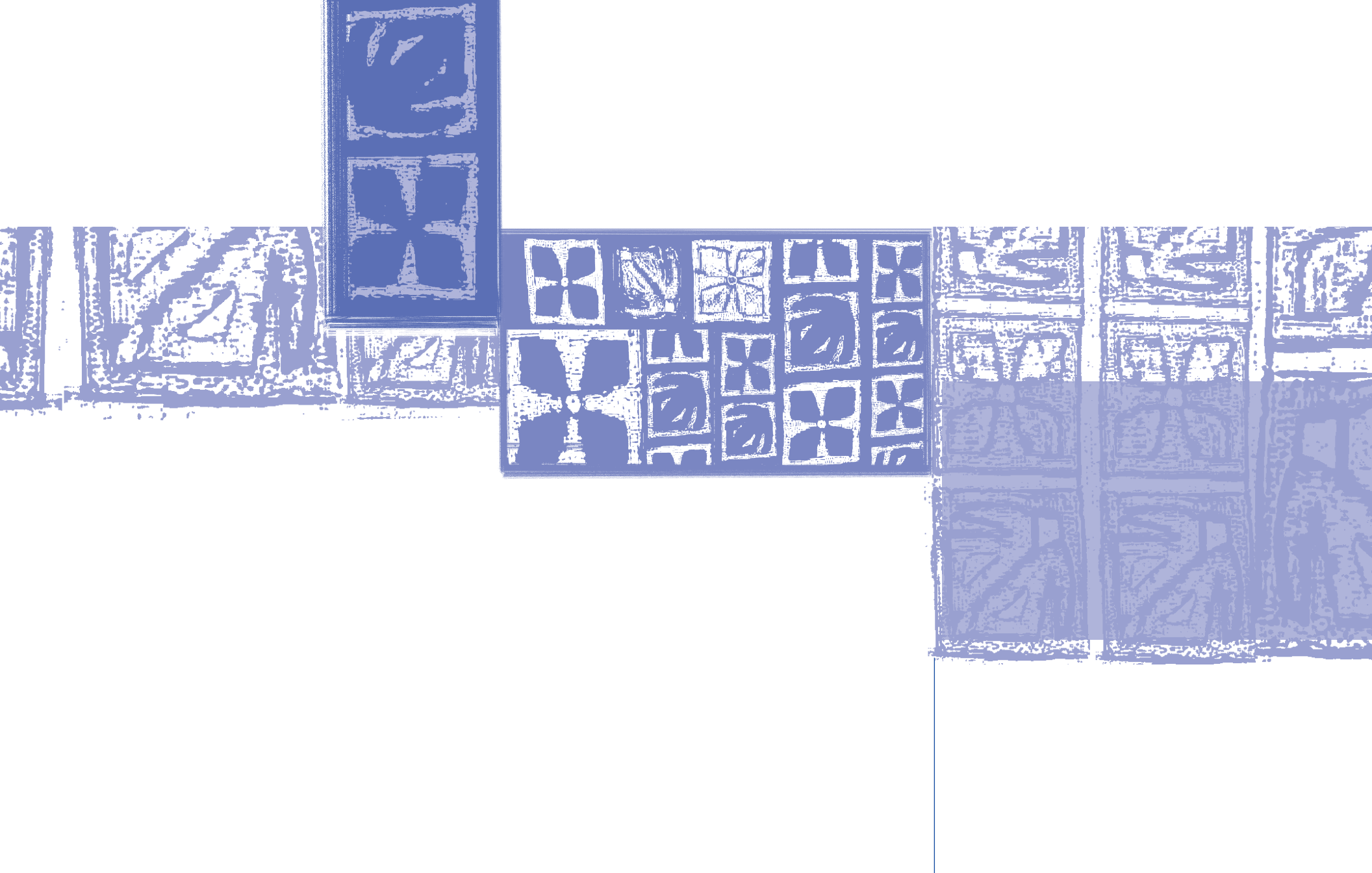
Antimony

The 1938 discovery of antimony in Klinj created a new source of income for the state.[11] Under Mohammad Nasirul Mulk, mines were contracted out to Chitrali businessmen as well as entrepreneurs from other parts of India and the treasury collected a royalty (Ghufran 1962: 235).

Grazing Tax

From 1857, a grazing tax known as *qalang* was imposed on nomadic pastoral tribes (Ghufran 1962: 148). Paid in the form of goats and butter, this tax remained in force until as recently as 1969.

11 Klinj is a village that lies to the west of Chitral town, on the main road to Garam Chashma.



Social STRUCTURE

Since at least as far back as 500 BC, Chitral has witnessed wave upon wave of foreign invasion. As a result, the population of the area consists of a heterogeneous mix of ethnic groups. During the rule of the Mehtars, some of these tribes were more united and influential than others. All held pieces of land, whether it was cultivated or barren.

The Mehtar selected competent men from the principal tribes and assigned to them duties in the state administration (Mulk 1971: 44; Staley 1969: 231).

Military commanders, regional administrators and revenue collectors, to name but a few such officials, were appointed in this manner. Before the use of currency was introduced in the late 19th century, payment for all state service was made in the form of land endowments (Biddulph 1977 [1880]: 68; Mulk 1971: 24).

Since the Mehtar relied heavily on the support of the major tribes to beat back enemy invasion and bolster his own power, members of these tribes enjoyed an honoured position in Chitrali society. Notables belonging to the principal tribes were addressed as 'Lal' (literally, 'ruby') and received royal favours. They were among the privileged few who attended the Mahraka, the daily assembly or audience with the Mehtar, which served as an opportunity for the ruler to meet his courtiers and discuss with them matters of state.

term Lal came to encompass entire tribes. This class of aristocrats held important positions in the administration and accompanied the Mehtar on his tours of inspection. The Lals were also entitled to keep serfs.

Class distinctions dominated Chitrali society under the Mehtars but these social divisions were not necessarily fixed. Rather, prestige could be gained or lost depending on an individual's luck and circumstances. By demonstrating unshakeable loyalty to the ruler, for instance, a man belonging to a minor tribe could improve his status and become a nobleman, though not necessarily a Lal. Indeed, all members of the major tribes were not aristocrats and all aristocrats were not Lals. Similarly, following a war of succession, a family, clan or entire tribe owing allegiance to an unsuccessful claimant to the throne would decline in social status (Lockhart ca. 1896: 1).

Class distinctions dominated Chitrali society under the Mehtars but these social divisions were not necessarily fixed. Rather, prestige could be gained or lost depending on an individual's luck and circumstances.

Eventually, a class of Lals emerged from among the principal tribes. These men were closely linked to the ruling family and came to be regarded as members of the nobility (Lockhart ca. 1896: 1–2). As more individuals and tribes became part of the nobility by virtue of their influence in the corridors of power, the

Branches of the ruling family and many of the principal tribes were known collectively as the Adam Zada. This upper class included the Lals, as well as other elites descended from the Mehtars such as the Shahzadas (princes) and Mehtarzhaos (sons of the Mehtar). The second rung of tribes was known as the Arbab Zada or Yuft (Ghufran 1962: 148). This group formed what may be described as the middle class. Compared to the minor tribes, the Adam Zadas and Arbab Zadas possessed larger landholdings and were entrusted with the task of performing state service (Scott 1937: 12–14). The lowest class in Chitrali

The people celebrated their relationship with nature through a variety of dances, among them the *dani* and *souz*.

society was known as the Faqir Miskeen, and consisted of a number of different ethnic groups and smaller tribes. These men were expected to perform menial state duties.

This segmentation of the population according to social status was not based on racial or other such distinctions. Rather, the system served as a form of division of labour. Each group played a specific role in the state administration depending on the group's size, wealth and influence.

Adam Zada

The principal tribes of the pre-Katoor period and the descendants of Baba Ayub were members of this privileged class. They occupied large tracts of fertile land with ample water resources and controlled game reserves in different parts of the state. The Adam Zadas attended the Mahraka and participated in decision making. They occupied senior civil and military positions in the administration. Their primary duty was the defence of the state.

The Adam Zadas were the aristocrats of Chitrali society. They enjoyed high status regardless of their material circumstances: “An Adam Zada remains an Adam Zada to the end of the chapter. He is born, not made and cannot descend in social scale. If he grows poor, he is called a poor Adam Zada” (GoI 1928: 127).

Arbab Zada

Also known as Yuft, this class was the most populous, making up close to 80 per cent of the population. Arbab Zada men served in the upper echelons of the bureaucracy, judiciary and military. Tribal chiefs belonging to this class formed a large segment of Mahraka participants.

The Arbab Zadas provided a substantial part of the Mehtar’s fighting force. They paid *ashimat* to visiting state officials and members of the ruling family. Men from this class were also required to perform *shadari* (personal service for the Mehtar). In exchange, they received land and gifts such as clothes, horses and falcons (Ghufran 1962: 149; Scott 1937: 13; Biddulph 1977 [1880]: 66).

Faqir Miskeen

In the writings of British colonial officers in the late 19th century, the lower classes in Chitral are referred to as the Faqir Miskeen, or ‘meek beggars’. This term, however, is something of a misnomer since beggars did not exist in Chitrali society at the time. In fact, the term referred to all members of the lower classes, and covered a variety of ethnic groups and smaller clans scattered across the state.

The Faqir Miskeen did not participate in the business of government or benefit from the Mehtar’s munificence. They lacked the wherewithal to contribute to the defence of the state and could not support a claimant to the throne because of their smaller numbers. Although by no means influential, the Faqir Miskeen were an important part of the fabric of Chitrali society. They worked for the state, carrying out menial duties such as sweeping and domestic labour, tilling land, fetching wood and grazing animals. Some fostered the Mehtar’s children. Most held small pieces of land, in exchange for which they paid no tax but were instead expected to work for the Mehtar (Mulk 1971: 34–35).

Under the Mehtars of Chitral, military service was considered an honour. The Faqir Miskeen were not called upon to perform military service, with one exception. The Kalash of Urtsun had assisted a warlord in the early Katoor period (Scott 1937: 14). In recognition of their service to the ruling family, they continued to be summoned for military service by later Mehtars.

Those belonging to the Faqir Miskeen class were poor, with only meagre sources of income and no share in the benefits of state administration (O’Brien 1895: vii). But, as with the other classes, exceptions were possible and individuals from this class are known to have risen in social status: “If a Faqir Miskeen grows wealthy and influential, he becomes an Arbab Zada” (GoI 1928: 127).

The lower classes were subdivided into various categories, depending on their role and status.

Rayat

The Rayat were tenant farmers and belonged to various clans and tribes.

They either owned land themselves or worked on land belonging to the Mehtar and nobles. Smallholders who experienced difficulty eking out a living would opt to become Rayat in order to have access to additional land. The term Rayat was also applied to the Kalash tribes and to groups of professionals such as musicians, falconers, blacksmiths, miners, potters and animal keepers.

Shirmuzh

Another section of the lower classes was known as Shirmuzh, literally meaning 'from one's own milk'. The term was used to describe two different arrangements, one of which served to raise the status of a family or tribe while the other was a form of slavery. What was common between them, as the literal meaning of the term suggests, was the fact that the Shirmuzh were considered members of the family—albeit far less privileged members.

It was not uncommon for the Mehtar to entrust one or more his children to the care of a foster family outside the capital. An infant would be sent to live with such a family until he or she was a toddler, at which time the child would return to the royal household in the Chitral fort. This arrangement allowed the Mehtar to forge crucial alliances with various families or entire tribes. Such foster families, known as Shirmuzh, received land in exchange for raising the child.

Following the Mehtar's lead, aristocrats began to send their children to foster families. Eventually, the system of *shirmuzhi* became an integral part of upper-class society. Besides its political implications, this arrangement also created within the social structure a degree of mobility. As a result of *shirmuzhi*, families or clans gained prestige and were elevated to a higher position on the social ladder, as was the case with the Bushae and Zondrae tribes. In the case of slaves or serfs who fostered a landlord's child, such an improvement in social standing was not guaranteed. If such families performed no other state service, they would not rise above their lowly status.

It was not uncommon for the Mehtar to entrust one or more his children to the care of a foster family outside the capital. This arrangement allowed the ruler to forge crucial alliances.

Not all forms of *shirmuzhi* served to raise the status of a family or tribe, for the term was also used to describe a system in which individuals were virtual slaves in the service of an Adam Zada. Such Shirmuzh were peasants or tenants, attached to the household of an aristocrat. They were allotted a piece land to cultivate and were not required to perform any other state service.

There were a number of circumstances under which an individual and his family might find themselves drawn into this type of *shirmuzhi*. For example, an Adam Zada might request the Mehtar for agricultural labourers. Such workers, serfs who cultivated their own land, would be given as slaves to the Adam Zada. On occasion, these men were

permitted to quit the service of the Adam Zada, surrendering their land as a penalty. For the most part, however, they remained attached to the Adam Zada and eventually became Shirmuzh.

All citizens were required to perform state service of one kind or another. The lower-class tribes were expected to work on state construction projects. Occasionally, men performing this type of labour might approach an influential noble, requesting employment. Subject to the Mehtar's permission, which was generally given, such men would then find themselves tilling land and performing domestic chores in the household of the aristocrat. In addition to the land they already held, these men received land from their new masters. Having reneged on their responsibility to perform state service, however, they lost their status as free men and became Shirmuzh.

Besides working on construction projects, men belonging to the lower classes also served as members of the bodyguard force. To supplement their income or increase their landholdings, some took on additional work on the farms of nearby landlords. Gradually, such men became Shirmuzh. Even independent tenant farmers who had abandoned state service became Shirmuzh and came to be regarded as serfs (Mulk 1971: 41–42).

Slavery was a common practice in Chitrali society, with men, women and children also sold to foreign traders. A man seeking to protect himself from being enslaved might seek a nobleman's protection, volunteering to foster a child. He too became a Shirmuzh (A. A. Khan 1992; S. Hussain 1989).

The final twist in this complex system is that *shirmuzhi* could be employed as a form of punishment meted out to lower-class tribes for incurring the displeasure of the Mehtar. Such men were enslaved and given to one of the Mehtar's favourites, losing not only their liberty but their property as well. Eventually, such men and their families became known as Khana Zad (Mulk 1971: 41).

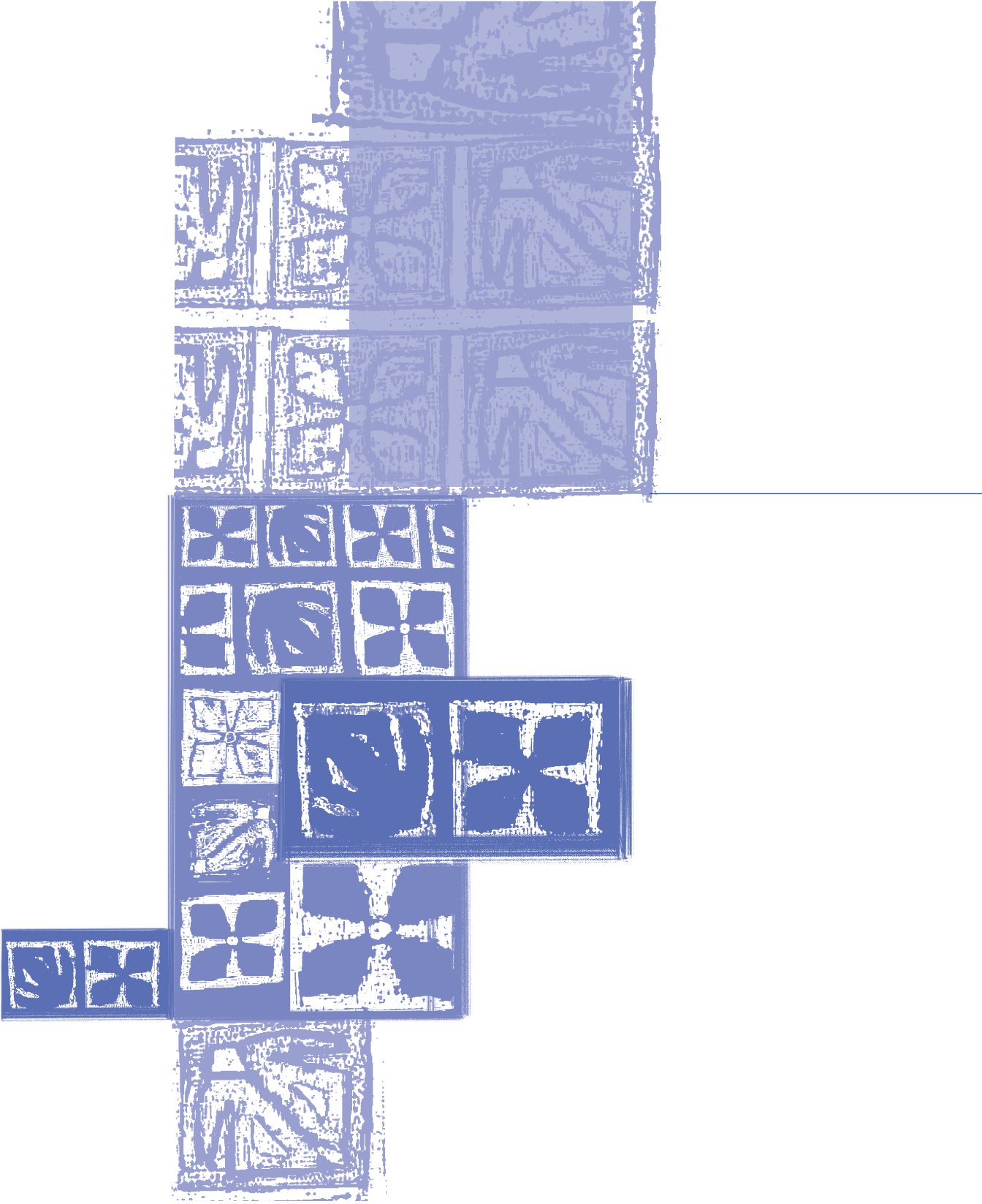
Khana Zad

The Khana Zad owned no property and did not belong to any clan or tribe. They were serfs on the estates of upper class nobles, and entirely dependent on their masters for food, shelter, clothing and health care. Masters often arranged the marriages of their Khana Zad and future generations would assist in farm work on the estate.

An individual could become a Khana Zad in a number of ways. A man's land might be destroyed in a natural disaster such as a flood or landslide, or his holdings might be confiscated by the Mehtar for some infraction. One deprived of his livelihood in this manner might approach a landlord for assistance and receive a piece of land or be provided with the means of subsistence, such as food and grain. Such a man would then become a serf, or Khana Zad. The Khana Zad would cultivate the land and live off the produce. In addition, he was expected to perform a number of services for the landlord, tilling the land, harvesting and threshing crops, and carrying out household chores. Since the Khana Zad no longer owned land, he was not required to pay the landlord a tithe. Nor was he bound to pay tax or perform state service. He could vacate the land and seek the patronage of another landlord.

A prisoner of war might also become a Khana Zad, enslaved to the Mehtar and

his family. Such men were treated as property and gifted to members of the aristocracy. Sons of the aristocracy received slaves as part of their inheritance (Mulk 1971: 41–42). Illegitimate children were also included in the Khana Zad category.



Land TENURE

The economy of Chitral state was based largely on subsistence agriculture. The mode of production prevalent during the rule of the Mehtars was similar to the feudal system found elsewhere in the Indian subcontinent. Compared to the vast *jagirs* (estates) held by feudal lords in British India, Chitral's landowners possessed modest holdings. Typically, individual landholdings in Chitral were relatively small, ranging from 6 to 15 kanals (one kanal is equivalent to 1,660 square meters).

Land was the backbone of the economy and also served as a tactical weapon in statecraft (Mulk 1971: 34). The authority of the Mehtar, the loyalty of tribal chiefs and the services rendered by the minor tribes were all linked to land.

The state administration depended for its income on cultivable land, pasture, water resources, forests, game reserves and wildlife. The Mehtar himself controlled these resources and relied on them to ensure his own survival. Ownership and use of natural resources were used as tools to manipulate tribal chiefs, notables, religious leaders, members of the ruling family and loyalists.

The system worked in part because land was coveted alike by all the Mehtar's subjects, who in many cases demonstrated total servility in order to receive a grant of land or retain their holdings. Land was also used to pay for the services of men employed in the administration. Such endowments were not made on a permanent basis and could be withdrawn by the Mehtar. If a landowner fell from grace, perhaps owing to the victory of a rival prince, he lost his land. Many such clans would go into exile along with the deposed prince they had supported, while the new Mehtar awarded their land to his own favourites.

The authority of the Mehtar, the loyalty of tribal chiefs and the services rendered by the minor tribes were all linked to land.

In Chitral under the Mehtars, all men were required to perform services for the state. The services expected of the Adam Zadas, Arbab Zadas and lower classes were linked to the land they held (Staley 1969: 232; Mulk 1971: 34). Since the Mehtar enjoyed de facto control over all land in the state, he was entitled to confiscate such holdings at will. Men rendered landless in this way were at the same time freed from the responsibility of performing state service.

This was, in effect, a unique version of feudalism with the Mehtar acting as feudal lord by virtue of his rights over all natural resources. This rendered him the supreme power in the land, a cut above a traditional feudal lord who owned a well-demarcated estate (Barth 1956: 81).

State Land

Under the Raees and Katoor Mehtars, estates were carved out for the benefit of the ruling class. At the same time, some land remained under the direct control of the Mehtar. Such holdings were either inherited from predecessors, wrested from deposed rivals or acquired by means of confiscation.

The state held land surrounding the capital fort in Chitral and the district headquarters forts. Land around the district forts provided for the subsistence of the *cheq mehtars* (subordinate mehtars), who had use of these lands but no other rights over them (Scott 1937: 14–18). Land in the vicinity of the summer residences of the Mehtar and *cheq mehtars* was also held by the state.

Some state land was granted to ministers such as the *atalegh* who was in charge of military affairs or the *asaqal*

The protected area known today as the Chitral Gol National Park was formerly a wildlife sanctuary under the direct control of the Mehtar.

who managed state lands and the royal household. In addition, state land was awarded to various influential members of the ruling family (Scott 1937: 16–17). Besides these endowments, during his reign Shujaul Mulk gave reclaimed wasteland and tracts of state land to his younger sons, to establish them in various parts of the state.

Rayat Duri

The oldest state lands were those surrendered by the principal tribes in the early days of Raees rule to provide for the ruling family. This land was allotted to the Rayat for subsistence farming but was not in their possession. Such land, known as *rayat duri*, was scattered across the state and enjoyed a good water supply. Tenancy was decided by the central *asaqal*, a senior official in the court of the Mehtar. The Rayat were allowed to retain a part of the annual produce and carried the state's share to the capital, Chitral town. Rayat could be evicted at any time for mismanagement. The *asaqal* maintained an oral record of all *rayat duri* (Ghufran 1962: 149–150).

Private Land

Human settlement and agricultural activity in the region that is now Chitral began as far back as 1000 BC. The earliest habitations sprang up close to water sources such as streams and torrents. As the population grew and

settlements expanded, various methods of irrigation were put to use.

By the time the Raees Mehtars came to rule the area, *barani* (rain-fed) cultivation was carried out only in some parts of lower Chitral. Such land, considered to be of low value, was not taxed. Most cultivated land, however, was irrigated and its holders were liable to pay tax to the state.

Many of these lands were handed down from generation to generation, leading to the fragmentation of holdings over the years. But the right to inheritance, or to retain land indefinitely, was not guaranteed. The Mehtar was empowered to confiscate any piece of land for any reason. Occasions when estates were taken in this way were rare, however, and the Mehtar's subjects were by and large able to think of landholdings as their property.

Most cultivated land was handed down from generation to generation but the right to inheritance was not guaranteed. The Mehtar was empowered to confiscate land for any number of reasons.

Ashimat Duri

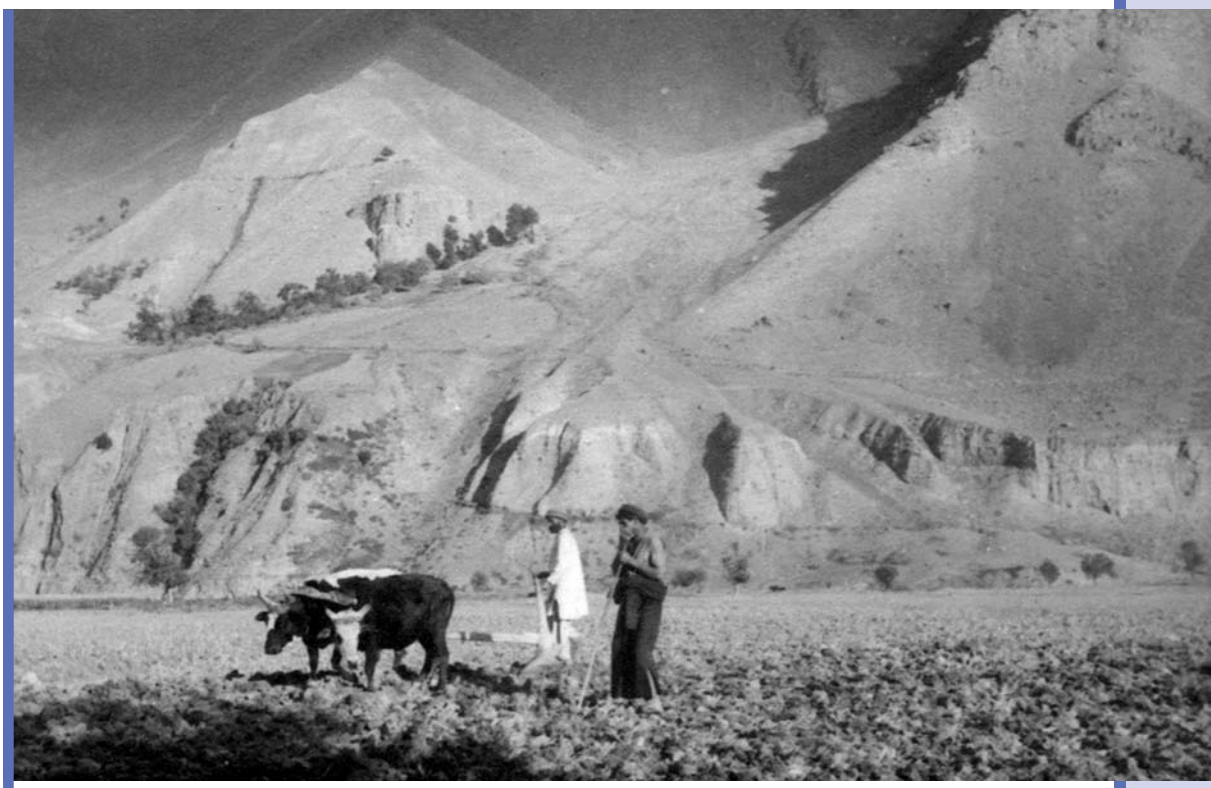
In exchange for the land they held, the Arbab Zadas were required to provide for the Mehtar and members of the ruling family during state visits. This tribute, offered in the form of cooked food, was known as *ashimat*. The land for which *ashimat* was paid was called *ashimat duri*. A record of all such land and its occupants was maintained by the local *chharbu*.

Thangi Duri

Tax on certain types of land was collected in the form of livestock, agricultural produce or items of everyday use. This tax was known as *thangi* and the land on which it was levied was called *thangi duri*. *Thangi* was collected by the local *chharbu* who kept an oral record of such transactions (Mulk 1971: 37–38). A register of *thangi duri* was also maintained at the centre in the state *malia* (revenue) office. The terms of payment were fixed even if the land itself changed hands, as was often the case.

Holders of *thangi duri* were also expected to serve the state. Throughout Raees rule and during much of the Katoor period, they participated in the defence of the realm. Upon the death of Muhtaram Shah II (1788–1838), however, his successor Shah Afzal (1838–1854) decreed that *thangi duri* owners were to serve in the state construction service. When the transformation of the *boli* system began in 1895, following British occupation, *thangi duri* owners were required to work as *boldoyo*.

The amount of land classified as *thangi duri* was not fixed. From time to time, the state brought tracts of wasteland under irrigation, rendering them fit for



Human settlement and agricultural activity in the region that is now Chitral began as far back as 1000 BC.

cultivation. As such, new *thangi duri* could be created. This land was then offered to various groups or individuals in exchange for the payment of *thangi* and the performance of *boli* (Mulk 1971: 39).

Meherbani Zameen

In the Khowar language, the word *meherbani* denotes a gift from a ruler or an elder. *Meherbani zameen* was land that the Mehtar gifted to his subjects for any number of reasons: as a reward for valour in battle, as compensation for losses suffered as the result of a natural disaster or in recognition of long-standing *shadari* service (Mulk 1971: 41). The gift was carved out of state land or holdings that had previously been confiscated by the Mehtar.

Recipients of *meherbani zameen* were not required to pay *ashimat* or *thangi* but were expected to perform *shadari* if they had not already done so.

Shirmuzh Galu

The Shirmuzh were families who fostered children of the Mehtar and aristocrats. The term was also used to describe individuals who were virtual slaves in the service of an Adam Zada. The land held by a Shirmuzh was known as *shirmuzh galu*.

Khana Zad Galu

The Khana Zad were serfs on the estates of upper-class nobles. *Khana zad galu* was land given to them for the

purpose of cultivation. They were permitted to live off the produce and were not required to pay the landlord a tithe. Instead, they performed farm work and domestic chores for the landlord.

Women were not allowed to inherit land from their fathers. If a man wished to make a gift of land to his daughter, he would need to do so during his own lifetime.

Daralí Zameen

Darali was a wage paid in exchange for bringing up a child. It was given as one-off remuneration to those, other than the Shirmuzh, who fostered a child from the royal family or the Adam Zada class. *Darali zameen* was land gifted, often permanently, to such families. The recipients were not required to perform state service or pay tax (Mulk 1971: 42).

Hindal Bashu

Since all those in possession of land were required to serve the state, and women at the time were not thought capable of performing such duties, only male members of a family were entitled to inherit land (Mulk 1971: 43). Accordingly, land belonging to a man who had no male heirs (known as a *hindal*) was taken over by the state after his death. Such land was known as *hindal bashu*.

The Mehtar could grant *hindal bashu* to favourites within his own tribe or to a member of the same tribe as the deceased. A clan or tribe receiving such land was collectively responsible for fulfilling the obligations of state service. It was often the case that when such land remained in the hands of the same tribe as the deceased, the women of his family were looked after by the new occupants.

Recipients of *hindal bashu* were permitted to break up the land into smaller holdings which changed hands frequently. As a result, *hindal bashu* became depleted and was also known as *charichhin* (literally meaning 'without fat'), referring to the fact that such land was not fertile (Mulk 1971: 42; S. Maidan 1989; S. Khan 1990).

Dukhtar Bashu

Traditionally, women were not allowed to inherit land from their fathers. If a man wished to make a gift of land to his daughter, he would need to do so during his own lifetime. Land gifted by estate owners to their daughters was known as *dukhtar bashu* (in Persian, the word *dukhtar* means 'daughter'). Sons were allowed to inherit this land from their mothers (Mulk 1971: 43).

This practice received official sanction until as recently as 1954, when Chitral was brought partially under the administration of the Pakistan government. Following the promulgation of the Interim Constitution of 1953, civil servants such as deputy commissioners, assistant commissioners and tehsildars were charged with the responsibility of local

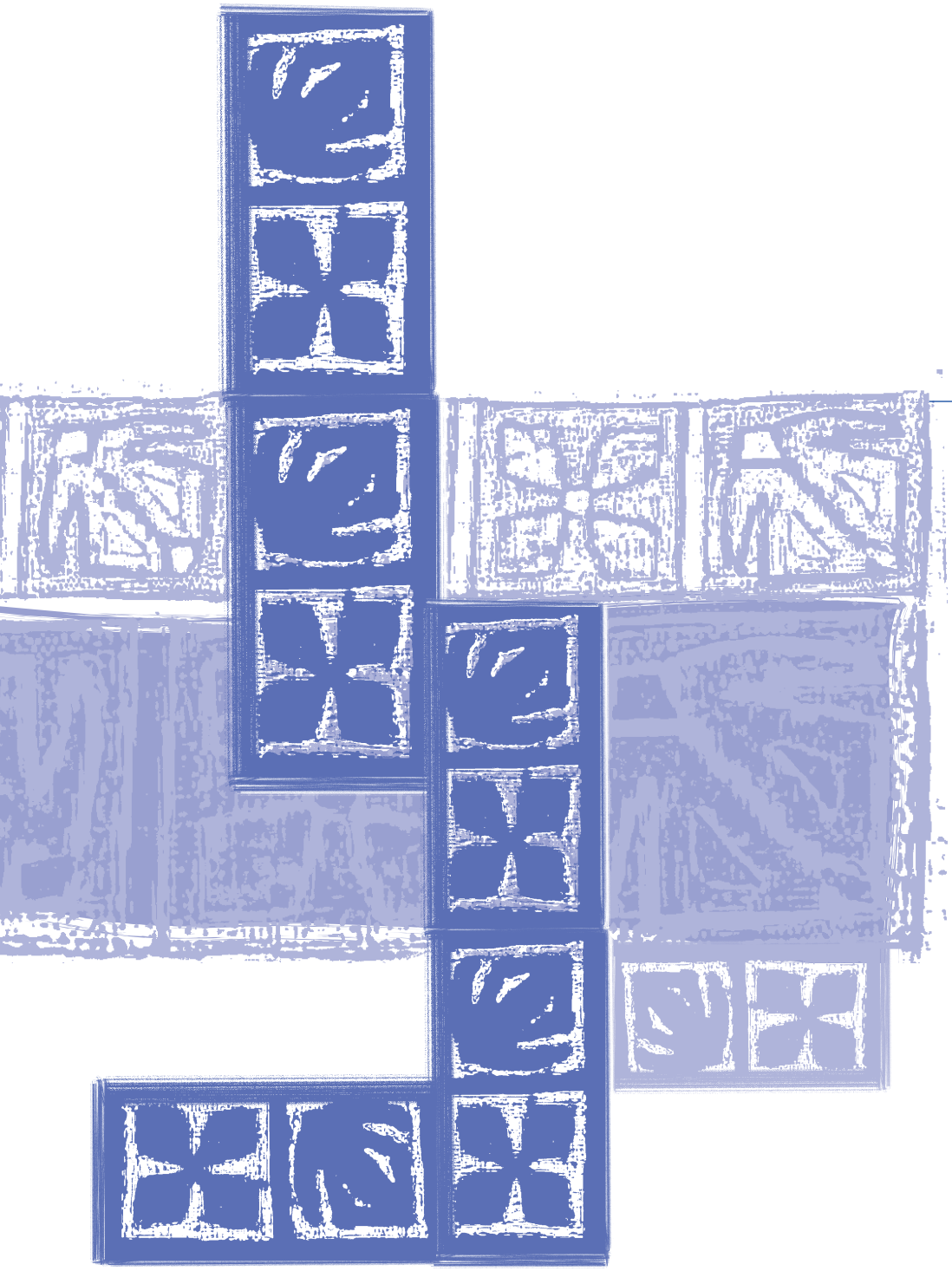
administration. After 1954, women were legally entitled to inherit a share of their father's land but in practice the old system prevailed. What did change, however, was the system of inheritance in cases where a man died without leaving behind a male heir. Where previously such land would be confiscated by the Mehtar as *hindal bashu*, after 1954 daughters were permitted to inherit a portion of the land. The women's share was determined by a judge in accordance with the Shariah.

Khodai Zameen

In other Muslim states across the region, land was donated for the construction of a mosque or *madrassa*. Land in excess of requirements was held in trust, known as *waqf*, and used to generate income for the upkeep of the mosque or *madrassa*. No such system existed in Chitral (Mulk 1971: 46). Instead, the Mehtar and aristocrats gifted land to reputed theologians. This land, known as *khodai zameen* (the word *khodai* means charity), was in some cases awarded permanently. In other instances, it was given on the condition that the recipient perform certain religious duties such as leading the prayer or teaching the Quran to children of the nobility. In the latter case, the grant would be revoked if the theologian in question reneged on his responsibilities.

Banta

In the Arandu area, a unique set of obligations was attached to the inheritance of land. According to this system, known as *banta* (distribution), a family's landholdings were divided into two equal parts. Sons who performed state service received one half of the land, while those who inherited the other half were freed from the responsibility of serving the Mehtar. The men exempted from state duty were known as *banta lashta* (Mulk 1971: 43). In a society where all men were expected to serve the state in some capacity, the *banta* system, which was sanctioned by the Mehtar, effectively allowed some men to be excused from state service. If a family produced a single male heir, he could not seek an exemption from state duty under the *banta* system.



Royal HOUSEHOLD

The Mehtars of Chitral held sway over a land that was cut off from the rest of the world for many months each year. Despite this inconvenience, they managed to cultivate cordial relations with some of their neighbours. When contact with foreigners proved to be hostile, the Mehtars relied on the principal tribes to step up in defence of the state. Closer to home, matters of routine governance and administration also brought the Mehtars into regular contact with the principal tribes. Over time, these tribes became an integral part of the system of statecraft.

From the Chitral fort, which housed the extended royal family, the Mehtar presided over an elaborate administrative hierarchy (Staley 1969: 231). Inside the fort, the Mehtar conducted state business, entertained guests, and played host to a multitude of courtiers and state officials.

Mehtar

The operational details of statecraft under the Raees and Katoor ruling families evolved over several centuries. The person of the Mehtar was the pivot of all political, economic and social activity in the state. Intimacy with or loyalty to the ruling prince was a mark of prestige and a preoccupation of sorts among the Mehtar's subjects. For his part, the ruling prince surrounded himself with trusted lieutenants, thereby increasing his own eminence.

In peacetime, a typical day in the life of a Mehtar might begin by rising early to offer prayers. This would be followed by breakfast, to which a few nobles were traditionally invited, while other guests were served breakfast in their own quarters.

Following breakfast, the Mehtar would enter the main hall of the fort to deal with matters of state and attend to correspondence. Until the late 19th century, state correspondence was carried out by means of special messengers dispatched to Simla and Srinagar.[12] The Mehtar might receive a letter or two from a neighbouring ruler or tribal chief, which the secretary would read out. The Mehtar would dictate a response and the secretary would prepare a draft which was read out the following morning. The Mehtar might approve the draft, affixing on it his signature, or reword it.

Not all letters the Mehtar received were handled in this manner. In some cases, correspondence would be read out in open court to elicit the views of notables and tribal chiefs before a response was prepared. After 1892, the British began to improve communications within Chitral and in 1895 a regular postal service was launched. Thereafter, state correspondence became a daily routine.

Following the correspondence hour, time was set aside for petitioners. Considering his supreme authority over the people, the Mehtar was for the most part surprisingly accessible. Men and women from every class, except for slaves, were permitted an audience with their ruler. Petitioners queued before the Mehtar to submit their applications, most of which were related to land or matrimonial disputes. Those unable to present their case in the morning session could approach the Mehtar later in the day, while he was on his way to join the congregation at the mosque, or at a later date, perhaps during one of his state visits to their areas (Mulk 1971: 75–76).

Petitioners were also permitted to plead their case in the Mahraka. Here, decisions were made in consultation with the nobles present, or an inquiry would be ordered (Mulk 1971: 55). After 1909, when Shujaul Mulk established the Kausal (judicial council) of notables, this body also heard petitions (Mulk 1971: 55; Din 1987: 37).

During his reign, Shujaul Mulk introduced a new routine into his daily activities. He spent most of his early evenings on the telephone, speaking to

12 Simla is a hill station in India. Srinagar, once part of the state of Kashmir, is now located in Indian-held Kashmir.

various administrative centres in the state, to keep abreast of local developments, after which he would attend the Mahraka. It is said that he would only retire after he had received a detailed briefing of events across the land (S. Khan 1995).

Mahraka

The Mehtar took his afternoon and evening meals in the company of his nobles. Both lunch and dinner sessions, called the Mahraka, were also a time to discuss matters of state. For visitors to the fort, an invitation to the Mahraka was highly coveted, for it was a sign of prestige. Dignitaries present in the capital were invited to the Mahraka and at least 60 men of noble birth attended each session. Given the gravity and dignity of the gathering, young men were not allowed to participate.

The Mehtar presided over the gathering from a raised platform, surrounded by tribal chiefs and notables who were seated according to their prominence. State officials stood in the background, ready to serve the guests or carry out the instructions of the Mehtar (Mulk 1971: 52).

Meals in the Mahraka were ceremonious events where the *yasawul* (superintendent of the royal kitchens) personally served a few of the Mehtar's favourites. The recipient of this honour, known as *isphen* (gift of food), would rise from his seat to thank the Mehtar (O'Brien 1895: 8).

Once the meal was completed, it was time to discuss matters such as defence, external relations, law and justice. Participants deliberated on state policies and decided what action should be taken. Lord Curzon, viceroy of British India from 1897 to 1902, visited Chitral in 1890 while he was a member of the British Parliament. He witnessed the proceedings of the Mahraka and recorded the occasion in his diary: "Chitral, in fact, had its parliament and democratic constitution. For just as the British House of Commons is an assembly so in Chitral, the Mehtar, seated on a platform, and hedged about with a certain dignity, dispensed justice or law in sight of some hundreds of his subjects, who heard the arguments, watched the process of debate, and by their attitude in the main decided the issue. Such durbars [sic] were held on most days of the week in Chitral, very often twice in the day, in the morning and again at night. Justice compels me to add that the speeches [in the Mahraka] were less long and the general demeanour more decorous than in some western assemblies" (Curzon 1926: 133).

Light-hearted conversation on interesting events was not excluded from the Mahraka. Nor, for that matter, was a discussion on leisure pursuits out of place. An experienced *shadar* might, for instance, take the opportunity to share his knowledge of horse breeding, polo or falconry (S. Khan 1995). The lunch Mahraka was generally the shorter session, while the evening Mahraka was followed most nights by a musical performance that continued into the early hours.

Shadari

Notables and tribal chiefs from across the state thronged to Chitral to pay their respects to the Mehtar. Guests remained in the court for up to six months at a time, boarding and lodging in the fort, and participating in the

Mahraka. Their presence was regarded as one of their state duties and absences from the court did not go unnoticed. This pre-Raees tradition, known as *shadari* (service), grew to become an integral part of statecraft under the Raees and Katoor Mehtars.

The evolution of the *shadari* system reflects the unique circumstances in which the game of Chitrali politics was played. The nature of Chitrali politics was mercurial, with the Mehtars frequently embroiled in warfare to fend off foreign invasion. Closer to home, the Mehtar's power was under threat from local rivals. And when a Mehtar died, the state was often thrown into chaos as a battle for succession was waged.

Given the ever-present danger of a challenge to their authority, the Mehtars kept a close eye on all influential individuals in the state. *Shadari* was one way to keep the nobles close so that the Mehtar might monitor their activities. It was at the same time in the interest of nobles and influential tribal leaders to be in attendance at the court when important decisions were made, for it was here that plots were hatched and the transfer of power from one Mehtar to another took place. The political manoeuvring of the *cheq mehtars*, who were perfectly capable of mounting a challenge to the throne, made the tribal chiefs and notables wary both for reasons of personal and national security.

Besides the political advantage of remaining in close contact with the seat of power, the *shadari* system also yielded material benefits. In return for the services they rendered to the Mehtar, nobles and tribal chiefs received property. A particularly dutiful and faithful *shadar* (one who performs *shadari*) would be granted vast estates by the Mehtar (Mulk 1971: 41).

A protocol was observed to mark the arrival and departure of each *shadar*. In the case of a Lal, his presence in the fort would be brought to the Mehtar's attention by the *yasawul*, who would then be instructed to issue rations for the upkeep of the aristocrat, his servants and their horses. Upon his departure, the Lal received gifts as a token of the Mehtar's appreciation. In a status-conscious society such as this, *shadars* also commanded the respect of the populace for their cultured manners.

Fort Officials and Domestic Arrangements

In addition to the sheep and goats collected by way of taxes, the royal kitchens served meat from animals killed in the Mehtar's game reserves. Supplying firewood for the kitchens and fireplaces of the royal household was the state duty of the Kalash tribes, who carried dry wood from the hillsides to the fort. Each man was required to carry one load a day.

Managing the domestic arrangements of the extended ruling family required an army of efficient and well-organised staff. These officials oversaw the day-to-day operations of the Mehtar's court and attended to the needs of the multitude residing in the fort. Some of the offices created to administer the Mehtar's household also existed in the district forts which accommodated the *cheq mehtars* and their families.

Thuak Ganak

A band of trusted men, hand-picked by the Mehtar, formed a special company

of bodyguards known as the *thuak ganak* (literally, 'gun-bearer'). This elite force was headed by a *subedar*, a junior army officer. Although the size of the force varied from time to time, it usually consisted of 40 men (S. N. Khan 1992).

To serve as a *thuak ganak* was highly coveted work that went mostly to men from the tribe that had fostered the Mehtar as an infant. Since their fortunes were closely tied with those of their ruler, such men were considered to be the most loyal. To protect the Mehtar's person, the *thuak ganak* moved about fully armed at all times.

Although not technically part of the royal household, the *thuak ganak* received rations from the fort stores. In addition, they were paid the salary of a *sipahi* (soldier). They performed their duties in rotation, serving at the fort for six to nine months before returning to their homes until their next round of duty (F. Q. Khan 1991; S. N. Khan 1992; A. Hamza 1997).

The nature of Chitrali politics was mercurial, with the Mehtars frequently embroiled in warfare to fend off foreign invasion. Closer to home, the Mehtar's power was under threat from local rivals.

The *thuak ganak* served only the Mehtar in the capital fort. The force did not exist in district forts headed by the *cheq mehtars*.

Mírza

Khowar (Indo-European-Indo-Aryan-Dardic) was the language spoken in the Mehtar's court, while official correspondence was carried out in Persian. It is not known for certain whether the early Mehtars kept written records of the day-to-day functioning of the state. A few files from Raees times have survived, containing orders for *ushr* grain and letters of appointment issued to village *qazis*. Similar records maintained by Mehtar Muhammad Shafi (1701–1717) have also withstood the ravages of time (Ghufran 1962: 44, 56). But for the most part, little or no written information is available about the routine business of government. It is possible that most records from the Raees and early Katoor period have perished. A more likely explanation, however, is that matters of importance were document but records were not kept systematically.

During his reign, Amanul Mulk introduced a system of record keeping and appointed a *mirza* (secretary) to document state correspondence, official orders and legal decisions. So useful did the *mirza* prove in subsequent years that his responsibilities were increased. He held the royal seal and his presence by the Mehtar's side at all times became imperative (Ghufran 1962: 122, 146).

From then on, all Mehtars appointed a *mirza*. The post did not exist in the districts until 1895, when the British came to control Chitral. Under the colonial administration, *cheq mehtars* were redesignated as governors and provided with secretaries.

Besides the secretary, the title of *mirza* was also awarded to hundreds of state employees performing clerical jobs in various capacities. Among them was a *mirza* who looked after the *ambaranu* or state stores of food, grain and provisions. Similarly, the *mirza* of the *toshakhana* (the store of food and provisions within the Mehtar's fort) issued rations, kept registers and preserved issue chits for audit (Mulk 1971: 63).

Asaqal

Occasionally written as *aqsaqal*, this word is of Turkic origin and means 'white-bearded man' (Curzon 1926: 132). *Asaqal* was the title of the minister for food, who managed the *toshakhana*. In addition, he was responsible for state land across Chitral. The title was also awarded to a few village elders, including those belonging to the Kalash tribes, who provided local administrative support to the Mehtar. In the districts, *cheq mehtars* appointed *asaqals* to manage the food stores in their own forts.

Sarkar

The *sarkar* (literally, 'tiller') served as second-in-command to the *asaqal*. He managed land attached to the fort and was in charge of the crop until it was harvested. Besides the capital fort in Chitral, *sarkars* also served in the district forts of the *cheq mehtars*.

Yasawul

The *yasawul* served as superintendent of the royal kitchens, overseeing arrangements for guests and courtiers. He received provisions from the *toshakhana* and supervised food preparation. It was his responsibility to marshal notables in the Mahraka and seat them according to their status. The *yasawul* also organised the evening's entertainment. In addition to the Chitral fort, each district fort employed a *yasawul*.

Mahram

Besides visiting notables and domestic staff, a number of men who were not performing state duty resided in the Chitral fort. They came to the capital to advance personal causes or seek protection from their rivals. They received grain, clothing and other favours from the Mehtar, but not cash. Such men were known as *mahraman* (constables; the singular form is *mahram*). Most were engaged in the kitchens and known as *mahraman-e-daam*, while *mahraman-e-soon* worked as police constables. *Mahraman* were also engaged in the district forts.

Andreno Bup

The term literally means 'old man of the interior of the household.' The man who served as *andreno bup* was selected from among the trusted followers of the Mehtar, preferably someone related to one of the women of the royal family. He was assigned a variety of responsibilities in connection with the *zenana* (women's quarters) and was the only male allowed to enter this area. The *andreno bup* carried out the orders of the royal women—queens, former queens and princesses, all of whom resided in the capital fort. He conveyed messages, fetched provisions and articles of daily use, and transacted business on their behalf. An *andreno bup* was also employed in each of the district forts.

Akhonzada

The children of the royal family were provided basic religious instruction. A learned man, known as an *akhonzada* ('son of a teacher'), would be employed to teach the Quran to youngsters. The *akhonzadas*, who also worked in the district forts, hailed from families that were renowned for their religious scholarship.

Cleaners

Professional sweepers were unknown in Chitral and sanitation in the fort was handled by means of a traditional system employing slaves or other labourers. Cleaners were paid a good salary to compensate for the nature of their work, which included the maintenance of toilets. In the winter, members of the State Bodyguards were employed to clear snow from the area surrounding the Chitral fort (A. Hamza 1997).

Women of the Royal Family

Among the many exploits for which they were infamous—such as keeping slaves, employing forced labour and misusing their wide-sweeping powers—the Mehtars had a penchant for polygamy and sired scores of children. Polygamy was at least in part a way to cement relationships with rival tribes and garner political support (Mulk 1971: 65).

The *zenana* of the fort housed the Mehtar's own wives as well as those of his brothers, along with the widows of previous Mehtars. This extended family of women observed strict *pardah* (veil), interacting with the outside world through the *andreno bup*. Each woman in the *zenana* resided in her own quarters. The more important queens maintained independent kitchens, receiving rations from the *toshakhana*. Meat, flour and firewood were distributed every morning after breakfast, while provisions such as tea, sugar, salt, soap and *ghee* (clarified butter) were provided at the beginning of every month. The royal ladies often sent special dishes from their own kitchens to relatives performing *shadari* in the Mehtar's court.

Many of the queens of Chitral wielded great influence over their husbands. Curiously, most of these women are not mentioned by name either in the written history of the area or in oral tradition because of a taboo in Chitrali culture regarding the use of women's names.

One such royal, the wife of a Sumaleki ruler in Gilgit, is said to have instigated her husband to attack Chitral during the reign of Mehtar Khan Raees (1356–1420).[13] It is said that their daughter, Hasham Begum, was married off to one of the Mehtar's sons. The prince in question happened to be a deaf mute. The young princess, who only came to know of her new husband's affliction after she had made the journey to the capital fort, was so distressed by the news that she drowned herself in the Chitral river. Her mother, the queen, was enraged by what she saw as deceit on the part of the Mehtar (Ghufran 1962: 38). Upon her bidding, the ruler of Gilgit attacked Chitral but was repulsed at the border.

The influence of the royal women did not always lead to war. During the reign of Muhtaram Shah Katoor II, for instance,

13 Neither her name nor that of her husband is mentioned in the records.

one of his wives played an important part in bringing about a rapprochement between her husband and her father's Khushwakhte family. In 1826, the Mehtar faced his brother-in-law, Suleman Shah, in a bloody battle at Booni. Following these events, the queen persuaded her brother to reconcile with the Mehtar (Ghufran 1962: 77).

Another distinguished woman, the mother of Shujaul Mulk, was a key figure during the late Katoor period. She is said to have possessed extraordinary courage and vision. Under her stewardship, Shujaul Mulk ascended the throne at the tender age of 14. By dint of her political savvy, she elicited widespread support for her young son. Her shrewd handling of the fragile political situation soon after the 1895 siege was at least in part responsible for the stability of the state in the years that followed.

Stables

Before the automobile made its first appearance in 1927, horses were the only form of transport available in Chitral. In the summer, traders from Badakhshan brought fine specimens for sale. The Mehtars purchased these animals in large numbers, for their own use and as gifts for their favourites.

Animals in the royal stables were divided into two categories, depending on their function. *Sawari* horses were kept exclusively for riding and polo, and were cared for by a group of men known as *mirakhors* (horse keepers). These animals, which were also used by the royal family, were especially well looked after (Ghulam 1990; A. A. Khan 1992). *Bari* animals included horses, mules and donkeys used to carry state grain and luggage. These creatures were tended by men known as *darabis* (mule keepers).

The upkeep of the Mehtar's horses and pack animals was the sole state duty assigned to the *mirakhors* and *darabis*. They performed this service in exchange for land which they were allowed to retain for as long as they served the Mehtar. The *mirakhors* were stationed in Chitral town throughout the year, attending to the royal stables. The *darabis*, meanwhile, drove the beasts of burden from one state granary to the next during the working season. In the winters, when *bari* animals were not worked, the *darabis* did little more than tend to the animals.

Communications

Prior to the introduction of telephones, a system of signals employing flags was in use between Chitral and Birmogh Lasht in the summers, when visibility was relatively good. But communication with other locations, and in winter, was carried out by means of letters delivered by messenger (S. Khan 1995; A. Hamza 1997).

Shujaul Mulk was keen to introduce telephones to Chitral. To raise funds for the project, he imposed a tax of one rupee per family on all citizens of the state. During his reign, a telephone was installed in the Chitral fort and each of the district headquarters forts but no private connections were provided. Thereafter, the telephone became a valuable tool for conducting state business. Indeed, Shujaul Mulk spent the early evening calling distant administrative units to keep abreast of the latest developments.

Entertainment

In peacetime, the Mehtars and their guests in the Chitral fort spent many an evening enjoying entertainment put on especially for their benefit. Residents of

Polo served as the chief entertainment of the nobility as well as ordinary citizens.

the fort also participated in sporting events and undertook hunting expeditions.

Polo

Exactly when it was introduced to the area remains a mystery, but polo has been the national sport of Chitral at least since the time of the first Mehtars, who took a personal interest in the game. Polo served as the chief entertainment of the ruler and his nobles as well as ordinary citizens. Even in the days when the Mehtars were at the height of their power, ordinary people would regularly compete against the Mehtar's team.

Polo was played on *sawari* horses purchased from Badakhshi traders. Tournaments were held every summer in the capital, with competitors travelling to Chitral town from the far corners of the state. Nobles as well as ordinary citizens were free to participate in these events. Players were provided boarding and lodging by the state for as long as they remained in the competition.

It was not only in the capital that polo was a popular pastime. Across the state, sites for polo grounds were earmarked, and matches were played regularly between villages and districts. Many such grounds exist to this day. Besides polo, riding competitions were also held. Horsemen would showcase their equestrian skills and marksmanship by firing at a swinging target (Curzon 1926: 122).

Hunting

The wildlife-rich valleys of Chitral were either owned by the state or granted as *jagirs* to the Mehtar's favourites. The nobles and the Mehtar's agents kept a close eye on these estates, while gamekeepers equipped with rifles and ammunition were employed to protect the animals from poachers. Most hunting on such land was carried out by the Mehtar or landowners' hunters, who were armed with rifles and hounds. During the hunting season, which began in autumn and lasted through the winter, large numbers of ibex, markhor and wild sheep were

Under the Mehtars' patronage, falconry became a sophisticated art.

killed. In these months, the royal kitchens were kept well supplied with game.

Many of the species found in the area, including the ibex, markhor, musk deer, wild goat and wild sheep, migrate to higher elevations in the summer. As winter sets in, they begin to move down the mountains. The Mehtars would plan hunting expeditions to distant valleys in the autumn, to coincide with the migratory habits of these animals. Dressed in full hunting gear, the royal party would set out to the mountains to bag ibex and markhor, braving the severe winter weather.

Ambush tactics were employed to kill as many animals as possible. When a hunting expedition was arranged in a certain area, the men of that area were ordered to go up to the snowline well before dawn. It was their job to startle the animals and cause a stampede, while the hunters themselves waited at a well-appointed spot in the valley below. As the animals charged down the slopes, the hunters would pick them off (Musharafuddin 1991).

Birds were also hunted in large numbers. The Chitral region lies along the migratory path of a variety of aquatic birds. The Mehtars built artificial ponds to lure birds to a particular area. In spring, species returning from their winter migration would land at these watering holes, providing the Mehtar and his hunting partners with rich pickings.

Falconry

Under the Mehtars' patronage, falconry became a sophisticated art. Birds of prey played an important part in the Mehtar's hunt, and were kept and trained by chief hunters known as *mershikars*. Eventually, the term came to refer to falconers, a mark of the respect with which the falcon was held both by the nobles and ordinary people. A contingent of *mershikars*, headed by a *subedar*, looked after falcons as well as hunting dogs. The Lals bred hawks as a symbol of their social status. In autumn and winter, falconry was the chief source of recreation for the Mehtar and his courtiers, with special expeditions planned for royal visitors (Hassan 1992).

Music

A band of musicians was on duty at the royal court at all times, performing every morning following breakfast, in the Mahraka after dinner and at polo matches. Known locally as *doms*, musicians were also part of the Mehtar's entourage during state visits.

The *doms* played at public festivals and on a number of other occasions including the departure of the Mehtar on a state visit (the tune played on this occasion was called *ponwar*), the arrival of the Mehtar from his tours or excursions, and

the arrival and departure of state guests. Musicians were of course called upon to perform at weddings, when the melody played was the *shishtuwar*. But music was not reserved for festive occasions alone. *Doms* played to announce the declaration of war and musicians accompanied troops to battle, instilling courage in the hearts of the men with martial tunes such as the *zhangwar* and *bakarashwar*.

The *doms* made all their own instruments. Some worked for the Mehtar and resided in the fort, while others lived in villages where they held land. Musicians in the employ of the Mehtar received cloth and rations from the Mehtar's official stores (Mulk 1971: 55).

Garments

Until the early 20th century, the Mehtars of Chitral dressed in much the same fashion as their subjects. There was no special royal wardrobe to speak of and, prior to the introduction of sewing machines, the Mehtar's garments were for the most part sewn by the women of the fort.

Cotton and silk were not freely available in Chitral, although wool made up for some of the shortfall. Cotton was grown in the lower altitudes and woven locally into a rough cloth. Fabric was also bought from visiting traders. In addition, the Mehtar collected cotton and woollen cloth as part of the state revenue.

In the later Katoor period, as the state grew richer, fabric could be purchased in abundance. In 1914, Shujaul Mulk ordered the setting up of a *darzi khana* (tailoring house) with 12 tailors receiving cash wages as well as rations from the state stores. The tailors created a variety of designs for the men and women of the royal family. It was at this time that the Mehtar started to wear special clothing that set him apart from his subjects. Garments were also made for courtiers and nobles, and the Mehtar would present coats to his favourites at the end of their *shadari*.

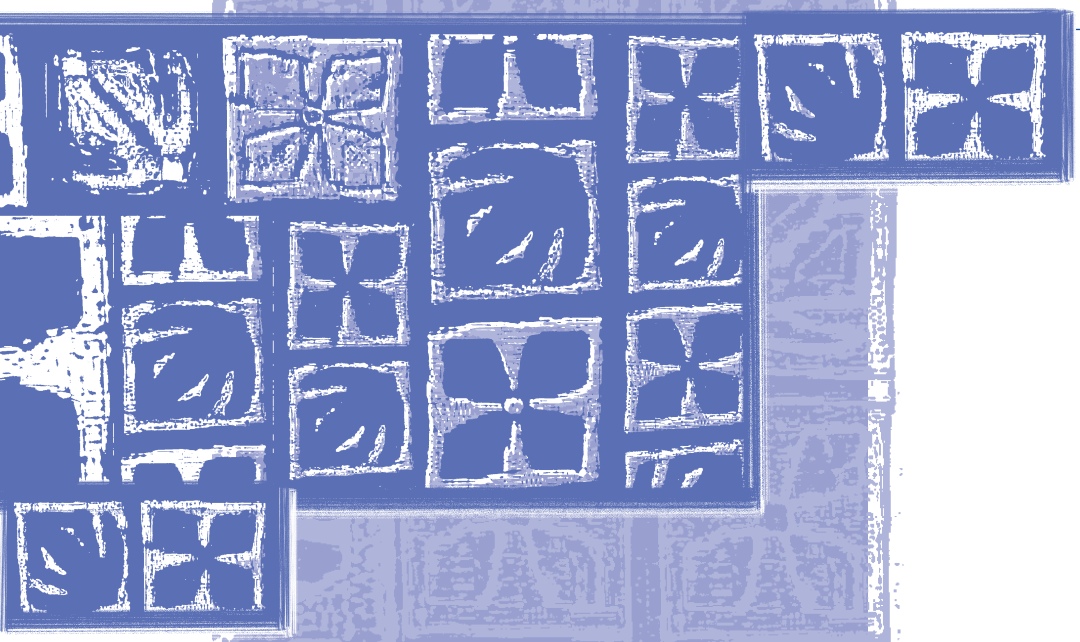
In addition to garments for the nobles and royalty, the *darzi khanas* prepared sets of rough-wear clothes which were distributed among the poor during state visits. Students of religious schools received clothes from this stock (S. Maidan 1989; A. Hamza 1997).

Besides a tailoring house, Shujaul Mulk set up a state laundry, the *dhobi khana*, which operated near the fort. The *dhobi khana* handled the garments of the men of the royal family as well as the uniforms of the bodyguards, while officers' uniforms were cleaned by their own orderlies. Workers at the *dhobi khana* were provided rations from the *toshakhana* in addition to a monthly salary (A. Hamza 1997).

State Flag

The state flag of Chitral was triangular in shape and pale green in colour. The wider side of the pennant depicted a mountain, most likely the Terich Mir peak. Beside it stood a tall *deodar* tree. At the narrow end, a star and crescent were emblazoned.

In the later Katoor period, this flag served as a symbol of the Mehtar's presence and flew above the Chitral fort. It was hoisted every morning, accompanied by a salute from the bodyguards, and taken down each evening after another salutation. No flags were hoisted in the district headquarters or atop any other state building (S. Khan 1995).



Civil ADMINISTRATION

The Mehtar was the source of all power in the land, the final authority on civil, military and judicial matters. To function effectively, he built around himself an elaborate administrative machinery. From Chitral, the Mehtar maintained control over distant parts of the state by appointing trusted officials recruited from the ranks of the prominent tribes or selected from among the members of his own extended family (Ghufran 1962: 61, 146).

In the Raees and early Katoor period, the civil administration in the districts was run by *cheq mehtars* and *hakims* (TRC 185: 6). The *hakims* were generally commoners, while the *cheq mehtars* were men related to the royal family. During Raees rule, the Mehtar did not appoint his own sons as *cheq mehtars* (Ghufran 1962: 51).

With small inhabited valleys scattered between towering mountains, the state of Chitral was a difficult land to govern. Controlling such a vast and often inhospitable terrain from Chitral town was virtually impossible.

Instead, men from influential families were selected to serve in distant administrative units. This arrangement continued until the end of Raees rule in 1590.

Following his accession to the seat of power, Muhtaram Shah Katoor I carved up the state, installing his brothers as *cheq mehtars* in various areas (Ghufran 1962: 49, 53, 101). In the new set-up, Muhtaram Shah's brother Khushwakht operated independently, eventually controlling the territories from Mastuj to Yasin. His descendants, known as the Khushwakhte, challenged the authority of the Mehtar, twice managing to take control of the throne. In 1717, under Asmatullah, the Khushwakhte captured Chitral. Shah Faramard (1717–1724) of the Khushwakhte clan became Mehtar and remained in power for the next seven years. In 1724, the Katoors reclaimed Chitral and held the seat of power for more than 30 years.

In 1761, the Khushwakhte mounted another challenge to Katoor power, this time led by Asmatullah's son, Shah Khairullah (1761–1786). The Khushwakhte again toppled the Katoor ruler of Chitral and installed their own nominees as *cheq mehtars* in Drosh, Mulkhow and Torkhow (Ghufran 1962: 66–67). Muhtaram Shah, later Katoor II, fled to Dir and Shah Khairullah ruled Chitral for the next 25 years (Ghufran 1962: 65, 67).

It was only in 1786 that Shah Nawaz Khan (1786–1788) of the Katoor family regained control of Chitral. Two years later, Muhtaram Shah II returned from exile to claim the throne. In a battle at the fort of Jutilasht, 12 kilometres south of Chitral town, Muhtaram Shah faced the forces of Shah Nawaz Khan. During the fighting, Shah Nawaz was killed and Muhtaram Shah was subsequently declared Mehtar.

Administrative Units

With small inhabited valleys scattered between towering mountains, the state of Chitral was a difficult land to govern. Logistical difficulties persist to this day, exacerbated by the fact that the entire Chitral valley is cut off from the rest of the world in the winter months. For the Mehtars, controlling such a vast and often inhospitable terrain from Chitral town was virtually impossible. If they were to rule the land effectively, it was

imperative to devise a system of local-level administration. Accordingly, the state was divided into five administrative units—Chitral, Drosh, Lotkuh, Mulkhow and Torkhow—with the Mehtar himself in charge at the centre and *cheq mehtars* running the show in the districts (Biddulph 1977 [1880]: 66). Each of these units is part of present-day District Chitral.

In 1862, Amanul Mulk annexed the Mastuj and Yasin valleys, deposing the Khushwakhte princes who had controlled these areas since the earliest days of Katoor rule. After being governed by the Khushwakhte for more than two centuries, Mastuj and Yasin became the sixth and seventh districts of the Katoor state (GoI 1928: 66–67; Ghufran 1962: 131, 132).[14]

Chitral

Chitral proper extended from Gahiret to Barenis, and sometimes up to Muzhgol.[15] Directly controlled by the Mehtar, this district was divided into three sub-districts, Ayun, Chitral and Kuh, each of which was administered by a *hakim* (GoI 1928: 66).

Drosh

In the Raees and early Katoor period, this district stretched from Gahiret to Bailam but its borders later shrank to the town of Arandu. Drosh was governed by a *cheq mehtar* (Ghufran 1962: 6, 73, 103), with *hakims* deputed to manage the three sub-districts of Arandu, Drosh and Shishikuh (GoI 1928: 66).

Lotkuh

This district, located on the border with the Badakhshan province of Afghanistan, was particularly difficult to govern. Lotkuh witnessed frequent bouts of violence fomented by Chitrali rebels and fugitives who took refuge in Badakhshan. Time and again Chitrali exiles, many of them unsuccessful claimants to the throne, won over the *cheq mehtar* of the district and used their influence to create disturbances in the area. A *hakim* managed each of Lotkuh's four sub-districts, Arkari, Khuzara, Ojhor and Shoghore (GoI 1928: 67).[16]

Mulkhow

Stretching from Ovir to Terich on the right bank of the Chitral river, this district was under the control of one and, occasionally, two *cheq mehtars*. It was here, in the sub-district ranging from Ovir to Muzhgol, that the ancestral village of the Katoor family was located. Fearful of a challenge to the throne from their own relatives, the Mehtars needed to keep a close eye on the area. For this reason, the Ovir–Muzhgol sub-district was sometimes counted as part of Chitral.

Mulkhow was divided into four sub-districts: Kosht, Mulkhow, Ovir and Terich. Each of these was managed by a *hakim* until the late Katoor period when, under the British colonial administration, the district came under the authority of a newly designated governor (GoI 1928: 66–67).

14 Mastuj is today part of District Chitral while Yasin falls within the limits of District Ghizar in the federally administered Northern Areas.
15 These towns exist even today, covering essentially the same areas.
16 Khuzara is now called the Lotkuh valley while Ojhor is known as the Karimabad valley.

Torkhow

Comprising all the villages from Istaru to the Rech valley, this district was in the charge of a *cheq mehtar* (Biddulph 1977 [1880]: 60). Torkhow was divided into two sub-districts, Rayeen and Rech, the former under a *charvelu* and the latter managed by a *hakim*. The office of the *charvelu* was dominant in the later Katoor period (GoI 1928: 67).

Mastuj and Yasin

During Raees rule, Mastuj and Yasin formed a single district which extended all the way from Reshun to the Boroghil pass and Laspur valley, and was managed by a *hakim*.[17] In the early Katoor period, the area was held by the Khushwakhte princes. Around the time that Amanul Mulk was at the zenith of his power in Chitral, the *cheq mehtars* of the Khushwakhte territories, which included Ghizar, Ishkoman, Mastuj, Punial and Yasin, were embroiled in internecine wars.

Between 1830 and 1860, Yasin was held by Gohar Aman of the Khushwakhte family. It was during Gohar Aman's rule in Yasin that the Sikh Maharaja of the Punjab, Gulab Singh (1846–1857), purchased Kashmir from the British. Under the Amritsar Treaty of 1846 the Maharaja paid 75,000 nanek shahi, the currency of the Sikh dynasty, for the territory which had until then been part of British India. After the sale deed was finalised, the Maharaja staked his claim to the adjoining areas of Astor, Gilgit and Yasin, insisting they were part of Kashmir. The British government gave him a free hand to take these territories forcibly and Gulab Singh subsequently launched a military campaign.

In Gilgit and Yasin, Gohar Aman and his forces put up stiff resistance against the Sikh regiments for more than a decade. It was only after Gohar Aman's death in 1860 that Yasin finally fell to the Maharaja. It was at this stage that Amanul Mulk intervened, approaching the British government through his emissaries, Wafadar Khan and Inayat Khan, to assert his own claim over Yasin. He sent his troops to oust the Maharaja's forces from the area and, with the support of local elites and notables, in 1862 Amanul Mulk took Yasin. Capitalising on his military gains, he also seized Mastuj and the valleys beyond the Shandur pass all the way to Chitral.

Amanul Mulk put Mastuj under one of his younger sons, Afzalul Mulk (1892), who already held Mulkhow. Mastuj was divided into four sub-districts, Laspur, Mastuj, Reshun and Yarkhun. This arrangement remained in place until April 1895, when the British colonial administration of India took control of Chitral. A few months later, they placed Mastuj under the authority of one of their newly designated governors, Bahadur Khan Katoor, a landlord who was Amanul Mulk's stepbrother. Thereafter, Mastuj became a protectorate of the British administration and was managed from Gilgit.

It was only in 1914, during the reign of Shujaul Mulk, that Mastuj was restored to the rulers of Chitral, albeit indirectly (Ghufran 1962: 186). The territory was handed over to the Mehtar but the British-appointed governor Bahadur Khan remained in charge of the area. This arrangement was acceptable both

17 At the time, Yasin was known as Wershigoom.

to the British, who were confident about Bahadur Khan's loyalty, and to Shujaul Mulk, whose own sons were too young to take charge of Mastuj and whose brothers could not be trusted.

The history of Yasin is even more complicated. In 1862, the Mehtar installed one of Gohar Aman's sons, Mir Wali, as *cheq mehtar* of the area. Mir Wali, a Sunni hardliner like his father, fervently opposed both the Maharaja and the British. Not surprisingly, they responded by flooding Yasin with spies and agents who encouraged Mir Wali's younger brother, Ghulam Muhayuddin, to overthrow the *cheq mehtar*. Amanul Mulk himself was not averse to this idea, having installed Mir Wali out of a sense of propriety. In fact, the Mehtar favoured the younger brother, who also happened to be his nephew.

Just a few years after Mir Wali assumed control of Yasin, the district was riven by strife. With the blessings of Amanul Mulk, in 1864 Ghulam Muhayuddin mounted a challenge against his elder brother. War between the rival princes lasted four years, until 1868, when Ghulam Muhayuddin emerged victorious. Mir Wali went into exile, living in Diamer and Chitral over the next three years. In 1871, he was murdered by his brother's men.

Ghulam Muhayuddin was known as Mehtar 'Pahlwan' (literally, 'wrestler'), a sobriquet awarded to him in recognition of his bravery. He controlled Yasin until 1873, when he was ousted by the Mehtar on suspicion of conspiracy. After removing Ghulam Muhayuddin from Yasin, the Mehtar handed charge of the district to his eldest son, crown prince Nizamul Mulk (1892–1895), who already controlled the Torkhow district. Nizamul Mulk remained governor of Yasin until his father's death.

In 1892, after a bitter power struggle, Nizamul Mulk became Mehtar of Chitral. He put Ghulam Muhayuddin back in charge of Yasin. The Mehtar's hold over the district—as well as the throne of Chitral—lasted for little over two years. In May 1895, after they had already taken military control of Chitral, the British occupied Yasin. They divided the district into three administrative units and appointed a governor for each: Ghulam Muhayuddin remained in control of Yasin proper, administering the area on behalf of the colonial authorities, while Raja Murad Ali Khan Maqpoon was given charge of Ghizar and Ali Mardan was appointed governor of Ishkoman.

In later years, Mehtar Shujaul Mulk made persistent supplications to the British authorities, asking to regain control of Yasin. It appears, however, that Gulab Singh's successor, Maharaja Ranbir Singh of Kashmir, was opposed to the idea, wanting British-held Yasin to serve as a buffer between his own territory and the areas ruled by the Mehtar. The British colonial authorities accepted this argument, refusing to hand back Yasin (TRC 99: 48). The Mehtar's objections were noted in official documents, but the decision was final: "After the fullest consideration it was made clear in a letter to H.H. the late Mehtar [Shujaul Mulk] that there could be no question of reopening the Chitral claim for the annexation to Chitral of Yasin or other territories in the Gilgit Agency, and that the government of India could not admit the Mehtar's request to have his sons appointed as governors of Yasin. . . . It should be added that since the separation of these districts from Chitral they [the British administration] are constrained to deny entirely any Katur [sic] claim to a revisionary interest in any of these districts" (TRC 281: 46).

State Ministers

From the highest echelons of power down to low-ranking officials, members of the administrative hierarchy were selected from among the principal tribes such as the Atambaigae, Khoshae, Khusrawae and Zondrae. This served, at least in theory, to cement ties with potential foes and secure their loyalty.

The men who governed the districts were known as *cheq mehtars*. Those chosen to occupy this position were often members of the ruling family and were provided for generously by the state.

A number of state officials of ministerial rank served at the capital fort in Chitral, working directly under the Mehtar. In fulfilling their day-to-day duties, they liaised with district-level officials. In addition to their administrative responsibilities, state servants were expected to perform military service and muster their own tribesmen in times of war.

Atalegh

Of Uzbek origin, this word which means an elder, father or head of the family has no connection to the Urdu word *ataliq*, which means a private tutor (Shahrani ca. 1979: 123; J. A. Shah 1993). The *atalegh* was a state official of the highest rank. His was one of the earliest administrative posts created by the Mehtars.

Under the Raees and early Katoors, the *atalegh* at the centre was primarily responsible for the defence of the state. Once the British colonial administration took over Chitral, deploying its own troops which were headed by its own officers, the *atalegh*'s defence-related responsibilities diminished. Instead, in the years following 1895, the *atalegh* focused on civil administrative duties. He managed all state construction projects, overseeing the work of the *boldoyo* who provided the labour. He was also in charge of supply contracts for the British garrisons stationed in Drosh (Scott 1937: 8). The *atalegh* at the centre exercised the authority of a minister, with district *ataleghs* serving under him (Mulk 1971: 62).

Wazír Azam

Following his accession to the throne in 1936, Mohammad Nasirul Mulk created the post of *wazir azam* (prime minister) as part of a wider effort to reorganise the state administrative machinery (Ghufran 1962: 224). The man who occupied this post was always selected from among the members of the ruling family. For the first time in Chitral's history, a cabinet was formally inducted and headed by the *wazir azam*, who was responsible for improving the performance of the revenue and commerce departments, and for ensuring that the administration ran smoothly (Ghufran 1962: 224). While other ministers were allotted houses by the Mehtar, the *wazir azam* was not

provided accommodation because, as a scion of the ruling family, the incumbent already occupied a large estate, controlled game reserves, and received *qalang* (grazing tax) and *ushr* from the state treasury (Scott 1937: 17).

Duwanbegi

The word *duwanbegi*, a corrupted version of the term *diwan-e-ganj* (revenue officer), was the title of the minister responsible for matters related to finance, trade and taxation (Ghufran 1962: 146). According to one source, two *duwanbegis* were appointed in Chitral (Lockhart ca. 1896: 2). This account, however, is not corroborated by any other authentic record and may be the result of misinformation or a simple error of interpretation. It is likely that the second post mentioned was in fact that of an assistant, or a man serving as *duwanbegi* in an honorary capacity.

Asaqal

The term *asaqal* is derived from the word *aqsaqal* (elder). The *asaqal* managed state land and supervised supplies to the royal household (Scott 1937: 19; Lockhart ca. 1896: 2). His was an important position in the court. The man who filled this post was selected from among the prominent tribes and was provided a house by the Mehtar. The post was not hereditary.

Baramush

The *baramush* (barracks master) was a hereditary post and the incumbent held the rank of a minister (Ghufran 1962: 146). At the centre, the *baramush* was responsible for construction work. In the later Katoor period, the post was abolished at the centre but continued to exist in the districts.

District Administration

The districts were governed by the *cheq mehtars* and their subordinate *hakims* as well as a host of other officials, all of whom answered directly to the Mehtar. The duties of district officials were well defined and their areas of jurisdiction clearly delineated.

Cheq Mehtar

The men who governed the districts during the Raees and early Katoor period were known as *cheq mehtars* (subordinate mehtars). Those chosen to occupy this position were often members of the ruling family and were provided for generously by the state. Their history of participating in revolts, intrigues and bloodshed, however, meant that they were under the strictest surveillance. Nevertheless some *cheq mehtars* served loyally under the Mehtar (Din 1987: 35).

The *cheq mehtar* settled local cases and handled financial disputes in his district. In the Raees and early Katoor period, he was also responsible for recruiting and supervising able-bodied men from the prominent tribes in his area to perform military service (Biddulph 1977 [1880]: 66; Mulk 1971: 61). Besides income from state lands attached to the district fort, a considerable portion of local revenue, collected in kind, was allotted to the *cheq mehtar* for his expenses (Scott 1937: 20). A *cheq mehtar* was not appointed to oversee administration in every district; certain areas were managed by a *hakim* or *atalegh*.

After they took control of Chitral in 1895, the British redesignated the *cheq*

mehtars as governors while simultaneously curtailing their powers. The governors were permitted to settle minor cases locally but were required to refer all important civil or criminal matters to the centre (Scott 1937: 7).

Hakim

In most districts, day-to-day administrative tasks were handled by a *hakim*, appointed by the Mehtar. The *hakim* was responsible for the overall administration of an area. In his official capacity, he received a fixed percentage of the revenue collected from his district as well as 10 families of serfs to perform agricultural labour (Biddulph 1977 [1880]: 66–67). A *hakim*'s private landholdings were exempted from tax.

In addition to their administrative responsibilities in the districts, some *hakims* performed *shadari* in the court of the Mehtar. Such *hakims* would travel to the capital a few times each year to affirm their allegiance to the Mehtar (Scott 1937: 19).

While their powers were less wide ranging than those of the *cheq mehtars*, *hakims* were at the same time not subject to the same level of surveillance from the centre. The post of the *hakim* was not hereditary and the Mehtar often obliged an important tribe by appointing one of its members to the position. On occasion, if the son of a *hakim* appeared to be a promising candidate, the post would remain within the same family.

Atalegh

In districts where a *hakim* was installed, the *atalegh* served merely in an honorary capacity with no administrative powers to speak of. In districts where no *hakim* had been deputed, however, the *atalegh* exercised the authority of a *hakim*. While the *atalegh* at the centre served as defence minister until the advent of the British, when his military responsibilities diminished, district *ataleghs* were responsible for civil administration.

Charvelu

The *charvelu* (taxation officer) served under the *hakim*, assisting in the collection of revenue, and in the maintenance of law and order. He also commanded the *boldoyo* who worked on state construction projects (Mulk 1971: 63). As a matter of policy, the *charvelu* could not belong to the same tribe as the *hakim*.

The *charvelu*, a hereditary post, was usually a member of the principal tribes of the area although exceptions to this rule were made occasionally (Biddulph 1977 [1880]: 67). Depending on his power and influence, the *charvelu* received between 12 and 50 maunds of grain annually from the state as payment for his services (Scott 1937: 19).

Asaqal

The *asaqal* of the district was in charge of state land attached to the district fort and supervised the *mehnatgars* (tenants) who worked on state farmland. He also managed the court of the *cheq mehtar* and oversaw the provision of food for the household. Owing to his rank, he was called upon to participate in the settlement of local cases, although he was not directly involved in matters of law and administration.

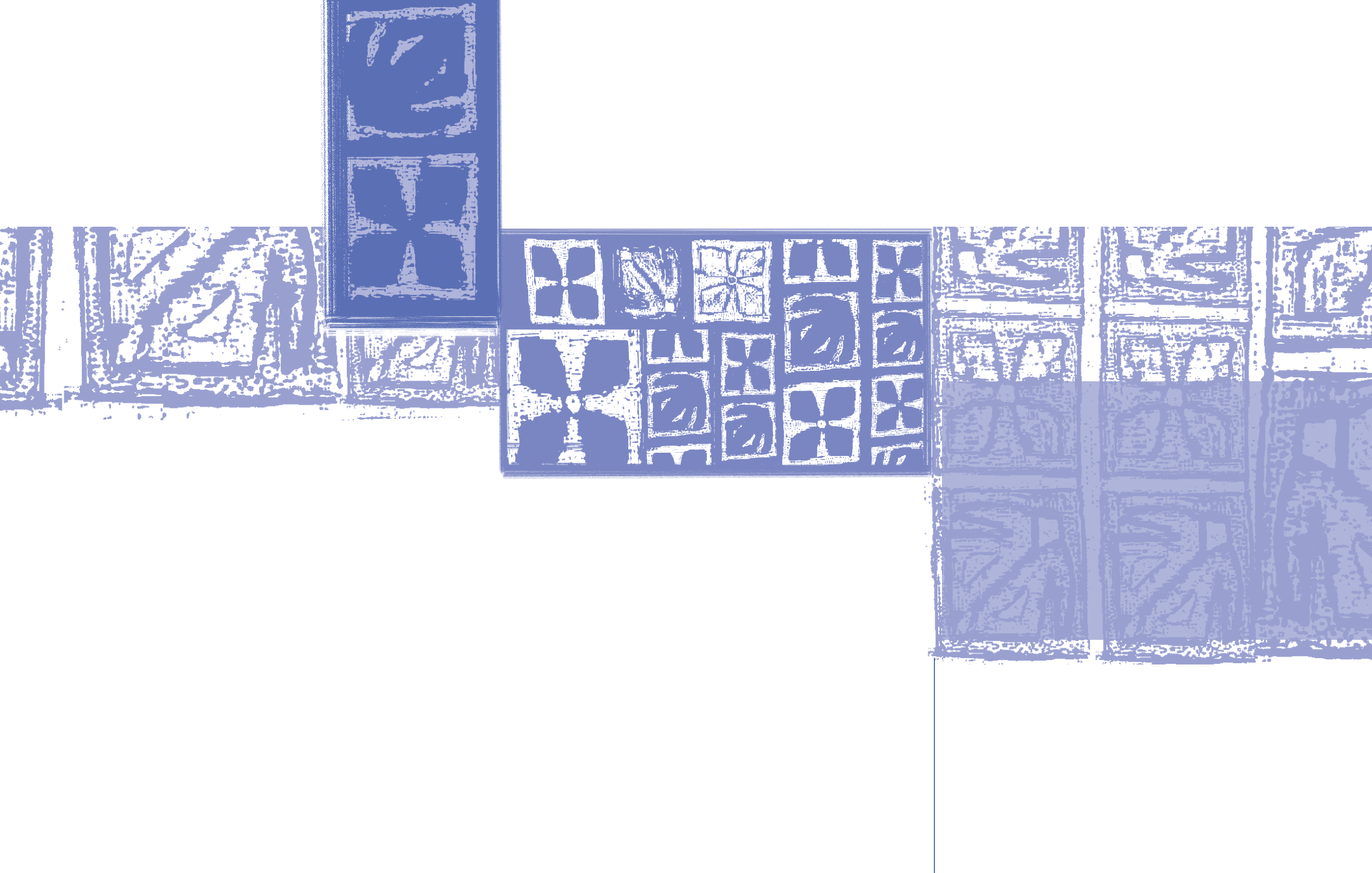
Baramush

Under the Raees and early Katoor Mehtars, a *baramush* served at the centre, in the Mehtar's court (Ghufran 1962:146). After 1892, the central post was abolished and the *baramush* worked only in the districts of upper Chitral, serving as an assistant to the *charvelu*. The post did not exist in lower Chitral.

The *baramush*, a hereditary post, was assigned a group of villages and responsible for the construction and maintenance of forts, roads and bridges in these areas. In return, he received a yearly payment, in kind, from the revenue collected locally (Biddulph 1977 [1880]: 67). Some men who occupied this post were more influential than others, and were paid according to their clout (Scott 1937: 19). The *baramush* also functioned as *jamadar* (junior army officer) of the *boldoyo* (GoI 1928: 70). If the *charvelu* was for some reason unable to command the *boldoyo*, the *baramush* acted on his behalf (Mulk 1972: 63).

Chharbu

The *chharbu* was a low-ranking state official. The man who filled this post was chosen by the Mehtar from the middle or lower classes and the job often remained in the same family for generations. The *chharbu* assisted the *baramush* and *charvelu* in matters of local administration, collecting revenue, implementing state orders, and monitoring law and order. He maintained an oral record of the payment of various taxes (Mulk 1971: 63). In return, he received "a woollen robe and five sheep yearly and his land [was] exempt from taxation" (Biddulph 1977 [1880]: 67). A competent *chharbu* of a large group of villages was known as an *arbab* or lord (Mulk 1971: 63).



Defence

Situated in the heart of the Hindukush range and encircled by towering peaks, Chitral is only accessible through a handful of mountain passes that become impassable in the winter. This geographical location has long served as a strategic defence for the men who have ruled the area. Difficulties of access in the winter meant that for at least a few months in the year, the state was safe from the threat of invasion. Summer, meanwhile, was often a turbulent time, offering hostile neighbours the opportunity to mount a challenge (Mulk 1971: 57). The tradition of statecraft that evolved in the area is in great measure a response to Chitral's unique climate and topography.

The Sumaleki princes of upper Chitral and the Kalash rulers of lower Chitral developed informal systems of statecraft to govern their respective principalities. After 1320, when Shah Nadir Raees came to control all of Chitral, a larger and more organised defence establishment was required to protect the expansive borders of the new state. Men and material resources at the command of Chitral's early Raees Mehtars were insufficient to meet this challenge. To solve the problem, Shah Nadir consulted with the tribal chiefs who had supported his bid to become Mehtar (Ghufran 1962: 45). Together they worked out a plan for a collective defence system which proved to be effective for many centuries to come (Ghufran 1962: 40, 43, 79, 12, 129, 132). The joint defence system continued to operate with great success until 1895, when Chitral became a protectorate of the British empire.

Joint Defence System (1320–1895)

The idea of joint defence was not new to Chitral. As early as the 10th century, Bahman-e-Kohistani is said to have raised an army made up of men from a number of different tribes and clans. Under such a system, defence of the state became the collective responsibility of all clans and tribes inhabiting the kingdom.

When Shah Nadir, the first Raees Mehtar, came to power, the idea of a joint defence system was once again floated. He discussed the matter at length with the chiefs of the prominent tribes. Subsequently, defence was declared to be the responsibility of the principal tribes whose members held the largest share of fertile land in the state. In an emergency, they were to assemble their tribesmen, armed with swords, shields and bows, and prepare themselves for battle (Ghufran 1962: 45, 147). This body of tribal fighters was known as *bol* (army). All able-bodied men from the principal tribes were required to take up arms when necessary. Whatever provisions they could procure were supplemented with supplies from other tribes who also acted as batmen (Ghufran 1962: 148). The system, called *boli*, was similar to the feudal system of defence that existed in medieval Europe.

The *bol* was not a permanent army, organised into specialised divisions such as artillery or cavalry, but rather a force comprised mainly of foot soldiers. Only a few of the fighters were mounted, since the state did not maintain large enough stables to provide horses for all the men.

The state did not pay for the performance of military service, though booty was distributed among the warriors on the basis of their rank and performance. In addition, the Mehtar was known to reward deeds of outstanding bravery with gifts of land. Negligence in the performance of one's duties, meanwhile, was sometimes punished by confiscating land (Ghufran 1962: 148). For the most part, the principal tribes served out of a sense of common responsibility, fuelled by the zeal to outdo one another in deeds of valour, thereby enhancing their prestige. On occasion, however, defence service became onerous. Power struggles between rival princes, which sometimes dragged on for several years, would leave all sides drained both of material resources and manpower.

Warfare is an integral part of Chitral's history, and the men of the region have

been involved in untold battles fought between rivals at home and against foreign invaders. Large fortunes were made and lost in these wars, while the men grew accustomed to living in a constant state of readiness for battle. The chiefs of the principal tribes and other notables always travelled fully armed with swords, daggers and shields. Until Amanul Mulk's reign, which began in 1856, noblemen even attended the Mahraka carrying weapons (Mulk 1971: 52–53). As the men fine-tuned their skills in the art of war, new tactics and more efficient military strategies evolved, in many cases leading to fine displays of swordsmanship and deeds of great valour (Biddulph 1977 [1880]: 91).

Atalegh

The state defence minister, a trusted lieutenant of the Mehtar, was known as the *atalegh*. Until the British took control of Chitral, the *atalegh*'s sole responsibility was to serve as head of the state military machine. Particularly during the early years of Raees rule, the Mehtar depended on the loyalty of the principal tribes to retain his hold on power. Given the volatile political situation of the time, it was incumbent on the *atalegh* to unite the tribes. As such, his was a key position in the administration. Only a man possessing extraordinary talent in statecraft, and belonging to a prominent and trusted tribe, was appointed to this post (Ghufran 1962: 147–148).

Fortifications

To secure the borders of their territory, the Mehtars constructed a large number of forts in the main valleys leading to the most frequented passes. Built on mountain ridges in proximity to water sources, forts also served as the residence of the Mehtar in Chitral and the *cheq mehtars* who managed affairs in the districts. Outposts were manned by armed guards throughout the year and any advance of enemy troops was reported to the central command using a beacon signalling system.

Emergency Warning

An early warning system was developed to signal emergencies, with beacons set up on hilltops that enjoyed a commanding view of the surrounding valleys. This system was known as *phumbarush*, literally meaning 'large fire with tall flames'. On spotting a signal, men from the principal tribes would immediately take up arms and prepare themselves to do battle.

All able-bodied men from the principal tribes were required to take up arms when necessary.

Beacon sites stocked with ample supplies of dry wood were placed in the charge of a few men from the nearest village who had standing orders to light a fire at the first sign of an enemy advance. There were 14 beacon sites set up in the Yarkhun valley alone, with scores of other such observation posts in Arandu, Arkari, Lotkuh, Mulkhow, Ojhor and Torkhow (GoI 1928: 71, 122). The *phumbarush* system contributed in great measure to the security of the state and ensured timely

evacuation of the population in case of an attack.

Military Tactics and Defence Strategies

The topography of the area provided its rulers with a natural defence against invaders. Ridges overlooking narrow gorges served as perfect strategic locations from where large boulders could be hurled on to an advancing enemy column (Robertson 1977 [1898]: 167–169). This tactic was employed against the British in 1895, when the Chitralis annihilated an entire battalion of British soldiers (Ghufran 1962: 123).

To maximise the damage, wooden stakes would be planted in the floor of narrow gorges. This slowed the advance of enemy soldiers, who could then be decimated with a rain of boulders from above. This form of ambush proved highly successful in the 1868 battle of Darband, in the Yarkhun valley, against the invading forces of Mir Mahmood Shah, the ruler of Badakhshan (Ghufran 1962: 123; Faizi 1996: 119). Mir Mahmood Shah's 12,000 cavalrymen were no match for the Chitralis, who halted the advance for many days before finally routing the enemy. The Badakhshis retreated, leaving behind a large number of dead soldiers as well as arms and ammunition (Ghufran 1962: 124). So memorable was this event that a folk song about the battle is still popular in Chitral today: "O Mahmood Shah! We were looking forward to meeting you / You ambitiously marched to subjugate our Mehtar / But at Darband, the corpses of your soldiers are piled high / You thought there was disunity within our ranks / You threatened to hit hard / But you failed to cross the Darband defile" (Khaki 2001: 236).

Another legendary stand was against the 1870 incursion into the Rech valley by Jahan Khan of Wakhan, Afghanistan (Ghufran 1962: 80).

Chitral's fighters developed other effective systems of surprise attack. In the days before bridges were built to span the region's many streams and rivers, the men of the area were expert swimmers. In the event of a war, such men would be called upon to swim up to enemy camps at night to slaughter the men in their sleep. Taking full advantage of the rugged terrain, which provided both vantage points and cover from enemy fire, snipers were frequently deployed to pick off an advancing column (Ghufran 1962: 64, 67). The Chitralis were adept at siege warfare as well, using gunpowder to demolish enemy towers and fort walls (Robertson 1977 [1898]: 339). Chitral's military strategists also used disinformation to destabilise enemy camps (Ghufran 1962: 158). In combination, these tactics enabled the Chitralis to protect their territory and beat back invasion on countless occasions.

Later, the Chitralis demonstrated their military prowess in the service of the British colonial administration. In the Anglo-Afghan war of 1919, the Chitral Bodyguards fought valiantly, occupying positions along the border and capturing both men as well as booty. In recognition of their bravery, in 1919 Shujaul Mulk was decorated Knight Companion of the Indian Empire, awarded an 11-gun salute and bestowed with the title of His Highness by the British Crown (Ghufran 1962: 194–198).

Weapons

Their extensive experience with warfare, and the need to be self-sufficient in the

production of military equipment, allowed the people of Chitral to become highly proficient in manufacturing a variety of armaments (Lockhart ca. 1896: 8). Given the popularity of hunting, moreover, weapons were a part of everyday life even in peacetime.

Although some arms were purchased from neighbouring states, the Chitralis were not dependent on outsiders for their weaponry. Daggers and swords for the state's own defence were made from iron. Chitrali daggers are said to have been of fine quality and in great demand in neighbouring countries (Biddulph 1977 [1880]: 62). Spears, arrows and matchlocks were also manufactured locally. Two matchlock workshops were set up, one each in Chitral and Madak Lasht (Ghufran 1962: 190).

Raw material for the manufacture of arms and ammunition was mined locally. Deposits of sulphur, potassium nitrate, antimony and iron were discovered in various parts of the state. Groups of smaller tribes were assigned the task of mining and transporting raw materials to smithies, where the material was processed and military supplies manufactured. The weapons were then dispatched to the state magazine. In some areas, gunpowder was collected by way of tax.

Music

The state defence machinery included an orchestra. When an emergency was declared and war became imminent, martial tunes were played to infuse the hearts of the tribal forces with enthusiasm. A tune called the *zhangwar* was played with a *surnai* (flute) and kettledrum to signal the start of a battle. During the fighting, the side winning an advantage would announce its gains

Music played an important part in Chitrali society, both in wartime and on festive occasions.

with another melody, known as the *bakarashwar*. Musicians accompanied the troops into the battlefield and continued playing to keep up the morale of the men (A. Khan 1992).

Later Katoor Period and the Colonial Era

Once the British colonial authorities came to control Chitral, the traditional *boli* system underwent dramatic changes. As the British themselves took over the defence of the area, there was no longer a place for the warriors of the prominent tribes. The *boli* system fell into decline and what was once an honourable form of service in defence of the state, performed by men belonging to the elite of Chitrali society, eventually turned into a type of menial labour. Under the British, the *boli* system was used to carry out construction projects.

The British Government of India and the Defence of Chitral

British involvement in the affairs of Chitral began in 1885, with the 'pact of friendship' signed between the Lockhart mission and Mehtar Amanul Mulk of Chitral. Even at that stage, the motives of the British colonial authorities were thinly veiled: "to enter into friendly relations with Amanul Mulk to gain full information regarding Chitral and the other provinces subject to the Mehtar's control with a view to making the government of India thoroughly acquainted with the material resources of the country, the number and condition of the inhabitants, the routes and passes leading through it and with all other matters of interest" (Scott 1937: 4).

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Predictably, after the treaty was signed and an Agent stationed in Chitral, the colonial authorities began to meddle in the affairs of the state. To cement their 'friendship', the Government of India in 1889 provided the Mehtar with an annual subsidy of 6,000 rupees along with the gift of a few rifles. Two years later, the subsidy was increased to 12,000 rupees (Scott 1937: 4). Having secured the loyalty of the Mehtar, the British Indian authorities took upon themselves the task of bolstering his power.

Upon the death of Amanul Mulk in 1892, Chitral was thrown into a state of chaos. Amanul Mulk was succeeded by his son, Afzalul Mulk, who only managed to serve as Mehtar for two months and nine days, after which he was murdered by Sher Afzal (1892), one of Amanul Mulk's brothers. Sher Afzal in turn retained the seat of power for just 27 days before being overthrown by Nizamul Mulk. But the new Mehtar was not much luckier than his predecessors. On 2 January 1895, Nizamul Mulk was assassinated. This time, the crime was instigated by the Mehtar's own brother, Amirul Mulk (1895). Following Nizamul Mulk's murder, Amirul Mulk became Mehtar of Chitral. Soon thereafter, on January 13, Umra Khan, a warlord from Jandul in neighbouring Afghanistan, invaded Chitral.

Amirul Mulk, whose sister was married to Umra Khan, is widely believed to have acted in cahoots with Umra Khan. The murder of Nizamul Mulk was apparently part of a wider plan to invade Chitral from Dir in the south, which was ruled by Umra Khan, and at the same time from Afghanistan. Meanwhile, a section of Chitrali exiles who had fled to

Afghanistan returned to Chitral. Under the leadership of Sher Afzal, an uncle of Shujaul Mulk, the Chitrali expatriates joined forces with Umra Khan.

These development sparked panic among a segment of influential Chitralis. This group included men such as Bahadur Khan Atalegh, Wafadar Khan Duwanbegi and Asfandiyar Khan Mehtarzhao, who had supported Amanul Mulk's 'friendship' treaty with the British and whose loyalties now lay with Shujaul Mulk. A few weeks after Nizamul Mulk's murder, they turned to the British for assistance. Eager to further their own influence in the area, the British stepped in to bolster Chitral's defences. British garrisons stationed in Chitral and Mastuj under the terms of the 1885 treaty took up positions against the Afghans.

As the battle for Chitral progressed, the British began to suspect that Amirul Mulk's loyalties lay with Umra Khan. Without further delay, British troops ousted the Mehtar, imprisoning him and installing Shujaul Mulk in his place.

The very next day saw a landmark event in the history of Chitral. On 4 March 1895, as British troops defended the fort of Chitral and its new Mehtar, they were surrounded by Umra Khan's forces. Under siege, British troops led by Major George Robertson called on their government for reinforcements. Troops were dispatched from Nowshera, through the Lowari pass, and from Gilgit over the Shandur pass. It took 46 long days for the troops from Gilgit to arrive. After many a skirmish and adventure along the way, on April 19 this contingent finally marched into Chitral. Immediately following its arrival, Umra Khan's forces fled and the siege was lifted. Incidentally, reinforcements from Nowshera reached Chitral a week later, on April 25.

The day the siege lifted, Chitral became a protectorate of the British empire. Thereafter, the question of retaining Chitral was debated both within British military circles and in Parliament. It was decided not to relinquish control of Chitral since it would mean that the losses sustained during the siege would have been in vain. Moreover, the threat of Tsarist expansion loomed on the horizon and Chitral was in danger of becoming imperial Russia's next target. A final decision regarding Chitral was announced in 1896 (Thomson 1981: 303–305). According to this plan, "six companies of the 25th Punjab Infantry with two Maxims [heavy artillery] were stationed at Chitral fort, and two companies at Gahiret, some fifteen miles south of Chitral. The 2nd Battalion of the 3rd Gurkhas with two mountain guns was to be at Drosh fort" (Thomson 1981: 310).

British Arms and Ammunition

Following the 1885 'friendship' pact between the British Indian authorities and the Mehtar of Chitral, the British gave Amanul Mulk a gift of 600 Snider rifles. After the Anglo-Afghan war of 1919, Shujaul Mulk received 2,000 '303' rifles and a large stock of ammunition in recognition of his loyalty. The Mehtar received another consignment of 1,000 rifles in 1927 for the State Bodyguard Force, followed in 1929 by a gift of two cannon (Ghufran 1962: 135, 200, 210; Scott 1937: 4).

Colonial Narratives

Colonial officers who travelled to Chitral saw in the local population an almost mythical prowess in battle. One such officer was Colonel Lockhart of the British

Colonial officers who travelled to Chitral saw in the local population an almost mythical prowess in battle.

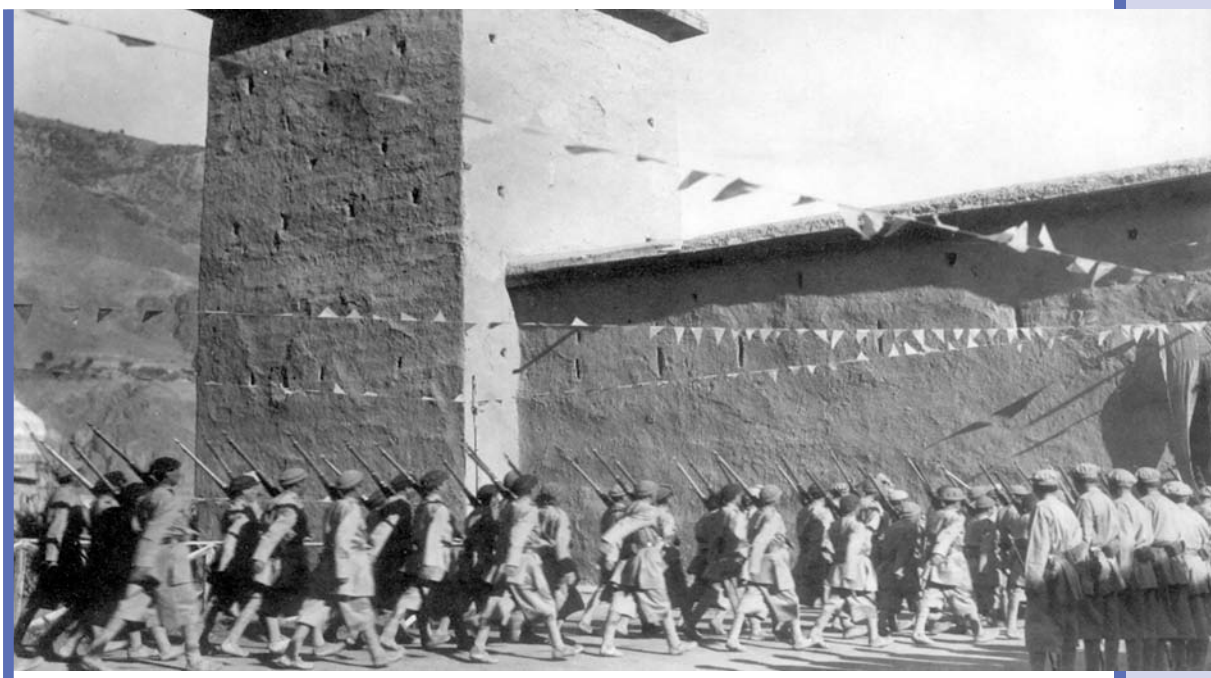
Indian army, who first visited the state in 1876, followed by two more tours in 1882 and 1888. In 1896, after the British Parliament decided in favour of retaining Chitral as a protectorate of the empire, he led another mission to Chitral. In his report on this mission, Lockhart noted that the Chitralis "seem impervious to cold or fatigue" and added that "they would make excellent light cavalry or mounted infantry" (Lockhart ca. 1896: 8).

The British were, by their own admission, keen to exploit the skill of Chitral's warriors: "it is difficult to guess at the numbers of the population. They could always turn out 10,000 excellent soldiers, which is probably all one wants to know" (Lockhart ca. 1896: 8). As such, it is no surprise that colonial narratives emphasise the fighting credentials of the Chitralis: "That there is good fighting strain in Chitral is amply proven by the fact that they have been successful when led by competent and brave leaders in repulsing invading hordes of Pathans and other tribes along their borders, and thus preserved, in bygone days, the integrity of their country. In the Afghan war of 1919 the Chitrali soldier showed dash and proved himself thoroughly reliable when properly led. They are splendid mountain men, hardy, frugal in their mode of living . . . and adept at the construction of stone shots and in other usage of guerrilla warfare" (GoI 1928: 42).

Chitral Scouts

From 1895, the colonial government of India controlled Chitral. In 1903, the colonial authorities created a local force to shoulder certain defence-related responsibilities alongside British battalions stationed in Chitral. During the planning stages, it was proposed that this force be called a levy. The idea was later dropped and the corps became known as the Chitral Scouts (TRC 12: 28–30). Locally, they were known as the Katcha ('raw' or 'temporary') Scouts.

At the time of its formation, the force was made up of nearly 1,000 men serving under two British officers. The Scouts were grouped into nine companies, each with 109 men belonging to the same area (GoI 1928: 61). Some districts, such as Mastuj, Mulkhow and Torkhow, were able to provide enough able-bodied men to form more than one company. The British authorities described these forces as "a local corps of cragsmen" (GoI 1928: 61). Their role was to watch the passes and hold the higher and more inaccessible ground on the flanks of positions selected for defence in the valleys. The commandant and assistant commandant were British officers whose tenure of duty with the Scouts was three years. The permanent instructional staff consisted of one Subedar and four honorary Jamadars, all of them natives (GoI 1928: 61).



The Chitral State Bodyguards, formalised in 1909, initially recruited only able-bodied men belonging to the principal tribes.

Each year, the Scouts were called up for a month's training in Chitral (Scott 1937: 8). When on duty, they divided their time between military exercises and training in the use of firearms. Compared to the Bodyguards, formed six years later, the Scouts received superior weapons training, which included the use of muskets, grenades and light machine guns (GoI 1928: 61). During their term of duty, the Scouts were provided with state rations, and kitted out with drill blouses, shorts and shirts. Although this was not a permanent force, the Scouts were paid a monthly stipend of 8 rupees throughout the year.

A single company of Scouts came to Chitral for training at a time, relieved a month later by a fresh contingent. The departing Scouts left behind their uniforms to be worn by the incoming soldiers. This rota continued for nine months. Training was not conducted in the winter months of December, January and February, although 15 Scouts were on duty during this time to guard the corps' arms and ammunition. Membership in the Scouts was open to men belonging to the Yuft class.

After the withdrawal of British battalions in 1942, the Katcha Scouts took over military posts in Drosh and Chitral. They were responsible for the defence of the state until the organisation of the new permanent Chitral State Scouts was completed. Following the establishment of the new force, able-bodied men from the Katcha Scouts were enlisted while the remaining soldiers were relieved of their duties (A. Baig 1996).

State Bodyguard Force

During his reign, Shujaul Mulk launched a series of administrative changes, particularly in the area of defence. An informal bodyguard force had served the

Table 1: Bodyguards (before 1909)

District	Companies
Chitral	7
Drosh	3
Lotkuh	4
Mastuj	8
Mulkhow	3
Torkhow	5
Total	30

Source: A. Hamza 1997.

Table 2: State Bodyguards (after 1909)

District	Companies
Chitral	110
Drosh	110
Lotkuh	110
Mastuj	110
Mulkhow	110
Torkhow	110
Total	660

Source: Daftar-e-Malia 1922–1948.

Mehtar from 1895, when he was installed in power by the British authorities. This force consisted of 30 companies, each with anything from 30 to 60 men (Table 1).

In 1909, the bodyguards were formalised. The new State Bodyguard Force consisted of six companies, each with 110 men, serving under the overall supervision of a First Commander (Table 2). Each company was headed by a second commander, quartermaster, instructor and *jamadar*, along with six non-commissioned officers serving as .instructors (GoI 1928: 63). The Mehtar was the chief commander of the force.

At first, only able-bodied men belonging to the principal tribes were selected for service. Each company recruited men of the Yuft class from a number of different tribes and regions. This eventually bred resentment, with tribal and territorial animosities surfacing within the ranks.

These tensions came to a head during the Anglo-Afghan war of 1919, in which the Bodyguards were called to serve.

Following the war, the Bodyguards were reorganised, with each company consisting of men belonging to a single area. During this phase, the company *subedar* generally hailed from a different area, the assumption being that an officer without personal attachment to his troops would be able to exercise more effective leadership. The Bodyguards remained dissatisfied, leading to a second reorganisation in the same year, following which each company was headed by a *subedar* belonging to the same tribe as the men. In 1919, the size of each company was also changed to 100 men. During this reorganisation, individuals of outstanding merit from among the ranks of the sappers and miners were also inducted (Ghufran 1962: 200).

Over the years, the size of the force grew to include as many as 40 companies, made up of 4,000 men (Scott 1937: 8). Companies served in rotation, two at a time, according to a predetermined schedule. The *hakim* of a particular district was responsible for ensuring that the Bodyguards in his area were present in the capital when it was their turn to perform active duty. Each man received a coat, shirt, shoes, belt and pouch during military training. Between 1925 and 1928, 2,500 sets of uniforms and 2,981 rifles were in use by the force (GoI 1928: 62–63).

Besides military training, the State Bodyguard Force also served in a civil capacity, mainly working on the construction of forts. The force was disbanded in 1953, and its weapons and ammunition were handed over to the new Chitral state police created the same year. Despite a lifetime of service, the Bodyguards were sent home without

a pension or any compensation (Ghufran 1962: 253).

Irregulars

In addition to the Bodyguards, Shujaul Mulk created a force of irregulars known as the Ashurait–Damelnisar Company to serve in the areas south of Drosh. Men from this company monitored the dense forests of the south, keeping a close eye on possible troop incursions from Chitral's neighbours. The force, made up of armed villagers, was created in Arnawai, Ashurait, Damel, Langurbat and Urtsun.[18] Each village was given between 10 and 20 rifles, and supplied with ammunition (GoI 1928: 63). Unlike the Scouts and Bodyguards, who received training in Chitral, the men of the Company were trained locally.

Chitral State Scouts

In 1936, Mohammad Nasirul Mulk succeeded his father, Shujaul Mulk, as Mehtar. Soon after he came to power, he called for the withdrawal of British troops from Chitral, to be replaced by a local defence force (Ghufran 1962: 23). This demand was voiced repeatedly over subsequent years. Partly as a result of his persistence, and also because of the increasing toll that the Second World War was taking on Britain, the British garrison stationed in Chitral was finally recalled on 18 October 1942. To serve in its place, the British created a new force known as the Chitral State Scouts.

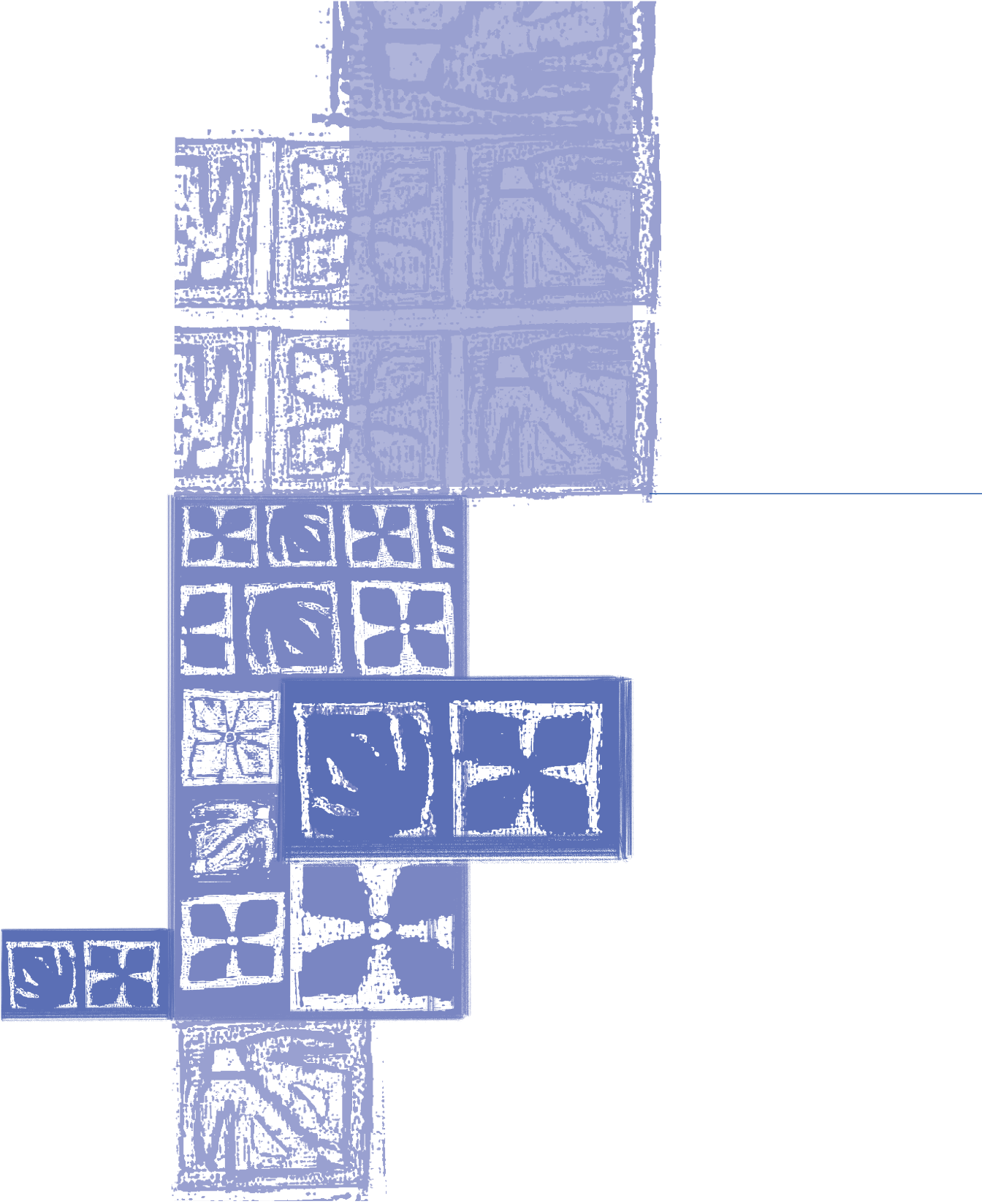
The new State Scouts attracted large numbers of young men from across Chitral. Entry to the new Scouts was open to members of the ruling family and principal tribes, but a man already serving in the Bodyguards was not permitted to leave that force to join the new Scouts. Families with a number of young men could enlist their sons in both forces without any objection from the state.

The Chitral State Scouts, created in 1942, attracted large numbers of young recruits from across the state. The Scouts Fort is located in the main Chitral valley.

Mohammad Nasirul Mulk was made honorary colonel of the new Scouts with the authority to confer ranks on the soldiers (Ghufran 1962: 232). He awarded all junior commissioned officer positions in the new force to untrained members of his own family, who were later imparted the requisite military instruction. By filling the officer ranks with relatives, the Mehtar ensured the loyalty of the Scouts.

In 1942, when the force was created, the total number of Scouts including batmen, support staff, cooks, barbers, washer men and sweepers stood at 1,000. The *jamadar* received a monthly salary of 50 rupees, while a sum of 17 rupees was paid to each of the soldiers (R. Diyar 1999).

18 Arnawai is today known as Arandu.



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WORKS AND SOCIAL SERVICES

Chitral's rugged terrain made communications difficult even at the best of times. Given the constant threat of attack from its neighbours, maintaining contact with various parts of the state was doubly important. Traditionally, local communities developed communications links with nearby villages for their own convenience. Under the Mehtars, however, a larger and more organised communications network was required not only to coordinate activities between distant administrative units but also to counter the threat of invasion.

Infrastructure

After 1320, in a unified Chitral, the construction of roads, bridges, outposts, canals granaries and other projects was carried out under state supervision.

Forts

Before the advent of Raees rule, communities themselves constructed fortifications under the supervision of local leaders. These forts stood along traditional invasion routes in various valleys to guard against enemy incursion. The oldest of these structures, built some 1,500 years ago, have not withstood the ravages of time. Such ruins may be found in a number of locations including Arkari, Ashurait, Brep, Denin, Koghuzi, Palmati, Sonoghur and Uzhnu. Meanwhile, intact forts from a later period still stand in places such as Avi, Chitral, Drasun, Droshp, Mastuj and Shagram. These buildings serve as a testament to the highly developed construction skills of the people (Ghufran 1962: 220, 222).

Roads, Bridges and Passes

In a rugged terrain such as that of Chitral, the construction of roads and bridges is a particularly arduous task, made all the more important by the state's defence needs. Although the borders of Chitral state under the Mehtars were rarely stable, the territory they controlled was nevertheless expansive (14,850 square kilometres in 1928) compared to the population (165,000 in the same year). With a relatively sparse population scattered over a vast mountainous land, massive resources were expended in terms of both material and manpower for the upkeep of infrastructure.

A doorway to Chitral from the direction of Dir in the south, the Lowari pass has since time immemorial been used by Pathan traders. The Lowari pass also served as an exit point for fugitives and exiles. Muhtaram Shah II used the Lowari route to escape to Chukiyatan, in Dir, after Chitral was invaded in 1761 by the forces of Yasin's Khushwakhte ruler, Khairullah (Ghufran 1962: 65, 67). The Lowari pass did not serve as a permanent traffic route, in large part because Chitral's relations with the state of Dir were seldom cordial (Ghufran 1962: 99, 137). The Lowari pass became a frequented passage only after 1895, when the British came to control both Chitral and the Pathan areas, which included Dir.

Labour

It was the responsibility of every citizen to contribute to the defence and stability of the state. While nobles and aristocrats performed various services for the Mehtar, construction work was assigned to the common people, who were not paid for their labour. A number of groups were involved in the development of infrastructure.

Boldoyo

The *boli* system originally evolved as part of the state's joint defence. After 1895, when the British colonial administration gained control of Chitral, this fighting force was turned into a corps of labourers. Members of the force were, from then on, known as the *boldoyo*. Their work was restricted to the construction and maintenance of infrastructure. The *boldoyo* built forts,

roads and bridges, and repaired military installations. Members of the prominent tribes who had previously participated in the defence of the state now performed manual labour. Once the new Bodyguards were created in 1909, men from the prominent tribes thronged to enlist in that force. The smaller, less prominent tribes continued to work as *boldoyo*.

Although the gazetteer of 1928 categorises the *boldoyo* as part of the defence forces, they received no military training and the nature of their work had no direct bearing on the defence of the state. The number of *boldoyo* companies requisitioned from various districts in the year 1928 is shown in Table 3. These companies, each consisting of 100 men, were summoned in rotation to work on a variety of projects. They constructed water channels to irrigate wasteland in areas such as lower Bakarabad, Balach, Balausht and Dolomuch (Ghufran 1962: 102); built rest houses in towns such as Barenis, Booni, Harchin, Koghuzi, Mastuj and Reshun (Ghufran 1962: 219–221, TRC 28: 34); and raised granaries in a number of locations including Ayun, Booni, Charun, Chitral, Drasun, Drosh, Garam Chashma, Grim Lasht, Koghuzi, Lasht Yarkhun, Mastuj, Parpish, Shagram and Shoghore (GoI 1928: 68).

Table 3: Boldoyo Companies (1928)

Area	Number of companies
Drosh and Kuh	1
Kosht	1
Mulkhow	2
Ojhor	1
Ovir	1
Torkhow	2

Source: GoI 1928

The routine repair of roads and bridges, meanwhile, was traditionally the responsibility of local villagers. The people themselves provided timber for the bridges, and the work was supervised by the area *charvelu* and his assistants.

Carpenters

A group of carpenters worked for the state. The most highly skilled craftsmen belonged to the Khow and Kalash tribes. The nature of their duties depended on the urgency of the work. In the later Katoor period, a separate company was created, made up solely of carpenters. These men belonged to a number of different tribes and worked throughout the year. In return for their labour, they received cash, clothing and grain (H. Mohammad 1983).

Levy Company

In the later Katoor period, the colonial administration created a Levy Company, a small force of irregulars charged with the responsibility of protecting the state postal service from Lowari to Drosh and Chitral.

The organisational structure of the Levy Company was similar to that of the State Bodyguard Force, with its own *subedar*, *jamadar* and as many as 108 men of various ranks (GoI 1928: 62). Known locally as ‘Loi’, the Levies escorted all incoming and outgoing mail across the Lowari pass. They provided protection to the postal service and were not responsible for mail distribution.

Besides their duties connected with the postal service, men from the Levy Company were also stationed at

During the winter, the entire Chitral valley is hemmed in by snow.

Arandu throughout the year to transmit information from the border authorities and monitor the frontier with Afghanistan. In addition, 10 men from the company, led by a *havaldar*, guarded the state treasury at the Chitral fort (GoI 1928: 62). In daylight hours during the summer, they had the added responsibility of patrolling the Chitral side of the Lowari pass (GoI 1928: 62).

Transport and Communications

Throughout Chitral, settlements have sprung up in narrow valleys surrounded by towering peaks. In many places, streams and rivers run through deep mountain gorges. During the winter, the entire valley is hemmed in by snow, impeding the movement not only of mechanised vehicles but also pedestrians. Even today, this rugged terrain with its harsh winters poses serious difficulties for transport and communications.

Telegraph and Telephone

The idea of constructing a telegraph line between Chitral and Gilgit came up for discussion during the 1892 visit to Chitral of the British Indian authorities for talks with Amanul Mulk (Curzon 1926: 108). But it was only in 1895, after British occupation of the area, that telegraph and telephone services were actually introduced.

Just days after the British relief force entered Chitral in April 1895, putting an end to the siege of the Chitral fort, an experimental telegraph line was installed over the Lowari pass (Thomson 1981: 234). In 1903, Chitral and Gilgit were fully linked via telegraph (Ghufran 1962: 182). The Mastuj fort was linked by both telephone and telegraph with the capital the following year, when the telegraph line over the

Lowari pass was upgraded to a telephone line.

The British were keen to develop dependable lines of communication across the state. Telephone lines were set up to connect all district headquarters, summer stations and important villages to the capital. Technicians were called in from India to train local men in operating the system, while repairs were carried out by locals under the supervision of the *charvelu*. Operators and linemen received a regular salary from the state (H. A . S. Khan 1992).

To fund this operation, a tax of one rupee per family was imposed on all citizens, with the promise that use of the new telephone service would be free of charge (A. Hamza 1997). Subsequently, however, telephone connections were only provided to forts, state summer residences and other important installations. In the districts, the people were on occasion permitted to use these telephones at no charge, but this was not the case in the capital. Private telephone lines were installed as late as 1954, long after the British authorities had quit Chitral.

State Luggage

If nothing else, British occupation brought a measure of stability to an area that was forever embroiled in political turmoil. With British troops permanently stationed in Chitral and the colonial administration in control of a number of neighbouring areas—Gilgit had fallen to the British in 1885, while Dir and Swat were occupied in 1895—the threat of both internal wars and attacks from neighbouring states abated. With this uneasy peace, trade and commerce within Chitral received a boost while the pace of imports and exports picked up.

During this period, many articles of daily use were brought to Chitral from markets in large cities across the region including Badakhshan, Kashghar and Peshawar. After crossing the Lowari pass, these goods were carted to the capital by a system known as *barbara*. Goods intended for the personal use of the Mehtar were hauled from one village to the next by men from the *boldoyo* corps working in rotation, until the consignment reached Chitral. In lower Chitral, the Rayat also performed this task (Bakhdur 1985).

Automobiles

Until 1927, automobiles were not seen in Chitral. In that year, Shujaul Mulk ordered a single car for exclusive use by the royal family. Since there were no metalled roads leading in to Chitral, the vehicle had to be dismantled, carried over the Lowari pass by pack animals and reassembled in Chitral. Roads in Chitral town were soon widened to accommodate the Mehtar's car (S. Khan 1995).

Social Services

Islamic education was introduced in the time of the Raees Mehtars, while modern health care facilities only became available after the British took control of the region.

Education

The Raees awarded considerable importance to religious education, both for their own children as well as the population at large. The Persian

language was introduced in the court of the Mehtar, and served as the medium for all state correspondence and written communication. Scholars were employed to tutor Chitral's young noblemen and princes in the masterpieces of Persian literature, but no formal curriculum or system of examinations was developed. The princes of the ruling family received instruction within the capital fort in Chitral. Tutors were also engaged to teach religion to the princesses, who received no other formal education.

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Theologians were encouraged to spread the teachings of Islam among the people. In areas such as Chitral town, Drosh, Mulkhow and Torkhow, theologians were employed by the state, and given land and other incentives. While religious men offered Islamic education to the general population, formal state-sponsored religious institutions were not established (Ghufran 1962: 44). No *darul uloom* (house of knowledge) or Islamic university was set up in any part of the state. Instead, in larger settlements, mosques served as centres of religious learning.

Among the early Katoor Mehtars, Muhtaram Shah Katoor II is said to have taken a keen interest in religious pursuits. He established religious schools in a number of areas including Ayun, Broze, Kuju, Madak and Orghoch (Ghufran 1962: 101, 144).

During the later Katoor period, when Chitral was administered by the British colonial authorities, education received a greater degree of official patronage. During the reign of Shujaul Mulk, elementary schools for boys were set up in Chitral, Drasun, Drosh, Garam Chashma, Mastuj, Reshun and Shagram. Here, children studied Persian literature along with religion (Mulk 1971: 75). Teachers in these schools received grain from the state.

For the first time in Chitral's history, Shujaul Mulk sent his sons abroad to acquire a modern education. The princes travelled to far-off places such as Aligarh, Deradun and Peshawar, accompanied by the sons of notables who were schooled at state expense (M. J. Shah 1992).

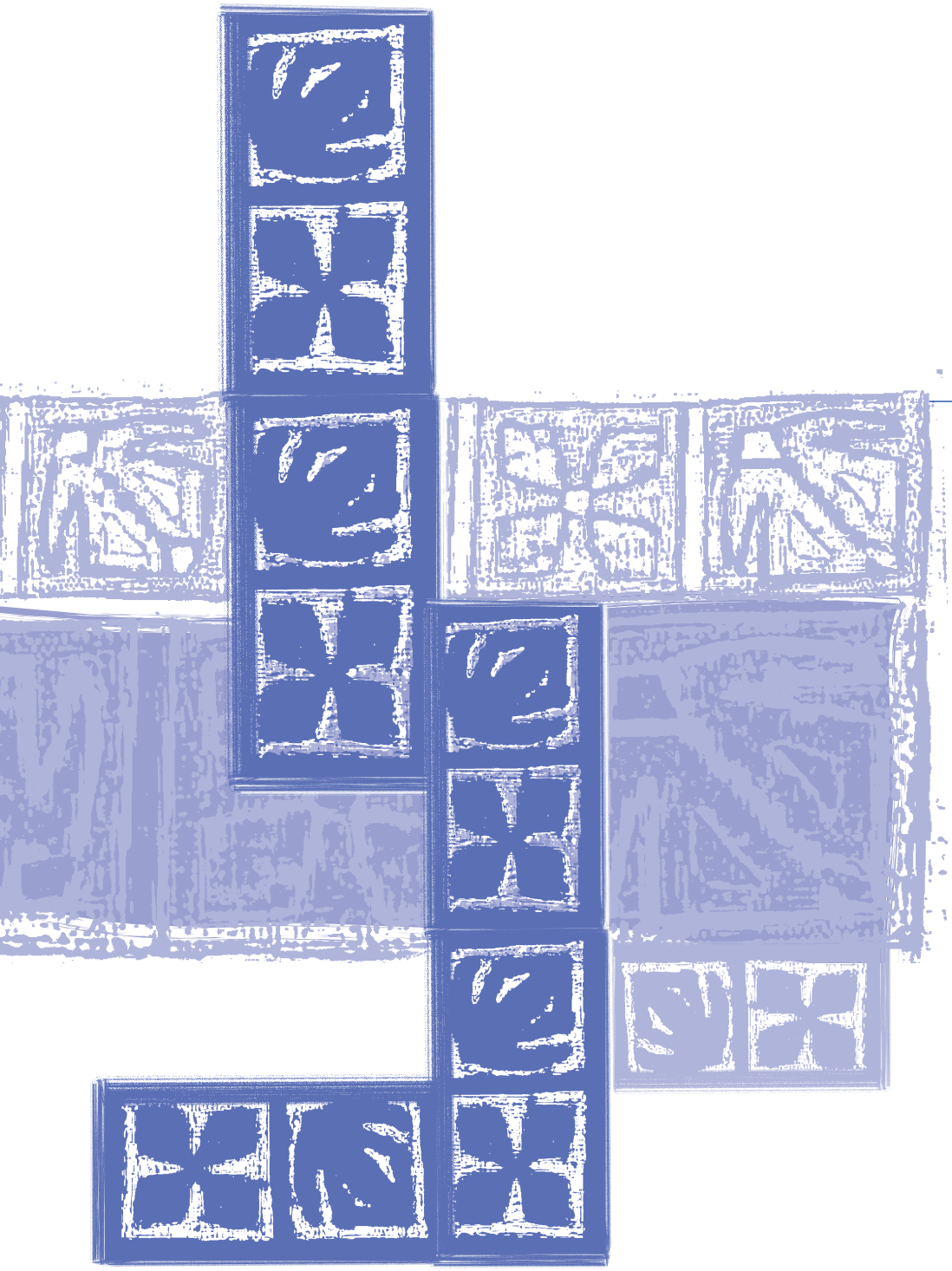
Shujaul Mulk's son, Mohammad Nasirul Mulk, who became Mehtar in 1936, was a graduate of Islamia College, Peshawar. During his reign, he improved education in Chitral and is regarded as the founder of modern schooling in the area. In 1938, he set up the first Anglo-Vernacular Middle School, staffed by qualified teachers from Peshawar. This institution adopted the curriculum of the Education Department of the North-West Frontier Province.

Health Care

The concept of a public health service was unknown to Chitral. Medicines prepared from locally available herbs

were used to treat a variety of ailments. *Tabibs* (physicians) were renowned for their knowledge of herbal and traditional medicine. Despite their skills, the health of the general population left much to be desired. Epidemics were common, and ailments such as cholera, hepatitis and tuberculosis were rampant. The royal household also employed the services of the *tabibs*.

In the later Katoor period, the British authorities introduced modern medical facilities to Chitral, building two hospitals, one each in Chitral and Drosh. These were staffed by qualified doctors and paramedics, and pharmaceutical medicines were made available. A third hospital, planned for Bumbagh in upper Chitral, was never built (GoI 1928: 31). These medical facilities served both the Mehtar and the people. The doctor at the Chitral hospital worked as the court physician.



Law AND JUSTICE

Prior to the Raees invasion of 1320, which brought the Chitral area under the rule of a single Mehtar, the region was controlled by minor princes and local chiefs who headed their own principalities. Once the Raees came to power, a unified system of administration was developed. Taxation and land assessment began to be formalised, and state duties were delegated to various classes and tribes. It was also under the Raees Mehtars that a multi-tiered judicial system was introduced.

The state of Chitral was governed through a compact system with the Mehtar at the helm of affairs, surrounded by a powerful aristocracy. Unlike a number of neighbouring states and territories that were also dominated by tribal affiliations, in Chitral the rule of law prevailed for many centuries. Chitrali society was well ordered and the people were by and large law abiding. Of course, disputes between individuals or groups arise in any society. In Chitral, such cases were resolved under customary law or Islamic law, as well as through executive fiat.

The Mehtar held the ultimate authority to decide cases and was not averse to flaunting his power by handing out arbitrary decisions: "The administration of justice was practically the will of the ruler, though nominally the precepts of the Shariyat [sic] are observed. In some cases, the intervention of the Moolahs [sic] is useful" (Biddulph 1977 [1880]: 66).

While such occasions were not uncommon, particularly in disputes involving land, the dispensation of justice was for the most part governed by a combination of customary and Islamic law, administered through formal judicial procedures.

Outside the capital, the Mehtars set up a local-level judicial administration, appointing village *qazis* (Islamic judges). Senior *qazis* were employed to oversee groups of villages and empowered to decide criminal cases referred to them by order of the Mehtar (Ghufran 1962: 56–57). The *qazis* were authorised to receive tithes from the villages under them (Ghufran 1962: 56).

Judicial Mechanisms

Until Amanul Mulk's death in 1892, a department of justice did not exist. The Mehtar himself disposed of cases related to property. Since he exercised de facto ownership over all land in the state, he decided land disputes according to his own discretion (Ghufran 1962: 150). Criminal matters were decided by a jury of Muslim theologians in the royal court (Din 1987: 37). Civil cases were frequently decided by the Mehtar after consulting with notables and state servants in the Mahraka (Mulk 1971: 55).

Mahraka

In the Mahraka, held daily to dispose of state business, petitioners would appear to present their cases. On such occasions, the Mehtar would be seated with his secretary on the ground before him. Bodyguards would guide each petitioner to the Mehtar, where they would submit a written application or plead their case verbally.

Thereafter, dignitaries and state servants in attendance reflected on various aspects of the case. If the defendant happened to be present, he or she would be called upon to respond. The Mehtar listened to all the sides and delivered his decision, which was written on to the petition. The ruler's judgement would be carried out by a *mahram* (Din 1987: 37).

No higher courts existed for appeal or review. Rather, all appeals were directed to the Mehtar. This simple procedure continued to operate until British occupation.

Kausal

Shujaul Mulk established the Kausal (judicial council) in 1909 as part of a wider effort to reorganise the judicial system. The Kausal was empowered to

hear both civil and criminal cases (Ghufran 1962: 217). Initially, this body was made up of five seasoned notables belonging to different areas but membership was later increased to 10 men (Scott 1937: 19). Some 30 notables were selected from across the state and called upon to serve on the Kausal in rotation (Scott 1937: 19). Each member was required to serve for no less than six months at a stretch, and received free boarding and lodging in addition to a monthly stipend of 10 rupees.

At least one of the 10 members of the Kausal was a theologian, appointed to advise the body on matters related to the Shariah (Islamic law), although judgements of the Kausal itself were not based on the Shariah. Rather, members drew on a combination of customary law and the executive orders of the Mehtar. Cases to be tried strictly under Islamic law were referred directly to the Mizan-e-Shariah.

Judicial council sub-committees, also known as *kausal*, operated in each district to conduct inquires into local cases referred to them by the Kausal in the Mehtar's court. These lower councils were made up of experienced notables of the area, assisted by the district civil hierarchy as well as the local *qazi* (judge) and *mufti* (jurist) (Ghufran 1962: 217; GoI 1928: 69). During the later years of Shujaul Mulk's reign, a third tier was added to this structure when village committees were set up. With these committees empowered to settle petty disputes, appellants were provided the opportunity to appeal to a higher judicial council, or to the Mehtar himself.

A citizen of the state was not required to navigate this judicial procedure and could instead appeal directly to the Mehtar in the Mahraka.

Mizan-e-Shariah

Since the early years of Raees rule, Islamic law was used in combination with customary law (Ghufran 1962: 217). The early system of Islamic law was administered by local *qazis* and no record of its operation was maintained. Under Shujaul Mulk's reorganisation, the judicial system began to operate at the grassroots level. In 1909, the Mehtar constituted an Islamic court known as the Mizan-e-Shariah ('scales of the Shariah') to decide civil disputes related to business, inheritance, marriage and divorce as well as criminal cases such as murder.

The Mehtar held the ultimate authority to decide cases and was not averse to flaunting his power by handing out arbitrary decisions.

The Mizan was headed by a *qaziul quza* (chief justice) and comprised four to six reputable theologians, all of whom were appointed by the Mehtar himself (Scott 1937: 19). The chief *qazi* and other theologians received room and board as well as grain from the state, in accordance with their rank in the judicial hierarchy (Scott 1937: 19).

Besides hearing cases, members of the Mizan reviewed decisions of district *qazis* and submitted their comments to

the Mehtar for approval (B. Ayub 1992). The Mehtar would seek the advice of the *qaziul quza* before placing his own signature on the final ruling. The document was then sent to the Kausal, where it was included in the official record. In cases where the Mehtar disagreed with the Mizan's decision, the papers would be returned for the court's consideration.

Documentation

No written records of civil or criminal cases were maintained until the time of Amanul Mulk's death (Ghufran 1962: 150). Shujaul Mulk, who was installed as Mehtar in 1895, reviewed this procedure. The Kausal established in 1909 was authorised to receive written petitions which were entered into the official record (Ghufran 1962: 217). In a second phase of reorganisation, started in 1915, stamp papers were made available to petitioners upon payment of a fee and, from then on, applications on plain paper were not accepted. In this way, the judicial system began to be documented and modernised.

Customary Law

At various stages throughout its early history, the Chitral region was invaded by armies from China, Gandhara and Persia. Repeated foreign occupation left its mark on the collective life of the area's inhabitants not only in terms of culture and religion, but also with regard to local laws and administrative mechanisms. Many of the procedures implemented by early conquerors, such as laws governing the distribution of natural resources, were subsequently adopted by the people and remained in force for many generations. As such, it is not surprising that a rich and diverse body of customary law evolved to govern social interaction.

Although no written legal tradition was developed, a complex code of conduct existed to cover virtually all aspects of daily life. This body of customary law served as a foundation for the legal system devised by the Raees and Katoor Mehtars.

The people of Chitral were by and large law abiding. The tribal culture of the area created stiff competition between rival clans to enhance their prestige in the eyes of the Mehtar. One of the ways in which this could be achieved was by obeying the law of the land. But even where prominent tribes might have considered disobedience, the state kept a close eye on their activities. With the political necessity of currying favour with the Mehtar and the state's constant vigilance, infractions of the law occurred only rarely.

Collective Responsibility

A unique feature of customary law was the concept of collective responsibility. If a criminal remained at large and fellow villagers were unable to determine the whereabouts of the offender, payment of compensation to the victim became the collective responsibility of the entire village. This practice evolved out of necessity since no law-enforcement agencies existed until as recently as 1953, when a police force was established. Before then, the people were not only held accountable for crimes committed in their areas but also required to flush out the criminal (Ghufran 1962: 217). To this end, they were provided gifts and incentives, while a few particularly cold-blooded individuals actually volunteered to work as spies for

the state. Later, during the reign of Shujaul Mulk, a secret intelligence service was established, headed by a *muharir* (head constable) in each village. This move is said to have lowered the crime rate (Lockhart ca. 1896: 2).

Social obligations, such as participation in death rites, and responsibility for community infrastructure projects were also shouldered equally by all residents of a village. Widows and orphans were exempt from this responsibility.

Murder

A man who killed his wife for alleged infidelity was not punishable under the law. In other cases of murder, the perpetrator could pay *lei* (blood money) to the family of the deceased. If the victim's heirs were not satisfied simply with compensation, they were entitled to demand that the murderer be put to death. Coincidentally, this particular principle of customary law is similar to the penalties for murder laid out in the Shariah.

In cases where the victim's family demanded the murderer's blood, the culprit would either be shot or beheaded. Execution was normally carried out by one of the victim's heirs although the state also provided this service. Punishment was meted out without delay and a murderer's property was confiscated. Where a murderer escaped apprehension, the payment of blood money became the collective responsibility of the entire village (Mulk 1971: 60). Interestingly, here customary law diverges from the Shariah which does not support collective punishment.

Treason

High treason was punishable by death. On occasion, the life of a person found guilty of treason would be spared and they would instead be sent into exile. In both cases, land belonging to the accused would be confiscated.

Theft

Even though the Raees Mehtars were Muslims, they honoured customary laws that in many cases went against the precepts of the Shariah. In cases of theft, for instance—which was incidentally a rare occurrence (O' Brien 1985: 10)—Islamic punishment involving the amputation of a hand was not meted out. Instead, if the crime was proved, the culprit was made to return what had been stolen or to pay double its value in cash. The offender would also be subject to a fine (Ghufran 1962: 218) and, occasionally, a term in prison (Lockhart ca. 1896: 2). Since no formal prisons existed, convicts were incarcerated in underground dungeons beneath old forts.

Repeated foreign occupation left its mark on the collective life of the area's inhabitants not only in terms of culture and religion, but also with regard to local laws and administrative mechanisms.

Prosecution and Imprisonment

The state could prosecute crimes on its own authority. No office akin to that of a public prosecutor existed and these responsibilities were performed by other state officials. Imprisonment was not strictly part of the legal tradition, although holding cells existed where persons under investigation were detained.

Representation

A delegation of elders was permitted to appear on behalf of the accused, to plead their case to the aggrieved party. The plaintiff too was entitled to representation. Such interventions were always honoured and could be repeated if initial attempts failed to result in reconciliation.

Succession to the Throne

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of customary law—and arguably a custom with the greatest impact on Chitrali society—was the absence of a law of succession. There were many occasions on which the transfer of power occurred smoothly, often because the Mehtar had the foresight to nominate a successor, as was the case with Muhtaram Shah II who named Shah Afzal as his heir. But even when a ruling Mehtar appointed a successor, this was no guarantee that the transfer of power would take place without bloodshed, as the Mehtar had perhaps intended. For instance, Amanul Mulk nominated his eldest son, Nizamul Mulk, as heir to the throne. At the time of Amanul Mulk's death, however, the crown prince was based in Yasin. In his absence, his younger brother Afzalul Mulk was crowned Mehtar.

A Mehtar's demise almost invariably led to chaos. Upon the ruler's death, a power struggle would ensue and the victor became the new Mehtar.

When no such prior arrangements had been made, a Mehtar's demise almost invariably led to chaos. Upon the ruler's death, a power struggle would ensue and the victor became the new Mehtar. Within the ruling family, there were many claimants to the throne besides the Mehtar's own sons. In the case of Sher Afzal and Afzalul Mulk, whose forces faced each other in November 1892, the battle of succession was fought between nephew and uncle. On other occasions the throne was contested by brothers, as with Shah Afzal II and Tajamul Shah who fought each other in 1838. In such cases power went to the bravest and most cunning son, not necessarily the eldest. These battles were all in the family and no outsider ever staked a claim to the throne of Chitral in a war of succession.

Natural Resources

Rights over water, wildlife, hunting, grazing, minerals, timber, firewood and hay collection were in the hands of various clans and tribes. Watersheds

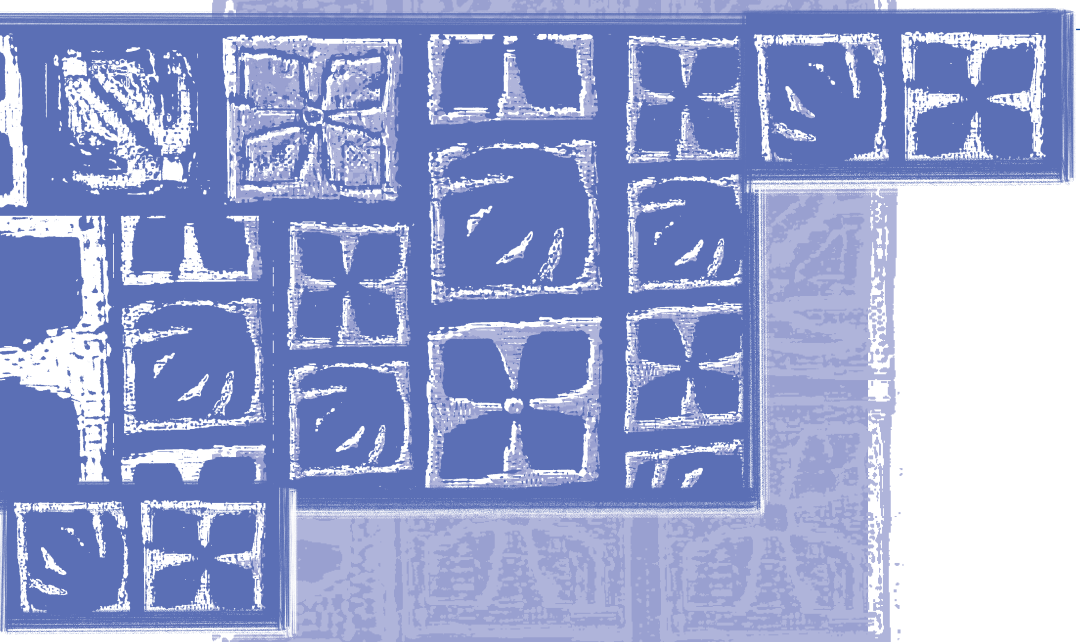
served as the boundary between the holdings of different groups or individuals. These borders were clearly defined and violations were punishable with fines imposed by the Mehtar.

A water rationing system was implemented and followed by each village according to its own needs. Rationing rules differed from place to place and disputes were decided by the notables of the area. Hunting rights, meanwhile, were restricted and poachers faced stiff fines as well as confiscation of weapons, equipment and hunted meat. If poaching occurred on state reserves, fines and confiscated goods went to the Mehtar. On private reserves, they accrued to the owner.

Inheritance and Family Law

In Chitrali society, the youngest son traditionally inherited his father's house while older sons received land on which to build their own homes. Women were not permitted to inherit land. The estate of a man who died without leaving a male heir was taken over by the state. Daughters were, however, permitted to receive land from their fathers during his lifetime and such a gift was known as *dukhtar bashu*. After his death, a man's daughters were only permitted to inherit livestock and articles of daily use.

Disputes over inheritance, divorce, dowry and subsistence allowances were decided by the elders of the area and their decision could not be challenged. In cases where fines were imposed, the amount collected went to the *cheq mehtar* of the district and, later, the governor.



Religious AFFAIRS

There is evidence to suggest that Buddhists and Zoroastrians lived in the Chitral area as far back as the second and third centuries BC. By the 7th century AD, Buddhism flourished in the region. In the 10th century Chitral was overrun by Arabs, leading to the introduction of Islam in the area. Each wave of invasion left its mark on the cultural and religious life of the people. As such, no single faith dominated the area prior to the advent of the Raees Mehtars. At the time of Shah Nadir's push into the valley, Kalash tribes controlled lower Chitral while the Sumaleki princes held upper Chitral.

The Raees Mehtars, themselves Sunni Muslims, encouraged the teaching of Islam and introduced the Shariah, appointing *qazis* to decide local cases (Ghufran 1962: 44). Some three centuries later, the Katoors received theologians from as far afield as India, Kabul, Turkistan, Samarqand, Bukhara, Kashghar and Iran, appointed them to ecclesiastical offices across Chitral, where they were required to preach the injunctions of Islam (Ghufran 1962: 379–388).

In the early years of Raees rule, the Kalash tribes were subjected to religious persecution. But for several centuries thereafter, under the Raees and Katoor Mehtars, the state's policy towards religious minorities was one of tolerance. The year 1895 marked a turning point in the history of Chitral in more ways than one. While this was the year in which the British colonial authorities occupied Chitral, it was also the time when the tradition of religious tolerance was abandoned.

Prior to the arrival of the British, the political turmoil and uncertainly that often prevailed in the state required the Mehtar to garner the support of as many of his subjects as possible. Religious tolerance of minority communities, it seems, was part of a wider political agenda. Once the British took over, the Mehtar derived his authority from the colonial administration and no longer depended on the support of his subjects. This shift in the power equation began during the reign of Shujaul Mulk, the first British-installed Mehtar.

The Kalash

The main Chitral valley came under the control of the Raees in 1320, bringing to an end Kalash rule in lower Chitral.

Under Shah Nadir, the first Raees Mehtar, the defeated Kalash tribes were enslaved and made to perform menial labour. Rather than endure this humiliation, many preferred to abandon their homes, migrating to the Kalash-dominated valleys of Birir, Bomboret and Rumbur, located in south-western Chitral. But in Chitral town, Drosh and the surrounding areas, more than half the Kalash population submitted to the dictates of the new ruler and converted to Islam, quite possibly as a result of direct pressure exerted by the Mehtar (Ghufran 1962: 28, 29, 37, 40, 45).

Over the next 30 years, the boundaries of the Raees state expanded further south. During this phase of expansion, no further Kalash tribes were rendered homeless and no mass migrations occurred. Of course many of the Kalash tribes who lived in these areas had already been forcibly converted to Islam (Ghufran 1962: 41). By this time, though, even those who refused to convert were not compelled to abandon their own faith, either by the state or by a religious movement of the Muslim majority.

The Kalash belief system does not involve an organised hierarchy of religious functionaries, nor is it a missionary faith whose followers might have posed a threat to the new Muslim ruler of Chitral. The Raees soon realised that the Kalash posed no threat to Islam. At the same time, it seems that the early strong-arm tactics employed by Shah Nadir had succeeded in subjugating this segment of the population. Once it became clear that the Kalash would put up no resistance to the Raees rulers, either politically or on the religious front, no further persecution occurred.

By the time the Katoor Mehtars came to power, the state was riddled with internal

strife and vulnerable to foreign invasion, not to mention the constant challenge posed by their rival Khushwakhte rulers. In a tense and fragile situation such as this, the Katoors wisely chose not to alienate any section of the population by interfering in matters of faith.

Shia Ismailis

Before the advent of the Raees, upper Chitral was ruled by the Sumaleki princes. The people in this area had been introduced to Islam following the Arab invasion in the 10th century AD. In 1320, as Shah Nadir tightened his grip on Chitral, the valley also saw the arrival of a different kind of newcomer. Taj Mughal, a *dai* (preacher), travelled to Chitral from Khurasan in Persia, which was then the centre of the Shia Ismailis.

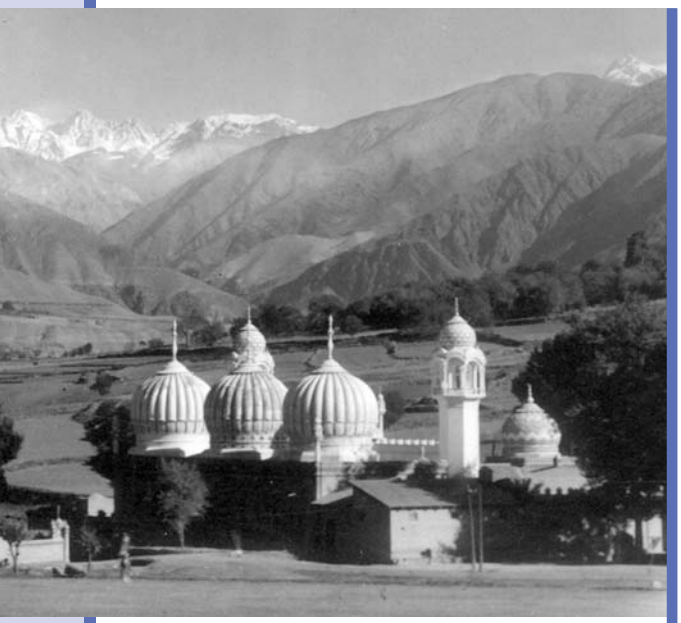
Although Islam had been introduced to the area some three centuries earlier, it had not been widely accepted by the local population. It was only with the arrival of Taj Mughal that Islam spread far and wide across Gilgit and upper Chitral (Ghufran 1962: 27, 28). Subsequently, a vast majority of the people of upper Chitral embraced the Ismaili sect, partly as a result of the work of Ismaili missionaries. In the valleys of Mastuj, Mulkhow and Torkhow in upper Chitral as well as Lotkuh in lower Chitral, Ismailis were in the majority.

Both the Raees and Katoor ruling families adhered to Sunni Islam, as did the Khushwakhte clan, the traditional rivals of the Katoors. The only exception was Shah Khairullah of the Khushwakhte family, who was an Ismaili. The Sunni rulers accepted Ismailis as equals. Ismaili Syeds were held in high esteem by the Mehtars and awarded the same status as Sunni *ulema* (theologians) in the royal court.

As a general rule in this part of the world, the religion or sect of the ruling family becomes the dominant faith among the people. So too was the case in Chitral under the Mehtars, who did nothing to propagate other faiths or sects. Ismailis were for the most part restricted to their own pockets. Although they received no official encouragement or support in matters of religion, they continued to enjoy equal status as citizens of the state. For several centuries, Sunnis and Shia Ismailis lived side by side without any overt hostility towards each other (Curzon 1926: 98).

Prior to the rule of Shujaul Mulk, Ismailis were not persecuted or victimised by the state. Under Shujaul Mulk, however, the state deviated from its time-honoured policy of religious tolerance. Tensions between the Shujaul Mulk and his Ismaili subjects began with their opposition to *ushr* taxes imposed by the ruler. In 1917, an Ismaili movement to resist *ushr* was brutally put down in Mastuj district by the state authorities. This resistance was most unexpected, since Ismailis had in the past been nothing but loyal and obedient to their Mehtar. The authorities cracked down hard on those suspected of involvement in the resistance and deported the leader of the movement, Bulbul Shah, to northern Afghanistan.

Bulbul Shah, who hailed from Mastuj, was a highly respected Ismaili Syed and a prominent local religious leader (TRC 312: 75, 111–113). His deportation was viewed by the Ismailis with outrage and seen as proof of the tyranny perpetrated against their community. The move was widely resented by Ismailis across Chitral, further alienating the community and giving rise to civil unrest.



Chitral's Jamia Mosque was constructed in 1935.

Not surprisingly, the events of 1917 led the Ismailis to become guarded about their own affairs. When disputes arose within the community, local leaders would step in to resolve matters without involving the state authorities, much to the annoyance of the Mehtar. By this time, Shujaul Mulk had begun to entertain misgivings about the activities of certain Ismaili Syed leaders, whom he suspected of spying for the rulers of Badakhshan and Gilgit.

In 1923, Sabz Ali, a missionary from India, travelled to the Ismaili-dominated areas of Chitral. He advised his fellow Ismailis to live in peace but to continue deciding internal matters under the auspices of their own village committees. Following his departure, a report of his activities was submitted to the Mehtar, who suspected an Ismaili revolt or revivalist movement was in the making. Fearing a threat to his authority, he attempted to forcibly convert Ismailis to Sunni Islam, leading to even wider unrest.

Eventually, the British authorities intervened. The colonial authorities constituted an inquiry under Major Hopkinson, who submitted his findings in a detailed report. This document unveiled the motives of the Mehtar, which included converting the Ismailis to Sunni Islam. The British instructed Shujaul Mulk to refrain from further persecution of the Ismailis. A Mehtar installed by the British had little choice but to obey his masters. Subsequently, a "patch-up was brought about between the Mehtar and the heads of the Ismaili community through the efforts of the Political Agent of Malakand" (TRC 312: 32–36). In 1926, at the behest of the British government, Shujaul Mulk declared an amnesty for all Ismailis.

Shujaul Mulk was content to let the matter rest for the remainder of his years in power. A second attempt to impose Sunni Islam on the Ismailis was made in 1936 by Mohammad Nasirul Mulk soon after he was installed as Mehtar. This time round, the Mehtar threatened to confiscate property and withdraw privileges, while at the same time offering land, money, clothing and horses as bait to those who converted. There were some who could not resist the temptation but the majority of Ismailis refused to compromise and instead fled their homes, taking refuge outside Chitral. Many went to Bombay, which was by that time the seat of their spiritual leader, Sir Sultan Mahomed Shah, Aga Khan III. Others travelled to Kashghar in eastern Turkistan and to Zebak in the Badakhshan province of Afghanistan. Following this exodus, in Chitral itself a large-scale boycott of Ismailis was organised. For several months, members of the community were denied access to critical resources and facilities such as roads and water channels.

Bashgalis

Although it was technically part of Afghanistan, the Bashgal area was never fully under Kabul's control. The only real sign of Afghan suzerainty here was the tribute paid by Bashgalis to the Amir (ruler) of Kabul in the form of *ghee* (clarified butter), oxen, horses, goat and sheep.

The people of Bashgal were known by the Chitralis as red Kafirs, owing to their ruddy complexion. Their religious beliefs revolved around the worship of various gods and goddesses. They were ruled by the Mehtars of Chitral at various points in history (Ghufran 1962: 33, 41, 59). Until the 1890s, the Mehtars did not interfere with the religious beliefs of the Bashgalis.

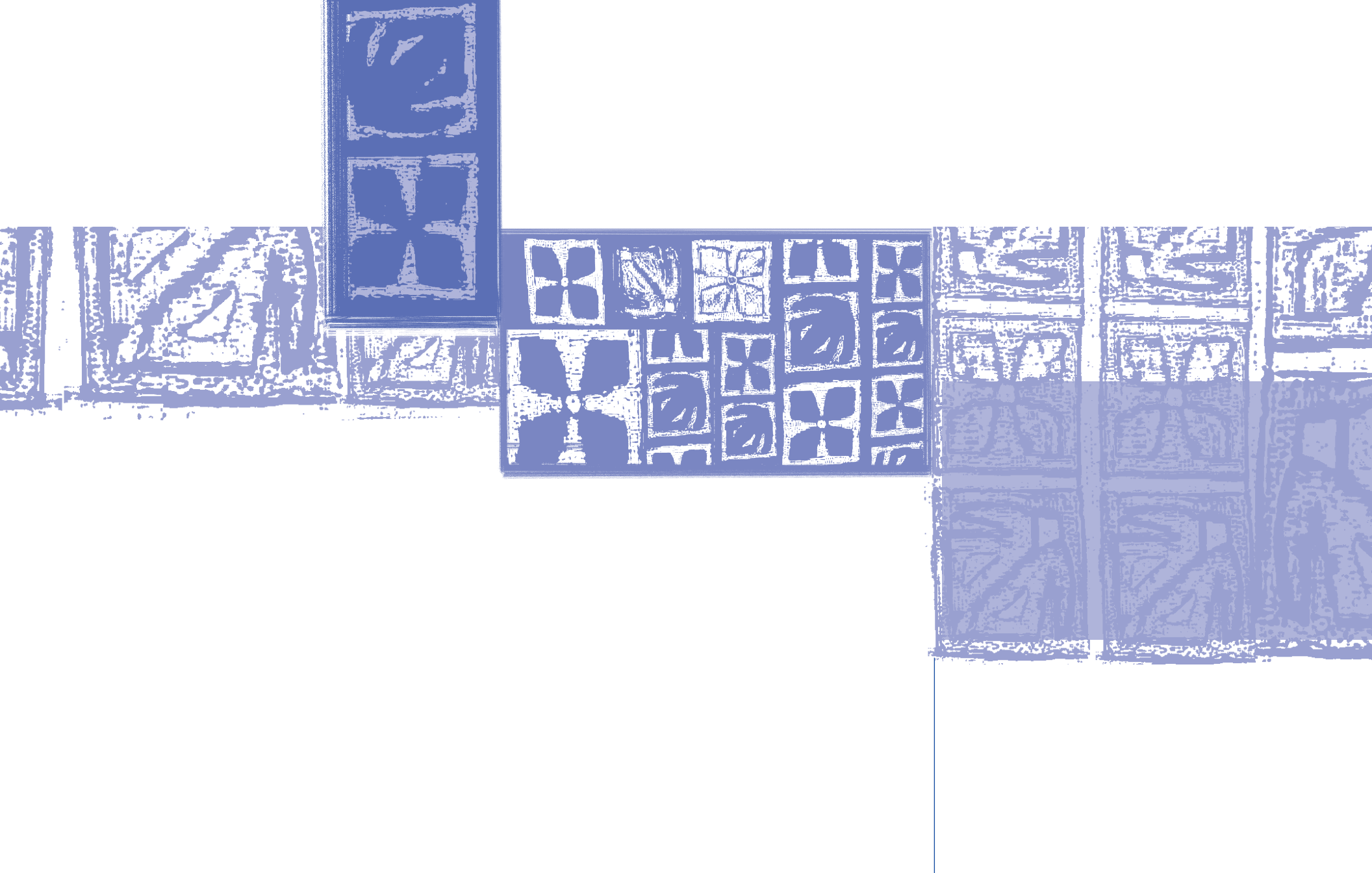
Chitral's shift in policy towards the people of Bashgal began in 1890, when the villages of Govardesh and Kamdesh in Bashgal were subdued by the Mehtar of Chitral. Under their headman Shitaluk, the Bashgalis in these areas agreed to pay a tribute to the Mehtar, detaching themselves from the Afghan Amir Abdur Rehman Khan.

This arrangement remained in place until 1892, when a faction of Bashgalis revolted against Amanul Mulk, who was then the Mehtar. Their refusal to pay the tribute sparked a retaliatory attack from the ruler of Chitral. A few months before his death, Amanul Mulk's forces besieged the Bashgalis, hundreds of whom were captured and brought to Chitral. Many subsequently converted to Islam and settled in Chitral (Ghufran 1962: 126). Over the next two years, even as the seat of power in Chitral itself was rapidly changing hands, the Bashgal valleys were repeatedly invaded by Chitral's rulers. The initial assault took place in 1892, just months before Amanul Mulk's death. The onslaught continued in the period of political turmoil that followed, first under the command of Amanul Mulk's son, Afzalul Mulk, who was Mehtar for less than three months; and later under Amanul Mulk's brother Sher Afzal, who retained the seat of power from November to December 1892. The Bashgal valleys were invaded again under Nizamul Mulk, who became Mehtar in December 1892. Throughout this period, Bashgalis were forced to convert to Islam.

In 1894, the Afghan Amir managed to regain Govardesh and Kamdesh, sending troops into these areas. To avoid large-scale bloodshed and avert the wrath of Abdur Rehman, the Bashgalis here, comprising less than 100 families, migrated to Chitral, converted to Sunni Islam and settled in the Mehtar's territory. A few years later, in 1896, Amir Abdur Rehman Khan renamed Bashgal, calling it Nuristan.

Other Religious Minorities

By the 19th century, minority communities such as the Sikhs and Hindus lived and conducted business in the Chitral and Drosh bazaars. While they virtually monopolised trade and commerce, during the reign of Amanul Mulk they were not permitted to openly practice their religion or build places of worship.



Conclusion

Situated in the heart of the Hindukush mountains, the state of Chitral enjoyed the rare advantage of natural protection from its neighbours. Largely as a result of shrewd military tactics which fully capitalised on the topography of the area, the Mehtars who ruled the state were able to defend their territory for several centuries. Isolated for the most part from its neighbours, statecraft and society in the valley of the Mehtars evolved in a direction that was unique to the region.

While the borders of the state expanded and contracted with the fate of its rulers, structures of governance and social traditions developed independently with little or no foreign influence.

The Mehtar was the source of all power in the state. Around him grew an elaborate system of administration, providing for the efficient management of distant parts of the kingdom. Within the capital fort at Chitral, which also served as the home of the Mehtar, an army of officials saw to the smooth operation of the royal household as well as matters of governance. This elaborate hierarchy was mirrored in the districts, where relatives of the Mehtar held sway.

Land was the pivot around which both state and society revolved. It was the mark of a man and a measure of his influence. A complex and subtly nuanced system of tenure evolved, covering various categories of land and types of ownership. The Mehtar enjoyed de facto rights over all land in the state and kept a tight grip on this precious resource, using it to forge the loyalties of local chiefs, aristocrats, heads of religious sects, state servants and members of the principal tribes.

Tribal chiefs played a crucial role in the defence of the state as well as day-to-day administration. Charged with the responsibility of mustering able-bodied tribesmen to fend off an enemy incursion, they vied with each other to excel in deeds of valour. In peacetime, meanwhile, they competed to outperform their rivals in the service of their Mehtar, thereby gaining not just material benefits but influence and prestige as well.

Chitral under the Mehtars was a class-conscious society and this is reflected in the social structure of the time. A privileged and powerful aristocracy lorded it over the middle classes. The entire edifice was underpinned by a nuanced and complex hierarchy of lower classes, members of which were divided into various categories of serf, bonded labourer and slave. Given the complexities of the class system one would expect it to be a rigid structure. This, though, was not always the case and a degree of social mobility was possible.

By and large, however, a few members of Chitrali society were more fortunate than most others. Along with such privilege came great responsibility. While every citizen was expected to contribute in one way or another to the functioning of the state, each man performed state service according to his status. This included a variety of responsibilities ranging from defence to menial labour.

All those who held land were subject to a host of tithes and taxes. These revenues served not only to finance the operations of the state but also to fuel its war machinery. Perhaps a sign of the times, Chitral's rulers were frequently embroiled in battle. This war culture permeated society to the extent that noblemen even attended the Mehtar's court fully armed. The Mehtar and his loyalists remained in a constant state of readiness for combat.

The history of Chitral is a rich mosaic of changing rulers, countless wars and centuries of political intrigue. What is sometimes overlooked in this maelstrom of events is the rich folklore and unique culture of the area. Sports and leisure activities were not neglected either by the Mehtars, in their constant battle to outwit their enemies, or by ordinary people who struggled daily to eke out a living. Music too was an important part

of everyday life, whether in wartime or on festive occasions.

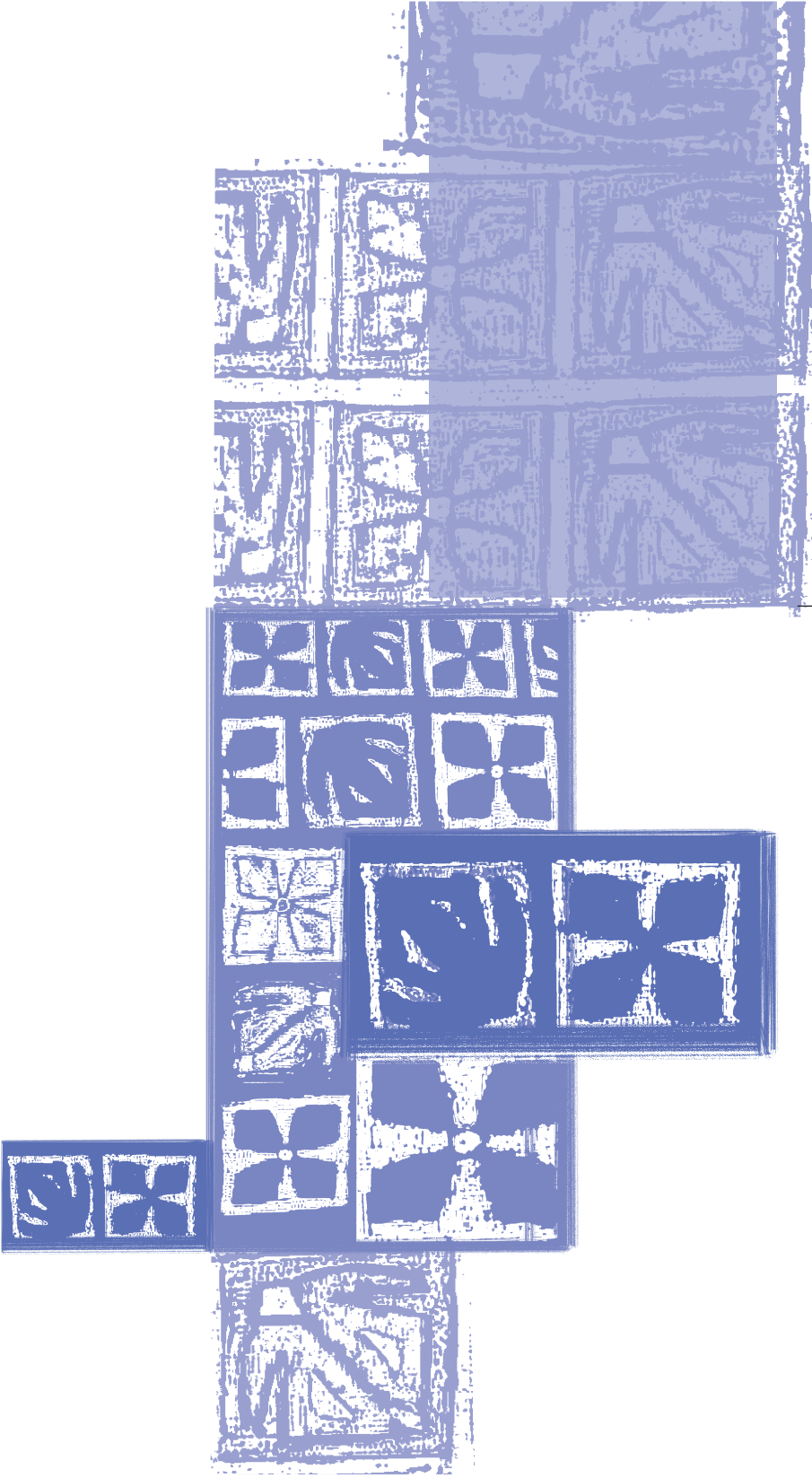
For a state that came into existence in the early years of the 14th century, Chitral was remarkable for its sophistication. Besides well-organised structures of governance, finance and land tenure, a rich tradition of customary law covered most aspects of social life. Superimposed on the body of customary law, the Mehtars developed a multi-tiered judicial system. The Shariah was introduced to cover matters not governed by customary law and the system functioned without serious conflict.

Beauty in diversity and strength in heterogeneity are reflected in the history of Chitral where, except for a few years in the early Raees period and then again in the later Katoor era, ethnic, religious and sectarian minorities lived in harmony with the majority population.

After close to seven centuries of fierce independence, in the late 19th century Chitral came under the administrative authority of the colonial government of India. Ironically, British occupation brought with it a measure of stability. With both Chitral and many of its neighbouring states held by the colonial authorities, the valley was no longer embroiled in constant warfare. Trade and commerce flourished and the people of Chitral, once isolated from the rest of the world, saw the arrival of the telephone and the automobile. Perhaps because they were freed from the responsibility of defending the borders of the state, later Mehtars looked to the outside world, bringing modern education not just to their own children but also to the people. Thus, painfully and gradually, the Chitral valley was introduced to western modernity.

The Mehtars of Chitral were powerful rulers with a strong grip on state and society. The British colonial administration allowed them full authority in the internal affairs of the state and did not disturb their power on the domestic front.

In 1947, when the British quit India, Chitral acceded to the newly created state of Pakistan but retained quasi-autonomous status. Six years later, the valley of the Mehtars was brought partially under the administrative control of the Government of Pakistan. The traditional system of statecraft was disbanded and a new administrative structure began to be established. This was followed in 1969 by the merger of Chitral state into the administrative set-up of the North-West Frontier Province and the birth of what is known today as District Chitral.



Annexes

Annex I Glossary

Adam Zada	literally, Adam + *zada* 'son' [Persian]; aristocrat; term used broadly to describe the Raees and Katoor ruling families, branches of the ruling family as well as members of the principal tribes
akhonzada	literally, *akhond* 'teacher' + *zada* 'son' [Persian]; one who teaches the Quran to children of the royal household
ambaranu	state store of food, grain and provisions [Khowar]
Amir	commander [Arabic]
andreno bup	literally, *andreno* 'of the interior' + *bup* 'father/old man' [Khowar]; man who serves in the *zenana*; selected from among the trusted adherents of the ruling family or related to a woman of the royal household
arbab	literally, 'lord' [Arabic]; *chharbu* of a large group of villages; collects revenue, implements state orders, and monitors law and order
Arbab Zada	literally, *arbab* 'lord' [Arabic] + *zada* 'son' [Persian]; middle class in traditional Chitrali society; also know as Yuft
asaqal	literally, 'white-bearded man' [Turkic]; at the centre, state minister for food and manager of the *toshakhana*, also responsible for state lands; in the district forts, *asaqals* manage the food stores
ashimat	tax on landholdings; paid in the form of meals served to the visiting Mehtar, other members of the ruling family and their entourage [Khowar]
ashimat duri	property for which tax is paid in the form of *ashimat* [Khowar]
atalegh	literally, 'elder, father or head of the family' [Turkic]; high-ranking state official in charge of military affairs
Badakhshi	person belonging to Badakhshan
Bahman-e-Kohistani	literally, 'lucky man from the mountains' [Persian]; legendary figure who ruled upper Chitral in the 10th century AD
bakarashwar	type of war music, played to signal a victory [Khowar]
banta	literally, 'division' [Urdu]; system of obligations attached to land under which a family divides its holdings into two equal parts: one half is set aside for sons opting to perform *boli* and the other half is inherited by sons who are free from the responsibility of performing state duty

banta lashta	literally, '*banta*-free' [Urdu]; those exempted from state service under the *banta* system
baramush	literally, 'barracks master' [Khowar]; at the centre, post of ministerial rank, responsible for supervising construction projects; at the district level, serves as assistant to the *charvelu*, responsible for the construction and maintenance of forts, roads and bridges; also functions as *jamadar* of the *boldoyo*
barani	rain-fed [Persian]
barbara	literally, 'carry load' [Khowar]; system of transporting goods to Chitral; men from the *boldoyo* and members of the Rayat class carry state luggage from one village to the next, all the way to the capital
bari	pack horses, mules and donkeys in the royal stables, used exclusively to carry goods [Khowar]
Bashgali	person belonging to Bashgal
bol	army; tribal defence force in the pre-British period; members of this force also man outposts, and construct and repair roads and defence installations [Khowar]
boldoyo	members of the *boli* system in the post-British period; they perform manual labour under the supervision of the *atalegh* [Khowar]
boli	literally, 'raising an army' [Khowar]; system of joint defence of the state during the pre-British period; in the post-British period, the *boli* system is restricted to the performance of manual labour
charas	cannabis
charichhin	literally, 'without fat' [Khowar]; refers to *hindal bashu* land that has changed hands frequently and is no longer fertile
charvelu	mid-ranking state official; assists *hakim* in collecting revenue, and maintaining law and order [Khowar]
cheq mehtar	subordinate mehtar; administrator of districts that lie beyond the capital; *cheq mehtars* were redesignated as governors during the British period [Khowar]
chharbu	low-ranking revenue official; assists the *baramush* and *charvelu* in matters of local administration [Khowar]
chirbrar	foster brother [Khowar]
dai	preacher [Persian]
darabi	keeper of *bari* animals [Khowar]

darali	compensation for fostering a child [Khowar]
darali zameen	land gifted, often permanently, by the Mehtar or Adam Zadas as remuneration to the foster parents of their children [Khowar]
darbar	court of the ruler; audience [Persian]
darul uloom	house of knowledge [Arabic]
darzi khana	literally, *darzi* 'tailor' + *khana* 'house' [Urdu, Persian]; tailoring house
deodar	cedar, *Cedrus deodara* [Urdu]
dhobi khana	literally, *dhobi* 'one who washes clothes' + *khana* 'house' [Urdu, Persian]; place where laundry is done
dom	musician [Sanskrit]
dukhtar bashu	literally, *dukhtar* 'daughter' [Persian] + *bashu* 'gift' [Khowar]; land gifted to a daughter; sons may inherit such land from their mothers
duri	estate or land [Khowar]; also see *galu* and *zameen*
duwanbegi	corrupted version of the Persian term *diwan-e-ganj* , meaning 'revenue officer'; minister responsible for matters related to finance; in charge of the state coffers [Turkic]
Faqir Miskeen	literally, *faqir* 'beggar' + *miskeen* 'meek' [Arabic]; term used by British colonial officers to describe the lower classes in Chitrali society
galu	land [Khowar]; also see *duri* and *zameen*
ghee	clarified butter [Urdu]
Gurkha	member of a regiment in the British colonial army established for Nepalese recruits
hakim	subordinate to the *cheq mehtar* [Arabic]
havaldar	army rank below *jamadar*; term used in the Indian subcontinent [Urdu]
hindal	person who has no male heirs [Khowar]
hindal bashu	land belonging to a person with no male heirs; such land falls into the hands of the Mehtar on the death of the owner [Khowar]
isphen	gift of cooked food served by the *yasawul* to the Mehtar's favourites in the Mahraka [Khowar]

jagir	estate [Urdu]
jagirdar	estate owner [Urdu]
jamadar	army rank below *subedar*; term used in the Indian subcontinent [Urdu]
kafir	infidel; non-believer [Arabic]
kanal	unit of area, equivalent to 1,660 square meters [Urdu]
katcha	literally, 'raw' [Urdu]; also temporary
Kausal	local pronunciation of 'council'; judicial council established by Shujaul Mulk in 1909
kausal	lower-tier judicial council committee established at the district level
Khana Zad	literally, *khana* 'house' + *zad* 'son' [Persian]; one who is 'born in the master's house'; a serf
khana zad galu	land given to a serf (*khana zad*) for subsistence purposes [Persian + Khowar]
khodai	charity [Khowar]
khodai zameen	land given by the Mehtar or members of the nobility to reputed theologians [Khowar]
Lal	literally, 'ruby' [Persian]; notable belonging to one of the principal tribes; member of the aristocracy
lei	literally, 'blood' [Khowar]; refers to blood money paid to the family of a murder victim
Loi	local pronunciation of 'levy'; refers to the Levy Company created to provide protection to the state postal service
madrassa	school for Islamic education [Arabic]
Maharaja	king or prince [Hindi]
Mahraka	audience or assembly, held twice daily; serves as an opportunity for the Mehtar to meet courtiers, discuss matters of state interest, hear petitions and decide cases [Pashto]
mahram	literally, 'constable' [Khowar]; man who resides in the Mehtar's fort but is not a state servant; usually, such individuals come to the fort for personal reasons or seeking protection from rivals

mahraman	plural of *mahram*
mahram-e-daam	literally, 'constable of the first floor' [Khowar]; visitor to the fort employed in the kitchens
mahram-e-soon	literally, 'constable of the tower' [Khowar]; visitor to the fort employed as a guard
malia	revenue [Urdu]
maund	measure of weight, roughly equal to 40 kilograms [Urdu]
meherbani	gift from the ruler or an elder [Persian]
meherbani zameen	state land granted by the Mehtars as a reward for valour or as compensation for losses suffered as the result of a natural disaster [Persian]
mehnatgar	literally, 'labourer' [Persian]; another name for members of the Rayat class
Mehtar	literally, 'leader' [Turkic]; title of the ruler of Chitral
Mehtarzhao	literally, Mehtar + *zhao* 'son' [Khowar]; descendant of the Mehtar
mershikar	chief hunter; refers to falconers [Persian]
mir	leader [Persian]
mirakhor	manager of the royal stables; keeper of *sawari* animals [Persian]
mirza	clerk [Persian]
Mizan-e-Shariah	literally, *mizan* 'scales' + Shariah 'Islamic law' [Arabic]; Islamic judicial council established by Shujaul Mulk in 1909
mufti	Islamic jurist [Arabic]
muharir	head constable of Shujaul Mulk's secret police [Arabic]
mullah	cleric [Persian, Turkic, Urdu]
octroi	duty levied on goods entering a town or city [English]
pardah	veil [Persian, Urdu]
phumbarush	literally, 'large fire with tall flames' [Khowar]; emergency signalling system using beacons
pir	elder [Persian]
ponwar	melody played when the Mehtar departs on a state visit [Khowar]

qalang	grazing tax levied on nomadic herdsmen; paid in the form of goats and butter [Persian]
qazi	Islamic judge [Arabic]
qaziul quza	Islamic chief justice [Arabic]
Rayat	literally, 'subject' [Arabic]; tenant on state land; also used to refer to members of the Kalash tribes as well as those employed in professional occupations such as musicians, falconers, blacksmiths, miners, potters and animal keepers
rayat duri	land allotted to a member of the Rayat class for subsistence farming [Khowar]
salaam	greeting [Arabic]
salar	commander of the military wing of the Muslim League political party [Urdu]
sarai	place where mercenaries and traders rest during their travels [Persian]
sarkar	literally, 'tiller' [Persian, Urdu]; second-in-command to the *asaqal*; manages lands attached to the fort
sawari	horses in the royal stables reserved for riding and polo matches [Urdu]
shadar	one who performs *shadari* [Khowar]
shadari	literally, 'service to the Mehtar' [Khowar]; under this system, notables and tribal chiefs from across the state come to the Chitral fort to pay their respects to the Mehtar
Shahzada	prince [Persian]
Shariah	Islamic law [Arabic]
Shirmuzh	literally, 'from one's own milk' [Khowar]; foster relative; also a serf attached to an Adam Zada
shirmuzh galu	land held in exchange for performing *shirmuzhi* [Khowar]
shirmuzhi	system under which children of the elite classes are raised by foster families; also a system of tenancy in which people belonging to the lower classes are given land in exchange for service to a certain family or tribe [Khowar]
shishtuwar	melody played at weddings [Khowar]
sipahi	soldier [Urdu, Persian]

subedar	army rank below lieutenant and above *jamadar* and *havaldar*; term used in the Indian subcontinent [Urdu]
surnai	musical instrument similar to a flute [Khowar]
Syed	direct descendant of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) [Arabic]
tabib	physician skilled in the use of traditional medicine [Arabic]
thangi	literally, 'tax' [Khowar]; system of land revenue introduced in 1320–1321 by Shah Nadir Raees; collected annually in the form of goods such as grain, meat, clothing, chickens, sheep, woollen overcoats, blankets, woollen and cotton cloth, and wooden bowls and plates
thangi duri	land held by those who pay *thangi* [Khowar]
thuak ganak	literally, 'gun-bearer' [Khowar]; refers to a company of trusted men chosen by the Mehtar to serve as personal bodyguards
toshakhana	food store [Persian]
ulema	body of Islamic theologians [Arabic]
ushr	land revenue; tithe on agricultural produce, amounting to 10 per cent of the yield; formally introduced in Chitral by Shujaul Mulk in 1910 [Arabic]
ustad	literally, 'teacher' or 'expert' [Urdu]; highly skilled musician
utakh	tax levied on the Arbab Zada class and paid in kind [Khowar]
waqf	trust [Arabic]; land donated for the construction of a mosque or *madrassa*; land in excess of requirements is held in trust and used to generate income for the mosque or *madrassa*
wazir azam	prime minister [Persian]
yasawul	superintendent of the royal kitchens; oversees arrangements for guests and courtiers, organises entertainment [Turkic]
Yuft	literally, 'middle class' [Khowar]; also see Arbab Zada
zameen	land [Khowar, Persian, Urdu]; also see *duri* and *galu*
zenana	women's quarters [Persian, Urdu]
zhangwar	type of war music played to signal the start of a battle [Khowar]

Annex 2 Rulers of the Chitral Area

ca. 500 BC	Darius I, Achaemenid empire of Persia
ca. 200 AD	Kanishka, Kushan empire of Gandhara
ca. 300	Han dynasty of China
ca. 300–600	Kushan dynasty, Tang dynasty of China
ca. 700	Local chiefs
ca. 900	Bahman-e-Kohistani (upper Chitral), Kalash tribes (lower Chitral)
ca. 1005	Sumalek (upper Chitral)
1320 AD	Raees dynasty
1590 AD	Katoor dynasty

Annex 3 Chronology of Events

ca. 1000 BC	Human settlement and agricultural activity begin in the area that is now Chitral. These habitations spring up close to water sources such as streams and torrents.
ca. 200 AD	Kanishka, the ruler of Gandhara, occupies Chitral.
ca. 300	Chinese invaders overrun the Chitral valley. Over the next 300 years, various parts of Chitral are ruled by local chiefs who offer tributes either to the shahs of Persia, the Gandhara rajas or the emperors of China.
ca. 600	Chinese armies once again invade Chitral. By this time, the rulers of Gandhara and the Tang dynasty of China control different parts of Chitral.
ca. 700	China's hold in the area begins to weaken, allowing local chieftains to rise to power.
ca. 900	Kalash tribes establish principalities in lower Chitral while upper Chitral is ruled by Bahman-e-Kohistani, who raises an army comprising men from different tribes and clans of the area. Under this system, defence becomes the joint responsibility of all the clans and tribes inhabiting the kingdom.
980	After conquering vast swathes of Central Asia, the Arabs march on upper Chitral. They prefer to rule indirectly, appointing Bahman-e-Kohistani as their agent. The invasion leads to the arrival of Muslim missionaries who introduce Islam to upper Chitral. In the lower valleys, the Kalash continue to rule largely uninterrupted until 1320.
ca. 1005	Sumalek, originally from Charkh in present-day Uzbekistan, becomes the supreme ruler of upper Chitral as well as Chilas, Ghizar, Gilgit, Hunza and Skardu. He divides the territory between his sons, who succeeded him as independent rulers. The reign of the Sumaleki princes ends in the early 14th century, following the conquest of Shah Nadir Raees.
1320	Shah Nadir Raees invades Chitral. The Sumalekis hold on to the Mulkhow and Torkhow regions for a short while thereafter. Eventually, Shah Nadir subjugates the Kalash tribes of the south as well as the Sumaleki rulers, establishing a larger unified state in the area. In the wake of Shah Nadir's success, some two thirds of the Kalash population converts to Islam. In the same year, Taj Mughal, a Shia Ismaili preacher, travels to Chitral from Khurasan in Persia.
1320–21	Shah Nadir meets with local tribal chiefs to discuss administrative measures for the new state. The chiefs volunteer to provide for the upkeep of the

	Mehtar, introducing a system of land revenue known as *thangi* that is binding on all tribes. Each tribe also surrenders part of its landholdings. In this way, the Mehtar gains control of vast tracts of cultivatable land while the tribal chiefs earn the right to participate in matters of state.
ca. 1400	The practice of offering gifts to the Mehtar is formalised in the shape of a tax.
1520	The forbearer of the Katoor family, Baba Ayub, who hails from Herat in Afghanistan, settles in Chitral.
1531	Mehtar Shah Tahir Raees dies, leaving as his successor Shah Nasir Raees who is less than 10 years old at the time.
1590	Dissension within the ruling family arises over the issue of succession. As the Raees princes wage a bitter power struggle, Baba Ayub's son and grandsons mount an attack on the ruling family. After a series of battles, the Katoors enter the capital victorious and assume full control of the state. Baba Ayub's grandson Muhtaram Shah, later known as Katoor I, ascends the seat of power in Chitral. He carves up the state, installing his brothers as *cheq mehtars* in various areas. In the new set-up, Muhtaram Shah's brother Khushwakht operates independently.
1629	In an attempt to regain control of Chitral, the Raees challenge Katoor power.
1630	Shah Mahmood Raees ascends the throne of Chitral and rules for the next 30 years.
1660	The Katoors regain control of Chitral, ruling until 1697.
1697	The Raees challenge the Katoors and once again wrest control of Chitral. Shah Abdul Qadir Raees is declared Mehtar but his rule is short lived, with the Katoors regaining power the following year.
1698	The Katoors take control of Chitral.
ca. 1700	Bids for the excavation and use of natural resources spark vicious rivalries within the civil administration and among the general population, becoming an integral part of court politics.
1717	The Khushwakhte, led by Asmatullah, the ruler of Yasin, topple the Katoor Mehtar Muhammad Shafi and install their own nominees as *cheq mehtars* in Drosh, Mulkhow and Torkhow. Shah Faramard of the Khushwakhte clan becomes Mehtar of Chitral and rules for the next seven years.
1724	The Katoors reclaim Chitral.
1761	Chitral is invaded once again by forces from Yasin, led by the area's Khushwakhte ruler, Khairullah. Muhtaram Shah II flees and takes refuge in Chukiyatan, Dir. The Khushwakhte hold Chitral until 1786.

1786	Shah Nawaz Khan of the Katoor family wrests control of Chitral from the Khushwakhte and becomes Mehtar.
1788	Muhtaram Shah II returns to Chitral to claim the throne. In a battle at the fort of Jutilasht, he faces the forces of Shah Nawaz Khan. Shah Nawaz is killed and Muhtaram Shah II is declared Mehtar.
1826	Muhtaram Shah Katoor II faces his brother-in-law, Suleman Shah, in a bloody battle at Booni. Later, a rapprochement is brought about between the warring parties by one of the Mehtar's wives, who also happens to be Suleman Shah's sister.
1838	Muhtaram Shah II dies. Shah Afzal and Tajamul Shah fight for the throne of Chitral. Shah Afzal wins the battle of succession. The new Mehtar decrees that *thangi duri* owners are to serve in the state construction service.
1846	Under the terms of the Amritsar Treaty, Gulab Singh, the Sikh Maharaja of the Punjab, purchases Kashmir from the British colonial government of India. The Maharaja stakes his claim to the adjoining territories of Astor, Gilgit and Yasin.
1856	Amanul Mulk becomes Mehtar of Chitral. Currency comes into use in Chitral for the first time. The Afghan kabuli is introduced and remains the sole currency of the state for nearly three decades.
1857	A grazing tax known as *qalang* is imposed on nomadic pastoral tribes. Paid in the form of goats and butter, this tax remains in force until 1969. Ranbir Singh becomes Maharaja of Kashmir.
1860	Gohar Aman of the Khushwakhte family, ruler of Yasin, dies. Following his death, Maharaja Ranbir Singh of Kashmir captures Yasin.
1862	Amanul Mulk annexes Mastuj and Yasin, ousting the Maharaja's forces and deposing the Khushwakhte princes. He puts Mastuj under one of his younger sons, Afzalul Mulk, and installs Mir Wali, one of Gohar Aman's sons, as *cheq mehtar* of Yasin.
1864	Mir Wali, *cheq mehtar* of Yasin, is challenged by his younger brother, Ghulam Muhayuddin. War between the rival princes lasts four years.
1868	Ghulam Muhayuddin takes control of Yasin. His deposed brother, Mir Wali, goes into exile. Mir Mahmood Shah, the ruler of Badakhshan, invades the Yarkhun valley. In the legendary battle of Darband, Mir Mahmood Shah's forces are routed by the Chitralis.
1870	Jahan Khan of Wakhan, Afghanistan, invades the Rech valley. His forces are defeated.

1871	After three years in exile, Mir Wali is murdered by his brother's men.
1873	Ghulam Muhayuddin is ousted from Yasin by the Mehtar. The district is handed over to the Mehtar's eldest son, crown prince Nizamul Mulk, who remains in charge of Yasin until his father's death in 1892.
1876	Colonel Lockhart of the British Indian army first visits Chitral, followed by three more tours in 1882, 1888 and 1896. The colonial administration of India introduces the Kashmir Subsidy as a token of 'friendship' between the ruler of Chitral and the Indian authorities. This annual payment initially amounts to 238,000 rupees but is doubled in 1881, with additional allowances paid to the sons of the Mehtar. Octroi is charged in the Chitral bazaar at the rate of two kabulis per horse, one kabuli per mule and one kabuli for every three donkeys.
ca. 1880	Afghan Amir Abdur Rehman Khan bans slavery. The slave market in Kabul is closed.
1885	A 'pact of friendship' is forged between the rulers of Chitral and the British colonial administration in India. A small contingent of British troops is stationed in Chitral, ostensibly to protect the Mehtar's power. The Indian rupee goes into circulation and is used along with the kabuli for more than 30 years. In the same year, the British take control of Gilgit.
1889	A new subsidy is paid to the Mehtar. Known as the British Subsidy, this annual payment initially stands at 6,000 rupees. Two years later, the amount is raised to 12,000 rupees.
1890	The areas of Govardesh and Kamdesh in the Bashgal region are subdued by the Mehtar of Chitral. Under their headman Shitaluk, the Bashgalis in these areas detach themselves from Afghan Amir Abdur Rehman Khan and instead agree to pay tribute to the Mehtar. Lord Curzon, a member of the British Parliament and later appointed viceroy of British India, visits Chitral. He witnesses the proceedings of the Mahraka, noting that "the speeches were less long and the general demeanour more decorous than in some western assemblies" (Curzon 1926: 133).
1892	A faction of Bashgalis revolts against Amanul Mulk, refusing to pay tribute to the Mehtar. This sparks a brutal reprisal from the ruler of Chitral. Amanul Mulk's forces besiege the Bashgalis, hundreds of whom are captured and brought to Chitral. Many subsequently convert to Islam and settle in Chitral. Over the next two years, even as the seat of power in Chitral itself is rapidly changing hands, the Bashgal valley is repeatedly invaded by Chitral's rulers. In the same year, a British delegation visits Chitral and holds talks with Amanul Mulk. Amanul Mulk dies, throwing Chitral into a state of chaos. Amanul Mulk is succeeded by his son, Afzalul Mulk, who reigns for two months and nine days before he is murdered by Sher Afzal, one of his father's brothers. Sher Afzal in turn retains the seat of power for just 27 days before being overthrown by Nizamul Mulk.

	Nizamul Mulk comes to power as Mehtar of Chitral. He puts Ghulam Muhayuddin back in charge of Yasin.
1894	Afghan Amir Abdur Rehman manages to retake the territories of Govardesh and Kamdesh, sending troops into these areas. To avoid large-scale bloodshed and avert the wrath of Abdur Rehman, the Bashgalis here migrate to Chitral, convert to Sunni Islam and settle in the Mehtar's territory.
1895	January 2: Nizamul Mulk is murdered. The crime is instigated by his brother, Amirul Mulk, who becomes Mehtar of Chitral. Amirul Mulk is said to have acted in cahoots with Umra Khan, a warlord from Jandul in Afghanistan. January 13: Just 11 days after Nizamul Mulk's assassination, Umra Khan crosses the Lowari pass and marches on Chitral. Soon thereafter, under the leadership of Sher Afzal, an uncle of Shujaul Mulk, a group of Chitrali expatriates joins forces with Umra Khan. These development spark panic among a segment of influential Chitralis who approach the British for assistance. British garrisons stationed in Chitral and Mastuj take up positions against the Afghans. March 3: The British install Shujaul Mulk as Mehtar of Chitral. He is just 14 years old at the time. March 4: British troops defend the new Mehtar in the fort of Chitral, surrounded by Umra Khan's forces. The besieged troops call for reinforcements. April 19: Reinforcements arrive, Umra Khan's forces flee and the siege of the Chitral fort is lifted. The British colonial administration of India takes control of Chitral. The British install an experimental telegraph line over the Lowari pass and set up a postal service. In the same year, the British occupy Dir, Swat and Yasin. In India, the colonial authorities ban slavery.
1896	The question of Chitral is debated in British military circles and Parliament. After a Parliamentary debate in London, it is decided to retain Chitral as a protectorate of the British empire. Lockhart submits a report on his mission to Chitral, noting that the Chitralis "would make excellent light cavalry or mounted infantry" (Lockhart ca. 1896: 8). In the same year, Afghan Amir Abdur Rehman Khan renames Bashgal, calling it Nuristan.
1898	The state finance department is reorganised under the command of British colonial officers. A comprehensive register of land ownership is compiled and records of land revenue are maintained.
ca. 1900	Timber is exported by river to Afghanistan. Trade caravans from neighbouring areas begin to purchase orpiment from Chitral. Orpiment exports to China earn considerable income for the state. Meanwhile, entire families are employed to pan the Chitral river for gold dust, which also serves to swell the state coffers.

1901	Shop rents in the Chitral bazaar amount to 270 rupees a year, annual sarai charges are 400 rupees and supply tax is levied at the rate of 2,200 rupees per annum. These rates remain unchanged until 1946.
1902	The British authorities award the Mehtar a contract to supply the British troops stationed in Chitral. Over the years, this arrangement earns the state a handsome income which, between 1932 and 1936, averages 218,800 rupees annually.
1902	Trade in narcotics comes under state regulation. The British set up a bonded warehouse at Boroghil and Chitral receives its first official consignment of cannabis from Yarkand in China.
1903	The colonial authorities create a local force, the Chitral Scouts, to shoulder certain defence-related responsibilities alongside British battalions. A department of trade and commerce is established.
1904	Telegraph lines are installed, linking Chitral and Gilgit. Trees felled for the project earn the Mehtar a royalty of half a rupee per pole. The Mastuj fort is linked by both telephone and telegraph with the capital, and the telegraph line over the Lowari pass is upgraded to a telephone line.
1908	The British establish a forestry department to control the use of timber by local communities. A tax is imposed on felling and the sale of firewood.
1909	Shujaul Mulk establishes the Kausal (judicial council) and the Mizan-e-Shariah (Islamic court). The new State Bodyguard Force is created.
1910	Shujaul Mulk introduces *ushr* across the state, encountering stiff resistance in some districts.
1914	Mastuj is restored to the rulers of Chitral, albeit indirectly. The territory is handed over to Shujaul Mulk but the British-appointed governor, Bahadur Khan, remains in charge of the area. Shujaul Mulk establishes a *darzi khana* (tailoring house). In this year, the state's annual income from orpiment stands at 20,000 kabulis.
1917	A movement launched by the Shia Ismailis of Mastuj district to oppose *ushr* tax is brutally put down by the authorities. The state cracks down on Ismailis suspected of involvement in the resistance and deports the leader of the movement, Bulbul Shah, to northern Afghanistan.
1918	*Ushr* is forcibly imposed throughout Chitral.
1919	In the third Anglo-Afghan war, the Chitral Bodyguards fight in the service of the British. In recognition of his contribution, Shujaul Mulk is decorated Knight Companion of the Indian Empire, awarded an 11-gun salute and bestowed with the title of His Highness by the British Crown. As a result of

	the war, Chitral's relations with Kabul are strained. The river route is closed and trade with Afghanistan comes to a grinding halt. Use of the kabuli is abandoned and the Indian rupee becomes the sole currency of Chitral until 1947, when the Pakistani rupee becomes legal tender. In this year, the state's earnings from octroi stand at 4,000 rupees. This income increases manifold in subsequent years. Between 1932 and 1936, the state earns an average 19,680 rupees annually in octroi fees.
1923	Sabz Ali, a Shia Ismaili missionary from India, travels to Chitral. He advises his fellow Ismailis to live in peace but to decide matters related to the community under the auspices of their own village committees.
1926	On the bidding of the British authorities, Shujaul Mulk announces an amnesty for Ismailis. The system for the collection and utilisation of *ushr* is formalised. *Ushr* grains are used by the state to make payments to nobles and princes. In the same year, the Charas Agreement is signed, transferring management of the bonded warehouse to the Mehtar who receives an annual fee of 15,000 rupees for providing this service. In 1928, this fee is raised to 30,000 rupees.
1927	Chitral sees its first automobile, ordered by Shujaul Mulk for exclusive use by the royal family.
1928	According to official records for the year, the combined stock of *ushr* grain held in state granaries stands at 6,610 maunds (approximately 264,400 kilograms). In this year, Chitral state extends over an area of 14,850 square kilometres and is home to a population of 165,000.
1936	Mohammad Nasirul Mulk ascends the throne of Chitral and begins to reorganise the state administrative machinery. Soon after coming to power, he calls for the withdrawal of British troops from Chitral. The new Mehtar attempts to impose Sunni Islam on the Ismailis, threatening to confiscate land and withdraw titles and privileges, while at the same time offering land, money, clothing and horses as bait to those who convert. Most Ismailis refuse to compromise and instead flee their homes, taking refuge outside Chitral.
1937	A trade delegation from Chitral is sent to the court of King Zahir Shah in Kabul and engages in talks to reopen the river route through Afghanistan. As a consequence, the Afghan government lifts the embargo on Chitral's timber for the first time since the Anglo-Afghan war of 1919.
1938	Octroi is imposed on the trade in cannabis and opium, with printed forms for revenue collection. Antimony is discovered in Klinj and the mines are contracted out to Chitrali businessmen as well as entrepreneurs from India.

	Mohammad Nasirul Mulk, himself a graduate of Islamia College, Peshawar, establishes the first Anglo-Vernacular Middle School in Chitral.
1942	On October 18, British battalions withdraw from Chitral, leaving the Katcha Scouts in control of military posts in Drosh and Chitral until a new force, known as the Chitral State Scouts, is in place.
1947	The British colonial authorities quit India, dividing the country into two new states, Pakistan and India. Following independence, Chitral accedes to Pakistan, but retains quasi-autonomous status.
1953	The Interim Constitution is promulgated. A police force is established for the first time in Chitral's history. The State Bodyguard Force is disbanded, and all its weapons and ammunition are handed over to the new state police.
1954	Chitral is brought partially under the administrative authority of the Pakistan government. Civil servants such as deputy commissioners, assistant commissioners and tehsildars are nominated and charged with the responsibility of local administration. The traditional system of statecraft is disbanded. In the same year, private telephone lines are installed in Chitral.
1969	Chitral state is brought under the full administrative control of the North-West Frontier Province. This sees the creation of District Chitral.

Annex 4 Bibliography

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Interview Statements

The writer conducted extensive field interviews with a wide range of individuals, including former state servants and dignitaries who witnessed the events discussed in this document. The following is a list of all informants cited in the text. The title or official designation of the informant is noted, along with the date and location of the interview. All non-English language titles and designations are explained in the glossary.

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