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ORIGINS OF PEOPLES OF THE KARAKORAM HIMALAYAS

Charles Graves

RULING BY DURBAR STYLE OF GOVERNANCE:

THE GILGIT AGENCY IN COLONIAL TIMES

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IMPACT OF SINO-PAK COOPERATION ON GILGIT-

BALTISTAN AND XINJIANG

Senge Sering

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Editor : K. WARIKOO

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Editor's Page

The Himalayas are an embodiment of divinity, of nature in its splendour and of culture in the deepest sense of the word. The Himalayas are the highest and the most spectacular mountains in the world, separating the Indian sub-continent from the Tibetan plateau. The Hindu Kush, Karakoram and Pamir ranges are continuous and are interlocked with the Himalayan mountain system, the region being most heavily glaciated, wild and rugged. By the Karakoram-Himalayan region geographers mean the whole complex mass of main and subsidiary ranges, outliers, spurs and foothills. When the lofty peak of K2 was discovered in Baltistan in early nineteenth century, it was locally known as Karakoram. William Moorcroft had heard this name in 1828, Cunningham in 1854, Hayward in 1870 and finally Montgomery applied the name K2 to the highest peak in the world. Major Montgomerie (of Trigonometrical Survey of India), General Walker (Superintendent of Great Trigonometrical Survey of India) and Clements Markham (then a geographer at India Office, London), adopted the name Karakoram 2 for the peak. Karakoram is home to more than 60 peaks (above 7,000 metres), including the K2, the second highest peak of the world (8,611 metres) after the Mount Everest (8848 metres).

After much debate on the nomenclature of the mountain ranges, Major Kenneth Mason found it best to call the whole region bounded by the Hunza river, the Indus, the Shyok and the Raskam-Yarkand river, the "Karakoram Himalayas". The boundaries of South and Central Asian countries converge along the Karakoram Himalayas, which lends unique geo-political and geo-strategic importance to the region. Abutting the borders of Afghanistan, China, Pakistan and India and being situated in close proximity to Central Asia, the Karakoram-Himalayan region has been an important constituent of India's trans-Himalayan communication network in the continent and beyond. The imposing geographical features and high daunting peaks did not prevent the region from being a complex of cultural interaction, overland trade and communication. This region is the cradle from where ancient Indian culture including Buddhism spread to different directions in Central Asia, East Asia and South East Asia. Gilgit, Hunza, Chitral, Skardu, Leh-Zaskar and other frontier areas have been important mileposts on the famous Silk Route. It needs to be emphasized that the Karakoram-Himalayan region, what has also been called 'Northern Areas' of the erstwhile State of Jammu and Kashmir-comprising Hunza, Nagar, Gilgit, Baltistan, Yasin-Chilas, Koh, Ghizar

and Ishkoman - is the single largest territorial unit of the State. This area constitutes about two-thirds of the total area of 84,471 sq. miles of the entire Jammu and Kashmir State.

The region displays a wide diversity of cultural patterns, languages, ethnic identities and religious practices. The entire region has been a melting pot of different cultures and faiths – Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, Hinduism and Islam. Whereas a variety of languages – Ladakhi, Balti, Shina, Burushaski, Gojali, Khowar etc. exist in the region, the cross-border linkages between various ethnic-religious groups turn this frontier into a complex vortex of geopolitics. There has been rise of sectarianism and religious extremism often leading to violence and conflict. At the same time, the region has been witnessing a new urge for revival of its indigenous languages, cultural heritage and social practices. Due to its high and difficult mountainous terrain, isolated and remote location and its distinct ethno-cultural characteristics, the region has its specific requirements for its sustainable development. Similarly, the social and political aspirations of different indigenous ethnic-religious groups in Karakoram-Himalayas have remained suppressed due to the geopolitical and religious factors.

The Karakoram-Himalayan region has been the subject of study of geologists, glaciologists, earth scientists, geographers, environmentalists and anthropologists. Since 1985 a series of international annual meetings on the geology of the Himalaya-Karakoram-Tibet region have been organized by various scientific bodies in Europe, USA, Japan etc. by several scientific bodies, almost every year. Prof. Stellrecht and her colleagues have been conducting the Karakoram Culture Area Project at Teubingen University, Germany for the past 25 years now. Nepal has been carrying out the Hindu Kush- Karakoram Himalaya Mountain Partnership Project for some years. Academia Sinica, Beijing and Pakistan's Ministry of Science and Technology started the International Karakoram Project in 1980. Most of these works/projects have mainly dealt with the geosciences, glaciology, atmosphere, ecology, anthropology etc. of this mountain region.

It is against this background that this special issue of *Himalayan and Central Asian Studies* deals with the historical, geopolitical, strategic, socio-economic and political perspectives on the entire Karakoram-Himalayan region. Apart from having two important papers from European scholars including that of Prof. Irmtraud Stellrecht, it has three papers representing the local voices and perspectives from the region, i.e. one each from Mirpur, Baltistan and Gilgit.

K. Warikoo

ORIGINS OF PEOPLES OF THE KARAKORAM HIMALAYAS

CHARLES GRAVES

The scholarly search for the origin of the people of this region often falls victim to the complex religious history of the area. If we leave aside the question of the religions of the people it may be possible to determine which 'peoples' at an early age inhabited the region up until recently called 'The Princely State of Jammu and Kashmir'.

At 3,500 years ago (at 1,500 BPE – 'before the Present Era') the Indo-Aryans had already entered the Ganges plain and presumably there were some other elements of migrations from Central Asia which reached the more northerly areas of India called Kashmir. Moreover, it is possible some 'aboriginal' groups from Rajasthan and Gujarat had penetrated Kashmir as well as other parts of the sub-continent. Also some 'Dravidian' speakers (arriving in the sub-continent *circa.* 2,500 BPE) could have come to Kashmir.¹

Besides all these peoples known to have populated the sub-continent, another group stands out whose descendants still inhabit Kashmir and in particular the region of 'Gilgit-Baltistan', namely those who speak *Burushaski* (i.e. the Burusu people) and those speaking related languages. These languages are of a completely different '*language macrofamily*' than 'Indo-European' or 'Indo-Iranian', although as 'proto-languages' they could have been similar (e.g. at 10,000 BPE). According to some Russian scholars, who proposed the theory already in the 1960s, *Burushaski* was part of a complex of languages which included proto-Tibetan, proto-Chinese, Chechen and other 'North Caucasian' languages, Basque, Hurrian (now extinct), Ket' (a few Ket' speakers existed until recently along the middle of the Yenesei River in Siberia) and Athabaskan (language of the Dene and Navaho in America).² Professor Sergei Starostin of the Oriental Institute

of the University of Moscow published these language parallels in *Dene-Sino-Caucasian Languages* (1991).³

The implication arising from study of such groups of peoples is that the origin of the *Sino-Caucasian* language was around Lake Balkash in Central Asia (near Alma Aty in Kazakhstan). At one time the area was crossed by rivers coming down from the Altai mountains and it was not a desert as today. Apparently a particular language developed there and its speakers spread out westward to the North Caucasus (Hurrians, Chechen, Basque etc.), northwards (the Ket' of the Yenessei) and eastwards (Burusu, proto-Tibetan and proto-Chinese as well as Athabaskans who eventually crossed the Bering Straight into the Americas). The speakers of these languages were not influenced by the 'Indo-Aryan', 'Indo-Iranian' and 'Indo-European' languages whose origins were also in Central Asia. Representatives of these latter, through various migrations, inhabited Iran, the Indian sub-continent (especially the Ganges basin) and later penetrated Europe (1500 BPE and later). Related to these latter are the Indo-European, Finno-Ugric, Dravidian, Kartvelian (proto-Georgian) and the Altaic languages (all these were called by Professor Starostin and some of his colleagues the *Nostratic* language macrofamily).⁴

Most of the primitive *Siberian* languages (Khanti-Mansi, Saami, Samoyed, Nanai, Yukaghir, Ainu, Chukchee, Koryak, Itelmen, Aleut, Evenki-Tungus, etc) are in one way or another reflections of both the *Nostratic* and the *Sino-Caucasian* languages. The multitude of *Amerindian* (American Indian) languages represent the eastward extension of these Siberian groups.⁵ Japanese and Korean languages represent not *Altaic* languages such as Kyrghyz, Kazakh, Turkish or Mongolian but rather a mixture of old Siberian languages (oral tradition) with borrowings from Chinese. Of course other major language groups relevant to the Near and Middle East (*Afro-Asiatic* group) do not enter the Kashmir scene except with the arrival of Islam.

Returning to Burushaski as a constituent language of early Kashmir, and considering its similarity to proto-Tibetan and proto-Chinese, this type was important on both sides of the Karakoram Pass at a very early date. This type of language existed both west and east of the Djungarian passes between West and East Turkestan, i.e. between today's Kazakhstan and today's Xinjiang (China). This is implied by the term *Sino* (i.e. Chinese) and *Caucasian* (i.e. north Caucasus). A portion of these speakers (e.g at 10,000 BPE) entered Kashmir from the north and west and they are represented today by the Burusu and related peoples. Other such speakers

went northwards to the Yenessei (the Ket') or westwards to south of the Caspian Sea (extinct Hurrians) and still others went to the North Caucasus area (Chechen, Inguish, Chirkass, Afkhaz etc.). Others migrated into Europe and settled in the Pyrenees (Basques).

In general the 'Sino-Caucasian' speakers kept close contact with the mountains and their primitive religions reflect this (cf. proto-Tibetan and Chinese religions, Basque and Navaho). There is considerable differentiation of their culture, language and religion from the Indo-Aryan, Indo-European culture which influences 'Europeans'.

Burusu religious terms may be compared with some 'Siberian' religious terminology. Regarding features of Burusu religion some typical words are in Burushaski as follows.⁶

Peri – fairy. *Ainu*: peure (youthful); upari (snow); pa (fog, mist)

Bilas – female demon. *Itelmen*: *Pilyachych* (protector of reindeer, god of animals)

Yvceni – ogress. *Ainu*: wu-yen (bad); osche kamui (wolf). *Itelmen*: *Achichenjaku* ('tiger-figure' – first ancestor)

Phut – male demon. *Ainu*: ofui (to burn); *Chukchee*: *Peh'ittin* ('father of tribe')

Boyo – animal god; *Ainu*: poro (big); baskuro (crow, eagle); kamui (god)

Vzdar – monster. *Ainu*: *antzhara*, *natshara* (night)

Cihil - 'djinn'. *Koryak*: *Sisil'khan* (child of high god)

The scenario of Burusu religion reminds us of the Tibetan pantheons, especially of the *Bon* type. These can be compared with Ainu and other 'Siberian' terminology as seen above. Although the Ainu are associated with their present homeland in northern Japan (Hokkaido), the similarities of their terminology with Siberian peoples and Burusu indicates that their origin is Siberia and, in fact, Eastern Kazakhstan. Their language represents an old speech close to some original language when *Nostratic* and *Sino-Caucasian* had not yet separated. *Chukchee*, *Koryak* and *Itelmen* represent the same phenomenon.

Thus, the original inhabitants of Kashmir were both 'Sino-Caucasian' and 'Indo-Iranian' speakers- the former were originally from the north and west and the latter were from 'Indo-Iranians' arriving in the Ganges basin after 1,500 BPE. Perhaps these two groups represent the *Pishachas* and the '*Nagas*'. Besides such groups the original constituency of Kashmir was enlarged by another group, namely the *Sakas* (of 'Scythian origin').

In 2001-2008 the Iran Chamber Society published a *History of Iran* in

which an article by I. P'iankov was entitled *The Ethnic Group Sakas*. The article discussed the Sakas but also what were called the *Kaspians*, i.e. the *Burusu*. Kaspians or Burusu were in Kashmir in the period of the sixth to second centuries BPE. They were the 'indigenous tribes' which held Kashmir, Gilgit, Badakhshan etc. The Chinese called the area *Jibin* (Kaspiria) or Kashmir, and it included the mountain passes of the Hindu Kush. *Kaspiria* continued under Burusu peoples until the first century of our present era. It encompassed the area of Vanda and Nandon, including Gilgit with Hunza and Yasin and also Wakhan and the adjoining Pamir plateau.

The archaeologists Bernshtein and Litvinski have been investigating sites in the East Pamir dating from the fifth to third centuries BPE. They discovered there the material culture of *the Sakas*. This was different from the Burusu or Kaspians. The Sakas were peoples who lived originally between the Syr Darya and Amu Darya in Central Asia. Moreover, other peoples lived in the eastern Pamirs – they were locals of a mixed Indo-Afghan type. Much more archaeology is needed to determine exactly who were the peoples living near Kashgar and in Kashmir at the beginning of our era. We are making some schematic guesses along that line.

According to *Wikipedia*, the dynasty of the Surens (a Parthian people now called the Alans) expelled the Sakas from their homes in Central Asia and pushed them eastwards into the Punjab. Apparently some Sakas were also bordering the Burusu in Kashmir and they were called the *Amyrgian Sakas*. In the first century of our Era they were at the headwaters of the Jhelum, Chenab and Ravi rivers in modern Kashmir. Thus Sakas, a Sythian-type people, inhabited Kashmir two thousand years ago mixing with the Burusu.

Another explanation for the arrival of Sakas in Kashmir area was that they were '*dislodged from their habitat near the Aral Sea in Central Asia by the Yueh-chi*' (Yueh-chi were migrating westwards from Xinjiang 176-160 BPE having been dislodged by the Huns). The *Yueh-chi* (called such by the Chinese) were an *Iranian-speaking* ('Tocharian') peoples who had lived long in Eastern Turkestan (Xinjiang) but eventually were pushed westwards by Huns. They entered western Central Asia and moved southwards into present-day Punjab. According to some authors the Yueh-chi forced the Sakas out of Bactria, and pushed some of them into Kashmir (the above-mentioned *Amyrgian Sakas*).

Thus, according to recent scholarship, a third element formed an integral part of the earliest inhabitants of Kashmir, namely *the Sakas*.

According to most scholars, Sakas were the most easterly branch of the Scythians. Scythians were noted by the Greek historian Herodotus (living 5th century BPE) as a population inhabiting the wide stretches of land from Ukraine in the west to far-away deserts of east Central Asia. They were described by other early Greek historians generally as *north Asian* people some of whom spoke 'borrowed' Iranian-type languages. A language family which might be attributed to the Scythians could be *Ugrian* (i.e. *Finno-Ugric*- languages are spoken by the Finns, the Estonians, the Hungarians and some 'Finno-Ugric' groups such as Mari and Mordva which live on the Volga in the Russian Federation today).

Greek historians noted the *pantheon of the Scythian peoples* (presumably the West Scythian variety) and it was known to consist of such deities as given below. Some Scythians were wheat-growers along the Don River basin and others lived on the routes leading to Kyrgyzstan in Central Asia. Scythians were to be distinguished from the *Sarmatians* who spoke an 'Iranian-related' language. Thus, Scythians were both agriculturalists (as in Ukraine) and nomads of the desert. Scythians may have borrowed from 'Iranian' but their indigenous language was more likely *Ugrian*.⁷

Scythians were sometimes called *Gimmirai* (the 'Gomer' of Genesis XI). In the 7th century BPE some were massacred in the kingdom of Media. Hippocrates said about the Scyths: '*they were slack, fat and had an excess of humour, the men being like eunuchs and who assumed women's habits*'. Herodotus spoke about the Scythian shaman group called *Enarees* – these were Scythians which had a 'sacred disease' caused by the *wrath of the goddess Ascalon whose shrine they had plundered*. In fact the Scythians were like *Tatars* – they had a cattle and horse culture, their women lived at slave level and polygamy was practiced.

Of course all such epithets attributed to the Scythians were aspects of a Greek mentality which considered itself superior and there was very little analysis exercised about the great variety of peoples which inhabited the steppes.

Some royal gods of the Scyths were named, with parallel Greek divinities. Here we shall name a few, provide the Greek equivalent, and through comparison with names of certain *north Asian* and Siberian divinities, try to determine the ethnic origin of the Scythians and eventually of the Sakas who inhabited Kashmir,.

Papaios / Api (Greek *Zeus (male)* and *Ge (female)*) *Khanty-Mansi* (Ob'-Yenessei cultural tradition): *pupig* –guardian, ancestor spirits; *Etpos Oika* – Moon God; *Finno-Ugric: pyha* - sacred place; *Ainu: hapo* – mother; *ape*

fire; *Saami*: *Peivo* - sun; *Yukaghir*: *epie* – grandmother.

Oitosuros (Greek *Apollo* who was god of prophecy, music and cattle also related to the sun) *Finno-Ugric*: *kul'otyr* – underground divinities; *otyri* – original ancestors; *Saami*: *noa'di* – shaman; *Altaic*: *surales* – spirits of the woods

Argympasa (Greek *Aphrodite*, daughter of *Zeus*) *Khanty-Mansi*: *Ioli Torum San* – earth mother; *Saami*: *akka* – childbirth goddess; *aemm* – a couple; *passe* – sacred place; *Ainu*: *Passe kamui* – highest god

Tabiti (Greek *Hestia*, goddess of the hearth, maiden divinity) *Finno-Ugric*: *ava* – mother; *Khanty-Mansi*: *ilt* – reincarnating spirit; *Saami*: *quoibme* – intimate relations man-woman; *aemm* – couple; *Samoyed*: *xatae tatsip'ea* - strong shaman in Nyalina dialect; *Ainu*: *ape* – fire; *hapo* – mother; *Yukaghir*: *epie* - grandmother; *olmai* – chief spirits

Thamimasadas (Greek *Poseidon*, god of the sea) *Khanty-Mansi*: *Numi Torum* – High God; *Saami*: *Jabmeaimo* – 'world of the dead'; *Siei'di* sacred stone, venerated place; *mailmen stytto* – 'pillar of the world'; *tiermes horagalla* - god of thunder; *Yukaghir*: *olmai* – chief 'spirits'

EnarÈes (related to Greek god *Ares*, indicating Scythian shamans using heaps of faggots in a veneration cult and employing sticks for divination , a *cursed* lot of shamans because they violated the temple of the goddess *Ascalon*. *EnarÈes* may have no 'north Asian' terminological equivalents cf. however *Samoyed*: *janan tarana tadib'e* – a shaman with his 'helper' spirits; *Yukaghir*: *i'rkeye* – shaman

The parallels seem to indicate that the Scythian pantheon could be related linguistically to the religious terminology of the north Asian peoples. These peoples were descended from the paleolithic inhabitants of the Urals and West Siberia. Such regional distinctions coincide with the location of the Scythians according to Greek historiography. However, it must be taken into account that the witnesses to the Scythian religious customs when transmitting the names of the Scythian divinities could have transmitted their own (quite inexact) pronunciation of the terms used by the Scythians for their gods.

The Scythian religion included sacrifices of men and horses dedicated to deceased royalty. The Scythian kings controlled the gold of the Altai region (as seen in the royal tombs). Their period of rule extended from the 7th century BPE to the 2nd century BPE and they even populated the Crimea in the West. Their barrows are to be found in southern Ukraine. Some particularities of their objects: cups to contain mare's milk; cauldrens with 'one foot'; decorative 'animal figures'. The author of the relevant article in

Encyclopedia Britannica – V. Gordon Childe - who was an archaeologist with the University of London, believes that the ‘animal figures’ discovered on Scythian metal objects were *descendants of those representations of animals made by ancient hunter-gatherers often displayed on rocks in the paleolithic age*. He is referring to what are known as ‘Siberian rock glyphs’. Professor Childe believed that the Scythian culture ‘wilted’ under the influence of the Greeks and the Sarmatians. The latter used Iranian-origin ‘monsters’ as models rather than the Siberian ‘glyphs’ and transmitted such an Iranian type of art to the ‘Teutonic’ peoples emigrating into Europe.

In 7th century BPE the Scythians attacked the ‘Cimmerians’ and then (5th century BPE) they attacked people living in Iran. They were called *Sacae* or *Saka*.⁸ The Scythians settled along the Volga at this time. The Greeks traded with them, and Scythian kings travelled about in Olbia. Although Scythians *hated foreign customs* they were nevertheless attracted to such customs. King Philip II of Macedonia was defeated by them in 339 BPE and later the Scyths threatened Chersonese (Black Sea). The Scythians adopted some Iranian culture from the Sarmatians. At a later stage the Huns attacked the Scythians from the east.

There have been two distinct ethnic groups in ancient Kashmir – the *Pishachas* and the *Nagas*. The Pishachas lived in the north called *Kamraz*. Nagas lived in the southern part of Kashmir called *Maraaz*. Such terms may be quite significant – they may prove our exposition about two original groups living in Kashmir – the *Burusu Sino-Caucasian type* or the *Indo-Afghan type* (part of the Indo-Aryan emigration into the Ganges basin circa. 1,500 BPE).

Concerning the *Pishachas* (inhabitants of north part of Kashmir in ancient times): various comparisons from ‘proto-languages’ can be made regarding this term e.g. *Nostratic* proto-term *perC* – rear, back. As for *Nagas* (inhabitants of south part of Kashmir) cf. *Nostratic* proto-term *nan/g/V* – tongue, language. The equivalent of this *Nostratic* proto-term in Burushaski is *dnghu* – tongue (as part of body). Such reference to *Nostratic* (in which Indo-Iranian is a part) might mean that the terminology was created by the Indo-Afghan part of the Kashmiri population rather than by the Burusu part.

On the other hand, with reference to the proto *Sino-Caucasian* terminology (SC) ‘Pishachas’ as a term could be based upon the SC *pursh* – predator or North Caucasian (NC) *He-bec’Iw / beHerrci* – wolf and the term SC *c’aq* – strong or Sino-Tibetan *chak* – firm.

Regarding *Kamraz* (northern part of Kashmir) from a ‘*Nostratic*’

perspective cf. *kame* – hard; *rVwhV* – wide. About *Maraaz* (southern part of Kashmir) cf. Indo-European *m/ahlrV* – water, or *marV* – wood, trees. These two interpretations, if correct, could refer to the hard (rocky) part of northern Kashmir as with Gilgit-Baltistan and the ‘softer’, forested and marshy (with lake such as at Srinagar) southern part. These are basically Nostratic terms indicating that the naming was done in Indo-Iranian-speaking rather than Sino-Caucasian-speaking areas of Kashmir.

Referring to the term *Pishachas* from *Burushaski* language point of view (‘Sino-Caucasian’ language macrofamily perspective) we can find the following: Burushaski *AiyAsh* – sky. In Samoyed (‘Siberian’ language group) *pi* – stone; *dzha* – earth. Saami: *pyha* – sacred place. Continuing along this line, as for *Nagas* we find: Khanty-Mansi: *Nai Ekva* – goddess of fire; Samoyed *nga* – shaman; *nagila* – spirit.

As regards *Kamraz* (northern part of Kashmir) cf. Samoyed *kon* – ‘lord, master’; Yukaghir *kama* – full; Hurrian (an extinct ‘Sino-Caucasian’ language) *Kumarbis* ‘great rock, chief deity; Ainu *Kamui* – god; *Kamui Moshiri* – world of the gods.

Regarding *Maraaz* (southern part of Kashmir) cf. Ainu *mo-i-wa* – small mountain; *moshiri* – country. These Ainu parallels above are quite striking.

As regards the term *Satisara*, the legend says it was a vast sea from which emerged Kashmir as a geographical entity. The term ‘Satisara’ could be of Burushaski origin: cf. SC *shak* – full; Burushaski: *huur* – conduit for water. Whatever the linguistic connection for this term (no *Nostratic* term seems relevant) the mythical concept of ‘Satisara’ seems close to *Ainu cosmology*.⁹

As for the Ainu cosmogonic myth, the ‘original substance’ was not separate from water, and all elements were disorderly. The earth was a huge morass. ‘Pase Kamui’ (highest Ainu god) took as his helper the wagtail bird (totem of the Ainu). Sent from heaven he began to strike the water with his wings, and to scratch what was underneath with his claws, working upon the clay. After a long time the water turned into an ocean, and upon it appeared drifting particles.

Such is echoed in some of the *Ket* (‘Sino-Caucasian’) *cosmology* where a ‘goddess’, fleeing from the great divine shaman *Al’be* along the Yenessei river northwards often plunged into the river and thereupon an island would appear. Terrain is the scene of activities of shamans and mythological deities. However, the cosmogonic myth about Kashmir’s origin which is universally accepted by Kashmiris has parallels to an Ainu cosmogony. In fact the Ainu terminology is in many instances close to the Burushaski

(as a constituent part of the Sino-Caucasian language macrofamily)

Dr. Ayaz Rasool Nazki, former Dean at the Sher-i-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences in Srinagar, has worked many years on the origins of the *Sharda* cult in Kashmir and the cult may have been an important part of the religion of the 'Indo-Afghan' peoples noted above. Dr. Nazki stated at an International Seminar on "Society, Culture and Politics in the Karakoram Himalayas" on 23-24 July 2009 at New Delhi, that Sharda, a triad of female goddesses, 'promoted knowledge, learning and their application'. The most ancient known temple of Sharda is to be found in ruins in the Pakistan-occupied part of Kashmir, not far from Muzaffarabad. It is at the confluence of three rivers in the Jehlum valley. Dr. Nazki believes the site dates back at least 5,000 years and that there was established at the site a kind of ancient university. In more modern times the *Sharda Peeth* in Kashmir is a stone slab set over water or stream under which the Sharda 'devi' is hidden. He believes the same hidden goddess was venerated at the Jehlum valley site long ago.

Of course such a view preempts any consideration that the sites were erected by the 'Indo-Aryans' who probably only entered the Ganges River valley c. 1,500 BPE. But there were some original 'Indo-Afghan' people in Kashmir much earlier, apparently.

The word **sharda** might be analysed as other words above, namely with the language macrofamily delineations of the school developed at the Oriental Institute in Moscow. Sharda as a Proto-Nostratic (PN) term may be related to **sarV** (flow or stream) (cf. Sino-Caucasian **sorV** (stream)) and PN **d/a/w** ('blow', 'tip or rock'). As seen above, the Sharda site was at the confluence of three streams.

This kind of primitive veneration is perhaps related to a very early source of Chinese Taoism, in its cult of *Nu Qua*.¹⁰ *Nu-Qua*, a primeval cosmic force in alliance with her male counterpart *P'an-ku*, was associated with a symbolic Mt. K'un-lun which in fact is the name of the mountain chain in the southern part of Xinjiang, close to the Karakoram Pass. Girardot and others¹¹ have described such a royal mother of the Western Paradise as related to water and thunder. *Nu-Qua* is revealed 'as a serpent or snail goddess, her name having the cognate meanings of 'snail, frog, water hole, pond, etc.' She was a 'profound female' who was 'the valley spirit who never dies'. Like *P'an-ku*, she is 'primarily associated with the transformation or continuous creation and regeneration of the world'.

It would be interesting to discover some primitive cultural relations between proto-Chinese peoples and proto-Kashmiris, both engaged in

venerating female deities associated with water and streams. Moreover, there is some reflection here of the Japanese Shinto goddess *Amaterasu* who even today 'counsels' every newly-crowned Emperor according to the Shinto rite at Ise shrine in Japan. *Amaterasu*, upon an aggressive behaviour of her cosmic counterpart *Susano* ('wind-god'), retired into a cave and was only encouraged to come out by the merry dancing of other goddesses. Then she saw herself in an offered divine mirror. After this cave episode, the world experienced the normal cycle of night and day.¹² The veneration is generally related to the 'Yamato' people who entered Japan over two thousand years ago. The goddess / cave symbolism seems to revert to the 'royal mother of the Western Paradise' Taoist concept of proto-Chinese religion, i.e. veneration related to the K'un-lun mountains. The implication is that Xinjiang basin might have been a meeting point between proto-Yamato eastwardly migrating people and Karakoram / proto-Taoist religion. In fact, we have already shown the close linguistic parallels between Burusu religious terminology and that of the Ainu, who eventually inhabited Japan as well.

I have already noted the widespread influence of the *Nu-Qua* concept in Asia in my book *Proto Religions in Central Asia*:¹³ 'the Serpent cult was introduced to Tibet with the Bon Religion which presumably arose in Kashmir or nearby. When 'Bon' was at the end of its influence in Tibet, some of its last traditionalists moved to *Ha-ba* (southwest China) where they carried on the *Na-khi naga cult* so well described by J.F. Rock in his monumental study *The Na-Khi Naga Cult and Related Ceremonies*.¹⁴ The people of *Na-khi* themselves adopted the name of their divinity as they moved into the far east corner of Tibet and then entered the Chinese mountain gorges. Their serpent cult is located in several grottos, e.g. that of *Shi-lo nek'o*. The founder of the *Na-khi* religion, *Dtomba-shi-lo*, lived in this cave according to tradition, and from there spread his creed. He is the same as *Ton-pa Shen-rab*, the founder of the ancient pre-buddhist *Bon*¹⁵ religion of Tibet. In these *Bon* religious sites the serpent-spirits and the *garuda* are propitiated by the sorcerers'. As well, we learn that the primary *Bon* religion was *gNa-khri-btsanpo* and heaven was called *gNam* or *Nam-Nikha*.

In this context note the similarity of *sharda* (proto-Kashmir) and *garuda* (Tibetan 'Bon'). Compare also the ethnic group called *nagas* referred to above and the *Na-Khi naga cult* as part of the *Bon* religion which was taken to east Tibet and the Chinese mountain gorges.

A 'third' element enters into the picture of early Kashmir, namely

the Scythian *Sakas* (with their possible relation to the 'Ugrian' language and also to *Samoyed, Saami, Yukaghir and Ainu*). We also considered Burusu religious terminology and its relation to *Ainu, Chukchee, Koryak and Itelmen* terminology. From these comparisons it appears that not only Burushaski but also (through the Sakas) some 'west' Siberian tongues and cultures have influenced Kashmir.

In other words, Burusu peoples carried a certain version of 'Sino-Caucasian' language and culture which *was close to the language of Siberian groups such as Ainu, Chukchee and Itelmen*. This we saw above in the chart of Burusu-Ainu-Itelmen etc. religious terms. The Sakas (as Scythians), on the other hand, were speaking some other *north Asian* Siberian languages such as the Khanti-Mansi (Finno-Ugrian), Saami, Samoyed and Yukaghir. This latter we have seen in the comparisons demonstrated in the chart of 'Sythian divinities' above.

Hence, three main groups of early Kashmir were the *Burusu*, the *Afghan-Indians* and the *Sakas*.¹⁶ The Sakas were obliged to remove eastward by the Yueh-chi in the first century of the Present Era as noted above, and they entered the Karakoram region.

The *Yueh-chi* people (so-named by the Chinese), speaking a variety of the Iranian language called by some *Tocharian*, entered northern present-day Afghanistan and the Punjab. Whereas the original inhabitants of Kashmir were a mixture of Burusu (called Kaspian) and some old Indian-Afghan tribes and the Sakas (a Sythian people), the western neighbours of Kashmir were probably descended in part from these Yueh-chi. And the Yueh-chi kingdom around Punjab and reaching far into modern India was called the *Kushan dynasty*.¹⁷

Entering our millennial eras (i.e. 200 BPE-200 PE) this new entity arrived at the borders of Kashmir, namely these *Yueh-chi* people. Inhabiting Xinjiang, they had been forced westwards by the Huns. They had entered Hindu Kush, Afghanistan, and the Punjab and were the founders of the Kushan dynasties. The movements of these and other related 'Iranian-speaking' peoples in Xinjiang were mentioned in Chinese historical records of the era 200 BPE-200 PE and have been made known by scholars like E.G. Pulleyblank.

These Yueh-chi replaced the Greek (Macedonian) dynasties in the *Hindu Kush* and the Indus basin. They also took Gandhara, Kabul and Kandahar. They adopted the Greek alphabet and combined it with the Pali script. They took for themselves the Greek deities, those of Zoroastrianism as well as those of Buddhism, and they were influenced

by Indian Shaivism (veneration of the god Shiva). Their winter capital was in Mathura near Agra in India and they held all Punjab (Bathindia). The Kushan king Kanishka convened a great Buddhist council in Kashmir. Around the year 116 (Present Era) one of their kings founded a kingdom in Kashgar (Xinjiang). The Kushan dynasties were also responsible for the art of Gandhara. The western Kushan kings were defeated by the Persian Sassanid empire in the mid-fourth century of the present era. They were also subjugated by the Indian Gupta empire. But evidently the Yueh-chi had considerable influence on Kashmir in the 300 years of the reign of the Kushan dynasties in Punjab and Mathura.

Pulleyblank and others believe that the *Tocharian-related* languages of the Yueh-chi, the Wu-sun, the Uighurs etc. are descended from languages spoken in the *Afanasievo culture* of Minusinsk (upper Yenessei valley) *circa.* 2,000 BPE. According to Pulleyblank, Afanasievo culture was the furthest eastward branch using the Indo-Iranian language. Its descendants created the successive Xinjiang cultures using an Iranian style language. With the expansion of a unified Chinese state (under the Han dynasty) many of these peoples were obliged to emigrate westwards out of Xinjiang and into eastern Central Asia. Moreover, the Kushan dynasties created by the Yueh-chi in Punjab and India had direct influence inside Kashmir and even dominated parts of Xinjiang.¹⁸ The Kushan kingdoms, accepting Buddhism as well as varieties of the Greek religion, influenced Kashmir culture during the early years of the present era.

In 133 B.C. after a discussion at court about appeasement of enemy desert people the Chinese emperor sent his envoy Chang Ch'ien to the Yueh-chih to gain their support against the desert people called *Hsiung-nu*. And from 127-119 B.C. the emperor made an expedition against these *Hsiung-nu*. Later, in 115 B.C., the same Chang Ch'ien was sent by the emperor to the people called *Wu-sun*.¹⁹

The Yueh-cheh had migrated to the Oxus River area in west Central Asia in the second century B.C. as noted above. Their language was a 'form of Tocharian'. The Wu-sun also used a 'Tocharian' language and created a 'Tocharian' state in the 1st century B.C. (according to Professor Pulleyblank). They were in Djungaria (n.w. Xinjiang). According to Pulleyblank, this Tocharian language had been used in west and north-west Xinjiang as early as the later half of the second millennium 1,500-1,000 B.C.²⁰

Chang Ch'ien, emissary of the Chinese emperor, visited these *Wu-sun people* around 123 B.C. This was a people living 2000 *li* n.e. of Ta-

yu'an. They had been subject to the *Hsiug-nu* (China's foe) and they had no specific political relation with the Yueh-chih. Pulleyblank states that the Wu-sun were not Scythians. But the Wu-sun originally lived with the Yueh-chih between Tun-huang and Ch'i-lien mountains in western Kansu province. The Yueh-chih had begun their migration westward to the banks of the Oxus *circa* 174 B.C. where the emissary Chang Ch'ien found them in 128 B.C. The Wu-sun stayed in Xinjiang.

The *second embassy* of Chang Ch'ien to the Wu-sun occurred in 119 B.C. (cf. Gernet who says it was 115 B.C. – perhaps there were three embassies). The Chinese sought them as allies and asked them to move back eastwards to Kansu (from whence they came, according to Pulleyblank). The Chinese requested them to defend the Western regions. In fact, the Wu-sun king, K'un-mo had 10,000 bowmen available for this.

The ruler of the Wu-sun was called by a name of Tocharian origin, but the Wu-sun king *K'un-mo* in his childhood had an experience as orphan in the desert and was supposedly saved and helped by a crow. So the Chinese word *wu-sun – crow grandson* was used by the Chinese to describe these nomadic peoples.

According to Pulleyblank, there were “both Saka and Yueh-chi elements in the Wu-sun population, as well as Sakas in the neighbouring small states in the Pamirs. When the Chinese made contacts with Kashmir (Che-pin) over the Hanging Pass, they learned that the ruler there was a Saka who had come from the north (i.e. from Xinjiang). They asserted that the king of the Sakas had been driven out of his original home in the Pamirs by the Yueh-chi”.²¹

What this shows is that the early peoples in Kashmir were influenced from westward and northward by Tocharian-speaking peoples including the *Yueh-chi* who migrated into Western Turkestan and then into the Punjab and India (as the Kushan dynasties) and also by the *Wu-sun* who stayed in Xinjiang but were linked ethnically and linguistically to the Yueh-chi. Thus, Yueh-chi (Kushan) rulers such as Kanishka, when he was in Kashmir, could cross the passes to Xinjiang and find a people there who had a similar historical role as his own people. We might conclude that *circa*. 116 A.D. when a great Kushan ruler had relations with peoples of Xinjiang, he met remnants of the Yueh-chi as well as Wu-sun people (cf. Pulleyblank statement above). Hence *a fourth element* should be considered among the inhabitants of the Karakoram area *circa*. two thousand years ago, namely the “Yueh-chi” and “Wu-sun” elements. These were Tocharian-speakers, i.e. the descendants of the *Afanasievo culture* of

Minusinsk who, according to Pulleyblank, spoke a form of 'east Iranian' language.

The appellation 'east Iranian' may be too modern a term – after all Afanasievo culture dates back 4,000 years. The Russian linguists following the 'Nostratic' hypothesis would probably call Afanasievo language 'Proto-Nostratic' in contrast to the 'Sino-Caucasian' language macrofamily to which the Burushaski of Gilgit, as well as the proto-Tibetans and proto-Chinese, belonged.

This *fourth element* of the Kashmir peoples of two thousand years ago (i.e. the Yueh-chi-Kushan and the Wu-sun elements) might account for some ancient *Iranian* elements in Kashmir society. Thus, 'Sino-Caucasian', 'Indo-Aryan', 'Scythian' (Saka) and 'east Iranian' peoples and languages penetrated the Karakoram area at an early time. The Kushan dynasties may have been somewhat significant in the forging of the Kashmir populations, particularly as it was no doubt their rulers who pursued contacts across the Karakoram pass to Xinjiang in the early years of the Present Era.

Kashmir Shaivism (veneration of Shiva) flourished from the eighth and ninth centuries to the twelfth centuries Present Era in Kashmir. It has similarities to Hindu *tantra*. The *Soudan peoples* entered western Kashmir soon after, at the end of a long pilgrimage over the centuries from the Near East, Mesopotamia and Afghanistan (Ghazni).

The first Muslim ruler of Kashmir was Shah Mirza and for five centuries Kashmir had Muslim rulers including the Moghuls (ruled up to 1751). Then the Afghan Durranis ruled until 1819 when the Sikhs replaced them under Ranjit Singh. In 1846 the Dogras (Gulab Singh) ruled there under the British tutelage.

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 16. As regards the origin of the word *Saka* or *Sakas*: In Greek a *sakos* is a shield of wood covered with hides. A *sakkion* is a small bag. *Sakkos* is a coarse cloth (of hair – sackcloth). *Saktor* means 'one who fills the lower world' – 'a slayer of many'; a *Sagaris* is a weapon used by Scythian tribes (single-edged axe). A *sage* is the harness of a horse or mule, and a *sagma* is the 'housings of a horse'. Another perhaps relevant Greek term is *skaios* – 'on the left side – on the western side' or 'unlucky', 'left-handed', 'gauche, awkward, uncouth' etc. From this comes *skaiotes* 'left-handed', 'stupid, rude'. The Nostratic background to such Greek terms may be *soku* 'blind', or to Uralic term /s/ok(k)a' blind'. Another Nostratic term is *sakV* 'sap' or resin'. In any case we should investigate the Greek term *skaios* (above) as it may be the origin of the word Scyths Scythians. We could seek the words *Saka* / *Sakas* or *Scyth* / *Scythians* in Sino/Caucasian terminology as follows: Burusu *shk-i (il)* - face, North Caucasian *sqa* – head; Sumerian *sag* – head; Ket' – *ciGV* – head; Iraqian (west) *saga* or *caga* – head. Also, North Caucasian *sakwa* – tress, mane; Sumerian *sig* – wool; Burushaski *se* – wool; Ket' *sugai* – tress.
- Other Sino-Caucasian terms: North Caucasian *swinki* – bear; Na Dene (Tlingit) *s'ik* – black bear; North Caucasian *siik* – squirrel; *sak'u* – marten; Chechen *satq'a* weasel; Yenesseian (Ket') *saqa* – squirrel; Tlingit *Calk* – ground squirrel. Although such 'origin' of *Saka* / *Sakas* may seem groundless, other Sino-Caucasian terms may be more relevant: SC*(Sino-Caucasian) *Sik* – full; Burushaski *sek* / *sak* – filled up; Ainu *Sik* – to fill; or SC* *c'aq* – strong; North East Caucasian *c'aq'q'V*

straight; Sumerian *zaq* – firm; Yenesseian (Ket') *sak-ar* hard, stiff; Basque *zakh-ar* – strong, violent, coarse. If the term Saka is of 'Sino-Caucasian' origin, then the last-mentioned group ('strong, firm, straight' etc.) may prove that the *Sakas* were 'self-naming'.

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RULING BY DURBAR STYLE OF GOVERNANCE *THE GILGIT AGENCY IN COLONIAL TIMES*

IRMTRAUD STELLRECHT

In May 2009, in a small chat room in the Hunza Valley (in Northern Areas of Pakistan), a heated debate flared up over an old photograph. It showed Mir Muhammad Nazim Khan, ruler of Hunza State, from 1892 to 1938, and his *Wazir*, Humayun Beg, in ceremonial attire at the Imperial Coronation Durbar at Delhi in 1903. The opinions offered by the participants ranged from appreciation for great leaders of the past to their utter condemnation as colonial 'devils' and exploiters. In fact, the photo conveys various messages. For me, first of all, it shows the integration of the Hunza *Mir* into a colonial hierarchy. Second, and more generally speaking, it draws our attention to the world of *darbars* or 'ceremonial gatherings' in colonial India. Muhammad Nazim Khan was actively involved in this world.¹ He participated in two imperial *darbars* at Delhi, and every year he also attended a *darbar*, known as the *Jalsa*.

The *Jalsa* was staged by the British political agent at Gilgit, the administrative centre of the Gilgit Agency.² The Gilgit *Jalsa* belongs to a special form of an all-Indian consultative and, at the same time, paternalistic practice of indirect rule, aptly called the '*darbar* style of governance'. Its execution differed depending on regional contexts. In Gilgit, the *Jalsa* combined three modes of assembly: first, the ritualised '*political darbar*', a gathering of all chiefs and leading men, presided over by the political agent; second, intimate consultations between him and high-ranking *darbaris*; and third, 'civil and military sports' for the general public. The *Jalsa* was introduced by the British in 1889, and was followed as a fixed regional tradition up to 1947. It was a real innovation. Never before had regional leaders assembled as a political and social group in its own right.

The *darbar* – the core of the event – reflected court rituals of Moghul times as adopted by the colonial power. Its codification occurred at the Imperial Assemblage in December 1877 at Delhi, celebrating Queen Victoria's proclamation as Empress of India. At this unique occasion the Viceroy, as representative of the Queen-Empress, held a ceremonial *darbar*. It reflected British ideas about Indian society: its fragmentation into separate and autonomous communities by caste, tribe, and religion, and, at the same time, its feudal structure. At the *darbar*, appropriate hierarchical relations between the crown and Indian princes as representatives of these separate social categories were assigned. Precedence was decisive in establishing a proper order. It was made visible, symbolically, through a hierarchical spatial arrangement of the *darbaris* and also through the exchange of gifts. By offering gold and valuables as *nazr*³ to the Viceroy, the princes acknowledged their subordinate position, and the Viceroy reciprocated with a *khilat*,⁴ i.e., robes of honour and valuables and, thus, showed his imperial superiority. In addition, he also granted graded honorary titles, as a mark of ranked status. The British understood this exchange of gifts as being commensurate with the signing of a contract of loyalty. Therefore, what was termed 'disloyalty' meant a breach of contract.

The codification of a symbolic idiom of difference in 1877 helped to make *darbars* a recognized model of colonial governance. This model was based on the assumption that the separate and autonomous communities of Indian society could be ruled only by their natural leaders through a process of consultation with the imperial state.' The codified *darbar* idiom facilitated the transfer of the model from imperial to regional levels, even to the margins of the empire. A special 'frontier version' of the Delhi blueprint was the Gilgit *Jalsa*, which forms the focus of this paper. The *Jalsa* ritually represented a complex political situation in the high mountain frontier zone between Central and South Asia.

The Hindukush-Karakoram-Pamir region can be considered a transit zone between South and Central Asia, connected by route systems. It was exactly a chance transit which in 1842 brought the Sikh Maharaja and afterwards, in 1846, the Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir to Gilgit, which functioned as an important route intersection. The routes were controlled by regional chiefs. They offered determined resistance to the Sikh leader and later the Kashmiri ruler. Apart from its military and administrative base at Gilgit, Kashmir's⁵ authority was based on established forms of gift exchange. That means: the Maharaja received *nazr* from the

chiefs and reciprocated with a *khilat*. In addition, he paid annual subsidies. Yet, these traditional forms of governance never ensured the loyalty of the chiefs. They still retained their scope to continue route- and, at the same time, trade-politics in the transit zone, through marriage alliances and gift exchange.

At the time of the 'Great Game' the Government of India assessed these networks at its northern frontier as highly dangerous. It was feared, the Russians could use them to gain influence south of the border passes. At the same time, Kashmir was not considered able to effectively control the frontier zone up to the passes. Therefore, in 1878 the Government of India established a political agency at Gilgit. Thus, a system of an overlapping 'dual control' was implemented. On the one hand, a Kashmiri *wazir* administered what was called the Gilgit Wazarat; on the other hand, all contacts to chiefs and leading men in surrounding valleys were to be supervised by the political agent. The coexistence of two political powers competing for authority and prestige with the chiefs to gain their loyalty inevitably produced friction.

The British Government was only prepared to run the Gilgit Agency with a minimum of costs and staff. It rather used Kashmir's administrative structures and financial funds to secure its aims. All the same, British precedence was judged unequivocal: first, because the Maharaja was a tributary to the crown, and second, because he couldn't ensure control beyond Gilgit proper. He was considered a suzerain in the frontier zone, whereas the political agent represented imperial sovereignty over the whole of India, up to its frontiers. The British agency was closed down after only three years, in 1881, the result of a total defeat in the face of militant regional coalitions. In 1889, the agency was opened anew. The uneasy partnership of dual control was continued and only ended in 1935, when the British leased the agency for a term of sixty years.

With this scenario, I have introduced the main actors of the annual *Jalsa*, and the political structure of their relationship. I will examine this relationship, as fixed in the ritual form at the *Jalsa*, and ask: how was the function of the *Jalsa* as a mode of *darbar* style of governance transformed into actual practice; how was it implemented, and how did it develop? By asking these questions, I take into consideration the modest beginnings of the *Jalsa* in 1889 and its high regional acceptance by 1947, which we can define as a divide between a formative phase and a phase when it became routine practice. Using Mary Louise Pratt's concept, we also can regard the *Jalsa* as a 'contact zone' – a ritual, social and political space, where

actors 'meet, clash, and grapple with each other... in contexts of highly asymmetrical colonial relations of power'. I'd like to ask: how did the actors in the 'contact zone' take part and respond to the *Jalsa* performance, how did they communicate beyond parameters of dominance, 'across lines of difference and hierarchy', appropriating the event as an arena for negotiating competing claims? This approach also moves away from classifying imperial rituals in princely India as 'hollow' shows, the staging of puppets acting in a colonial theatre. In answering these questions, I will mostly use archival documents, bearing in mind recent debates about knowledge production in the colonial context.

In December 1889, Lieutenant-Colonel Algernon Durand, political agent at Gilgit, staged the first *Jalsa* and, as part of it, a 'political *darbar*' at its centre. Holding *darbars* and integrating gift exchanges to show subordination and loyalty was an established routine when Kashmiri officials in Gilgit met leading men of the surrounding valleys. Yet, Durand's *darbar* was different. We can clearly discern an imperial pattern, which had already been used in respect of unruly frontier regions. The Viceroy, Lord Dufferin, just two years before, in 1887, had held a big *darbar* at Peshawar, in British territory, but close to the northern trans-frontier regions, extending towards Chitral. Trans-frontier chiefs were explicitly called to attend. This invitation to the *darbar* was a political tool, integrating the chiefs into the sphere of British influence and, at the same time, warning the Amir of Afghanistan against expanding his influence in the frontier zone. Durand was doubtlessly familiar with the Peshawar *darbar* and also with the archetypical imperial assemblage of 1877, whose date coincided with that of the first *Jalsa* – December 25th to 29th.

Let us start by having a look at the first *Jalsa* procedure. On *darbar* day, the British flag was hoisted at the agency bungalow. The invitees with their followers appeared: some *Rajas* including Raja Khan Bahadur of Astor Valley and Raja Akbar Khan of Punial Valley who had been dependent on Kashmir for decades; the eldest highborn son of the *Mir* of Nagar, the second state in Hunza Valley; an extremely lowborn half-brother of the *Mir* of Hunza, Muhammad Nazim Khan, aged about twenty – we already met him on the photograph; there were leading men of the Gilgit Wazarat and also the civil and military personnel of Kashmir, accompanied by fifty soldiers in uniform.

Durand presided over the *darbar*. The position of the Maharaja's highest official, the *Wazir-i-Wazarat*, was fixed hierarchically below the Agent. Precedence among the native *darbaris*, i.e., the 'highest seat', was

given by Durand to the Nagar prince. The gift exchange expressed this order of precedence: all *darbaris*, led by the *Wazir-i-Wazarat*, presented *nazr* – regionally produced gold dust – as a token of submission and loyalty. It was touched and remitted by Durand and later he reciprocated with a *khilat*. Durand gave a speech and used it to impress five important points on the attendees:

1. The permanent status of the political agency, i.e., primary loyalty should now be directed towards the British.
2. The British Government acts in complete political accord with Kashmir in strengthening its northern frontier, i.e., giving the Maharaja subordinated respect is accepted.
3. In the future, the *Jalsa* will be an annual event, i.e. the contract of subordination and loyalty has to be renewed regularly.
4. The occasion of the *Jalsa* will be used to hand over the annual subsidies, i.e., they will be paid punctually and will no longer be held back by corrupt Kashmir officials.
5. The payment of the subsidies is dependent on proven loyalty during the preceding year, i.e., the subsidy has to be considered as part of a contract and its faithful execution. After clarifying these points, in the presence of the Kashmiri *Wazir*, Durand personally disbursed the subsidies to the *darbaris*.

Durand made public entertainments part of the *Jalsa*, especially horse-racing and polo, the traditional game of the region's upper class. Yet Durand introduced a new competitive element: the winners were adequately rewarded by him. Durand took an active part in the sports himself. He and his only fellow-officer joined the Gilgit polo team and even succeeded in inflicting a crushing defeat on the Nagar team, until now thought to be invincible. 'Military sports' followed during a separate 'field day': Durand's Pathan guard and Kashmiri Gurkhas attacked a ruined fort and impressed an admiring crowd by their accuracy in shooting.

With the *Jalsa*, Durand aimed at forging a highly economical, at the same time, effective instrument to successfully fulfil his official mandate in times of crisis. In 1888, a Russian officer had crossed the passes into Hunza Valley and met the Hunza *mir*. At the same time, a Hunza-Nagar coalition drove Kashmiri troops out of the most important strategic position at the entrance to the Hunza Valley. The result of the crisis was the re-establishment of the agency, mandating Durand to secure and open the

regions up to the passes, exclude any foreign power and, by giving subsidies to local chiefs, strengthen their loyalty. The mandate also included authority to issue directives to Kashmiri officials. Thus, on the frontier, political decisions at the centre were reproduced: the disempowerment of the Maharaja by the British Government. As the expenditure of running the agency was fixed 'to the lowest limit', Durand's recourse to instruments of indirect rule was imperative. He aimed at exercising power through the leading men of the region, but as well through Kashmir, while, at the same time, demonstrating British superiority. The *Jalsa* as a symbolic representation of relationships of power could substantially help to cope with this complex situation.

Yet, it seems that Durand handled the *darbar* style of governance not simply as a ready-to-hand strategy. He integrated it into a colonial worldview, first of all, through his cultural understanding of a separate 'frontier world', pervaded by intrigue. Kashmir, as Durand saw it, was ruled by intrigue. Just as the typical 'frontier chief' loved double-dealing across colonial borders, foreign powers, such as Russia, used this propensity to gain influence in the frontier region. In addition, there was incessant intriguing among the innumerable members of the ruling families, vying for power, often resulting, finally, in tribal coalitions against Kashmir and the British. Second, in Durand's worldview, the native mind was seen as being highly impressionable. This included the Kashmiris. It could, therefore, easily be moulded by education. Finally, Durand was convinced, that 'patience and courtesy go a long way in the east', and help to end intrigue and generate loyalty. Therefore, only officers with specific qualities, such as tact, temper, patience, and discretion were suited to service on the frontier. It was precisely these qualities that Durand demonstrated to the British Government on numerous occasions.

Combating intrigue, impressing the native mind with acts of courtesy, teaching straightforward lessons – with these ideas, the *Jalsa* can be considered an ideal forum of colonial education. As early as 1889, Durand considered the *Jalsa* as a platform of demonstration: winning the polo match at the first *Jalsa* was 'one of the most useful lessons of the (*Jalsa*) week,..' or accuracy shown in the shooting exercise on the same occasion 'impressed the tribesmen very much..'

The first *Jalsa* was a modest event. To find out about its effect, Durand sent spies to the Hunza Valley and he got reassuring news. Yet, one year later, at the *Jalsa* in 1890, Durand had to accept that the effect didn't last: the Hunza and Nagar envoys were two days late; in addition, the envoy

from Nagar, was only of inferior status. Durand understood the message, and did not hand over the Nagar subsidy.

In 1891, the *Jalsa* couldn't take place: in December the war against the Hunza and Nager began. Russian intrigues in the Hunza Valley hadn't come to an end. Reliability, courtesy and patience hadn't proven persuasive, and subsidies, Durand had realised all along, were not a solid basis to build up loyalty. By now he was keen to teach a lesson, never to be forgotten. and show that there are 'bayonets behind the rupees', and 'an iron fist beneath the velvet glove'.

After three weeks, the Hunza campaign was over. It ended with a crushing defeat for both states. Again, this could be considered a most important lesson: never before had the Hunza been subdued; its fortress was considered just impregnable. But things almost went wrong for the British. The expedition corps was stuck up for eighteen days by determined resistance in the lower Hunza Valley. Out of the seventeen leading men, invited to accompany the advance in order to personally witness how military lessons are taught, sixteen just disappeared.

In March 1892, the *Jalsa*, which had been cancelled in December 1891, was made up for. The prestigious Hunza Campaign had helped to make the *Jalsa* an authoritative forum of British dominance. Durand wanted, at all costs, to use it as a forum to publicly announce a new political order in the Hunza Valley. He didn't even wait for official approval. Durand's speech was unambiguous and short: 'Rajas and Gentlemen, ...Since we last met, disloyalty and disobedience have received the punishment, which, I then warned you, would overtake them... But as the strength of the British Government has been shown, so has its mercy; ... Muhammad Nazim Khan is recognised as mir of Hunza and Humayun (Beg) as the *Wazir*...Obedience to the orders of Government will alone ensure their rule...I believe ...that all will recognise the generosity of Government. You have all seen the results of double-dealing and treachery. I trust that you and others will take the lesson to heart.' And then Durand singled out a man who had given an outstanding example of loyalty: 'As the reward of faithful service,...Raja Akbar Khan (of Punial),... and others, who served us without hesitation, have gone to India, where they have by this time received the thanks of His Excellency the Viceroy for their loyal service.'

Yet, in Autumn 1892 and Winter 1893 tribal coalitions formed again, this time in the region south of Gilgit and also in Chitral. Durand dealt with these intrigues firmly by using military force, clearly transgressing

political guidelines of the British Government. He even had to postpone the *Jalsa* from December 1892 to the end of April 1893.⁶ At that time 'the worst was over', as Durand remarked, but in his *Jalsa* speech he saw himself forced to seriously admonish the assembled chiefs and leading men 'like a father'. It was Durand's last *Jalsa*. In May he left for India, and was followed in office by his close friend and brother-in-arms, George Scott Robertson, a medical officer who had served in the agency right from its beginnings. When in spring 1895, a war of succession to the throne began in Chitral, it was Robertson who headed hundreds of newly recruited levies from the agency to Chitral and even became one of the heroes of what was called the 'Chitral Siege'.

Robertson firmly believed that prestige on the frontier is 'as valuable as bayonets,' but, of course, bayonets can also be used to assure prestige. At all events, the *Jalsa* of 1895, after the prestigious victory in Chitral, could be perfectly used as an all-embracing lesson in loyalty. Let us take a closer look at it. The event lasted ten days, from December 25th to January 3rd.⁷ On December 25th, Christmas Day, Robertson held a reception at the agency bungalow, with all chiefs and leading men attending and paying their respects. Five days of civil and military sports followed: target shooting, tug of war, tent pegging, horse races, and rifle shooting matches for the levies. Twelve teams competed in polo matches. Nagar won, integrating in its team even the *Mir* and his *Wazir*.

The *darbar* on December 31st was attended by about thousand *darbaris*, among them dozens of leading men and chiefs with their retinues. It took place in front of the agency. As the 12 o'clock gun fired, Robertson left the bungalow and solemnly walked to his seat. A band played the British national anthem, a guard of honour presented arms, a battery fired a salute of 11 guns, honouring the Maharaja. All *darbaris*, Kashmiris included, presented *nazr*, the Kashmiri officers their words, to be touched and remitted. Then Robertson delivered his extremely long speech, opening it with 'my friends'. He first praised loyalty, not just given, but enthusiastically demonstrated during the Chitral War. Loyalty, he made clear, was more than contract or subsidies; it was also a positive emotion.

In further speeches Robertson followed a distinct rhetorical pattern to convey serious messages: from particular events he deduced general principles. Appointing new district governors, who had proved their loyalty over and over again..., he drew on the British principle of 'natural' leaders ruling 'their' group in a feudal society: 'These Governors will manage their districts in accordance with the manners and customs of

the people, except in those very few instances where the manners and customs of the people are opposed to those enlightened principles upon which the Governments of all civilised countries are now based...This principle of trying to insure the happiness of a people by non-interference with all their customs which are not of an improper nature, ...is the principle which has ever been upheld in all the districts about Gilgit.⁸

Robertson used the same rhetoric when driving home the truth about the Chitral War. After listing disloyal and treacherous deeds of those Chitralis who had abandoned the British cause and gone over to the enemy, he stated in instructive tones: 'The perfidious Chitralis, as soon as the fighting was over, were allowed to return to their homes, and clemency was shown to them, because of their ignorance and foolishness. Not one man was executed, although according to eastern ideas hundreds deserved that fate.'

A highlight of the *darbar* was the handing over of rewards and honours for service in war. Three already ruling chiefs were now given final legitimacy defined as proven loyalty for the imperial cause: 'Foremost as usual, when loyal sentiments have to be declared and loyal deeds to be done, were Mir Muhammad Nazim Khan of Hunza, Raja Sikandar Khan of Nagar, and Raja Akbar Khan of Punyal. His Excellency the Viceroy of India has been pleased to mark his appreciation of their admirable behaviour by conferring upon each of them a decoration, and by sending them *khilats*. He has also sent each of these chiefs a sword of honour.' Robertson presented these marks of distinction and invested the three men with the *khilat*, a valuable robe of honour.⁹

This investiture finally also solved the vexing problem of precedence: first, loyal service to the British, proven through verifiable deeds, became the bar for defining status at the *Jalsa*. Of course these loyal deeds in peacetime, after 1895, no longer bore a martial touch. Second, Robertson's sequence in calling the three chiefs represented a ranking never afterwards changed: Hunza first, Nager second, Punyal third, and then the rest. This sequence was transformed in future *darbars* into seating arrangements and used as a sequential order for presenting *nazr*.¹⁰

In his report to the Government of India, Robertson classified the *Jalsa* as a highlight and a lesson too: 'Throughout the *darbar* week everything went off most successfully: all were well looked after and fed and all went away highly pleased with the way they had been treated and with the liberality of Government...I am of the opinion that the effect produced by this *darbar* throughout the whole countryside has been highly

satisfactory.' The bottom line showed that the *Jalsa* was an expensive affair: subsidies and cash rewards for loyal service in Chitral amounted to about Rs. 25,000, not including the *khilats* presented and other expenses.

The *Jalsa* of 1895 can be considered the paradigmatic end of the formative phase, as the final implementation of the *darbar* style of governance in the Gilgit Agency. After 1895, it became routine in times of peace. Let us use this divide to take a closer look at Durand. He assumed mythical proportions because of his uncompromising attitude whenever he saw empire endangered: by Kashmir, by the Hunza, by the Russians, or, in general terms, by intrigue. Of course, the *Jalsa* is, indirectly, part of this stance. When in the late nineteen twenties, the British Government discussed the future of the agency – and Kashmir's obligation to give *nazr* was a major point in the debate – Durand, who had died in the meantime, was revived again, right from the archive where his hegemonic knowledge of how to rule the agency and how to handle a refractory Maharaja was stored. The British resident in Kashmir, Evelyn Howell, asked to write an evaluation in 1927, brought Durand to life again: "Whether by design or from a natural tendency that way Durand thought proper to assume and maintain a very Olympian pose during his tenure (in Gilgit) and his successors have departed little from it."¹¹ And Howell, after studying the files, portrayed the typical political agent as coinciding with the self-image of Durand: 'The Political Agent, (according to Durand), is a creature of superior clay, who will give protection against the Kashmir ogre, and whose voice must be hearkened to and obeyed, as if it were the voice of a god.' In his retrospective analysis, Howell also touched on Durand's personality, and in this context made a revealing remark concerning the introduction of the *darbar* style of governance, including the *Jalsa*, in the Gilgit Agency: "(Durand) kept great state. He exacted the most deferential behaviour on all public occasions from all with whom he had dealings and he made public occasions numerous. The wisdom of this conduct may be inferred from the small measure of cost, in money or anxiety, at which the Gilgit frontier has been maintained, since Durand laid the foundations."¹² Durand's fame survived until the end of the *Raj*. The last British officer at Gilgit, William A. Brown, with tears in his eyes, saw himself in a proud line of loyal British service, initiated by the venerated Durand.

Durand had given the *Jalsa* its structure. Presenting *nazr* remained a symbolic pillar, as an annual renewal of contract. When the *Jalsa* was cancelled once, the political agent even toured the valleys to make up for

the ritual in local surroundings, got *nazr* and gave *khilat*. The significance of the gift exchange in its contractual meaning also made participation in the *Jalsa* obligatory. When a chief once asked to be excused, without giving serious reasons, a strict order to participate followed. The political agent could also use the ritual for punishment:¹³ not reciprocating *nazr* with a *khilat* meant not granting a new contract, and being excluded from the *Jalsa* meant loss of legitimacy.

Another permanent structural element of the *Jalsa* was the speech delivered by the political agent at the *darbar*. Also after 1895, in times of peace, it never lost its exalted, educational profile. As the *Jalsa* was an annual event, the political agent reviewed interim occurrences and, thus, embedded his speech in regional life.¹⁴ He judged how past situations should be classified, reminded them of how current problems could be solved, warned of future consequences of deeds, and, of course, taught the correct worldview in regard to imperial events. Only serious matters were highlighted: appointments, grants of medals and decorations, and also 'Windsor events' – such as coronations and jubilees. Requests to commemorate the late Queen-Empress with the Victoria Towers were made, as were appeals for subscriptions to the vice-regal war fund during the world wars.

The more sensitive elements of the speech – praise and reprimand – had to be approved by the British Resident in Kashmir. Reprimand, usually, was only made when a critical stage in a long-lasting conflict was reached. *Durbaris* were then called by name and admonished. The language used was guarded. Political agents seem to have been aware of the dangers of publicly losing one's *izzat* (honour). Before reaching the *darbar* level, the issue went through many stages of conflict mediation. Political agents even made it an explicit point to clear disputes before the *Jalsa*. But if not successful, the *Jalsa* offered good chances for further dialogue and negotiation, even integrating mediators.

The normative atmosphere of the *darbar* was intended and was an important part of colonial politics. In 1935 a political agent subsumed it thus: 'It is quite impossible to over estimate the political value of the annual *Jalsa*. It continues to be a very cheap and profitable form of spring cleaning.' But perhaps this very aloof perspective, indirectly defining the *darbaris* as puppets in a spectacle, positioned and orchestrated by the political agent, is, perhaps, due to official language used in reports to superiors.

Up to now the British perspective of the *Jalsa* was followed. Yet, this is only half the truth. Participating in the event, being officially

acknowledged as a *durbari* and, thus, becoming an essential part in the structure of British authority and prestige, also gave the attendees a certain legitimization: to be part of the game, to make demands, expect support, seek one's own interests, launch claims or show resistance, even in the context of asymmetrical colonial relations. In this context, the *Jalsa* can be classified as a contact zone, 'a social space where individuals and groups 'meet, clash, and grapple with each other,' in a plurality of micro-settings, across lines of difference and hierarchy. I will touch on this point very briefly. Processes in the contact zone are subtle, voices are scarcely audible – there is a lack of documentation –, and experiences have antecedents too complex to be narrated.

The *Jalsa* developed into an event which brought a multitude of *durbaris* to Gilgit; chiefs and governors were entitled to have a retinue of up to twelve persons and their own bands. But the event also attracted more and more spectators from valleys surrounding Gilgit. The huge gathering was an exception in regard to British rules, tolerated only in *Jalsa* times. During the year, there was no freedom of movement and no free access to Gilgit. People were systematically kept apart. This holds particularly true for the members of the ruling elite. Their mobility and external social contacts were closely supervised. As a precautionary measure against intrigue, marriage alliances and gift exchanges had to be approved by the Agent. To keep in touch with the situation, he regularly went 'on tour'. Against this background, the Gilgit *Jalsa* was an extraordinary regional event, assembling a multitude of visitors with different languages (Shina, Khowar, Burushaski) and beliefs (Sunnis, Shias, Ismailis).

The most attractive part for the crowd was 'civil and military sports', organised as competitions, as introduced by Durand. The *Jalsa* stimulated the selection of local teams. Training for the tournament went on during the whole year, some even supported by British officers. The teams competed for trophies, donated by the political agent. Representing their places of origin, the winning teams formed a new type of ranking in the region, across lines of established hierarchy. A process of identification with locality in a regional context and times of peace was stimulated. The same holds true for the companies of levies and scouts, recruited by the British in different valleys as an auxiliary force. At the *Jalsa*, they paraded in separate formations and competed against each other in military sports. In normal service they were expected to cooperate.

When we look at the chiefs and leading men, the *Jalsa* offered a forum to demonstrate their wealth: precious horses, robes, luxury items and

bands. It also opened up a chance to get into direct social contact with each other. There was networking and gift exchange. Gifts were allowed to be accepted, if the political agent was informed. Secret exchanges of gifts were forbidden and, when revealed, they had to be returned.

REFERENCES

1. *Durbar* (Persian) means princely court, ceremonial gathering.
2. *Jalsa* (Arabic) means social gathering, sitting together, meeting, assembly.
3. *Nazr* (Arabic) means a vow gift, given by an inferior to a superior.
4. *Khilat* (Arabic) means bestowal of a cloth/robe of honour by the superior on the inferior.
5. For reasons of convenience I will use 'Kashmir' for the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir, which was ruled by the Dogras.
6. From now onward the date of the *Jalsa* definitely shifted from December to spring time.
7. On 24 December the *darbaris* arrived, sports took place on 26 and 27, on 31 the political *darbar* was held, and on 1 January rewards for loyal service in Chitral were given, on 2, 3 January Robertson saw various chiefs and headmen for intimate discussions, and on 4 January all left.
8. To give his message of non-interference more authenticity, Robertson again went down to the grass root level of an exemplary case, this time from the Pathan region south to Gilgit. During the war these Pathans had showed disloyal behaviour, and Robertson deduced: 'You see how kindly and mercifully the Government of India dealt with a foolish and wrong-headed people and abstained from annexing those fertile valleys the revenue from which might have helped to indemnify Government for its great outlay of money.'
9. A valuable *khimkab choga*
10. Towards Kashmir Robertson took a compromising attitude. Of course, Kashmiri officials and officers were not spared the ritual of presenting *nazr* or their sword. But Robertson made it a point to mention the Maharaja in his speech most respectfully.
11. His edifice rests upon three main props: (1) a firm belief in the invincible strength of the British Empire, (2) an unquestioning assurance that the British officer, and especially the Political Agent, is a creature of superior clay, who will give protection against the Kashmir ogre, and whose voice must be hearkened to and obeyed, as if it were the voice of a god, (3) a policy towards the people of the Political Districts and their rulers based on liberality, justice and courtesy, with a minimum of interference, by which their contentment should be secured.
12. Setting aside the abortive attempt of Major Biddulph in 1878, the Agency was first established under Captain Durand in 1889...' Whenever the status of the agency was evaluated by the Government of India, as in the late nineteenth-twenties and on the eve of the Gilgit Lease in 1935, always through the lens of past developments archived in voluminous colonial records, the name of Durand loomed large. As the political agent succinctly stated in 1935: 'The Gilgit tradition began with Durand,'.
13. The annual subsidy, as a means of ensuring loyalty, over the years lost its significance. The relevance of the annual reconfirmation of the contract of loyalty

can be also explained as a means to suppress intrigue in the frontier zone. Until 1917 Russia, later the Soviet Union were considered a latent menace for colonial rule. At all events, many British documents show continued mistrust towards the ruling elite, as loyalty was always endangered by intrigue, also along route networks. Otherwise, the continuing significance of *nazr* can also be explained quite simply: it had become a tradition.

14. This aspect is also demonstrated in the division of the regional calendar into times 'before or after the *Jalsa*'.

LANGUAGE, CULTURE AND HERITAGE OF MIRPUR

MUHAMMAD RAFIQ BHATTI

Language, culture and heritage are the cornerstones of civilizations - ancient, medieval and present. It is very difficult to draw the lines of demarcation between languages, cultures and heritage of different regions because these are interwoven and overlapping. Language is a medium of expression of feelings, emotions, reason, prudence, passions and vision. Mankind since time immemorial has evolved different modes of expression, called tongues, dialects or languages. A language is a living organism, which originates, develops and dies. There are so many languages that have died away and are extinct now.

Culture reflects the macro and micro behavioural structure of a society generally accepted. All practices that people undertake, adopt or follow consciously for their economic, social, political, moral, religious or spiritual satisfaction come under the garb of culture. These practices, rites, rituals, customs, traditions, arts, architecture, food and dress etc. become part of their individual and collective life and pass on from generation to generation. It is a process of history and differentiates one community from other, one nation from other and one time span from the other. It is like a tree that has its roots in the past, branches in the present and shades in future.

The concept of heritage refers to the stock of art and science of a society preserved in different forms. It reflects the past, reforms the present and regulates the future behaviour of individuals and societies. Different societies and nations have different stock of heritages. Major part of heritage is attributed to past culture. In other words heritage is past culture preserved in different forms.

Geographically, Mirpur is situated on the southern borders of the

former State of Jammu and Kashmir. District Mirpur is situated 32.17 to 32.50 degree north and 72.40 to 80.30 degree east on the world map with reference to Kashmir map. Before partition its area was 1,627 sq miles. Its southern and western borders touch Gujrat, Jhelum, Gujjar Khan and Rawalpindi districts of Pakistan. Before partition Jammu province had five districts named, Jammu, Kathua, Udhampur, Riasi and Mirpur. After partition major area of former district of Mirpur fell into Pakistani administered Kashmir and district Mirpur was further divided into two more districts named Kotli and Bhimber.

It is said that old Mirpur city was founded by Ghakhar tribe in 1051 Hijri or in the third decade of 17th century AD. Some believe that a saint Hazrat Miran Shah Ghazi was the founder of this city. The shrine of Miran Shah Ghazi still survives although the water of Mangla Dam keeps it submerged for nine months of the year. As water level falls and shrine appears, people (pilgrims) visit the shrine and hold *Urs* every year with zest and zeal. In 1967, old Mirpur city was evacuated due to construction of Mangla dam. In its place new Mirpur city, just 5 kilometers towards south at Balla Gala, was populated.

The people of district Mirpur inclusive of Kotli and Bhimber speak a language called as Mirpuri or Pahari, which is a blend of Punjabi, Dogri, Pothowari, Lahndi and Gojri. Recent researches show that Pahari Mirpuri language was earlier called as Kharoshti. At present Mirpuri in itself is not recognized as an independent language. It is known as Mirpuri Pahari, Mirpuri Punjabi or Mirpuri Pothowari. But researchers opine that it is Mirpuri Pahari which is close to Prakrit or Pali. Rock carvings of Chitterpari near Mirpur town testify to this relationship. To quote Dr. Mohsin Shakeel, "all the Pahari languages share many common grammatical features and lexical items". The famous Pir Panjal range of mountains demarcates some of the Pahari languages spoken on its Northeast and southwest slopes.

The leading literary work that identifies Mirpuri Pahari is *Saif-ul-Malook* written by famous Sufi poet Mian Muhammad Bakhsh. *Saif-ul-Malook* is universally recognized as a book written in Mirpuri Pahari. The author himself belonged to District Mirpur. *Saif-ul-Malook* is a perfect and complete reflection of Mirpuri language, culture and heritage. Every year the *Urs* of Mian Muhammad Bakhsh is celebrated at Khari Sharif with great religious, spiritual and social festivity. The verses of *Saif-ul-Malook* are recited. People from far flung areas come and attend this *Urs*. It has great cultural significance. On this occasion, many groups come to recite *Saif-ul-Malook* with their musical instruments and pay homage to the saint

poet who is also called as “Roomi of Kashir” or “Nightingale of Kashmir”. Old mosques, tombs and shrines have recently been renovated by the department of Auqaf. The new expanded and modified buildings along with the grand mosque have made the place attractive for pilgrims, visitors and for cultural congregations.

Briefly we can safely say that Mirpuri language has three dimensions

1. Mirpuri Pahari.
2. Mirpuri Punjabi.
3. Mirpuri Pothowari.

George Grierson, a prominent scholar and author of *Linguistic Survey of India* broadly divides the Himalayan range into three regions: i) Eastern Pahari region, ii) Central Pahari region and iii) Western Pahari region. District Mirpur falls in third region, i.e., Western Pahari region. But geographically it is not true. District Mirpur is the southeast part of the State of Jammu and Kashmir. Prof. Zabair Ahmed Qazi, of Allama Iqbal Open University, Islamabad, who has done research on regional dialects and languages, observes that Grierson ignored the actual location of district Mirpur. Grierson acknowledges that “Western Pahari consists of great number of dialects varying from hill to hill.” And one does find a change in language after every 10 miles. But with these varying accents, there is a general homogeneity so far as the over all language of the region is concerned. For example the words mine and thine are spoken *Mahra Twara* in Mirpur. In Kotli it is spoken as *Mera Tera* and at other places it is spoken as *Asna Tusna*. In Kotli come and go are spoken *Aana Jana*. In Mirpur, the same are spoken as *Anran Janran*. *Chitka* a magazine of Almi Pahari Adbi Sangat, describes the alphabets of Mirpuri Pahari in details. Dr. Nasrullah Khan Nasar has classified Pahari alphabets in two categories, i.e., Primary and Secondary.

It may be noted that the present inhabitants of this district are not aboriginal. They are migrants from adjacent areas of Punjab. But since long they have evolved a form of language which is an amalgamation of different accents and dialects. Majority of population has migrated either from Punjab or has been in socio-economic and cultural touch with Punjab, hence Punjabi accent looks dominant. But one can not call it as Punjabi. The alphabets of Mirpuri Pahari language identified with reference to phonetics recorded in *Chitka* are same as identified by Prof. Dr. Nasruall Khan Nasar with minor differences.

The areas of Mirpur adjacent to Rawalpindi have Pothowari accent.

It may be noted that Mirpuri and Pothowari are closely related. The areas close to Jehlum, Dina and Kharian also differ in accent. But with all these minor dialectical differences, the fact remains that District Mirpur has its distinct language. One may call it as Mirpuri or Pahari language. From the northern and eastern side of Mirpur, say Poonch, Rajouri, Noshera, Riasi and Jammu, Poonchi, Gojri and Dogri accents are also mixed in it. Due to migration of Kashmiris from Indian administrated Kashmir an important change in Mirpuri language has taken place. Moreover, overseas migration from Mirpur to Europe, particularly to England has also influenced the texture of Mirpuri Pahari language. Urdu and English have adversely effected its nativity. Mirpur being the district headquarter and a developing modern city is loosing its old linguistic identity. Due to changing patterns of life, food and dress, Mirpuri language is also changing.

To conclude, Mirpuri is an offshoot of Pahari and Pahari in itself is perverted form of Prakrit, a language which became popular during the Ghandara civilization. In ancient times it had been written in Guru Mukhi script and at present it is being written in Shah Mukhi. According to David Crystal, the author of *Encyclopedia on Languages*, Pahari is a group of Languages belonging to northwest group of Indo-Aryan spoken in lower Himalayas. Prof. Nazir Tabassum, an expert of Pahari/Mirpuri language states that there are 60 sounds in Mirpuri language comprising of 38 consonants and 22 monothongs vowels. *Chitka*, a journal of Almi Pahari Adbi Sangat (APAS) reflects good research work on Mirpuri Language. On the Pakistani side of Jammu and Kashmir, Jammu and Kashmir Cultural Academy, Gojri Adbi Sangat and literary society *Adbika* are working to perceive and promote Mirpuri language, literature and culture. *Tehzeeb*, a magazine of AJK Cultural Academy also played a significant role in this respect.

Mirpuri Pahari Writers and Writings

So far as the writing in Mirpuri Pahari language is concerned, there is no record of any ancient or subsequent research work. But we find some rock and stone carvings which show that people here have been using a script close to *Sharda*. One sample was found from a water tank (*Baoli*).

Since the use of Shah Mukhi script, one can classify the literary work of this district in three phases; classical, neo-classical and modern. The work of the writers of these groups is mostly poetry. In the classical group, a number of writers and writings could be included. Most of them

were poets and their poetry was over shadowed by Punjabi. Here I mention only three as representative of first phase.

1. *Pir De Heer* by Syed Muhammad Shah of Khnayara Sharif Dadyal.
2. *Ishiq Prem Dian Sattan* by Syed Haider Shah Qalandar of Panag Sharif Kotli
3. *Qissa Shah Behram* by Imam Bakhsh of Banah Khoiratta Kotli.

In neo-classical phase, the following names are popular.

1. *Se Harfi Hai Mubarka* by Pir Syed Naik Alam.
2. Hazrat Mian Muhammad Bakhsh of Khari Sharif Mirpur has authored more than a dozen books. His famous book *Saif-ul-Malook* has been recognized as the authentic record of Mirpuri Pahari language, culture and heritage. It is the master piece of Mirpuri Pahari literature.
3. Mian Muhammad Zaman of Baratla Kotli, popularly known as Zaman Channa (Channa was her beloved) was a romantic poet. His poetry is not fully published yet. But he is still popular among commoners, elders and youngsters.
4. Muhammad Ashraf Asghar of Bannah Khoiratta Kotli; his poetic collection is named *Phullan Bhari Changair*.
5. Al-Haj Nawab Din Bhatti of Saj Rajouri; his book published in Mirpur entitled *Ishiq Na Puchda Zatan* is a fine piece of literature in Mirpuri Pahari.
6. Khawaja Ali Bahadur of Machiary Mirpur. His book *Dukkan Dey Pandh* is also a representative of Mirpuri Pahari. The present author's book *Qarz-e-Hasna* is a critical analysis of his poetic work.
7. Munshi Muhammad Ismail of Panjeri Mirpur is believed to have authored about one hundred books, the famous being *Saif-ul-Malook*.
8. Muhammad Khalil Saqib of Khari Mirpur is author of half a dozen books in poetry and prose, the famous one being *Khusbo-e-Faqar*.

Besides the above mentioned writers, Qazi Muhammad Jan of Sehautha Mirpur, Ghulam Qadir famous as Mian Kaka of Samahni, Muhammad Alam Sozi of Dadyal, Haji Muhammad Hanif Soz of Boa Kalan Mirpur, Ch. Muhammad Siddique of Islamgarh Mirpur, Mian Zaman of Khari and Maqbool Ahmed Azad of Palak also deserve special mention here for their research work. It may be noted that the writings of classical and neo-classical writers are dominated by Punjabi. But one can

not ignore their Mirpuri Pahari content as all these writers belong to this district and they have their own linguistic identity.

Due to increasing awareness about regional languages, culture and heritage, a number of young writers, both men and women, are inclined now towards their mother tongues, dialects and languages. Along with poetry, these modern writers of these districts also write prose. Ustad Saleem Rafiqi, Mrs. Shakh-i-Nibat, Haji Rana Fazal Hussain, Myself, Mazhar Javed Hassan, Rana Ghulam Sarwar Sehrai, Masoom Hussain Zinda, Muhammad Farooq Aseer, Muhammad Farooq Jarral, Jamil Ahmed Jamil, Qadeer Ahmed Qadeer, Dr. Mohsin Shakeel, Prof. Saeed Saqib, Mushtaq Shad, Zulfiqar Asad and Dr. Zahida Qasim are regular writers of poetry in Mirpuri Pahari. In prose, Ali Adalat, Dr. Sardar Haleem Khan, Prof. Zubair Ahmed Qazi, Liaqat Ali Khan, Tariq Mahmood, myself and Shamas-ur-Rehman have been making their contributions. *Chitka 2003*, a magazine of APAS represents these contributions made by modern writers of Mirpuri Pahari both in poetry and prose.

Organizations Promoting Mirpuri Language

Though not properly registered, the following organizations are actively working for the promotion of language, culture and heritage in Mirpur.

1. Almi Pahari Adbi Sangat.
2. National Institute of Kashmir Studies
3. The Saif-ul-Malook Arts Academy.
4. The Jammu and Kashmir Writers Forum.
5. Adbika Azad Kashmir.
6. The Citizen Forum.
7. Mian Muhammad Bukhsh Society.
8. Tourism Department, AJK Government, Mirpur.
9. Radio Azad Kashmir, Mirpur.

Due to the efforts of these organizations, Mirpuri Pahari language is being released of Punjabi dominance, and it is becoming popular among new writers. Even those who favoured Urdu and Panjabi medium are now writing in Mirpuri Pahari. The poetic taste of public is also receptive to this trend. Needless to add that regional and local dialects and languages are seed beds for national languages, as these are the springs, streams, rivulets and rivers to join the seas and oceans of national languages. Hence every effort should be made to promote these regional and local dialects

and languages.

Since the inception of Radio Mirpur, popular Mirpuri Pahari programmes such as *Mahari Tehrt*, *Payara Desh* and *Karman Ni Chan* have been aired. The advertisement in Mirpuri Pahari has more attraction for trade, commerce and industries of this district as different institutions prefer their advertisements in Mirpuri. A private TV Channel, *Aap* also telecasts a programme *Bazam-i-Sakhun* in Mirpuri. Outside Mirpur, particularly in UK, the migrants from Mirpur take keen interest in promoting Mirpuri language there. Few years ago they started a campaign in UK to get Mirpuri language recognized at Council level and now in some areas of UK. Mirpuri Pahari is accepted as a language. Ali Adalat, Shamas-ur-Rehman and their friends have been at the forefront for this successful struggle.

Mirpuri Culture

The cultural side of Mirpur is rich enough. Living patterns, food and dress, in particular are different from Punjab and Kashmir Valley. But a constant change is silently taking place in this context. About four decades ago most men wore shirts and turbans with a *chadar* on shoulders. Women attired themselves in *shalwar*, *qameez* and *chadar* over heads. They also wore traditional ornaments. But now we see a deviation in the dress of both genders. Since 1970 onwards there has been a shift in dress, foot wear and ornaments. Due to local, regional and international migration, mobility and interaction, both men and women look different. Although, *shalwar qameez* is still popular among both the genders, yet shirts, pants and even jeans are being used openly. In towns, *pyjama* has replaced *shalwar*. But rural areas are even today tied to conventional dress. Turban that was a symbol of grace and dignity is no longer in vogue. Due to improved means of transport, camels, mules, horses and donkeys are used rarely.

Gypsies or Nomads

The gypsies or nomads (Bakarwals and Pashtoos) are also residing in district Mirpur, and they have a separate language, culture and heritage in this area. They still keep herds, like goats, sheep, horses and mules. They still wear their traditional dress, i.e., long shirts, loose *shalwars* and black turbans. The women also dress likewise with embroidered headgear (*topi*) and *chadars*. But they are poverty stricken and are giving up their nomadic life. In coming few years, these nomad Bakarwals will no more

be seen with their herds in Mirpur.

There is another group of nomads in Mirpur, which consists of Pashtoons and Afghans. This group is economically very sound and some of them live in towns. But a large number of these nomads live in tents and straw huts close to vicinities. They have still preserved their own traditions. They are very hard working people. Instead of camels and donkeys, they now use tractors and other mechanical tools to earn their livelihood.

Migration from Mirpur

A large number of people from Mirpur have migrated to other countries, especially to UK for employment. About one million Mirpuris are settled in UK. It has helped them to improve their life style, houses and buildings. Old designed houses made of mud, stones and wooden logs have become rare. In their place, beautiful concrete, spacious, decorated and furnished houses with new styles of furniture have been built. The use of electronic machines has also changed domestic life style. Mirpur city is now called a mini-England. Even in rural areas of Mirpur, the old pattern of living has undergone a change. Agriculture is now a secondary profession. People do not keep animals. Rather they buy their vegetables, milk and edibles from stores and general stores. Agriculture has slowly given way to commercial and industrial enterprises. In place of oxen, yokes and ploughs, people now use tractors, thrashers, graders and other mechanical tools in farming. In place of wells, there are tube wells and bored pumps to get water. Water supply schemes have made pitchers and fetching spring water a story of past. Now women have not to go to deep wells to pull out water, where they would exchange their joys and sorrows sitting close on the walls of wells.

Mangla Dam and Heritage

The construction and upraising of Mangla Dam has adversely affected the historical monuments like temples, monasteries, forts, mosques, gurdwaras, tombs, tanks and graveyards. No steps have been taken to preserve or protect this architectural heritage. The fort of Burjun has no remains. The forts of Mangla, Ram Kot, Hari Pur, Bagh Sar and Thuroochi are decaying. No effort in public or private sector is being made to save these treasures of Mirpur. The monuments at Choumukh, a historical site of Mirpur (once a capital city) are nearing extinction. The *Sarai* of Saad Abad in Samahni is withering.

Bhimber, now a separate district, has rich cultural heritage which deserves our immediate attention. Historically the cultural heritage of Bhimber dates older than Mirpur. Besides the inn of "Saad Abad" and Fort of "Bagh Sar", lake of Bagh Sar and water reservoir (*Baoli*) at Mohalla Bawali, Hathi Gate and Shah Jehan Mosque in Bhimber city are breathing their last. The temple of Sangri and Banian along with Gurdwara Ali Beg call for urgent steps to preserve them. Similarly, the decaying structure of a beautiful *Baoli* at Sokasan needs attention. The fact is that so far we have consciously or unconsciously damaged a major part of precious heritage of Mirpur. But there is still a lot to save.

Games and Hobbies

The people of Mirpur were very fond of wrestling, kabadi, weight lifting, dog fighting, bull races, wrist holding, cock and button quail fighting. The camel and horse races were also held. Horse and cattle shows were held almost in all major places of this district. In these shows people of all ages and groups participated with fervour. Now these games are on the decline. It is the responsibility of the ministry of tourism, sports and culture to revive and promote them. These social activities on special festivals had great socio-economic value. These developed social relations, tolerance and spirit of competition. Harmony, cooperation, mutual co-existence, friendship and tolerance were promoted by such sports and festivals. But now these social activities are on the wane in Mirpur.

Similarly, social gatherings at the tombs of mystics and saints were very popular and were held regularly with faith and fervour. There are many such tombs and mystic centres in district Mirpur. The *Urs* of Pira Shah Ghazi Qalander, Mian Muhammad Bukhsh, Syed Naik Alam, Syed Lal Badshah, Mian Shah Badshah, Panj Pir, Dhular Shahab, Mai Toti, Mohra Shrif, Panag Sharif and some others have significant social and cultural value, as these provide opportunities to the people to mix together and improve their social and cultural contacts. Before partition social activities at these places were prominent. After partition religious rites and rituals have been in the forefront while relegating the social activities to the background, which has depreciated the cultural growth of a balanced social order.

Festivities

The rites and traditions of marriages in rural areas of Mirpur are in

tact to some extent, though in cities and towns new modern practices have crept in. The construction of marriage halls, use of cars in place of horses and bridal cots for bridegroom and brides have become rare now, particularly in cities and towns. In place of folklore songs sung in marriage ceremonies, cassettes, videos and other musical instruments are played now. One finds that social value and significance of marriages has been decreasing. Due to inflation and increasing cost of food stuffs, ornaments and other accessories, the old grace of marriage ceremonies is declining. Instead a new social set up is under way. Folk dances, bhangra, wrist holding and weight lifting with drum beating during the marriage procession are fading day by day. Holding of marriage processions for a night was very common a few decades ago. But now such festivities are not to be witnessed.

People of Mirpur district have always been fond of two social melodies – music and dance. Single and double pipe flutes, tongs, *Ik Tara* and *Shehnai* were the common musical instruments used in Mirpur here since early days. Bhangra, *ludi* and sword playing were also common a few decades ago. Folk love stories like *Namoo and Mitha* along with *Mahya* and *Tappa* have been important folklore of Mirpur. Women of the district also danced and sang in marriage ceremonies. Particularly, *Mehndi* is a very special festivity of marriage in which women wear colourful costly dresses and ornaments which make the ceremony very attractive. The fashion of *Sari* is on the increase now.

Shair Khwani (reciting verses from mystic poetry) was a very popular social practice in Mirpur. Reciters from Pothohar and Pindi were invited to display their art. Harmonium, Tabla and Chimta were used by people in such performances. These classical, musical instruments are very rare now. Radio and particularly TVs have sucked them from open air into tight studios.

To conclude, the following steps need to be taken to promote the cultural heritage of the Karakoram Himalayan region:

1. The government of India and Pakistan must take confidence building measures and create an atmosphere of peace, tranquility and cooperation. Mutual confidence, trust and tolerance are the foundation stones for achieving these objectives.
2. Mistrust and hostility must be discouraged in both public and private spheres.
3. People to people contacts must be encouraged at all levels. There

should be free and easy exchanges of intellectuals, writers, artists and scholars between the two countries.

4. The educational, cultural and research institutions in both the countries should undertake joint research programmes.
5. Print and electronic media in the two countries should help in normalizing the bilateral relations.
6. The universities in both countries should introduce the subjects archaeology, museology and heritage management at college and university levels so as to promote greater awareness and understanding of the ancient historical heritage of the Karakoram Himalayas.
7. During the construction of dams, roads and other mega projects in the region, care must be taken that archaeological monuments and sites are not destroyed. The ministries of tourism, culture and heritage along with department of archaeology and archaeological experts must be taken into confidence before undertaking such projects.

CONSTITUTIONAL STATUS OF GILGIT BALTISTAN, CHITRAL AND SHENAKI KOHISTAN

ABDUL HAMID KHAN

Before the partition of the Indian sub-continent, the British handed over the tiny states including Yasin, Punial, Gupis, Ishkoman, Gilgit, Nagar, Hunza, Astore and Chilas to the Maharaja of Kashmir. Chilas was under the suzerainty of Yasin even after 1947. Before 1860, Mastuj (now part of Chitral), Gupis and Ishkoman were also integral parts of Yasin. After the murder of British spy Col. George Hayward by the Yasin ruler Mir Wali in 1873, differences between the State of Yasin and the British government had deepened. The British reacted by separating Mastuj, Koh Ghizer, Gupis and Ishkoman from Yasin. Rundu, Kharmang, Skardu, Ladakh and Astore remained under the direct control of Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir. Before the partition of India, the Maharaja of Kashmir, on 1 August 1947, took over the administration of the entire Gilgit-Baltistan, i.e., former Gilgit Wazarat north of the Indus and all political districts. The area together with Bonji formed the Gilgit frontier province. Maharaja of Kashmir appointed Brigadier Ghansara Singh as the Governor, and also sanctioned the budget for the Gilgit frontier province.

Ninety days after taking over the charge of Gilgit Agency and political districts (Baltistan was a tehsil of Ladakh at that time), Gilgit Scouts revolted and arrested Governor Ghansara Singh on 1 November 1947. Thus the Maharaja lost control over Gilgit. Raja Shah Raees Khan and the then Captain Mirza Hassan Khan became President and Commander-in-Chief of the newly born Republic of Gilgit on 1 November 1947. Unfortunately, the rebellion was on and the local military commanders including Mirza Hassan Khan and Ehsan Ali were busy, therefore, some simpleton military low ranking persons asked the neighbouring Muslim state of Pakistan to send an expert for subsidiary duties in administration. On 16 November

1947, that is 15 days after the separation of Gilgit Frontier Province of Kashmir, a third class magistrate (Naib Tehsildar) Sardar Alam was sent by the government of Pakistan from North West Frontier Province to discharge his duties as a temporary helper to the newly born state of Gilgit. For Pakistan from the very beginning Alam created sectarian differences among the locals.

Saif-ur-Rehman *Mehtar* (Ruler) of Chitral was sent to prison by the government of Pakistan and later he got killed in 1954 at the Lawari Pass. The state of Chitral, which was a tributary of Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir, was taken over illegally and un-democratically by Pakistan in 1950. Chitral State became a full-fledged Agency and a Political Agent was posted who was known as *Wazir-e-Azam* till 1966. In August 1969, Chitral became a district and the first Deputy Commissioner was posted. Chitral became a district of the newly created Malakand Division of the North West Frontier Province in 1970. In the meanwhile Pakistan took control of Shenaki Kohistan which was part and parcel of Chilas, now a part of Balawaristan.

While the Kashmir issue was being discussed at the UN, it passed the United Nations Commission for India and Pakistan (UNCIP) resolution whereby Pakistan agreed to withdraw all its forces and armed personnel, tribesmen and citizens from the State of Jammu and Kashmir including Balawaristan within a period of 7 weeks. But later on UNCIP accepted the request of Pakistan to extend the period of withdrawal from 7 weeks to three months (12 weeks). India agreed to withdraw bulk of its forces subject to the complete withdrawal of all Pakistani forces and civilians (Pathans of Frontier Province of Pakistan) and other Pakistani citizens, who were not citizens of Jammu and Kashmir State and Balawaristan.

Under the UNCIP resolution the Government of Pakistan agreed:

- “1. To withdraw its troops from the territory of the state of Jammu and Kashmir in seven weeks as follows:
 - a. During the first three weeks twenty infantry battalion, plus the corresponding proportion of artillery and supporting units.
 - b. During the following fortnight the remainder of the Pakistan troops, with the exception of eight infantry battalions.
 - c. By the end of seven weeks, all Pakistani troops, including their ammunition, stores and material, will have left the territory of the state.
2. That having secured the withdrawal of the tribesmen from the territory of the State of Jammu and Kashmir, it shall secure the withdrawal of Pakistani nationals still in the territory of the state and not normally residents therein, who have entered the state for the purpose of fighting.”

The Government of India agreed:

“To withdraw the bulk of its forces from the state of Jammu and Kashmir in stages. The withdrawal will begin as soon as the commission will have notified the Government of India, that the tribesmen and Pakistan nationals, not normally resident in Jammu & Kashmir territory who have entered the state for the purpose of fighting, have withdrawn and that the Pakistani troops are being withdrawn from the state of Jammu & Kashmir.”

Truce terms of 28 April 1949 stipulated:

“Pending a final solution, the territory evacuated by the Pakistan troops will be administered by the Local Authority under the surveillance of the commission...”
“Observers will advise the commission and or the plebiscite administrator regarding developments in the sparsely populated mountainous region of the territory of Jammu & Kashmir in the north (i.e. Gilgit Baltistan). Without prejudice to the provision of point 8 of the resolution of 5 January 1949, the Commission and or the plebiscite administrator may request the Government of India to post garrison at specified points.”

On the other hand Pakistan had signed a fraudulent agreement on the same date on 28 April 1949 with the leaders of Pak-occupied Kashmir about taking over the control of Gilgit Baltistan, when UNCIP passed its Truce Terms. This was the first violation of UNCIP resolution committed by Pakistan.

Pakistan signed a border agreement with China on 2 March 1963 regarding the delimitation and demarcation of Sinkiang-Kashmir border (the name Kashmir was used for Gilgit by both the signatories). Article 6 of this agreement states:

“The two parties have agreed that after the settlement of the Kashmir dispute between India and Pakistan, the sovereign authority concerned will reopen negotiations with the government of the Peoples Republic of China on the boundary treaty to replace the present agreement.”

Thus both Pakistan and China accepted and recognized that Pakistan has no sovereign authority over the territory of Balawaristan. But Pakistan has no right to hand over 2,500 sq miles of area to China, to create its physical link with China by constructing the Karakoram Highway on the soil of Balawaristan, for its own vested interests. Pakistan was not and is not a legal government of Gilgit-Baltistan under law. In its objection letter sent on 16 March 1963 to the President of Security Council, India declared the China-Pakistan border treaty against UNCIP resolutions. In its reply, the then Foreign Minister of Pakistan, Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, clarified the

actual and legal position of the said treaty saying that “the boundary agreement (between Pakistan and China) does not affect the status of the territory of Jammu and Kashmir, it does not affect the imperatives of demilitarization of the state. It does not derogate one jot or title from the right of self determination of the people.” Thus as per the statement of Pakistan authorities, Pakistan does not have any sovereign power, over Balawaristan and its disputed nature has not changed even after the lapse of 65 years.

PAK COURT VERDICTS

In the Supreme Court of Pakistan, appeal No.33 – 1965, Noor Hussain versus State case can be studied as follows: “Any territory which does not constitute part of the Republic of Pakistan is defined in the constitution of 1962 as a foreign territory.” It means that Gilgit-Baltistan is not a part of Pakistan according to the 1962 constitution. The same situation applies with the constitution of 1973. In another writ petition No.5961, 1978, in the Lahore High Court, Dilawar Shah versus Judicial Commissioner (the then judicial dictator of Northern Areas), Justice Javed Iqbal decided that: “Northern Areas (Balawaristan), which are administered by the federal government directly are not part of any province. These areas are also not included in the tribal areas list as per Article 246 of the constitution.” The learned counsel submitted that under clause (d) article 1 (2) of 1973 constitution, a territory can be included in Pakistan by “accession or otherwise”. He conceded that so far there is no such legal instrument which is recognizable.

Fauzia Saleem Abbas, a local lady and ex-Counselor of Northern Areas Council filed a writ petition (Petition No 11 and 17 of 1994 THROUGH *Al Jihad Trust* of Pakistan) in the Supreme Court of Pakistan against the denial of basic human rights to the people of Balawaristan (Gilgit-Baltistan) in 1994. In his reply to this petition, Attorney General of Pakistan Ch. Muhammad Farooq in Supreme Court stated: “The Chief Court of Northern Areas shall exercise all powers and perform all functions which were being performed by the Court of Judicial Commissioner being the highest court of judicature in the Northern Areas.”

The Supreme Court of Pakistan headed by Justice Ajmal Mian observed on 12 May 1999 that, “It may be observed that the geographical location of the Northern Areas (i.e. Balawaristan) is very sensitive, because it is bordering India, China, Tibet and USSR, and as the above areas in the

past have also been treated differently, this court cannot decide what type of government should be provided to ensure the compliance with the above mandate of the constitution, nor we can direct that the people of Northern Areas should be given representation in the Parliament as, at this stage, it may be in the larger interest of the country because of the fact that a plebiscite under the auspices of the United Nations is to be held. In regard to the right to access to justice through an independent judiciary, it may be observed that the Northern Areas (Balawaristan) has a Chief Court, which can be equated with a High Court, provided it is manned by the persons of the stature who are fit to be elevated as judges to any High Court in Pakistan. Its jurisdiction is to be enlarged so as to include jurisdiction to entertain Constitutional Petitions inter alia to enforce the Fundamental Rights enshrined in the constitution."

The Court ruled: "We, therefore, allow the above petitions and direct the Respondent Federation as under: To initiate appropriate administrative/legislative measures within a period of six months from today to make necessary amendments in the constitution / rules / notification / notifications, to ensure that the people of Northern Areas (Balawaristan) enjoy their above fundamental rights, namely, to be governed through their chosen representatives to have access to justice through an independent judiciary inter alia for enforcement of their fundamental rights guaranteed under the constitution."

One needs to ask as to how can a court deliver any judgment for those areas, which are out of Pakistani constitution and its jurisdiction? The judges of Supreme Court of Pakistan should have gone through the UN record, so that they could have known the reality before delivering any judgement regarding the disputed areas of Jammu & Kashmir (J&K) such as Balawaristan. If Supreme Court of Pakistan has any sympathy with the people of this region, it can only direct the government of Pakistan to comply with the UN resolution in this regard. The constitution of Pakistan or Parliament of Pakistan have nothing to do with the issue of Gilgit-Baltistan or PoK, because these areas are not part of Pakistan. The only obligation of Pakistan in UN is to call back its forces, agents and citizens. "Local Authority" under the surveillance of the UN should be given to the people of Balawaristan. In the UN resolutions, it was also said that the sovereignty and integrity of the disputed region would not be effected, while government of Pakistan violated this law by encroaching Shandoor, Bhasha and Babosar pass besides constructing 5 mega dams on this land against the will of the people. What kind of punishment has

been given to the Government of Pakistan by the Supreme Court for human rights violation of the people of Balawaristan, during the past 65 years? What has the Court done to compensate the 2 million people of this disputed region? Had the Supreme Court gone through the statement of Shahzad Iqbal, Deputy Secretary of Pakistan, made in Lahore High Court on behalf of the government of Pakistan that, "under Article 1, Sub Section 2 of the constitution, Balawaristan is not a part of Pakistan." It has also been admitted by Pakistan Government that granting constitutional rights to Northern Areas by annexing it with Pakistan would be against the Pakistani stand adopted at international level. In an agreement, made with China on 2 March 1963, Pakistan described the Northern Areas as "Jammu & Kashmir" instead of Hunza or Shimshaal (Balawaristan).

In an order passed by Justice Usman Ali Shah, the then head of Federal Ombudsman of Pakistan says, that according to international law "No taxation without representation", the Income Tax Department of Pakistan or Central Board of Revenue has no power to levy taxes from Northern Areas (Balawaristan). But even then the taxes are recovered from the people of Balawaristan without giving them any representation in the parliament of Pakistan or local government established by complying with the UNCIP resolution. A few years back, Malik Maskeen and Haji Abdul Quddus of Diamer District had filed a writ petition before Muzaffargarh High court for the merger of 28,000 sq.mile area of Northern Areas with the 4,000 sq.mile area of Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (POK). The then Chief Justice, Majid Malik, in his decision had instructed the "Azad Kashmir" (POK) government to take over the administrative control of Northern Areas and grant the rights to the people. Sardar Qayyum, the then Prime Minister of "Azad Kashmir", while rejecting the decision of taking over the administrative control due to the fear of Pakistani agencies, endorsed the remaining text of the decision, that Northern Areas was a part of Jammu and Kashmir.

A statement submitted by Mr. Shahzad Iqbal, Deputy Secretary, Kashmir Affairs and Northern Areas (Balawaristan) Affairs Division, on behalf of the Government of Pakistan, in response to a writ petition (No.862, 1990) filed by Qurban Ali, Shahbaz Khan and Fida Mohammad Nashaad versus State of Pakistan and Government of Pakistan, in the Lahore High Court stated Pakistan government's official position on the states of 'Northern Areas' as follows:

1. "In terms of article 1 (2) of the constitution of Islamic Republic of

- Pakistan, Northern Areas (Balawaristan) does not form part of Pakistan. This area is linked with the main Kashmir issue which is under consideration in the UN for the last 50 years.”
2. Grant of constitutional status tantamounts to unilateral annexation of Northern Areas (Balawaristan) with Pakistan, which will be against Pakistan stand on Kashmir issue in international fora.
 3. Till decision of this dispute (meaning the whole J & K dispute) government (Pakistan) is administering Northern Areas (Balawaristan) in accordance with the provision of United Nations Commission for India and Pakistan (UNCIP).”
 4. While administering Northern Areas (Balawaristan) in accordance with the provision of UNCIP resolution in exercise of its powers as provincial government for the area Pakistan has been extending federal laws to these areas through special powers as are considered necessary and expedient in public interest.”

Mr. Afzal Khan, former Minister for Kashmir Affairs and “Northern Areas” Affairs (KANA) and Chief Executive stated on 11 August 1996: “If the opposition wants to give due status to “Northern Areas” they must come forward, so that we may amend the constitution to make “Northern Areas” a legal part of Pakistan.” The Minister further admitted that “Azad Kashmir” (Pakistan Occupied Kashmir) through self government made tremendous socio-economic progress, whereas the “Northern Areas” is still backward.”

According to UN resolutions, Pakistan has no right to extend its Federal or Provincial or Military or any other laws to Gilgit-Baltistan. KANA Division of Pakistan government, parliament or judiciary of Pakistan or any other judicial or administrative representative of Pakistan based in “Northern Areas” (Balawaristan) or Islamabad or anywhere in Pakistan have no right to extend / exercise any ordinary or special powers to this area, without popular will and due representation of the two million people of the area. As regards Shahzad’s statement, that “Northern Areas” is not part of Pakistan and that Pakistan has its own compulsions in granting it constitutional status, it is correct. In this statement he did not submit any document regarding the so-called fraudulent accession of Mirs with Pakistan and the 28 April 1949 Karachi Agreement. On 9 April 1993 all party conference was held for the first time in Balawaristan’s recent political history, where more than a dozen local based pro-Pakistan religious and political parties and pro-independence nationalist parties

gathered under the leadership of the pro-independence nationalist party - *Balawaristan National Front* (BNF) in Gilgit. All these groups/ parties formed an Alliance and unanimously condemned the Pakistani occupation and its system since 16 November 1947. Soon after, Pakistan announced its package to pacify the unrest. In 1998 Balawaristan Bar Council boycotted the Chief Court (who was appointed on contract basis) for almost a year, and was deputed by the Minister for KANA Division.

It is an irony that the highest court (Chief Court) was established on contract basis, where no right to petition against the human rights violations is allowed, while death sentences and other major punishments or awards are given without any further appeal in any High Court or Supreme Court against the illegal decision of a contract based retired Pakistani citizen. Just imagine; the designation of the head of this court is not judge or justice, but "Chairman" like local bodies elected chairman.

Gilgit-Baltistan or "Northern Areas" did not find any place in the Pakistani constitutions of 1956, 1962 and even in 1973. This huge strategic area with a population of two million only finds scant mention in the Federal rules of Business whereunder a Special Ministry in the central government, Ministry of Kashmir Affairs and Northern Areas (KANA), is responsible for the administration of the area. Although Gilgit-Baltistan did not have representation in the national assembly and Senate, that has not stopped the government of Pakistan from collecting direct and indirect taxes from its people, without ploughing these resources back for development of the region.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC SITUATION IN PAKISTAN- OCCUPIED KASHMIR AND GILGIT-BALTISTAN

ANIL BHAT

In 1947 the combined population of Pak-occupied Kashmir (POK) and the “Northern Areas” of Gilgit and Baltistan was 25 percent of the total population of J&K State. Today this percentage has gone upto 33 percent of the total population of J&K. The per decade growth rate of the population on both sides of the Line of Control (LoC) has remained the same. The steep rise in population in POK is because of the heavy influx of Punjabi Muslims from the plains. Today the Punjabi Muslims outnumber the Kashmiris in POK by a ratio of 5:1. Not only is ‘Azad Kashmir’ not *Azad* (free) – it hardly remains Kashmir except in name. Taking a cue from what the Chinese did in Tibet – the Pakistani Army has followed suit in POK – it has flooded the area with Punjabi Muslims to outnumber the Kashmiris in their own land. Most of the new Punjabi Muslim settlers were former soldiers of the Pakistani Army sent on a simple mission – colonise Pakistan Occupied Kashmir, stamp out its Kashmiri identity all together, make it ‘Pak’ (which in Urdu means pure) by making it fully Punjabi.

The grass always looks greener on the other side of the hill. It is a great tragedy that the strident propaganda of the jihadis has created a smoke screen that obfuscates the simple truth. Today we need to look across the LoC to see what is the reality. Not only is ‘Azad Kashmir’ no longer Kashmiri anymore in terms of demographic numbers, it never really was ‘Azad’ or free. In 1991, POK Prime Minister, Mumtaz Rathore was dismissed, arrested and flown by helicopter to a Pakistani prison. Ammanulla Khan, the leader of the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front, the man who coined the slogan of ‘Azadi’ was arrested in POK by the Pakistanis when he tried to raise the issue of ‘Azadi’ there. The nomination

papers of 32 JKLF leaders who wanted to stand up for elections to the POK assembly in 2001 were rejected because of the same slogan of 'Azadi'. So alarmed were the Pakistani authorities by these stirrings of 'Azadi' that on 29 July 2001, Maj Gen Mohhamed Anwar of the Pakistan Army was given premature retirement from the Army within 24 hours, and dutifully 'elected' as President of POK on the ticket of the Muslim Conference. The political scene in POK had become murkier due to the squabbles between Qayum and Hayat. Qayum wanted to have his son Sardar Atiq nominated for the post of Prime Minister. Both were accused of massive corruption and shown the door. The Pakistan Army Division in Murree supervised the 'elections' in POK that led to the installation of Hayat Khan who dutifully toed the military line. The reality today is that the POK State Legislative Assembly is controlled from outside. The upper house of 11 members is chaired by a Pakistani Federal Minister in charge of Kashmir and Northern Area Affairs. 12 seats in the Assembly are reserved in Pakistan for so called refugees from Kashmir who migrated in 1947. These seats invariably go to whichever is the ruling party in Pakistan.

Dismal Economic Record

Those who talk of 'Azadi' and the 'Kashmiri identity' also need to take a hard look at the hard economic realities.

- The per capita income in Pakistan is Rs 4,500, in sharp contrast its just Rs 1,802 in POK.
- The literacy rate in POK is 44 % whereas the literacy rate in J&K is 59%.
- Metalled Roads in J&K are 20,000 kms whereas POK has only 3000 Kms.
- J&K has 50 hospitals and 300 Primary Health Clinics. POK by contrast has only 15 hospitals and 30 primary health clinics.
- In J&K 50% of the fertile land is under cultivation, compared to 13% in POK.
- Per capita calorie intake in J&K is markedly higher than in POK. The infant mortality rate is far lower in J&K than in POK.

Pakistani economy itself is in a debt trap. It is being kept afloat by foreign doles and loans. The Indian economy, in sharp contrast, is booming with an impressive GDP growth rate of 8% per annum. What 'Azadi' are we talking about in POK? The 'Azadi' to be impoverished, economically and educationally backward, mired in poverty and the freedom to

exchange Kashmiriyat for Punjabiyaat ? In POK the Punjabi mafia has usurped prime real estate and totally colonized the area.

Situation in Gilgit-Baltistan

“Northern Areas” under direct control of Pakistan government, consists of five districts- Hunza-Nagar, Gilgit, Skardu, Diamer, Koh-e-Gazer and Ghanche, covering an area of 72,496 square kms, with a population of 16,00,000. These areas were also occupied by Pakistan along with the areas of J&K, adjacent to Punjab and NWFP, known as POK. The area is governed by the 1949 Karachi Agreement, independent of POK. The agreement between Mohammad Ibrahim Khan, President of POK government and Ghulam Abbas, representative of Muslim Conference, was signed without the representation of “Northern Areas”. According to this agreement, all the affairs of Gilgit, which were previously under the control of its political agents, were handed over to the Government of Pakistan. The Frontier Crimes Regulations (FCR) laws, which were introduced by the British to tame the recalcitrant tribesmen, were frequently used, rather misused, by the Pakistani government. There is a Northern Areas Council, which is merely an advisory body whose members are appointed by Pakistan. A Shia majority region, Northern Areas is still underdeveloped, with a literacy rate of only 14%, compared to the Pakistani average of 31%. Even after 66 years of Pakistani occupation of Gilgit-Baltistan, there has been hardly any social, economic or infrastructural development. Thousands of students of the Balwaristan region are studying in Karachi because there is neither any education board, nor university, nor any technical institution there. The fate of POK is perhaps better compared to the genocide of Shias that has been systematically taking place in Gilgit and Baltistan. What the world does not know however, is that there is nothing good about the fate of the 1.5 million Shia people of this region. The *Balawaristan National Front* (BNF) and the *Gilgit-Baltistan Jamhoori Mahaz* are spearheading the movement for a separate Shia state in this area.

All pretence of democracy and freedom has been thrown aside in the Northern Areas in a manner that in 1999, the Supreme Court of Pakistan was moved to state “It is not understandable on what basis the people of Northern Areas can be denied their fundamental rights guaranteed under the Constitution”. They have no right to vote, to elect their representatives, to govern themselves and to seek recourse to justice in courts. “The Northern Areas” have become a virtual colony of the

Pakistan Army which has systematically looted its forest wealth of timber and indiscriminately hunted down its rare species of fauna. Amir Humza Qureshi, founder of the *Gilgit-Baltistan Jamhoori Mahaz* has been campaigning tirelessly for the rights of the Shias of Gilgit. He has been jailed many times and tortured badly. *The South Asian Voice* paper quoted him as saying, "It is a fact that the people of Gilgit and Baltistan are facing much more human rights violations. Whenever the official (Pakistani) media talks of repression in (Indian) Kashmir, people with strong hearts laugh at this hypocritical attitude and people with weak hearts cry". He goes on to state, "India is not perpetrating even one hundredth part of the repression that Pakistan has been inflicting upon the people of the "Northern Areas" for the past 65 years. The Indian Government has given people all their fundamental rights. But the people of the Baltistan region have no rights whatsoever. They have no legal status. They are neither a province of Pakistan, nor a part of the so called "Azad Kashmir". They are ruled directly from Islamabad as a total Shia colony. They cannot vote or elect their representatives. They have been protesting against this taxation without representation. They have been demanding "Self-rule".

The following opposition/resistance groups have emerged.

- *Balawaristan National Front.*
- *Gilgit-Baltistan United Action forum for Self Rule.*
- *Muttahida Quami Party* (which wants a similar status as Azad Kashmir for "Northern Areas")

The world does not know that in 1988 the harassed Shia people revolted in sheer desperation. The Islamisation drive of Gen Zia-ul-Haq was imposing Sunni mores on the Shias which bred a great deal of resentment. This boiled over into the streets in a virtual revolt. The Pakistani Army had cracked down in a way that was reminiscent of Tikka Khan's genocide in Bangladesh. Thousands of Sunni Pathan tribesman were brought in from the frontier and Afghanistan and let loose on the hapless Shia population. The orgy of murder, loot and rape was mind numbing. What followed was a systematic drive to settle thousands of Sunni Pathans and Punjabis in this area and change its very demographic composition. The Shias would soon become a minority in their own land. There was a second Shia rebellion in 1999 after the deployment of twelve battalions the newly raised Northern Light Infantry, comprising mainly Shias, in the Kargil war. It was a well thought out plan to use Shias as cannon fodder against Indian Army.

What the world also does not know is that in sheer desperation, the Shia people of the Northern Areas of Gilgit, Astor, Skardu, Hunza Nagar, Chitral and adjoining areas appealed to the UN Secretary General Kofi Anan to stop the Pakistanis from changing the demographic composition of this area by flooding it with ex-Army Punjabi plainsmen and Pathans.

On 3 Aug 2001, *The Times of India* reported that Abdul Hamid Khan, (Chairman of BNP) appealed to the UN and the International Court of Justice to stop Pakistan from carrying out atrocities in the "Northern Areas". He stated that in 1988 and 1999, the Pakistani Army had unleashed a campaign of genocide upon the Shias of this area. Over 900 youths were killed, 1000 wounded and 40 were still missing. The Shias once formed 75% of the population in this area. Today the non-locals (mostly Punjabis) make up 40% of the population. Sriram Chaulia, a journalist, contrasted Pakistan's policies of the ethnic flooding/re-engineering of the demographic composition of POK and "Northern Areas" with the special status granted to J&K by Article 370 of the constitution. This disallows non-Kashmiris from acquiring property in J&K. J&K today is a paradise compared to POK and Gilgit-Baltistan.

- The plight of the people of the "Northern Areas" is pathetic. Under the Frontier Crimes Regulation every resident has to report to the Police station once a month and any movement from one village to another has to be reported to the Police station.
- The literacy rate in the "Northern Areas" is abysmal. It is 14% for males and just 3.5 percent for females. Compare this with 64.4 % for J&K.
- There are no universities or professional colleges in the "Northern Areas". There are only 12 High Schools and two regional colleges (which do not have post-graduation facilities).
- There is no daily newspaper, no radio or TV in the "Northern Areas". Locals who join the government services are paid 25 percent less than the non-native entries from Punjab.
- Funds allocated for development are frequently allowed to lapse. There is just one doctor for 6,000 people.
- Piped water supply is virtually non-existent.
- Two thirds of the population must do without electricity in an area where winters are particularly harsh.

Hundreds of people have been killed in Shia-Sunni violence. Shias have been protesting against the change of curriculum in religious

education where Sunni mores are enforced on them. If the plight of the people of POK is pathetic, that of the "Northern Areas" is much worse. The people of the "Northern Areas" have been appealing for deliverance to the UN and other agencies. Their voice has been drowned out by the strident cacophony of the *Jihad* mafia. They feel that the people of J&K need to thank their stars that they are on the Indian side of the LoC. They are free as a part of the world's largest and most vibrant democracy. Their identity and culture are protected. J&K is part of the booming Indian economy which is poised to take off and became the fourth largest in the world.

"*Koi muqabila nahin wahan aur yahan ki tarakki ka*" ("there is no comparison between development there and here"), was the reaction of most of the passengers who traveled from Srinagar to Muzaffarabad in the bus service. "Our people who went across were in a hurry to come back. Those who have come here from Pakistan occupied Kashmir (POK) are overcome with happiness and want to stay longer", said Mufti Mohammad Sayeed, the then Chief Minister during a press conference in the capital on 27 May 2005. When asked as to how many Indian Kashmiris have relatives in "Northern Areas" and how many had applied to go there, he replied, "...there are many who have their relatives there but I am not aware of the number of applicants for going there..."

A 28 minutes television news feature by ANI, aired on Doordarshan pulled the lid off the difference in the scenarios on both sides of the Line of Control. Some of the visitors from Jammu & Kashmir (J&K) were shocked at not being able to meet their relatives, who, just prior to their arrival, had been arrested by POK's 'security agencies', who despite the Pakistani establishment's rhetoric of Kashmir and letting both sides of it meet are loath to let the truth about 'Azad' (free or liberated) Kashmir out. And if that is the case in POK, then "Northern Areas" can only still be a distant dream. For Kashmiris coming to Srinagar from Muzaffarabad, like Nissar Ahmed Mir, Asghar Ali Shah and his wife Khalida, it was nostalgic return to their birth place, and emotional reunion with their long-separated relatives. Also, what they could not help expressing was the great progress Indian Kashmir had made despite terrorism, with people enjoying the fruits of freedom of religion, speech, political activity, dress and modernization.

Nissar Abbas, vice president of the Skardu Press Club and a correspondent of *Jung*, was assaulted by an Army Major on March 20, 2005. The journalist was covering a function at an indoor auditorium

where social workers and members of the Agha Khan Welfare Association had gathered. He was charged with violating Section 144, that prohibits public gatherings. Those present protested against this arrest saying that Section 144 was not applicable to indoor gatherings and that in any case, the ill treatment by a dozen or more Army soldiers, who also threatened and locked the attendees, was unwarranted.

Media in "Northern Areas" has been reeling from bouts of harassment by the local police and bureaucracy, who ensure that only censored news and articles are published. The Baltistan Union of Journalists and Skardu Press Club members condemned the manhandling and commented that there is a growing perception in these areas that they are citizens of an occupied territory. At least 30 people were killed after the dastardly murder of Shia scholar, Agha Rizvi in January 2005, while the tally of sectarian killings since 1988 is over a thousand. The rising demand for weapons by armed sectarian groups providing protection to their respective communities has resulted in overpriced weapons making their way from the North West Frontier Province (NWFP) on the Karakoram Highway passing through at least 120 checkpoints, while the police and the administration conveniently turn a Nelson's eye.

In the wake of the Srinagar- Muzaffarabad bus service, the people of Skardu - Gilgit area have been demanding the opening of roads from Skardu to Kargil and Dras. The president of Kargil - Ladakh refugees association in Pakistan, while reiterating these demands, bitterly criticized the Pakistani government's callous attitude towards over 1,00,000 refugees. He said he would prefer going back to India, where he is convinced he would get a better deal. Tour operators feel that opening of roads between Baltistan and Ladakh would result in a large flow of tourists including foreigners.

During the past sixty six years of Pakistan's India-centric, Kashmir-fixated history, is the yawning gap between the development of Indian J&K and POK, ironically referred to as Azad Kashmir. Leave alone any contribution by Pakistan towards the development of this region, once known as 'Shangri La', it has, over the decades, been denuded of its once rich culture and resources.

In August 2003, the *Balwaristan National Front's* (BNP) representative to the United Nations Sub-commission for Promotion and Protection of Human Rights at Geneva, Mohammad Mir accused Pakistan of stripping Gilgit and Baltistan, causing its people to suffer penury and hunger. "Punjabis and Pathans (Afghans) have steadily been forcibly settled in

the area, reducing the local population to a minority and eradicating the local 'Kalash' culture of the Chitral region". He also complained about large-scale human rights violations in POK and Balwaristan, a name given by dissident groups in Gilgit and Baltistan to the region which Pakistan calls "Northern Areas". "Pakistan government has been implementing a concerted plan to reduce the people of Gilgit-Baltistan to a minority by violating the State Subject Rule, under which no outsider can settle down or buy property in any area of J&K. However, Pakistani rulers have been violating this law encouraging people from outside to settle there, so that Kashmiris are reduced to a minority."

The Pakistan military establishment has also been exploiting this region to increase its cannon-fodder. The Northern Light Infantry, was raised with the specific aim of using it for infiltration and attacks in J&K. The area is also being used as training grounds for *mujahideen* who are being sent to India, Afghanistan and Central Asian countries for *jihād* or for creating trouble. Many terrorist training camps have been set up over the years in Gilgit, Gultari, Skardu and other parts of "Northern Areas". Unlike the ones in Pakistan, these do not need to be moved or renamed frequently.

The greatest dirty trick which Pakistan Army played on the Muslims of Balwaristan and POK was by initiating the Kargil war during which over 900 personnel of Northern Light Infantry (comprising men of these areas) were killed. They were, as such, used as cannon-fodder, rather than the mainstream Punjabi-dominated Pakistan Army. The people of this area were the worst sufferers of this misadventure of Pakistan. The youth of Balwaristan, initially lured into the Kashmir militancy by the ISI, soon became disillusioned, convinced that they were being exploited, over and above their region being illegally ruled upon by Pakistan. General Pervez Musharraf maintained the charade of making frequent trips to "Northern Areas" and promising huge funds for the development of the region on the one hand, while on the other, declaring the people of Balwaristan as anti-Pakistan, and threatening to deal with them sternly.

A movement to liberate Balwaristan, even if it sounds a far cry today, is already on. A number of organisations like *Balwaristan National Students Organisation* (BNSO), *Baltistan Students Federation* (BSF), *Karakoram Students Organisation* (KSO), *Northern Areas Students Association* (NASA) have come up. Of them, the most important organisation is *Balwaristan National Front* (BNF) which is trying to coordinate the ongoing freedom movements in Balwaristan and get cooperation and guidance from the *Muttahida Qaumi*

Movement (MQM). An organisation called *All Parties National Alliance* (APNA), under chairmanship of Wajahat Hassan Khan, rejected the division of J&K along communal lines and demanded reunification along and independence of J&K from Pakistan. Yet another organisation, *Gilgit Baltistan National Alliance* (GBNA), along with APNA demanded that these two be included in any future talks over Kashmir. In a referendum in Hijah and Tararkhal towns held by APNA in July 2003, out of 3,000 people 2,694 voted in favour of complete independence of J&K from Pakistan.

The rising discontent in the “Northern Areas”, often marked by ethnic clashes, following decades of deprivation is an ominous indicator of the region’s future. In June 2003, there were violent protests against Musharraf regime’s decision to introduce Islamic curriculum in educational institutions. Gilgit was virtually under siege. To ward off any untoward situation, the law enforcement agencies had to impose prohibitory orders under Section 144. These sectarian tensions go back to 1988, when riots broke out in area over the sighting of Ramadan moon resulting in the killing of 700 innocent people which included women, elders and children. The lack of development, the Shia-Sunni conflict, the oppression of the local people by Pak army, the use of Northern Light Infantry personnel as pawns on Kashmir chess-board, Talibanisation of the area, setting up training camps for militants are all factors which give the region a precarious perch on a powder-keg.

IMPACT OF SINO-PAK COOPERATION ON GILGIT-BALTISTAN AND XINJIANG*

SENGE SERING

The occupation of Gilgit-Baltistan by Pakistan and take-over of Xinjiang by China subsequently enabled both countries to build roads to consolidate their control over these regions. At the same time, opening of the Khunjerab Pass through the Karakoram Highway (KKH) allowed Pakistan and China to enhance commercial, military and political collaboration. However, the social, cultural and commercial interaction that today China and Pakistan has through the twin neighboring regions of Gilgit-Baltistan and Xinjiang dates back several thousands of years. Since time immemorial, the mountain passes of the Karakoram Range facilitated traders and adventurers to travel through the valleys of Gilgit-Baltistan and Xinjiang and pursue their commercial and political interests in India, China and Central Asia. Then the shortest and safest among the passes, the Muztagh La, connected Braldo and Shaksgam valleys of Baltistan with important trading posts of Yarkand, Hotan, Kashgar, Badakhshan; admitting travel even farther north towards Beijing and Russia.¹ As part of the infamous Silk Route, Muztagh La pass facilitated “significant trade between Yarkand and the Braldo district of Baltistan”.² At that time, Braldo was “central to the regional economy” and ranked high as the regional grain-basket.³ Many locals including those from the regional capital, Skardo, and the people of Hunza and Nagar valleys made Braldo their home due to its strategic location on the famous trade artery. Social interaction enabled many Baltis to travel to Yarkand, Mazar and Khotan, and settle there.⁴

Majority of the geographical entities in both Aghil and Shaksgam

* This paper is based on the presentation made by the author at International Seminar at Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi on 3 March 2010.

valleys possess Balti nomenclature demonstrating an ancient socio-economic and political interlink of these valleys with Baltistan and Ladakh. For instance, the passes are called Sarpo Lago (yellow top of the pass), Drenmang La (abundant with bears), Shingshol La (pass where tree density is thinning), Tatar La (Mongol Pass) and Sakang La (pass with earth and ice). The mountains are named Skyang Kangri (wild donkey), Kyagar Kangri (grey and white) and Skamri (dry rock), while the valleys are Shaksgam (dried up heap of pebbles), Aghil Ldepsang (plain), Marpo Lungpa (red), Salungma (earthen), Khapulung (gateway), Kharkhor Lungma (castle surrounding) and Skam Lungpa (dry). The famous camping grounds include Moni Brangsa (residence of musicians), Balti Brangsa (Balti residence) and Balti Pulo (dwellings of the Baltis).

For the people of Baltistan, Khotan and Yarkand, Shaksgam route has a historical and sentimental context, since it allowed communities on both sides of the Muztagh range to share and exchange cultural values. For instance, the people of both regions share dress code like the long robes, and traditional food items like *mantu*. Russian tea-kettle called *Samovar* was introduced to Gilgit-Baltistan by the Uyghurs of Xinjiang. Balti traditional round woolen cap also came from Xinjiang. Similarly, the string musical instruments used in Hunza, Ladakh and Xinjiang are very similar. During the time when Tibetan empire extended to Central Asia, places like Gilgit, Skardo and Shigar along with Khotan and Kashgar were the centers of Bon and Buddhist teachings. The Epic of *Ling Gesar* is recited with reverence by the people of both regions. Today, when local elders mention of Baltis living in Yarkand and Khotan, the young generation inquisitively asks about their kin who travelled over the infamous Muztagh Range to settle in those places. As a token of recollection, many people in Braldo still possess the trade items which their forefathers brought from Central Asia and preserved in large yak-hair and leather sacks. The merchandise, which include antique ornaments, silk garments, silver and bronze jewelry, horse saddles, corals and turquoise beads, remind them of the prosperity that Braldo experienced for centuries. There are stories of locals traveling to Wakhan and Badakhshan to procure the famous polo ponies as a gift for the Rajas of Baltistan.⁵ The traders also sold these horses in Himachal and Kashmir to obtain high margins of profit.

Since the transit and trade brought a great amount of revenue for the Rajas of Shigar, Khotan and Yarkand, they maintained security along the passes to offset the Hunza robbers and fugitives who would “infest

the trade routes".⁶ The Raja of Shigar also established a polo-ground stadium south of the Shaksgam valley.⁷ The ground, called *Muztaghi Shagaran* (the polo-ground of ice-peak) would attract much fanfare with players and musicians when the autumn festival to end the harvest season was celebrated.⁸ The musicians who accompanied the royal entourage would establish camps at *Moni Brangsa* (the residence of the musicians)⁹ near the lower reaches of the Sarpo Lago River. According to famous historians like Wazir Ahmed Zwapa-Brakmayurpa and Hassan Hasrat Odchan, polo, the national sport of Baltistan, was discovered by the local rulers who customarily established *Shagarans* in areas under their subjugation to enforce sovereignty. Balti historian Abbas Kazmi states that the rulers of Shigar and Khotan used to play polo at *Muztaghi Shagaran* which dates back to the 5th century AD. Many similar *Shagarans* still exist in Haramosh, Gilgit (*Gyal-kid*),¹⁰ Punial, Shandur (*Shang-bzur*), and Chitral reminding the era of Balti rule.¹¹ Traditional sport-competitions like these acted as a tool of diplomacy and helped maintain cordial relations between Shigar and Khotan and ensured respectable and peaceful co-existence. Further, it also allowed cultural and knowledge-based exchange enriching the centuries-old civilizations.¹²

With the passage of time, the glacial growth and outbursts along the Muztagh pass made travel difficult and resulted in increasing casualties of humans and pack-animals. In one instance, Kenneth Mason found a corpse of a Balti man in 1924, who had two rupees, dated 1918, on him, a string of turquoises, and "six tins of aniline dyes, unopened, and bearing the device of a lion and shield".¹³ Despite that, many travelers continued their journey by "making a road for the horses".¹⁴ In 1930, Younghusband reported that the accumulation of ice in the ridges of the Muztagh La had narrowed the path. He writes: "When I crossed [Muztagh La] forty-three years ago there was much more ice on it than when it was in use thirty or forty years before. In Ferber's [another traveler] time there was more ice than in mine. And last year there was more ice than in Ferber's time."¹⁵ In recent times, the path has become "quite impassable through ice having collected".¹⁶ The shepherds of Shimshal could, however, still approach the Shaksgam, Raskam and Aghil valleys from the western Shingshol pass; and the same passage also enabled Kyrgyz and Wakhis to enter Hunza. In 1963, China occupied the valleys of Shimshal, Raskam, Shaksgam and Aghil - an area reaching 12,050 sq. miles in its vastness - and brought human travel and trade over the mountain passes of Muztagh and Kunlun to a standstill.

The occupation of these valleys came in the wake of Pakistan and China forming a strategic alliance. As part of frontier settlement plan, both nations, represented by Pakistani foreign minister Z. A. Bhutto and Chinese foreign minister Chen Yi, signed a provisional agreement on March 2, 1963 in Beijing allowing China to occupy Shaksgam, Raskam, Shimshal and Aghil valleys of Gilgit-Baltistan. As part of the deal, “...the two parties agreed that after the settlement of the Kashmir dispute between Pakistan and India, the sovereign authority concerned will reopen negotiations with the government of the Peoples’ Republic of China on the boundary, as described in Article II of the present agreement of Kashmir, so as to sign a boundary treaty to replace the present agreement.”¹⁷ India protested to China, and registered its concerns with the United Nations.¹⁸ The Chinese authorities guaranteed to India that the agreement is only provisional and can be renegotiated once the dispute of Jammu & Kashmir is resolved. Similar protests also came from the ruler of Hunza, who claims the valleys up to the Aghil Pass.¹⁹ Historical records show that both Chinese authorities and the rulers of Hunza considered the Kunlun mountain range as the natural boundary between India and China.²⁰ The Chinese official maps of 1917, 1919 and 1933 recognized the border of J&K at the Kunlun range. An earlier 1762 map of Xinjiang compiled at the orders of the Chinese Emperor Chien Lung also acknowledged the southern border of Xinjiang at Kunlun.²¹ Despite these assurances, Pakistani and Chinese involvement in Jammu and Kashmir State complicated the matter and prolonged the dispute, having socio-economic, cultural and political implications for the local people and military and strategic implications for South Asia.

Both the local political parties of Gilgit-Baltistan and the royal family of Hunza challenged the agreement and transfer of land to China since both China and Pakistan do not have sovereign rights over this region to undertake such agreements.²² According to the UN resolutions and Pakistani successive constitutions, Pakistan was asked by the international community in 1948 to vacate the territory of Gilgit-Baltistan. In essence, the alliance gained legitimacy at the cost of the rights and assets of the people of Gilgit-Baltistan. One may say that China exploited Pakistan’s geographic and strategic vulnerability for the mutual benefit and provided patronage to a country which was surrounded by adversaries like USSR, Afghanistan and India. The alliance allowed China to become Pakistan’s high-security guarantor and patron. At the same time, the agreement re-initiated the cross-regional barter trade; this time through a modern

asphalted road called the Karakoram Highway (KKH) constructed over the Khunjerab Pass and replacing the age-old traditional Muztagh La Pass corridor.

Although KKH allows the Wakhi ethnic community, straddling both sides of the Karakoram mountain Range, in Gilgit and Xinjiang to enhance interaction and promote cultural relations, Pakistan's occupation of Gilgit-Baltistan and China's presence in the adjoining valleys of J&K has negative impact on the Kashmir issue. It has ensued trust deficit among India and Pakistan, which ultimately hinders peaceful bilateral negotiations. China claims KKH as her 'strategic investment',²³ which enables short and safe link to the warm waters of the Indian Ocean. China's eastern feeder roads connect the highways of the western provinces with the KKH and significantly cut the distance between the Pakistani ports and China's industrial and military complexes. For instance, the feeder road built eastward through Shaksgam, Raskam and Shimshal valleys of J&K,²⁴ linked Gilgit with Khotan,²⁵ which is an important military headquarter situated at the cross-section of Tibet-Xinjiang Highway and Khotan-Golmud Highway. Khotan-Golmud Highway links Xinjiang to Qinghai province and central China. It shortens the distance between Gilgit and Golmud to almost half, while bypassing the longer Urumqi-Kashgar Highway. Golmud – once a salty marshland – is a strategically located booming city and functions as one of the largest goods transit point in western China; the strategic military headquarter; the national petrochemical base, and home to rich oil-wells and minerals.²⁶ Likewise, the feeder stretching along the southern rim of Xinjiang connects Gilgit with Aksai Chin and reduces the distance between both regions by more than 800 miles.²⁷ Such interventions helped connect military complexes of West Tibet to Xinjiang and Pakistan. Chinese road network through Shaksgam which also links KKH with Tibet-Xinjiang Highway has led to encirclement of J&K from three directions and consolidation of her control over the occupied trans-Karakoram valleys.²⁸ India considers such advances illegal and a challenge to her sovereignty over J&K. India is concerned that both China and Pakistan consider 1963 frontier settlement as final.²⁹ In 1978, Chinese Vice President Geng Biao during the inaugural ceremony of KKH, stated that his government 'firmly supports' Pakistan's stance on the Kashmir issue.³⁰ As a reciprocal, Pakistan also acknowledges China's claim over Aksai-Chin.³¹ Recently, Chinese ambassador to Pakistan, Luo Zhaohui, announced China's intent to establish a consulate at Gilgit, thereby re-confirming their support to Pakistan's occupation of

Gilgit-Baltistan.³² Professor Wang Jianming of Minority Groups Development Research Institute of Beijing stated that Chinese government uses the term 'the northern province of Pakistan' for Gilgit-Baltistan.³³ Chinese media also advances similar notions by using separate terms like 'Pakistan held Kashmir' for Muzaffarabad, and 'the Northern Areas of Pakistan' for Gilgit-Baltistan.³⁴ Locals assert that the construction of highways connecting Gilgit-Baltistan and Xinjiang has further consolidated Pakistani control over the occupied region, which calls for attention.

While KKH enhances access and control of Pakistan over Gilgit-Baltistan, 'AJK',³⁵ and NWFP;³⁶ both countries also use the highway network as a secret conduit of weapons' supply.³⁷ After the completion of the KKH, Deputy Prime Minister of China, Li Xiannian publicly testified that 'KKH allows *them* to give military aid to Pakistan'.³⁷ These weapons were employed against India in the name of promoting *Jihad* in Kashmir; to support creation of an independent Khalistan, as well as against the Soviet forces engaged in the Afghan War.³⁹ The highway diplomacy, which is the most striking feature of China's trade route strategy, enables both China and Pakistan to use KKH as an anti-route to contain the growing political and economic influence of their adversaries.⁴⁰ China and USA established listening posts along the KKH and maintained *Jihadi* training camps in both Xinjiang and Gilgit-Baltistan.⁴¹ Along with the military supplies, KKH transported Uyghur and Hui militants of Xinjiang to Pak-occupied Kashmir, where they received training and reinforcements before embarking to Afghanistan.⁴² At the same time, training camps were established in Kashgar and Hotan to facilitate the *Jihad*. It is reported that China sent her specialists to PoK to train the militants. It is also said that China was giving around US\$400 million annually as monetary support to the *Mujahideen*.⁴³ As of recently, there were more than 10,000 Uyghur and Hui *Mujahideen* living in Pakistan and PoK.⁴⁴ Given the significance of these twin regions and their road-network in sustaining the Afghan war, Russians called KKH the 'principal artery for the flow of Chinese weapons to the insurgents'. Department of the Soviet Communist Party's Central Committee (CCCP) even planned to attack Gilgit-Baltistan to firstly, interdict KKH; secondly to destroy Afghan and Uyghur training camps and bases; and thirdly to refuse China access to Pakistan which was directly involved in supporting *Jihad*.⁴⁵ The policy, which won China the title of highway bogey,⁴⁶ helped both countries contain their adversary USSR from expanding its political influence in South Asia, and also promoted their strategic and political interests in Afghanistan. At the same

time, it allowed China to gain trust of the Americans and win minds and hearts among the Muslim Arab leaders.⁴⁷ While Xinjiang enables China to connect to the Central Asian countries, Gilgit-Baltistan has become the corridor to access the warm waters of Indian Ocean. The KKH later assisted China to export military hardware to the Taliban and increase political leverage, when both Afghanistan and China signed the defense agreement.⁴⁸ These policies made the Karakoram corridor and the twin regions of Gilgit-Baltistan and Xinjiang vulnerable to the expanding regional political agendas of both Pakistan and China. Such interventions converted both regions into a war zone and brought instability. Cross-border trade, which flourished in ancient times also diminished. Up until the end of Afghan war, locals lived with the fear of Russian attacks as well as Chinese military advances into Gilgit-Baltistan.

The *Jihadi* activities over the KKH, which brought the Afghans and Uyghurs to Gilgit-Baltistan have had an adverse impact on local society. Very few in China could realize that the *Jihadi* influences and connection with the Arab world will come with social baggage and haunt them in the Xinjiang province by transforming it into a hub of fundamentalist Islamic political movements. On the other hand, the Pashtuns and Uyghurs who made Gilgit their home⁴⁹ are believed to collaborate with local extremists and propagate the radical form of Islam among the local youth. As the local Sunnis started associating with Pashtun and Afghan *Jihadis*, such trends raised alarm among the local Shias for their own security and religious identity. Consequently, Shias sought moral and financial support from an 'Islamic' Iran. The collaboration of local Sunnis with the ISI enabled them to reach out to the Sufi-Nurbakhshis to persuade the children to join *Jihadi madrassahs* and adopt radical Muslim beliefs. All these influences have hurt the local indigenous cultural identity and damaged its growth. The adverse impacts are long term as an identity based on traditional sports like polo and archery, music and classical dance, epics and seasonal festivals, which bound the ethnic groups of Gilgit and Baltistan, gave way to radical and sectarian ideologies and created political friction, and racial and religious tensions. The watershed moment came in 1988, when there was genocide of Shias and bloodshed in Gilgit and surrounding valleys, doing a permanent damage to the society.

The extremists continue to impose their religious customs upon the locals and have even increased their interference in the local politics to compete for jobs, services and resource exploitation. This has acutely polarized the region on sectarian lines, which for centuries, enabled its

inhabitants professing various religions to co-exist in amicable conditions. Pakistan's occupation and interference has deteriorated the social order and weakened locals in Gilgit-Baltistan to the point that many analysts have come to the conclusion that the region is slowly moving towards anarchy. Unabated social polarization will encourage the trend of Shia persecution and targeted-killing in other parts of Pakistan. It will also provoke the arrival of Taliban in large hordes, continue and hasten demographic change, and hurt local cultural identity and ethnic solidarity.

The land of Gilgit-Baltistan and Xinjiang which was used as a forward post to promote *Jihad* in Afghanistan and Kashmir has now become the center of separatist movements, which is raising threat perception among the occupiers. Akin to the freedom struggle in Gilgit-Baltistan, the majority of the people of Xinjiang desire separation from China and establishment of an independent country, mostly called East Turkestan but also referred to as Uyghuristan Republic. The separatist movement which started as an ethnic and secular struggle has largely attained the garb of religious extremism owing to connection of Uyghurs with the Afghan *Jihadis*. Today, many separatist parties use the connotation of religion rather than Pan-Turkic racial and linguistic identity. The struggle was also fanned by Pakistan after her Inter-service Intelligence (ISI) under the leadership of General Javed Nasir promoted fundamentalism among the Uyghurs.⁵⁰ For many years, Pakistani extremist religious political parties like *Jamaat-e-Islami* (JI) supported the religious parties of Xinjiang. The nexus of local religious parties, Pakistani ISI and JI, and Afghan parties associated with Gulbadin Hekmatyar eventually killed the secular separatist movement of Xinjiang. At the same time, it forced western supporters to distance themselves from freedom struggle in Xinjiang. China insists that religious extremism hurts her political interests in Xinjiang. However, secularism losing ground to religious nationalism has actually enabled China to tighten its grip over the region and increase interference in local political and social affairs. In the wake of local separatists losing support of western communities, China has a free hand without any international resistance to pursue her political objective of oppression of local people. In some cases, western regimes also give diplomatic and moral support to the Chinese authorities to suppress Islamic extremism, which China misuses to brutally oppress ethnic Uyghurs. It is imperative for the international community to extend their support to the remnants of once-widespread secular freedom parties before they also fall victim to both the Islamists and the Chinese authorities.

One way to tackle rising extremism in both Gilgit-Baltistan and Xinjiang is to promote the indigenous secular cultural assets as a potential bulwark. However, China and Pakistan, which believe that promotion of indigenous cultures will advance ethnic nationalism and possibly rupture their geographic seam, may not let the development of such policies. In fact, successive regimes in both countries have tackled the nationalists heavy-handedly to curb pan-ethnic and linguistic sentiments. In many cases, government agencies in Pakistan covertly provoke sectarianism to suppress secular nationalism. For instance, during one of the incidents, intelligence agencies released a Punjabi Shia cleric from prison “to be sent to Gilgit to keep the pot of sectarian violence boiling”.⁵¹

The Uyghur separatists who ride along the KKH to arrive in Gilgit-Baltistan also enable China to extend its scope of military operation further south of the Karakoram Range. Pakistan is home to thousands of Uyghurs, many of whom arrive for Islamic studies;⁵² and later join militant groups to support and promote dissent in Xinjiang.⁵³ On occasions, soldiers belonging to Chinese PLA have carried out search operations in Gilgit and the adjoining valleys to smoke out the separatists. In one of such operations in 1997, 14 Uyghurs were arrested from Gilgit on the suspicions of promoting the three evils of separatism, extremism and terrorism.⁵⁴ China is suspicious of Pakistani *Jihadi* centers for hosting the separatists. It also accuses Pakistani militants and Uyghur dissidents of orchestrating attacks on the Chinese engineers residing in Pakistan, many of whom were killed in recent years. Given the concerns, China compelled Pakistan to sign an extradition treaty in 2003. Since then, many Uyghur leaders and activists have been arrested and handed over to the Chinese authorities. In 2003, Pakistan’s President General P. Musharraf expressed solidarity with China regarding separatism in Xinjiang by saying that “his country will never allow anybody, including the terrorist force of East Turkestan, to use the territory of Pakistan to carry out any form of anti-China activities.” This was the first time that a Pakistani leader went public in support of Chinese policies to curtail Muslim separatists in Xinjiang.⁵⁵ In view of Chinese concerns that there is a link between the separatist forces in Xinjiang and the *jihadi* organizations in Pakistan and Afghanistan, Pakistan has also institutionalized anti-terrorism dialogue with China and the two sides have agreed to share intelligence on terrorism. The treaty also enables China to influence Pakistan’s security policy towards Gilgit-Baltistan to ensure protection for its engineers and workers. It was under Chinese pressure that Pakistan arrested 300 suspected Pashtuns from Gilgit

in 2008, which threatened Chinese Production and Construction Corps (PCC-PLA) workers currently engaged in energy, road building and mineral extraction projects in Gilgit-Baltistan.⁵⁶ China is building mega dams at Bunji and Diamer which will generate more than 12,000 MW of electricity for energy-starved Pakistan. At the same time, Chinese are involved in building China-specific industrial zones in Gilgit and Muzaffarabad and have acquired lease over 300 mining sites in the region. Local political activists accuse Pakistan of beefing up security in Gilgit-Baltistan on the pretext of providing security to the Chinese.

Rising threats attributed to the use of KKH for militancy and separatism have compelled both countries to conduct counter-insurgency military exercises along the highway. The first of its kind joint land force exercise called 'Friendship Exercise' came in August 2004 in Tashkurgan, a strategic town and convergence point of all land routes emerging and leading towards Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, northern Turkestan, Khotan, Tibet and Gilgit-Baltistan.⁵⁷ The exercise is aimed to further strengthen co-operation between the two countries and their armies; improve the capacity of jointly combating political and military threats; and contain and crackdown on the forces of separatism, extremism and terrorism. The exercise will also help promote bilateral co-operation in non-traditional security and maintain stability in the region.⁵⁸ Termed as the high altitude cold-weather exercise, it comprised of PLA's anti-terrorist battalion and entailed searching and tracking down of terrorists in mountainous terrain. Such military capabilities may also help Pakistan contain separatism in its own occupied region of Gilgit-Baltistan and Balochistan.

Likewise, in 2006, both countries conducted another joint military exercise along the KKH in Pakistani city of Abbottabad. This time, the commandos of the army aviation wing of Pakistan Army and special forces of PLA participated in the exercise. It was for the first time that PLA special forces joined a foreign force in foreign land to undertake such exercise. The exercises were scheduled during the same time when Chinese President Hu Jintao was also present in Pakistan. Exercises included hour long simulation of suicide attacks. Both militaries used latest weapons of detection technologies and speed response. Selection of Abbottabad was very crucial for the exercise site as like Tashkurgan, Abbottabad is a converging point of traffic from directions that lead to Gilgit, Xinjiang, Swat, Peshawar, Kabul, Kashmir and Islamabad.

In order to improve fighting capabilities against both internal and external security threats, China and Pakistan signed two agreements of

'friendship, cooperation and good neighborly relations' and 'combating terrorism, separatism and extremism' in April 2005 and November 2006 respectively. The treaties bound both nations to support each other, diplomatically and militarily, to combat separatism in Gilgit-Baltistan and Xinjiang. D. Rajan of India states that the treaties also bind the two nations to desist from 'joining any alliance or bloc which infringes upon the sovereignty, security and territorial integrity of the other side'. It also forbids both nations from signing treaties of this nature with a third country.⁵⁹ The agreements also enable intensifying cooperation in the areas of economy, defense, science and technology, people-to-people contact and cooperation to advance Sino-Pakistan strategic partnership. The joint statement issued at Islamabad in the presence of Chinese President Hu Jintao on November 26, 2006 terms the treaty as providing 'an important legal foundation for the strategic partnership' to both nations. Professor Yu Dunxin of China Institute for Contemporary International Relations states that 'through the treaty, the two countries are bound to work as close allies against any foreign threat'.⁶⁰ Such treaties and exercises have implications especially for the people of Gilgit-Baltistan who are struggling to attain political freedom and withdrawal of Pakistani troops from their region. Pakistan may call Chinese support to quell local separatist movement in Gilgit-Baltistan as well as Balochistan the way it extends its support to China to suppress separatism in Xinjiang.

Today, both countries are taking their strategic relations to even higher level by investing billions of dollars in Gilgit-Baltistan to expand the Karakoram Corridor and build an expressway, rail-line and oil/gas pipeline (OGP) through it. KKH expansion project is China's brainchild and an initiative of ex-President of Pakistan, General Pervez Musharraf. The ambitious plan, which intends to improve cross-regional transportation and commercial network among the client states, will convert KKH into a 90-foot wide expressway and allow construction of a tunnel through the Khunjerab Pass to provide all-weather traffic and increasing the existing capacity to three times. The corridor development project will cost US\$6 billion and will link Central Asia and China to the Asian highway network, passing through Afghanistan and Iran.⁶¹ Further, a 1,100 km long rail-link worth US\$10.237 billion will be laid through the tunnel, which will cut the distance between Pakistan's capital Islamabad and China's trade center Kashgar to a mere seventeen hours.⁶² In addition, OGP will also run through the tunnel⁶³ linking the existing fuel-lanes of Central Asia and China to refineries on Pakistani ports, and the Middle East.⁶⁴ It is

expected that the corridor will serve economic needs of both countries with an eye to advance strategic interests in the Gulf. Many security analysts predict that the economic interdependency which will come through the Karakorum Corridor, will bind Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, China and the Central Asian countries leading to emergence of a regional block. The postmodern great trade-route game thus continues through the corridors of Gilgit-Baltistan albeit replacing traditional players like Britain and Russia with the contemporary powers like China, USA and India.

Locals fear that further expansion of the Karakoram corridor will only have negative social implications. Today, Chinese investments in Gilgit-Baltistan exceed US\$10 billions in energy, mineral extraction sectors. Both countries are setting up China-specific industrial zones in Gilgit and Muzaffarabad, with over 2,000 Chinese currently involved in several infrastructure projects in the region.⁶⁵ Such economic interventions will have long-term impact on the local society and will be seen as a threat to control of natives of Gilgit-Baltistan over their resources. Future expansion of KKH will only lead to arrival of Pakistanis and Hans in large numbers in both regions, and change of local demography, competition over resources and service with the settlers, and resource depletion sans revenue-share for the locals. It will lead to destruction of local culture and religious identities. Pakistan is emulating Chinese policy of heavy investment and settlement of Pakistanis in Gilgit-Baltistan to consolidate its control over the region as well as to exploit the resources to generate revenues. In Xinjiang, where China is currently investing US\$88 billion, the interventions are leading to change of demography in favor of Han settlers, who have grown from 5% in 1940 to 40% in 2009.⁶⁶ Local people of Gilgit-Baltistan complain about the Chinese presence in their region who show no regard to their customs, culture, work ethics, and environmental norms. The road network and China's financial investment in the mega dams has enabled thousands of residents of Xinjiang to come to Gilgit-Baltistan and partake developmental work here. This has strained relations with locals who see their right over such jobs being denied. In recent months, many fights have taken place in Gilgit and Hunza between locals and the Chinese workers. Locals also disapprove of Chinese persecution of the Uyghurs. The people of Gojal especially fear for the religious and cultural rights of the Wakhis living in Xinjiang who express dissatisfaction over Chinese religious policies.⁶⁷

With enhanced Sino-Pak relations and investments in Gilgit-Baltistan,

the Pashtuns will also bring drug culture to both Gilgit-Baltistan and Xinjiang. Although no survey has been conducted in Gilgit-Baltistan regarding percentage infected HIV/AIDS cases; but Xinjiang ranks first among the Chinese provinces regarding HIV/AIDS infected cases and majority of these have occurred because of the drug intake.⁶⁸ For the Chinese, the two biggest threats that have emerged after the opening of the Karakoram Highway are Islamic ideology and drug trafficking. According to the Joint United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), drug intake is the primary source of HIV/AIDS infections. The KKH introduced lethal drugs like heroin to Xinjiang, and the intake is highest among the youth. The trend of sharing contaminated needles to inject drugs has led to HIV/AIDS rates in Xinjiang skyrocket, contributing to the highest infection rate in the country. The report reveals that 85% of all reported people living with HIV/AIDS in Xinjiang are Uyghurs and 96% infections were detected among intravenous drug users. Further, the infection rate among the inhabitants along the border near Gilgit now exceeds 70%. Such influences are detrimental to the social environment of Gilgit-Baltistan as was reiterated by the late Kalon Mehdi of Khimchung Skardo, who had the honor of being the only Balti LLB graduate from Aligarh University, India, once saying that unification with Ladakh and Kashmir brought culture and civilization to Baltistan. Nowadays, we receive drugs, Kalashnikov, Wahhabism and sectarianism as a gift for opting for Pakistan.⁶⁹

In the current context, the number of Pashtuns and Uyghurs, who have travelled to and made Gilgit their home to pursue commercial interests, are already growing. Some of these Uyghurs run *Mantu*⁷⁰ restaurants and serve Central Asian cuisine in the Gilgit town. Some Uyghurs have established shops to sell Karakuli caps and carpets. Some run *Serais* which host the travelling Uyghurs on their way from Xinjiang to Islamabad and vice versa. Likewise, some Pakistanis have also established hotels in Kashgar, although no native of Gilgit-Baltistan has been involved in such enterprises. A careful analysis suggests that the land connectivity and ensuing cross-regional trade over the KKH has so far failed to benefit the people of Gilgit-Baltistan, which for thousands of years remained a pivotal trading post on the infamous Silk Route. Pakistan claimed to construct KKH to revolutionize change in livelihoods and enhance local trade but the road has largely failed to prove its worth in over four decades.⁷¹ Dr. Ispahani states that the bilateral border barter trade, which started in 1967, initially benefited the people of Hunza,

Wakhan and Tashkurgan area.⁷² For instance, in 1969, a 50-camel caravan carrying silk, carpets, pressure cookers, and jasmine tea crossed over the Mintaka Pass from Tashkurgan into Gojal valley of Hunza. That year, the trade led to revenue generation worth US\$16,667. However, due to lack of interest to pursue a steady trade policy in both China and Pakistan vis-a-vis inter-regional trade, revenues have remained subsistent and intermittent. This can be inferred by analyzing the income and literacy patterns in Gilgit-Baltistan.

On the 32nd anniversary of the completion of KKH, poverty is still rampant in Gilgit-Baltistan as more than half of 1.3 million inhabitants still live below poverty line. The per capita income of Gilgit-Baltistan is only one-fourth of Pakistan's national average.⁷³ Government education department has failed to pay attention to the human development index which is evident from the extremely low literacy rate: 15% for the males and 5% for the females.⁷⁴ Likewise, energy consumption rate for locals is almost ten times lower (5 watts per capita) to Pakistan's national average of 48 watts per capita.⁷⁵ The transit and trade is mainly in the control of Pakistanis⁷⁶ and Han-Chinese who fill their coffers with the revenues.⁷⁷ Locals opined that while cheap synthetic Chinese products somehow address short-term needs of local poor; at the same time, it has adversely affected the sustainability of the local cottage industry, and taken away the livelihood resource of the local manufacturers and producers (see Annexure II). Just within the timeframe of last 10 years, artisans in Gulabpur village engaged in making traditional caps, shawls, woolen and yak hair carpets, Gonchas, and leather boots have lost their livelihood to the Chinese imports. With the death of the last craftsperson Apo Shukur Bumalpa in 2007, the people of Gulabpur now travel 40 miles further north to Basha valley if they intend to purchase and wear traditional clothes.

In 1996, many business experts pinned their hopes on Pakistan, China, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan, after they ratified quadrilateral inter-governmental agreement on trade, transit and transportation.⁷⁸ However, Pakistan still ranks sixth and last among the trading partners of Xinjiang.⁷⁹ Despite existence of Preferential Trade Agreement, Free Trade Agreement and Early Harvest Program on goods (signed in 2007), investments (signed in 2008) and services (signed in 2009), locals have failed to obtain expected benefits. When Sino-Pak trade reached US\$7 billion in 2009, share of KKH trade was a miniscule 4%, and more surprisingly, Chinese balance of exports was a staggering 83%.⁸⁰

According to the local respondents, Pakistan doesn't share transit

fee from KKH, and income of the dry-port with the regional administration.⁸¹ Further, the staff at the custom check point, Khunjerab Pass, Frontier Works Organization, Special Communication Organization, and even the security guards for the Chinese workers mainly come from Pakistan.⁸² Likewise, most of the China-product stores are owned and run by the Pakistanis. It is also claimed that military's National Logistics Cell has the exclusive right to handle freight traffic via KKH, thus depriving the revenue of cross-border transportation service to the locals.⁸³ In Xinjiang, transport services along the KKH are mainly run by the Hans. Many people of Gilgit-Baltistan complain that the road connectivity has largely been used to: maneuver troops to convert Gilgit-Baltistan into a military garrison and support wars; to establish listening posts; and to control the local people. Similar trends can be seen in Xinjiang. Although Chinese and Pakistani officials blame the separatists in their respective occupied regions for low trade volume,⁸⁴ above-mentioned statistics give weight to the local opinion that KKH has so far served the larger interests of regional connectivity for Pakistan and China rather than advancing local livelihoods. One still needs to see if future expansion of the corridor will bring any substantial and tangible benefits for the local people.

Conclusion

The drivers compelling Pakistan and China to develop Karakoram Corridor and maintain their presence in both Xinjiang and Gilgit-Baltistan are diverse and mainly pertain to national economic, strategic and political ambitions. However, their presence has largely failed to promote the interests of the local people. Growing Chinese interference in local affairs has created friction among different stakeholders and instability in the region. Chinese and Pakistani control over resources and revenues may be a short-term tactical move, but will fail to provide any long-term strategic gains. The locals want China to refrain from getting involved in the affairs of J&K including Gilgit-Baltistan; secondly, to withdraw from the occupied valleys of Shaksgam, Raskam, Shimshal, Aghil and Aksai-chin; and thirdly, to persuade Pakistan to withdraw its forces from Gilgit-Baltistan. Chinese and Pakistani presence in the twin regions in the name of combating terrorism and separatism is affecting local society and cultural identity, ethnic and religious demography and control of the natives over their resources. Unwarranted increase of Sino-Pak involvement in Gilgit-Baltistan and Xinjiang will, therefore, only aggravate the situation. Only after China and Pakistan vacate their respective parts

of J&K, one can expect that protection of local livelihoods, ecosystem and indigenous cultures, and peace and long-lasting stability will return to South Asia.

Annexure I

Following is the list of the projects undergoing in Gilgit-Baltistan with Chinese monetary, technical, manpower, machinery, and equipment support. Both countries consider land connectivity via Gilgit-Baltistan and Xinjiang imperative to ensure sustainability and timely completion of these projects as well as initiation of new projects in future.

1. Chinese Consulate in Gilgit
2. Five concrete bridges along Gilgit-Skardo road
3. Gilgit-Skardo Highway up-gradation project: involving expansion and re-alignment of 175 km existing paved road, which links Baltistan with Pakistan
4. KKH expansion project phase I
5. Khunjerab Pass Tunnel (Friendship tunnel)
6. Concrete-base suspension bridge, Darel Valley
7. Concrete-base suspension bridge, Tanger Valley
8. Concrete-base suspension bridge, Yasin Valley
9. Concrete-base suspension bridge, Gupis Valley
10. Concrete-base suspension bridge, Shigar Valley
11. Diamer Dam, US\$12.6 billion, 4500 MW
12. Bunji Dam, US\$7 billion, 7000 MW
13. Pratab Bridge near Bunji Dam
14. Naltar Power Project-I 16 MW
15. Naltar Power Project-II 16 MW
16. Naltar Power Project-III 18 MW
17. Shagarthang hydel scheme, 26 MW
18. Yulbu hydel project, costing US\$6 billion and generating 3,000 MW
19. Phander hydel project costing US\$70 million and generating 87 MW
20. Basho hydel project costing US\$40 million and generating 26 MW
21. Daso hydel project costing US\$7.8 billion
22. Harpo hydel project costing US\$44.608 million
23. Land Development Project, Sadpara Dam

24. Land Development Project, Manawar-Gilgit
25. Building air-strips on KKH for fighter planes
26. Sost dry port construction and up-gradation project
27. Joint venture of Sino-Pak Sost Dry-port Ltd.
28. An integrated border management, overland trade and trans-border economic and investment zone replicating China-South East Asia Economic Cooperation module
29. China-specific special economic zones in Gilgit
30. China-specific special economic zones along the KKH near major towns
31. China-specific special industrial zone in Gilgit over an area of 1,500 acres
32. Several mining leases awarded to Chinese companies
33. Air connectivity from Gilgit and Skardo to Kashgar
34. Chinese bank branches in Gilgit-Baltistan
35. Energy and trade corridor, involving gas and oil pipelines
36. Cross-border cable system
37. Fiber-optic lines through the Khunjerab Pass tunnels
38. ZTE telecom of China
39. Zong China Mobil Ltd.
40. Huawei telecom industries of China

Annexure II

None of the trade items exchanged over the KKH between Pakistan and China are produced or manufactured in Gilgit-Baltistan. KKH is essentially a transit route to transport Pakistani and Chinese goods with no transit revenues for the locals.

Exports: Dates, wooden decorations, non-stick tawa, ore, lead, fans, rice, bed sheet, shaving cream, agarbatti, ready-made garments, shoes, salt, zari cloth, Portland cement, sports goods, packing material, prayer mats, dry fruits, brass / onyx decoration pieces, herbs, cotton cloth, hena, utensils, mangoes, kinoo, cotton fabrics, other textiles, minerals, sports goods, cutlery, surgical goods, fruits, industrial alcohol

Imports: Shoes, garments, winter clothing, cloth, blankets, pen, ballpen, sports items, toys, crockery, electronics, auto parts, decoration pieces, watches, fresh and dry fruits, machinery, rugs, tires, hardware, sanitary ware, mobile, computer accessories, cosmetics, cement, drilling

equipment, artificial jewelry, decorations, glasses and crockery, shoes, garments, lighters, and foreign cigarettes, building machinery

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3. *Ibid.*, p.356.
4. *Ibid.*, p.358.
5. Until recently, the Gashopa family of Skardo and Khimchung possessed Badakhshani polo horses.
5. F. Younghusband, *op.cit.*, p.523.
7. <http://books.google.co.in/books?cd=7&id=8V8TAQAIAAJ&dq=muztagh+polo+ground&q=polo+ground>, p. 48.
8. Most of these narratives come from local people as part of oral tradition. I acquired the information from local historians like Abbas Kazmi, Hassan Hasrat, Raja Sahab Saba of Shigar, tourist guide Mohammad Khan Mir, Haji Ghulam Abbas, Master Jaffar, and Master Ahmed during my conversation with them in 1990, and again between 1998 and 2002.
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15. *Ibid.*, p.524.
16. Andreas Rieck, The Nurbakhshis of Baltistan: Crisis and Revival of a Five Centuries Old Community *Die Welt des Islams*, (New Series), Vol. 35, Issue 2, November 1995. p. 162.
17. *The Dawn International*, Karachi (Pakistan), 3 March 1963.
18. C. Alok Bansal and V. Gupta, Eds., *Pakistan Occupied Kashmir: The Untold Story*. New Delhi, Manas Publications, 2007, pp. 46-49.
19. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hunza_\(princely_state\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hunza_(princely_state)); accessed 2 March 2010.
20. http://www.iakf.org/main/files/uplink2007_05_22_Letter_to_Ambassador_Khalid.pdf
21. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2754976?seq=7>
22. In December 2000, the Foreign Minister of Pakistan stated that Northern Areas

- (Gilgit-Baltistan) do not lie within the boundaries of what constitutes Pakistan and are part of the state of Jammu and Kashmir. This statement was subsequently confirmed by the Federal Bureau of Foreign Affairs.
23. M.Z. Ispahani, *Roads and Rivals: The Politics of Access in the Borderlands of Asia*. London, I. B. Tauris, 1989. p.197.
 24. These valleys are under the illegal Chinese occupation and belong to Gilgit-Baltistan of J&K.
 25. Maps of the Surveyor General of Pakistan show the roads linking Gilgit with Xinjiang through Raskam. Mr. Vishnu Prasad of Ministry of External Affairs of India complained to China for building feeder roads in Shaksgam and Raskam which violated the border agreement of 1963 between China and Pakistan.
 26. <http://www.gasandoil.com/goc/news/nts23296.htm>
 27. Aksai Chin is the Chinese occupied part of Ladakh (J&K), see M. Z. Isapahani, *op.cit.*, p.202 & ff.
 28. On June 26, 1969, Indian government spokesperson said in New Delhi that the new road was a militarily sinister move directed against India and would enable China to move troops from Tibet and Ladakh to Gilgit, directly cutting the distance from 1,000 to 200 miles.
 29. The foreign ministry spokesperson of China commented on the article 6 of the 1963 Shaksgam agreement saying that the deal is final and there is no need to re-open negotiations on the agreement. See Srikanth Kondapalli, Sino-Pakistan border dispute: old issues and new developments. *World Focus*, January 2007, pp. 26-31.
 30. Ispahani, *op.cit.*, p.199.
 31. Pakistani maps show Aksai-chin not demarcated land, enabling China to negotiate if and when Pakistan acquires sovereignty over J&K.
 32. <http://pamirtimes.net/2008/01/27/chinese-consulate-being-established-in-gilgit/>
 33. The author received the information in a meeting with Professor Wang in Delhi during a conference on Xinjiang on 4 March 2010.
 34. <http://english.cri.cn/2238/2005-4-6/33@224705.htm>
 35. Pakistani term for her occupied parts of Kashmir along the Pir Panjal Range.
 36. Pakistan's North West Frontier Province, which is claimed by Afghanistan.
 37. See Congressional Research Service Report, 17 December 2001; <http://www.uyghuramerican.org/statements/letter-to-colin.html>; Soviet-backed government in Kabul claimed that China funded Afghan *Mujahideen* with US\$400 million worth of weapons; 300 military advisors and trainers residing in camps at PoK including Gilgit-Baltistan, and Xinjiang. It is said that more than 55,000 fighters received training in camps in Pakistan many of which existed in Gilgit-Baltistan and Chitral.
 38. Ispahani, *op.cit.*, p.199.
 39. H. Abbas, *Pakistan's Drift into Extremism: Allah, the Army and America's War on Terror*. New Delhi, Pentagon Press, 2005. p.149.
 40. Ispahani, *op.cit.*, p. 197; China describes the road as 'strategic investment', and trade via KKH as 'merely symbolic operation'.
 41. <http://www.scribd.com/doc/11799077/Pakistans-Evolving-Relations-With-China-Russia-And-Central-Asia>
 42. http://src-h.slav.hokudai.ac.jp/coe21/publish/no16_1_ses/11_rahman.pdf. China provided covert military supplies worth \$200 million annually to the Afghan *Mujahideen* to fight the Soviets and KKH became the conduit of supply.

43. S. F. Starr, ed., *Xinjiang: China's Muslim Borderland*. Washington, Central Asia Caucasus Institute, 2004. p. 149.
44. In the mid-1980s, there were more than 300 Chinese instructors and advisors stationed in PoK providing training to the *Mujahideen*. See John Cooley, *Unholy Wars: Afghanistan, America, and International Terrorism*, Sterling, Va., Pluto Press, 2002.
45. R. Hussain, *Pakistan and the emergence of Islamic militancy in Afghanistan*. Ashgate, 2005. p. 102.
46. Ispahani, *op.cit.*, p.192.
47. <http://www.scribd.com/doc/11799077/Pakistans-Evolving-Relations-With-China-Russia-And-Central-Asia>
48. *Far East & Australasia Regional Survey of the World*. London, Routledge, 2003. p. 73.
49. Pashtun-Pakistanis started settling in Gilgit-Baltistan in the late 1970s. Pakistan illegally abrogated State Subject Rule (SSR) to allow its citizens to acquire assets and claim stake in local socio-economic and political affairs. The dilution of local demography has weakened the social and cultural fabric and increased Pakistani control over the occupied region.
50. H. Abbas, *op.cit.*, p.148.
51. http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2006%5C05%5C21%5Cstory_21-5-2006_pg3_1
52. See Associated Press, "China: Terror Suspect Handed Over" May 27, 2002 as quoted in *The World Uighur Network News* http://www.uygur.org/wunn02/2002_05_27.htm
53. See Congressional Research Service Report, 17 December 2001, op. cit. Also See: <http://www.uyghuramerican.org/statements/letter-to-colin.html>
54. <http://web.amnesty.org/library/index/engasa170212004> – Accessed 6 February 2007 – Attachment 1
55. [www.apcss.org/.../APCSS—%20Uyghur%20Muslim%20Separatism%20in%20Xinjiang.doc](http://www.apcss.org/.../APCSS-%20Uyghur%20Muslim%20Separatism%20in%20Xinjiang.doc)
56. <http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/news/pakistan/nwfp/300-suspected-people-expelled-from-n-areas-gilgit>
57. http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/english/doc/2004-07/30/content_353068.htm
58. <http://www.scribd.com/doc/11799077/Pakistans-Evolving-Relations-With-China-Russia-And-Central-Asia>
59. <http://www.southasiaanalysis.org/%5Cpapers21%5Cpaper2058.html>
60. Associated Press of Pakistan, 22 November 2006.
61. While the program is still under implementation, trans-regional trade already started through the KKH when a Pakistani company called 'Pak Caspian Trade Link' supplied container full of goods to Almaty in 2005.
62. <http://ips-pk.org/content/view/234/184/>; Pakistani minister for railways, Haji Ahmed Bilour and governor of East Turkestan, Ismail Tiliwaldi both agreed to initiate the project in their meeting
63. <http://www.andrewgrantham.co.uk/afghanistan/tag/china/>
64. <http://pk2.mofcom.gov.cn/aarticle/chinanews/200610/20061003508868.html>; Pakistan's President Musharraf said, 'KKH is the eight wonder of the world and we created it. We are also capable of creating ninth and 10th wonders of the world in the form of railway and OGP linkages between Pakistan and China'

65. <http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/chn/gxh/tyb/zwbd//wshd/t658790.htm>; cited through <http://www.sourcejuice.com/1305686/2010/02/17/Pakistan-Luo-Zhaohui-met-Pakistan-new-Gilgit-Baltistan-Province/>
66. <http://www.cfr.org/publication/16870/>
67. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/pdfplus/20029489.pdf> (pp 317-318)
68. <http://www.uighuramerican.org/mediareports/2000/afpaug2400.htm>
69. Interview with nephew of the late Kalon in June 2006, who quoted him stating the negative influences of Pashtuns in Baltistan
70. Central Asian dumplings which taste like Tibetan *momo* dumplings
71. Ispahani, *op.cit.*, pp. 188-195.
72. *Ibid.*, p.188.
73. SESNAC report 2007
74. World Bank estimates of 1997; no literacy census has been done since 1998.
75. <http://pamirtimes.net/2008/09/11/op-ed-awakening-of-gilgit-baltistan-a-response-to-n-n-khattak/>
76. http://www.bbc.co.uk/urdu/pakistan/story/2005/09/050925_gilgit_china_fz.shtml
77. Interviewed traders of Hassan Khan market, Gilgit on 29 October 2006.
78. <http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1G1-155626531.html>
79. <http://pk2.mofcom.gov.cn/aarticle/chinanews/200808/20080805736308.html>
80. Pakistani trade figures for 2006.
81. Gilgit-Baltistan Chief Executive and Chairman of the dry port Mir Ghazanfar Ali Khan admits that the region does not receive share from the income of the dry port. In 2009, he proposed that 3% share of the income of the dry port be spent on the development of Gilgit-Baltistan.
82. In Skardo, there are around 15 shops which sell Chinese imported products and more than 70% of them are operated by Pakistanis.
83. <http://www.hindustan.org/forum/archive/index.php/t-2976.html>
84. Interviewed Pakistani customs official on 2 November 2009 in Islamabad.

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