# THE 'ANCIENT SUPREMACY'

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# THE 'ANCIENT SUPREMACY'

*Bukhara, Afghanistan and the Battle for Balkh, 1731-1901*

BY

J.L. LEE




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IN MEMORY OF MY FATHER
Leonard Lee, of the Sudan Railways (1904-1967)

*The King who has not wisdom in himself, nor wise man for his counsellor,*
*Authority's sceptre will curtail and dominion crumble from its base.*
*For he, unable to discern, what tyranny or justice is,*
*The world into a desert turns, the fount of justice, a* Sarāb.*
(Jami, *Salman and Absal*: adapted from Fitzgerald's translation)

*There is a pun on the word *sarāb*. *Sarāb* was the name of the camel of Basūs which gave rise to a war between Arab tribes in pre-Islamic times known as *Harbī Basūs*. There is a common Arabic expression, *ash'am min sarāb*, more disastrous than *sarāb*' (Steingass). *Sarāb*, is also the Persian word for 'mirage'.

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# PREFACE

On, or around, 10 July 1892, a small contingent of poorly-armed irregular cavalry, led by the head of a minor province in north-western Afghanistan, mutinied. The rebellion was quickly snuffed out by the Afghan army and the leaders of the uprising imprisoned or executed. At the time, the revolt was deemed hardly worthy of notice outside of the country. True, the subsequent edition of the official *Gazetteer of Afghan Turkistan* (1907, xxviii, 221-2) devoted a paragraph or so to the incident, but in the ensuing decades historians of Afghanistan were too occupied with matters they considered of greater moment to bother with the suppression of a motley band of recalcitrant Uzbek horsemen. Yet the brief and abortive rebellion of Muhammad Sharif Khan Ming, *Wali* of Maimana, marked the final, despairing attempt to seize back a modicum of autonomy from the Afghan government by the last representative of a dynasty which had once held sway over a country larger than Switzerland.

Muhammad Sharif Khan's defeat, and the overthrow of his line which resulted, terminated some two and a half centuries of Mingid domination of Balkh. Even more importantly, from the point of view of Central Asian history, the downfall of this dynasty signalled the end of what the Amir of Afghanistan, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan [1880-1901], called the 'Ancient Supremacy';[2] that is, the epoch of Chingizid sovereignty over the *wilayat*, or appanage, of Balkh which dated back to the second decade of the thirteenth century.

Prior to Balkh's incorporation into the state of Afghanistan, every ruler of the province, with a few, short interregna, all claimed to be descendants, however distant the degree, of the great Mongol conqueror, Chingiz Khan. Though the capital of the Chingizid empire lay on the other side of the Amu Darya river, either in Bukhara or Samarkand, according to ancient tradition the province of Balkh was ruled by the heir apparent to the throne. As such, Balkh played an important part in the fortunes of the various Turco-Mongol dynasties which

[2] *Remarks made by the Amir after his Departure from Peshawar*, 14 April 1885, India Office Library & Records, Secret Letters and Enclosures from India, L/P&S/7/44, 219-40 (255); henceforth, SLEI:44, etc.

arose as a consequence of the conquests of Chingiz Khan. As far as the Mingids of Maimana are concerned, the ancestor of Muhammad Sharif Khan, Uraz Bi, who probably founded this dynasty, received his letters patent from the famous Tuqay-Timurid prince and future Khan of Bukhara, Nazr Muhammad Khan [1611-1651], some three centuries before Ahmad Shah Durrani, the 'Father of Afghanistan', established his people's independence on the wreckage of the Safawid Empire.

At the time of Uraz Bi Ming's appointment, the territory which today is referred to as Afghanistan, far from being a homogeneous nation state, was the region where three great empires met. Balkh, as we have already noted, was the appanage of the Tuqay-Timurid *sultan*, or prince, Nazr Muhammad Khan which, in turn, was but a part of the Chingizid empire which dominated the whole of Central Asia. In the west, Herat was under Safawid Persia, although sovereignty over the region was the subject of a long-standing and bitter dispute between the Shah and Nazr Muhammad Khan. In the east, Kabul, the present capital of Afghanistan, was a northern outpost of the Mughal Empire, whilst Qandahar, the homeland of the future Durrani Afghan monarchy, was the subject of another protracted disagreement between Safawid and Mughal rulers.

The governmental systems of Safawid Persia and Mughal India were pyramidal, autocratic and centralised; the ruler, or *padshah*, upholding an Oriental variation of the Divine Right of Kings and being regarded by his subjects as the Shadow of God on earth. In stark contrast, Chingizid rule, as represented by the Tuqay-Timurids of Balkh and Bukhara, was rooted in Turco-Mongolian tribal tradition and was the antithesis of the *padshahi* system. Power was devolved outwards and downwards from the centre to such an extent that a district *amir*, or provincial commander, had at his disposal far greater powers than his Safawid, Mughal or, subsequently, Afghan, counterpart who was obliged to refer even quite small matters to the *padshah* for approval or adjudication. The Chingizid system of devolved authority, furthermore, was deeply rooted in the consciousness of both subject and ruler and when, on the infrequent occasions a Khan or appanage holder tried to institute reforms more in line with the Indo-Persian model, he very soon came unstuck and was eventually obliged to restore the ancient order by sultans or the amirs who resented the interference of 'central' government in provincial affairs. As the centuries went by, the position of Supreme Khan was thus

increasingly limited to a paternal, ceremonial and honorific role. The Khan's presence was essential to legitimatise the active Khan's authority, but the former had little to do with the daily running of the empire. In this respect, the Supreme Khan would have found many similarities between his position and that of a modern European monarch.

By 1892, however, the three great, rival empires of Central Asia had passed away and the map of Central Asia had been redrawn to such an extent as to be unrecognisable to someone of the previous generation. The Mughal Empire had imploded and been absorbed into British India. The Safawid rulers had been dealt a death blow by the transient but bloody career of Nadir Shah Afshar, out of the ashes of whose ephemeral empire the Qajar dynasty emerged to rule over a truncated and weakened Persia. The Chingizid dominions north of the Oxus had gradually broken up into small, mutually-hostile, Khanates and were picked off one-by-one by the expanding power of Tsarist Russia, though the Manghit dynasty of Bukhara retained a modicum of internal authority until early into the next century. South of the Amu Darya, the appanage of Balkh had been renamed 'Afghan Turkistan' and was governed by the Afghan Amir of Kabul, an ardent advocate of *padshahi* monarchical theory. The once-great princely appanage had been reduced to an impoverished and dispirited backwater of the newly-created state of Afghanistan. The Chingizid amirs, on whom the mantle of power had fallen in the wake of the breakdown of Tuqay-Timurid authority, had been deposed and had either been executed or died in ignominy in the foul gaols of Kabul. Their wealth had been confiscated, their lands distributed amongst colonists, whilst the city-states over which they once held sway were governed by southerners appointed by the Amir himself. It is the tumultuous and sanguine history of the demise of this 'Ancient Supremacy' which is the subject of this work.

When it comes to what, for want of a better term, we may call the 'Battle for Balkh,' one searches in vain through the extensive corpus of western histories of Afghanistan and Central Asia for any systematic treatment of the decline and fall of Chingizid rule in Central Asia, primarily because this epoch is eclipsed by the wider struggle between the two great European Imperial powers of the day, Britain and Russia, for control of Central Asia. By the last decade or so of the eighteenth century, the East India Company had extended its authority westwards and northwards to the borders of the Punjab. As a

consequence, Britain's interest in things Central Asia revolved exclusively around the issue of how best to protect India's north-western frontier from periodic invasion by the Afghan Amirs. Within living memory, Nadir Shah Afshar had not just crossed the Indus but had actually sacked Delhi and although his empire had fallen apart on his death, Ahmad Shah Durrani had assumed the mantle of a *mujahid,* or holy warrior, and had made repeated forays into the Punjab to fight the infidel Sikhs and Marathas. Following the death of Timur Shah b. Ahmad Shah, however, this threat receded with the outbreak of a protracted civil war over the issue of succession which eventually led to the break-up of the Afghan realms into a number of semi-independent city states.

Almost as soon as the Afghan threat had subsided, the authorities in Calcutta had further reason to worry about the security situation on the north-west frontier, for following Napoleon's successes in Egypt, it was feared that the French Emperor would try and emulate the conquests of Alexander the Great and attack India overland through Persia and Qandahar. By 1815, the French threat, too, had dissipated, only to be replaced, a decade or so later, with Russo-phobia, precipitated by Tsarist military and political successes in the Caucasus, Caspian and Kazakhstan. Unlike the Afghan and French 'problem', however, the Russian threat did not go away. Instead, as the century unfolded, it increased until this single issue dominated British foreign policy. In order to protect India from Russian invasion and subversion, from the middle of the 1830s Calcutta abandoned its support of Persia and sought instead an alliance with the Afghan Amir of Kabul. As a consequence of this shift in policy, British interests became increasingly more intertwined with the fluctuating fortunes of the Afghan Amirs and eventually led to the creation of the buffer state of Afghanistan which, it was believed, would be the bulwark by which Russian power and influence was held in check. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that British historians of this era gave priority to issues related to Russian-British rivalry, known as the 'Great Game', and Anglo-Afghan relations. The other side of the coin was that it was not in British interests to examine too deeply the awkward issues of the pre-Durrani situation of Central Asia and particularly the embarrassing claims of sovereignty made by Persia and Bukhara over certain of the regions which Britain was determined to include in the state of Afghanistan.

Not only so, but it has to be remembered that the homeland of the Afghan (i.e. Pushtun or 'Pathan') tribes lay south of the Hindu Kush, on either side of the Khyber and Bolan Passes, and consequently histories of Afghanistan written in the colonial period concentrated on developments this region to the detriment of what was deemed to be 'provincial' affairs. Furthermore, up until the second half of the present century, those individuals who were regarded as authorities on the area were more often than not the very people who had either formulated or implemented Britain's Central Asia policy and thus, to one degree or another, their publications contain an element of imperial polemic. Indeed, publication was the most important medium through which officials in one or other of the branches of the India administration, were able to justify the ways of government to man as well as immortalise their own, or others', part in redrawing the map of Central Asia. Western scholars in the present, post-colonial age, have merely inherited this ideological mantle and even in the present post-colonial era, historical studies on Afghanistan and Central Asia still tend to be variations on the 'Great Game' theme.

This world view means that the criteria used by such historians to evaluate the significance, or otherwise, of internal developments in Afghanistan and Central Asia is based on whether or not such-and-such an event is considered to have some direct or indirect bearing on British strategic interests or throws more light on Anglo-Afghan or Anglo-Russian relations. The pages of such studies are full of diplomatic (and undiplomatic) exchanges between London, Calcutta, Kabul and St. Petersburg, or in-depth discussions about the political aspirations of powerful individuals amongst the ruling clique in the Afghan capital how they were disposed, or not, as the case may be, towards Britain, Russia or Persia, and the various methods Britain employed to impose its will on the Amirs of Kabul. The net result is that the imperial historical tradition which still permeates modern scholarship, is obsessed by a narrow-minded, Cartesian view of the last two centuries of Central Asian history. It is as if the peoples of the region, from the Amir to the night soil cleaner, only existed when British eyes deigned to look upon them.

Consequently, certain periods of Afghanistan's chequered history have been mulled over *ad nauseam* whilst other eras have either been totally ignored or simply passed by Elphinstone's mission to the court of Shah Shuja' in 1808; European (and particularly British) exploration of Central Asia; the various Anglo-Afghan Treaties; Russian

advances in Central Asia; the Persian sieges of Herat and the several frontier commissions; are all given pride of place. Above all, the 'romantic' story of the First Anglo-Afghan War [1838-1842] has captured these historians' imagination and the saga of this Central Asian Dunkirk has been retold and reworked countless times in the course of the last century and a half. During the same period there has been but a single study of the reign of Ahmad Shah Durrani written by a European (Lockhart 1938). The story of Dost Muhammad's meeting with Alexander Burnes in 1838, the Amir's subsequent flight, imprisonment and eventual surrender to Sir William Macnaughten, have been told again and again, yet the period of more than a decade between Dost Muhammad Khan's reinstatement following the disasters of the First Anglo-Afghan War and his first treaty with Britain in 1855 is covered in the space of a few sentences or paragraphs. The reign of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan has inspired a considerable literature, whilst the reign of his son, Habibullah, during which there was a brief, but glorious, flowering of literary talent, has, until the present generation, attracted but little serious or systematic study (cf. Schinasi 1979).

Furthermore, the imperial world view produced the most extraordinary selectivity, even when writing about events which hold a central place in 'Great Game' folklore. Perhaps the best example of this 'pick-'n-mix' tradition is the Persian siege of Herat [1837-1838]. In the last century it provided a particularly choice opportunity for smug self-congratulation for it was an "Englishman,"[3] Lt. Eldred Pottinger, who, according to the conventional interpretation of events, single-handedly, kicked, bullied and harangued the defenders and their despotic overlords, Kamran Shah and Wazir Yar Muhammad Khan, into holding off the Persian assaults on the city.

The crucial part played by the Sunni Confederacy of Aimaq, Uzbek and Turkman tribes from Badghis, the Panjdeh oasis and the Chahar Wilayat, under the joint leadership of Muhammad Khan Hazara and Mizrab Khan Ming of Maimana, is rarely mentioned. Yet so serious a threat was this confederation to the Persian army's flanks, that the Shah was obliged to detach several thousand of his best soldiers under the command of arguably the best military mind in Persia, the Asaf al-Daula, Prince-Governor of Khurasan, and send them into the mountains of Badghis and the Tir Band-i Turkistan. It took the Persian column some four months to subdue these tribes

[3] Fraser-Tytler, 86; Pottinger was actually Irish.

during which time they suffered heavy losses of men and equipment. By the time Mizrab Khan Ming and Muhammad Khan Hazara had been brought to heel, the Asaf al-Daula was forced to go into winter quarters in Qal'a-yi Nau, for the Sabzak Pass was closed by snow. It was not until the spring that what was left of the Persian column finally rejoined the main army investing Herat. The loss of thousands of crack troops and most of the Persian cannon to the siege operations was undoubtedly far more significant for the survival of Herat than all the frantic bravery of Pottinger. Indeed, when Faiz Muhammad Katib, at the beginning of this century, wrote his account of the Persian invasion of Herat in his *Siraj al-Tawarikh*, he devoted as much space to the Asaf al-Daula's mauling in Badghis, as he did to the siege of itself.

Another flaw in the imperial histories, and one which is still perpetuated by contemporary scholarship, is the scant attention paid to the centuries prior to the election of Ahmad Shah Durrani as Amir of the Afghan tribes in 1747. When such works do attempt a contextual approach, they more often than not merely provide the reader with a shopping list of the various waves of conquests which have swept through 'Afghanistan'. The invasions of the Mongols, Timurids, Mughals, Shaibanids and Safawids, to name but a few, are portrayed as fragmentary, transitory happenings which can be dismissed in the course of a few pages. The 'Afghanistan period' of Central Asia, therefore, is never placed in a proper, organic relationship to the past and is thus uprooted from the soil out of which it grew.

Indeed, such histories are often marred by an underlying anachronism, namely, the presupposition that Afghanistan, as it was defined, say, by the end of the nineteenth century, existed as a homogeneous, distinct and independent nation-state at least as early as 1747. In fact, the name 'Afghanistan' was almost certainly a term coined by the English (Forster 1789) and was not in vogue even amongst officials in Calcutta until around the third decade of the nineteenth century. Regrettably, this world view has now been recycled back to the peoples of Afghanistan themselves through the media of western-sponsored school text books and European and American-trained Afghans. At a recent conference I attended, an eminent Afghan intellectual solemnly declared that Sultan Husain Baiqara, Zahir al-Din Babur, Timur Lang, the Herati poet Jami, amongst others, were 'Afghans'. This narcissistic view of Afghanistan has left us regrettably ignorant of internal developments in the region over the last three centuries.

There is one more, peculiarly European, perception of Central Asian historical geography underlying the colonial world view of the region and playing a significant part in determining the final frontiers of Afghanistan and the demise of the 'Ancient Supremacy' on either sides of the Amu Darya. All the members of the India administration had been brought up from an early age on a diet of Greek and Latin texts. Throughout the course of their education British civil servants, military officers and diplomats had been steeped in classical history and geography and saw India, Persia and the intervening lands through the eyes of Quintus Curtius, Ptolemy, Herodotus, etc. For such individuals, Balkh was not the Balkh of the Chingizids, nor was the Amu Darya the river which was the vein that ran through the heart of the Uzbek empire. Balkh was Bactria, the Tir Band-i Turkistan the Paropamisus mountains, the Amu Darya, the Oxus. It was the frontier which marked the border between civilisation and barbarism; a region which existed in suspended animation with the frame frozen in 326 BC, the point when the Achæmenid city of Bactra fell into the hands of the all-conquering Alexander the Great.

This present study is an attempt to break free from the shackles of this imperial and classical heritage and to write a history of one of the most important regions of Central Asia from a fresh perspective. As such, I trust it is not too presumptuous to claim that this work is possibly the first post-colonial history of Central Asia and Afghanistan and one, I hope, which will oblige the next generation of scholars to re-examine conventional approaches not just to the region's past but, more importantly, to its present. As part of the unconventional approach I have adopted, the architecture of the book has been deliberately built not around the reigns of the Amirs of Afghanistan but the rise and fall of the Ming dynasty of Maimana, the last and probably the most ancient amirid state of the former appanage of Balkh.

In order to establish proper historical, political and cultural context and continuity for the nineteenth-century struggle for Turkistan, the first two chapters have been devoted to the pre-Durrani epoch of Turco-Mongolian supremacy over a region which, from the dawn of human history, has played a vital role in the religious, political and social life of what is now referred to as Central Asia. In the third chapter, I have devoted considerable space to an analysis of the nature of Afghan-Uzbek relations during and immediately after the conquests of Nadir Shah Afshar. Having thus set the scene, the remaining chapters contain the unfolding saga of the protracted and bitter

struggle between Kabul and Bukhara for control of Balkh and the effect this had on the peoples of the appanage, socially, economically and politically. At the same time it has not been possible to exclude the part played by outside forces, such as Persia, Russia and, above all, Britain, in the subjugation of Balkh to the Afghan Amirs. However, unlike the imperial tradition which I have so criticised above, neither London, Calcutta or even Kabul are the study's *terminus a quo*; they are its *terminus ad quem*, for the impetus for the annexation of Balkh came not so much from Kabul as from Calcutta.

During the latter half of his reign, Dost Muhammad Khan (d. 1862), almost by accident, found himself in the position to be the major beneficiary of British Central Asian policy, a situation that he and his successors, not unnaturally, exploited to the utmost extent. Though Dost Muhammad Khan had made a brief incursion north of the Hindu Kush prior to the First Anglo-Afghan War, it was only following his return to Kabul, in the wake of the British withdrawal in 1842, that he was able to exert actual, direct authority over Balkh. Over the decade which followed his reinstatement, the Amir consolidated his authority by bringing more and more of the Afghan tribal areas south of the Hindu Kush under his sway. By the end of the 1840s, Dost Muhammad Khan was in a sufficiently strong position to contemplate the invasion and annexation of Balkh.

Britain, during this same period, was strangely indifferent to the extension and consolidation of the Amir's power. Certainly it was not for the lack of intelligence, for the L/P&S/5 series in the India Office Library are full of reports submitted by clandestine news writers and secret agents about Dost Muhammad's proceedings. In an earlier generation, the authorities in Calcutta would have rightly been extremely concerned to observe that a ruler, whom a few years previously Britain had felt obliged to depose and exile, was yearly becoming ever more powerful. If this was not enough, at the same time that the Amir had sent his armies northwards to annex Balkh, the ruler of Kabul also openly sided with the Sikhs in their war with the East India Company. Not unexpectedly, therefore, following the defeat of the Sikhs and the annexation of the Punjab and Peshawar which followed hard on its heels, there was panic in the Afghan capital as Company troops were expected to continue their advance through the Khyber, take control of Kabul and overthrow Dost Muhammad Khan. The East India Company army, however, halted south of the Khyber, the memory of the recent disastrous retreat from Kabul in 1842 still being

fresh in everyone's mind, and within a matter of five years, Calcutta and Kabul, far from being at loggerheads, were actively pursuing rapprochement. Thus, Dost Muhammad Khan was left alone to pursue his own policy of colonial annexation and in the following five years succeeded in seizing control of Qataghan and the Balkh-Aqcha axis.

The next important stage in the 'Afghanisation' of the appanage came in 1855, when Dost Muhammad Khan signed the first of what was to prove a series of treaties between Afghanistan and Britain and formally ended nearly two decades of mutual suspicion. Britain, however, had no intention of securing peace by surrendering control of the Khyber Pass or returning Peshawar to the Amir, nor did Dost Muhammad Khan insist on this as a pre-condition for the establishment of peaceful relations, even though the city held an important and emotional place in the hearts of all Pushtuns. Instead, during the negotiations of 1855 and for the remainder of the century, Britain cynically supported the Kabul rulers' campaigns to incorporate the province of Balkh into a Greater Afghanistan. In doing so Britain cleverly killed several birds with one stone.

There is at least a *prima facie* case to support the contention that Calcutta encouraged the Afghan annexation of Balkh as compensation for the loss of Peshawar. At the same time, Britain achieved a major policy objective, namely, the establishment of a friendly, British-reliant power on the banks of the Oxus, whilst dealing a mortal blow to Chingizid power by cutting the lands of the 'Ancient Supremacy' in half. In the south, meanwhile, British occupation of Peshawar and control of the North-West Frontier and Baluchistan, ensured that Afghan solidarity was undermined; the Pushtun tribal heartlands being under British suzerainty, whilst, north of the Khyber, the Muhammadzais were forced to become dependent on British military and financial aid as they tried to hold together a country in which Pushtuns represented considerably less than 50% of the population. Afghanistan is thus the classic, most successful and longest-surviving example of the British Imperial strategy of 'Divide and Rule'.

As far as Dost Muhammad Khan was concerned, probably as early as his 'surrender' to Sir William Macnaughten in 1840, he realised that in many matters his interests were identical with the British and there was a great deal of advantage to be gained by not flogging the long-dead Peshawar horse. The appanage of Balkh, after all, had a much greater annual revenue than the North-West Frontier and was potentially far easier to control. The province was mostly flat, or

undulating plain, rather than a maze of narrow, twisting valleys and high, inaccessible mountains, which realised a very considerable revenue from its agriculture, mercantile and cottage industries. At the same time, by incorporating the Chingizid appanage into an enlarged Afghanistan he could, to some degree, pay Bukhara back for the personal insult he had received in 1840, when he had been imprisoned by Nasrullah Khan Manghit.

Thus, even at a relatively early period in Anglo-Afghan relations we can detect the roots of the theory which, later in the century, was to blossom into the debate about a 'Scientific Frontier' for India, that is, the extension of British influence, either by direct conquest or via a proxy, to the south bank of the Oxus. The origins of this concept can, in fact, be traced to the period just before and during the First Anglo-Afghan War. In response to the flight of Dost Muhammad Khan beyond the Hindu Kush, political officers such as Burnes, Pottinger, Arthur Conolly, Todd and Lord, urged on their superiors the necessity of extending the power of the East India Company's quisling, Shah Shuja' al-Mulk, up to the Amu Darya and thus prevent the fugitive Amir recruiting an army from the population of Lesser Turkistan. These political officers supplied Calcutta with a considerable corpus of 'evidence', based on highly selective and dubious historical precedent, to justify such annexation, though following the disasters of 1841-42, nothing came of these plans. The generations of politicians who followed in these political officers' footsteps, however, relied heavily on these reports and so perpetuated the myths that had been created in the late 1830s and early 1840s. In the latter half of the century, when the argument about the 'natural' and 'scientific' frontiers of India were raging in London and Calcutta, it was the 'evidence' of Burnes and his contemporaries which was cited as justification for considering the appanage of Balkh as part of Afghanistan and drawing the frontier of the country along the course of the Oxus river.

Apart from being in the front line of the 'Great Game' the province of Balkh played a vital, though understated, role in determining the course of internal Afghanistan's history. It was usually from Balkh where pretenders to the Kabul throne made their bid for power, wooing the indigenous rulers to their side with promises of restored autonomy which were more often than not broken once the usurper had taken Kabul. Amirs, ousted from their throne by a more powerful rival or by invasion, inevitably sought refuge beyond the Hindu Kush. During the civil war between Amir Sher 'Ali Khan and the family of

his elder brother, Muhammad Afzal Khan [1862-1868], it was the decision of the Afghan governor of Balkh to change sides, coupled with the support of the local amirs, which tipped the balance in favour of Sher 'Ali Khan and forced the Afzalids into exile in Samarkand. In 1868, it was the refusal of the Wali of Maimana to surrender to 'Abd al-Rahman Khan which bought Sher 'Ali the necessary time to secure Qandahar and march on Kabul. It was the governors and people of Badakhshan and Balkh who, in 1880, welcomed 'Abd al-Rahman Khan from his exile, thus providing the Sardar with a strong power base from which he was able to successfully persuade the British authorities in Kabul to recognise him as Amir of Afghanistan over the heads of Sher 'Ali Khan's sons who had by far the strongest claim to Dost Muhammad Khan's throne.

The reign of Amir 'Abd al-Rahman Khan [1880-1901] is rightly regarded by scholars as the most important of any Afghan Amir of the century, though, as I have argued in this work, for all the wrong reasons. His reign is also crucial in the long, drawn out battle for supremacy in Balkh, for it was under this Amir that the last vestiges of Chingizid rule was exterminated. In pursuit of his policy of centralisation of power, modelled on the government of his life-long hero, Peter the Great of Russia, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan eradicated all forms of autonomous or devolved governmental systems, not just in Afghan Turkistan, but throughout Afghanistan. Consequently, since it was during the reign of this Amir that the Mingid dynasty of Maimana and, indeed, all the other amirid dynasties of Lesser Turkistan, was finally brought to an end, the death of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan in 1901 provides a natural terminus for this work.

Though the reign of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan was an unmitigated disaster for the ordinary citizen of his country, as far as Britain was concerned, there was every reason for self-congratulation, for by the end of his reign Calcutta could 'justly' claim to have achieved its long-standing goal of an enlarged, unified and pro-British Afghanistan. According to the British version of events (hotly disputed by the Amir himself), they had succeeded in placing 'Abd al-Rahman Khan on the throne and wedding his fortunes to their own. In return, the Amir had ceded control of Afghanistan's foreign relations to Britain. During his reign, Russia and Britain jointly agreed to demarcate the northern border of Afghanistan on the Amu Darya and the Amir's government, chronically corrupt, inefficient and inept was

more or less totally reliant on British rupees and munitions to stay in power and suppress frequent rebellions.

The reign of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan is another of those eras of Afghanistan's history which, though having been been much discussed, is still permeated with the imperial historical perspective. One of the consequences of British policy during the reign of Amir 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, and one which has serious implications for objective scholarship, was that Britain kept Afghanistan in political and ideological quarantine. No representative of a 'western' or potentially hostile power was allowed to enter the country without specific permission and only then after they had undergone security clearance by the authorities in Calcutta or London. In the case of British citizens and officials who visited the country, anything which they sought to publish about their experiences was subject to the most rigorous censorship and anything deemed to be harmful to British interests was excised. Other works, considered as either too outspoken or independently-minded, were suppressed and filed away as 'strictly confidential', thus ensuring that only the officially-approved version of events reached the general public.

Such a policy was not difficult to implement for, after all, these erstwhile authors were invariably employees of one or other branch of the Indian administration and did not wish to risk their career or blot their copybooks. Britain's virtual monopoly on what was, or was not, published about 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's government put its government in the position to manipulate and exploit public opinion about the state of affairs in the country for its own ends. To make matters worse, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, never one to pass over the opportunity for self-glorification and self-promotion, made sure that his role as saviour of India's Northern Frontier was immortalised with the publication of the English version of his autobiography (Sultan Muhammad Khan 1900) which is still the stock-in-trade of the Neo-Great-Gamers of our generation.

Whilst published works reinforced, supported and endorsed Britain's publicly-proclaimed 'policy success,' a small coterie of senior ministers and civil servants who had access to the *wakil,* or native agents', reports from Kabul, Qandahar and various other cities in and around Afghanistan, were acutely aware that the reality of the Amir's reign was the opposite of the public facade. Behind the bland histories, self-justifying biographies and press releases, there are the voluminous, Political and Secret Department Annual Files in which one

can discover the extent to which the British government managed to pull the wool over the eyes of both the general public and scholars. Amongst other things, these files reveal that from early on in the Amir's reign, certain senior government officials and advisers were deeply concerned at 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's tyrannical proceedings. Indeed, some senior advisors, General Roberts of Qandahar amongst them, urged the administration to depose the Amir. In the end, however, the authorities were not prepared to risk the *status quo* 'merely' for humanitarian considerations. In this respect, nothing much has changed over the last hundred years or so.

The promotion of the Amir as the great reformer who created the framework of 'modern' political institutions in Afghanistan is probably the most lasting legacy of the imperial media manipulation. The P&S records, again, provide considerable evidence to support the claim that bureaucratic departments existed in name only and even senior officials were powerless to do the least thing without the Amir's specific approval. By the middle of 1888, provincial administration (with the exception of Sardar Ishaq Khan's in Balkh which paid only nominal allegiance to Kabul and was fated to suffer severely later the same year as a consequence) had virtually ground to a halt. Governors of the remotest provinces were obliged to refer even the smallest item of business to Kabul for the Amir's signature or run the risk of disgrace or execution.

The India Office Records not only provide new insights into the real state of affairs in respect of the Amir's government, but also reveal the true state of the Amir's mental and physical health. Up until recently it has been assumed by both Afghan and western scholars that 'Abd al-Rahman Khan suffered from occasional bouts of 'gout' which gave him occasional pain and discomfort in his legs and arms. This diagnosis, however, can be dismissed for we now know that for much of his reign 'Abd al-Rahman Khan suffered from one or more acute and chronic diseases which caused him not just prolonged and exquisite physical suffering, but affected his sanity to such an extent that, had the truth been known, he would have doubtless been overthrown or forced to abdicate his throne. Furthermore, we know that British officials were well aware of the seriousness of the Amir's illness as early as 1885, though they probably did not realise that 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's state of health was affecting his mind.

This crippling illness was at least partly responsible for 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's paranoid, autocratic and despotic style of

government. Unfortunately, true to form, Britain, decided that rather than use her overwhelming political, economic, and financial influence to require the Amir to pay some attention to humanitarian issues, she would sweep the whole problem discretely under the carpet. The reason for this was an open secret amongst the senior ranks of officials in Calcutta and London. Had the true magnitude of the Amir's atrocities been known, the public outcry that would have ensued might well have have brought down the government or, at the very least, obliged the administration to do a hasty about-turn. Indeed, Britain could well have been forced to undertake a further, costly intervention in Afghanistan that might have resulted in the permanent annexation of the southern parts of the country to the Indian Empire.

Finally, however, even Calcutta was forced into taking some action, following the defeat of Sardar Ishaq Khan in 1888 and the purges which followed. By the spring of 1889, news of the 'Turkistan Atrocities' began to filter across the Amu Darya into Russian Turkistan and was duly passed down the line to St. Petersburg. The Russian government, seizing the propaganda opportunity with both hands, expressed its deep concern to the British. Given Russia's own human rights record in Central Asia, it was very much a case of the pot calling the kettle black.

Queen Victoria, having read the dispatches from the Russian capital, intervened and expressed her anxiety that Britain appeared to be supporting such a brutal regime. The Viceroy was, therefore, requested to obtain accurate information from inside the country and when it was evident that the situation was far worse than even the Russian government was claiming, Calcutta was forced to address a mild rebuke to the Amir. However, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's reply dismissed such reports outright, claiming they were rumours put about by Russian agents and enemies of state.

Having done his job, the Viceroy took the matter no further, instead he convinced himself that the Amir had adopted a more humanitarian policy towards the population of Afghanistan. Since, in reality, the killings continued very much as they had before, British officials eventually created a myth to justify the mayhem, convincing themselves, and the world at large, that the Amir's 'firm' and 'decisive' rule was actually beneficial for the peoples of Afghanistan. Such an approach may seem peculiar, but it has to be borne in mind that it was the same nation and generation that convinced itself that 'caning maketh man' and that castor oil was a panacea.

The true story of the years of terror runs like a stream of crimson through two decades of news letters issuing from the native agents in Kabul, Qandahar, Herat and Turkistan. The secret history of what a senior British official termed the 'Reign of Terror' contained within these India Office diaries reveals the extent to which Britain's foreign policy 'success' was achieved only at the price of the blood of the peoples over whom the Amir wielded absolute and untrammelled power. During the course of twenty-one years, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan probably had as many as 100,000 persons judicially executed, whilst hundreds of thousands more perished from hunger, forced migrations, epidemics, or died as a result of the numerous campaigns which the Amir conducted against various ethnic, tribal and sectarian interests. The fear that the Amir's atrocities engendered was a shadow which fell across the lives of everyone in Afghanistan. From the heir apparent to the water-carrier no-one was exempt from what the Kabulis called the 'Power that Walks in Darkness.'

The down-playing of this unpleasant aspect of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's reign is a tradition which has been maintained by scholars over the last hundred years, probably because the nature and extent of the atrocities committed throughout the Amir's reign do not fit easily into the conventional view of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan as the 'Founder of Modern Afghanistan.' Yet it is impossible to properly evaluate his reign without addressing head-on this whole, sordid issue. It is like writing a history of the Stalinist era of the USSR, without any references to the purges, the gulags, collectivisation, the forcible relocation of ethnic groups or the decimation of the Soviet intelligentsia which was the by-product of his policies, or discussing Germany's Third Reich whilst ignoring the Holocaust. Whilst the Amir's 'achievements' are constantly reworked and expanded by successive generations of academics and journalists, for the peoples of Afghanistan, from the Ishaqzai tribesmen of Badghis province, to the descendants of the amirid dynasties of Lesser Turkistan, from the tribal chiefs of Nuristan, to 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's own descendants, it is the atrocities which dominate the folk memories which have survived from this era. Issues deemed of paramount importance to western scholars and British politicians, such as the Panjdeh Crisis, the Frontier demarcation, etc., have long been forgotten. It is not just that the ordinary citizens of Afghanistan found themselves the sacrificial goat in a predominantly European game of *buzkashi*, it is impossible for us to obtain a proper perspective on the present, tragic,

bloodshed in Kabul without being aware of how deeply rooted is the bitterness which was 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's 'greatest' legacy to Afghanistan.

Hence, I have taken my life into my hands (perhaps literally) and in Chapter X tried to address an issue which I am acutely aware still arouses strong emotions both inside and outside Afghanistan. I have endeavoured to do this difficult task in as an objective a manner as possible, given the gruesome nature of the subject matter. Since this study is built around the fate of the province of Balkh, the 'Reign of Terror' is examined primarily in relation to Afghan Turkistan and, specifically, the period immediately after the defeat of Sardar Ishaq Khan's rebellion in 1888. I have felt it important, however, for the sake of balance, to place the 'Turkistan Atrocities' in a wider, national context. In doing so, the suffering of the people of Balkh, terrible as they were, are seen not as unique or an aberration, but 'merely' the latest in a series of brutal purges which affected all the peoples of Afghanistan to one degree of another. For the Amir conducted a number of very similar repressions in many parts of the country during his reign, repressions which showed no regard for race, language or creed.

There is, therefore, little justification, for any one ethnic group to claim that they had been singled out by 'Abd al-Rahman Khan. To do so is to not just to do themselves and their fellow-countrymen a disservice, but is pointless in the extreme. After all, what use is it to indulge in gruesome comparisons, claiming that one's own wound is longer, deeper or more painful than one's neighbour or trying to prove one's point by reopening the scar tissue to see who bleeds more copiously. Not that there is any justification either, for following the British example and simply bury one's head in the sand, pretending that such things never happened. Far better for all concerned, and for the good of the nation as a whole, for neighbours to bind each others wounds and thus stem the haemorrhage once and for all.

'Abd al-Rahman Khan was a master of 'Divide and Rule', playing the racial and sectarian cards again and again for his own ends in total disregard of what he would bequeath his country. By the time of his death in 1901, the races of Afghanistan, who had over the millennia established a reasonable *modus vivendi* with their neighbours in a region which, historically, is highly multi-ethnic, had become alienated not just one from the other but, in many cases, been forcibly displaced from their ancestral lands and dumped down in environments that

were both alien and hostile. Their sufferings produced a lasting distrust, even aversion, to centralised government, its idiosyncratic ordinances and, in particular, its local representatives, nearly all of whom come from distant parts of Afghanistan and represented different cultures. Indeed, over the course of the last hundred years there have been numerous cases of governors in various provinces of Afghanistan resorting to interpreters in order to communicate with the people they ruled. It is not surprising, therefore, that tribes and ethnic groups who had been subject to such persecution and dislocation became insular, isolationist and ethnocentric. Given the appalling sufferings they had endured, it was the only way to preserve what was left of their decimated culture, language and traditions.

In one way, to end the present work with the death of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan is to end with anticlimax and pathos, for our history breaks off at a time when Afghanistan was at one of the lowest and saddest points in its history. I make no apology for this, for this study is about the demise of the 'Ancient Supremacy' and it would be impertinent to try and manufacture a happy ending *à la* Barbara Cartland. By 1901, Afghan Turkistan, as the wilayat of Balkh was called by this time, was but a shadow of what it had been under Nazr Muhammad Khan and the Tuqay-Timurids.Successive waves of invasion, pillage and war combined with swingeing taxation and a series of decimating plagues had brought the province to its knees and its population to the brink of destitution. 'Abd al-Rahman Khan had closed the north and north-western frontiers to trade with disastrous consequences, for the region had traditionally sold its grain surplus and other produce such as leather, karakul and cattle, to Russian Turkistan, Panjdeh, Khiva and Merv. In the following century, following the emergence of Soviet power, even the right to exploit the waters of the Amu Darya for irrigation was denied the people living on the Afghan side of the frontier. Neither was the discovery of huge gas reserves near Shibarghan turned to the benefit of the peoples of the region, nor indeed, for the country as a whole.

There is one further issue which does not seem to have been highlighted in most scholarly works on this era. During the course of the formation of Afghanistan and the redrawing of the map of Central Asia to suit European requirements, a great deal of the material culture of the region was irrecoverably lost. Indeed, the very subject matter of this work, namely, the decline and fall of the amirid dynasties of Balkh, in itself, is sufficient evidence to justify this claim.

Other examples of this cultural impoverishment include: the virtual eradication of the ancient Kafir religion, along with its temples and unique wood carving; the exodus of other religious minorities, such as the Armenians, Hindus and Jews, from Afghanistan precipitated by discriminatory legislation and the changes in their *dhimmi*, or protected religious minority, status in violation of Islamic law. Many of their religious buildings, such as the Armenian Church in Kabul and the synagogues of Maimana, Balkh and Herat, were either destroyed or fell down through neglect. Probably the most appalling act of cultural vandalism in the last century, however, was perpetrated not by Afghans but by British engineers who, in 1885, demolished the Timurid *mussala* of Gauhar Shad in Herat.

In the present century, many of the old citadels of the Balkh appanage, which were physical reminders of the 'Ancient Supremacy' and some of which certainly dated back to the Bronze Age, were 'modernised'. The old, covered bazaars, too, were destroyed. In Maimana's case, the Timurid(?) bastion(s) of the Mingid citadel along with the shrine of Saif al-Muluk was demolished as part of a redevelopment programme and replaced by a faceless tea house and a cinema showing turgid Indian films in a language none of the viewers understand.

Even despite such irredeemable losses to Central Asia's material culture, not everything was destroyed, but the present study has brought home to me how little, in fact, is actually known about social and artistic developments in the region during the epoch of European imperialism. Much of Western scholarship has concentrated either on the cultural heritage of the pre-Durrani period or the study of modern social, anthropological or artistic trends and the period covered by this book has tended to fall between two stools. In this context, the gaps in our knowledge are profound. How little do we know about the social or internal, political structure of, say, the Kafir or Chahar Aimaq tribes? We know virtually nothing about the role played by Central Asian Sufi Orders and their *pir*s in resisting both internal and external imperialism. Nor are we at all well informed about theological and philosophical developments in Central Asia during the heyday of Western imperialism and how the various religious leaders, whether Sufi, Sunni or Shi'i, responded theologically to the so-called 'Christian' domination of a region which, since the days of the Arab conquest, had been one of the great heart lands of Sunni Islam. Or what about the influence of sectarian-millennialist movements such as Babism and the Ahmadiyya? How profoundly ignorant we are of the

music, poetry, calligraphy and manuscript illumination of this age, or of developments in religious, vernacular and public architecture.

From the evidence of my own eyes, I cannot subscribe to the generally-held view of western scholars that all significant architectural, artistic and literary activities ceased with the collapse of the Safawid, Mughal and Timurid empires. There is evidence to show that a strong tradition of manuscript illumination, in the Timurid style, was maintained at least in the Shibarghan area well into the nineteenth century. A number of fine calligraphers, including a grandson of Ishan Saiyid Uraq, were working in Mazar-i Sharif and Balkh at the turn of the present century. Ghulam Muhammad Mosawar b. 'Abd al-Baqi Mingbashi of Maimana (b. 1873) was not just Court artist to Amir Habibullah, but was undoubtedly one of the most eminent artists of Central Asia. Amongst other things, he was one of the first citizens of Afghanistan to study European art at first hand.

There are scores of religious and private buildings on either side of the Amu Darya, dating from probably the late eighteenth century to the early twentieth century, which boast the most exquisitely carved pillars and painted (lacquered?) ceilings. Yet no art historian, to my knowledge, has undertaken a study of these wonderful expressions of vernacular architecture. The court robes and banners of the Turkman and Uzbek Khans and amirs bear silent but eloquent testimony to the fact that the last century was one of the great eras of Central Asian embroidery, whilst the 'collectability' of Turkman carpets of the same period gives the lie to the nineteenth-century European stereotype of the Turkman as ruthless, slave-trading barbarians.

Undoubtedly there will be those who will criticise the somewhat fragmentary nature of parts of this narrative, but such is the nature of the sources available to me that it would have been difficult to approach this subject in any other manner. As I have pointed out above, virtually nothing has been written on 'internal' and 'regional' developments in Afghanistan and Central Asia during the period of the 'Great Game'. I have considered it important, therefore, to publish as much information as possible in the hope that other scholars, more erudite and better qualified than myself, will be stimulated to pursue further particular lines of enquiry which I have only been able to touch on in the present study.

In order not to make the work even more voluminous (as well as to keep down the cost of publication) I have assumed that the reader is familiar with certain events in Central Asian and Afghan history, such

as the First and Second Anglo-Afghan Wars, which are well documented. Such events are featured only when their inclusion is important for continuity or context, or when the sources throw new light on these particular incidents. In order to avoid falling into the trap of those traditional historians whom I have been so harsh on above, I have given equal weight to 'internal' developments in Balkh as to the various battles between government forces and the 'Turkistanis'. Above all, I have endeavoured to write the book in as readable a narrative style as is possible, given the complexity of the subject matter. I leave it to the reader to judge whether I have succeeded in any, or all, of these aims.

*On 'Turkistan', 'Afghan Turkistan', 'Lesser Turkistan', etc.*

During the Durrani epoch of Balkh's long history, a variety of different designations were used by indigenous and European sources to describe the region. In the middle of the eighteenth century Persian sources at the Afghan Court tended to refer to the wilayat by the usual 'southerner' designation of 'Turkistan' (i.e. 'The Land of the Turks') whilst references to 'Balkh' could mean either the city or the whole province. When British and European sources began to be interested in the region, during the first half of the nineteenth century, they followed the southern tradition and favoured the term 'Turkistan', though some authors preferred the mediaeval name, 'Tatary'.

As the century unfolded and as a consequence of British promotion of a Greater Afghanistan, officials became increasingly uncomfortable about the designation 'Turkistan.' For not only could 'Turkistan' be deemed, historically, to include the countries on both sides of the Amu Darya, thus giving credence to Russian claims that Maimana and other city-states of the Chahar Wilayat ought not to be considered as part of Afghanistan, but it implied that sovereignty over the Balkh appanage lay not with the Afghans but with the 'Turks', that is, the Uzbeks and, to a lesser extent, the Turkmans.

Eventually, in 1869, Sir Henry Rawlinson in his famous *Memorandum on the Frontier of Afghanistan*, recommended that for political purpose Britain should no longer use the term 'Turkistan' but 'Afghan Turkistan'. Following this recommendation, new maps of Afghanistan were published and from this point onwards the term

'Afghan Turkistan' was adopted as the official designation of the appanage in all official communications and publications. As a corollary, the territory which lay north of the Oxus was referred to as Russian Turkistan since, from 1868 onwards, the Amir of Bukhara was a feudatory of the Tsar.

Despite this change, however, British native *wakil*s, news writers and other secret agents still used the traditional and vernacular terminology and more often than not refer to it as 'Turkistan' or 'the province (*wilayat*) of Balkh'. To make matters even more confusing, the Amirs of Afghanistan and officials in Kabul tended to use these more familiar terms too. Moreover, Katib and other official historians of the Afghan Court writing at the beginning of this century, sometimes refer to the appanage as 'Lesser Turkistan'. Finally, Sir Henry Rawlinson in his memorandum suggested, as an alternative, the use of 'Cis Oxus Territory'; though this term is only rarely used in official correspondence and was quickly dropped, presumably because it was too much of a mouthful and it was more or less impossible to translate into Pushtu or Dari.

I have followed McChesney (1991) in translating the term *wilayat-i Balkh* as 'appanage of Balkh', especially in the earlier chapters when Afghan power was confined to south of the Hindu Kush and the region was still part of the Chingizid Khanate of Bukhara. On occasions I have used the terms 'the province of Balkh' and 'Balkh province' as synonyms. In the later chapters of the work, when the wilayat, to all intents and purposes, was partitioned between two, rival, states, I have employed the designation 'Lesser Turkistan', to designate the whole region of the former appanage of Balkh as it relates to its amirid rulers and the indigenous population. 'Afghan Turkistan' refers to that part of the former appanage which, at that point in time, was under the authority of the Afghan governor in Balkh and where district governors and other senior officials were appointed by the Amir in Kabul or the Afghan governor of Balkh. 'Lesser Turkistan', therefore, encompasses a somewhat wider area than 'Afghan Turkistan,' since the former would include semi-independent regions, such as Maimana, Panjdeh, etc. where the Afghan writ did not run. In a few cases, for stylistic purposes, I have used 'Cis Oxus' as a synonym of Lesser Turkistan. 'Balkh district' is used to differentiate the local, district government of Balkh from the whole wilayat.

As a general rule, the Afghan army stationed in Afghan Turkistan is referred to as the Balkh army, since to designate central

government garrisons and forces the 'Turkistan Army', as both British and Persian sources tend to do, is extremely confusing. The regular Afghanistan army in the province consisted of troops recruited more or less exclusively from Kabul, Qandahar, Herat and Jalalabad with only a very few regiments, mostly irregular cavalry, recruited from the indigenous population of Afghan Turkistan. In order, therefore, to distinguish between Afghan government forces and those of the native, amirid rulers of the province, I have decided, with some reluctance, to use the rather cumbersome terms 'Turkistani' and 'Turkistanian'. Both terms can be justified on the basis that they appear frequently in contemporary Persian sources, the *wakil* diaries and even in official communications between the British and Afghan government. Unfortunately, in the present day, the use of these terms is open to considerable misunderstanding and misrepresentation, since they are used in quite a different sense by ultra-nationalist and secessionist groups (mainly Diaspora communities in Turkey, Pakistan, Europe and America), who advocate a kind of Central Asian Panturkism. I would like to stress, therefore, that by adopting these terms I am using them exclusively in the nineteenth-century sense, and their adoption in no way implies support for, or bias towards, these modern nationalists.

In this respect, it is worth noting that 'Turkistan' is not an indigenous name, but was originally a term adopted by 'outsiders' and southerners to describe the appanage. Nor was, or is, the wilayat of Balkh, the sort of mono-cultural and mono-linguistic bloc which this term implies. Apart from Uzbek, Turkman and a few smaller Turkic communities of Kazakh, Uyghur, etc., the province of Balkh has always included, and still does, a sizable minority of Persian-speaking peoples (*farsiwans*, Tajiks, Hazaras and Aimaqs mainly) as well as religious minorities (Jews and Hindus), all of whom played their part in the battle for Balkh. There was a small Pushtu-speaking population in Badghis, Balkh and Aqcha as early as the third decade of the eighteenth century, and probably before. There is strong evidence that many of the long-established Afghan families (including the descendants of the original Afghan garrison left in Balkh and Aqcha by Ahmad Shah Durrani) were just as opposed to Muhammadzai annexation of the wilayat as the Uzbeks, Aimaqs, Hazaras, Turkmans, etc. Thus to portray the struggle between the Afghan Amirs and the peoples of Lesser Turkistan as a battle for Uzbek national self-determination is not just ethnologically inaccurate, it is almost certainly

an anachronism. It is to fall into the trap, regrettably so prevalent in the post-colonial world, of confusing nationality and citizenship with ethnicity.

*Sources and Their Evaluation*

This book is the outcome of some sixteen years of research. The project began in the summer of 1977, when I was appointed as Fellow of the British Institute of Afghan Studies (now the Society of South Asian Studies) to study popular religious culture in northern Afghanistan. Unfortunately, within a matter of months after commencing the project, the political situation in Afghanistan deteriorated to such an extent that it became more and more difficult to obtain official permission for field work north of the Hindu Kush. The end came in July of 1978, a few months after the Taraki *putsch*, when a local teacher near Maimana, who had helped with the research and opened his home to me, was briefly detained and questioned by the authorities in Faryab. Though my work was officially sanctioned by the government in Kabul, the unco-operative attitude of the local administration, coupled with concern that people I interviewed were at risk of arrest, or even worse, forced me to return to Kabul with very little prospect of ever returning. By the summer of that year, I had made four separate field trips to Balkh and Faryab. All told, during 1977 and 1978, I spent a total of some three or four months in Northern Afghanistan. I had previously been to the area (Bamiyan, Balkh and Samangan) during my time as a student in Kabul university (1975-76).

In the course of the field work, I visited a number of important shrines in Samangan, Balkh and Faryab provinces and attended the *janda bala*, or pole-raising, ceremony at the shrine of 'Ali b. Abi Talib in Mazar-i Sharif at the Persian New Year festival of *Nauroz* (21 March 1978). During the spring and summer of 1978, I travelled extensively through the district (*wulswali*) of Gurziwan and the mountains and valleys of the Tir Band-i Turkistan which lie between the Seven Valleys (Haft Darra) of Gurziwan and the northern watershed of the Murghab river. At the same time, I interviewed a number of elders (*rish safed*; *aqsaqal*), village heads (*qariyadar sahib*) local

historians, teachers and mullahs, particularly in Maimana and Gurziwan.

In 1988, the Society for South Asian Studies kindly awarded me a travel grant to conduct a number of interviews amongst the refugee community of Peshawar and, more recently (1993, 1994), I have been fortunate (some may say, mad) enough to have returned to Afghanistan. Relevant material from my most recent visits, particularly a series of interviews with Saiyid Mohai al-Din Gauhari, great-grandson of Ishan Saiyid Uraq, has been incorporated into the work. Finally, a number of exiles from northern Afghanistan living in the USA and Britain have provided me with a useful means for cross-checking certain facts.

On my return to Britain in 1981, my research continued on a part-time basis, mainly in the India Office Library and the Political and Secret Department files (L/P&S) in particular. The wealth of information contained in these records eventually led me to work my way consecutively through every volume of the L/P&S/5, 7, and 9 series, starting from 1830 and ending at the death of Amir 'Abd al-Rahman Khan in 1901. Every reference to events in Afghan Turkistan that could be found in the myriad of secret agents' reports, *wakil* diaries, military and intelligence memoranda, field surveys, etc., was recorded and subsequently sorted on a year-by-year basis. In addition I have used the following series of India Office Records: Proceedings (P); Military (L/P&S/17); Memoranda (L/P&S/18); European Manuscripts (MSS Eur); Political and Secret Department Library (L/P&S/19, 20) and what, in the 1980s, was referred to as *Miscellaneous* and *Additional Records* of the L/P&S/20 series (some of these records have been recently recatalogued).

This work is based primarily, though not exclusively, on the information contained in the original *wakil* diaries and agents' reports of these L/P&S series, records which still remain one of the most important primary source for the history of Central Asia in the last century. Unfortunately, financial and family constraints meant that I was unable to pursue my research in the National Archives in Delhi, though I have used some of the grants generously awarded for the research by the British Academy and the Society for South Asian Studies, to commission research in the National Archives and cover the cost of reproduction of specific records and files in Delhi.

A number of points need to be made regarding the sources in the Political and Secret Department collection in the India Office Library.

Scholars who have used these records in the past have tended to rely on the more easily-accessible and well-catalogued *Memoranda* Series (L/P&S/18) and other historical summaries which the P&S department began to produce from the 1860s onwards. Another source commonly used is monthly précis of events referred to as the *Trans-Frontier Journal* or *Journal of Political Events on the W. and N.W. Frontier*. Starting from about the middle of the 1870s, the *TFJ* series was inaugurated by the Political and Secret Department in response to the ever-increasing volume of intelligence items arriving on a monthly basis not just from news writers in Kabul, Qandahar, Herat and Mashhad but also from political officers stationed in Peshawar, Baluchistan, Gilgit, etc. They were specifically designed to provide senior members of the administration with the information they needed without wading through scores of individual reports.

In respect of the *Memoranda*, *TFJ*, *Epitome*, and similar précis series, the Indian and British governments tended to treat them as primary sources and whenever a senior member of the administration required information on Central Asia, Afghanistan, the Frontier issue, etc., it was to these records that they turned. With one notable notable exception (Yapp 1980), scholars have tended to adopt the same view of the *Memoranda* series. These compilations, however, need to be treated with care for sometimes they distort the information which is contained in the reports of individual *wakil*s and agents. The *Memoranda*, *Epitome*s, *Summaries* and such like histories, were compiled in India by civil servants who had no first-hand knowledge of the region they were writing about. This lack of 'hands-on' experience is at its most evident in their transliterations of personal and geographical names which are frequently unrecognisable.

More subtly the sheer volume of intelligence reports, as well as the Political & Secret Department's method of filing individual records by date rather than by subject, deterred these desk historians from sifting through the welter of original reports in anything like a systematic manner. This was especially so since they were usually working against very tight deadlines. Consequently, the writer took short cuts and relied heavily on the previous generation of *Memoranda*, *Epitome*s, etc., and only made selective forays into the original diaries. Inevitably they tended to regurgitate any misinterpretations or distortion of the original *wakil* diary or agent's report that were latent in these earlier *Memoranda*.

Furthermore, there is some evidence to suggest that some civil servants when they were commissioned to write a historical memoranda took the opportunity afforded by the commission to prefer sources which agreed with their point of view. There was also a tendency to bend with the prevailing political wind, or find facts which endorsed the known views or political outlook of departmental superiors, the Viceroy, etc. Uncomfortable facts which went against the grain were sometimes omitted, *wakil* diaries quoted selectively or paraphrased in such as way as to reinterpret the information.

The *TFJ* series have a better claim to accuracy since they were composed a matter of weeks after reports of events reached India. However, the *TFJ* suffer from similar problems to the *Memoranda* series, though to a much lesser degree. They are an excellent starting point for scholars, but it is essential to avoid the temptation to treat either *Memoranda*, *Epitomes*, etc, or the *TFJ* as pristine, primary sources and it is necessary to refer backwards to the original *wakil* diaries to obtain the real picture.

During the formative period of British relations with Afghanistan up to the middle of the 1850s, officials in Calcutta gave precedence to certain well-known authorities often to the exclusion of others. Mountstuart Elphinstone (1809) and Alexander Burnes (1834; 1843; *Political, Geographical and Commercial Reports and Papers, 1835-37*), in particular, were held in high esteem. Yet however remarkable Elphinstone's work was, both his published book, *Account of the Kingdom of Caboul* and the secret reports on his mission filed in the P&S records, rely heavily on intelligence acquired during a few short week's residence in Peshawar. Elphinstone himself never set foot on the other side of the Khyber, let alone in Kabul, Herat, Qandahar or Balkh.

In the case of Burnes, there is more reason to justify the claim that he was an 'authority'; after all, he spent a considerable amount of time living and travelling in Afghanistan and Turkistan. However, when one compares his information with other contemporary sources, the faith which scholars have placed in Burnes, is shown to be somewhat misplaced. Major D'Arcy Todd, a Royal Engineer, who at the time of Burnes' famous journey to Bukhara was attached to the British Embassy in Tehran, wrote a scathing critique of Burnes' *Military Memoir* and cast serious doubt on his fellow-officer's credibility and conclusions. Todd accused Burnes of plagiarising earlier sources for his information and dismissed what military intelligence he had

acquired during his travels as being so vague as to be useless. Todd's critique, though, was discretely filed away and quickly forgotten. After all, it would have been extremely embarrassing if such observations had been made public, especially when the individual being criticised had recently been awarded the Royal Geographical Society's prestigious Gold Medal for his 'pioneering' exploits and had been wined and dined by the cream of London Society, including government ministers and royalty!

Later in the century, the writings of Ferrier (1857;1858) and Vambery (1863;1873) were elevated to a similar cult status and were, indeed still are, quoted extensively. Once again, contemporary reports and news letters from native agents in the L/P&S/5 series indicate that such trust in these authorities is misplaced. Indeed, in Ferrier's case, it is very doubtful whether he ever travelled further north than Herat.

Whilst certain individuals' were basking in the glow of fame and popularity, others were inexplicably ignored. By far the most important account of the state of Afghanistan prior to Moorcroft's travels of 1824-25 was the survey conducted, ironically at the behest of the East India Company, by Ghulam Sarwar [1793-95]. Utilising Afghan government archives and backing up his research with an extended residence in what was then known as the Kingdom of Kabul, Ghulam Sarwar's report is hardly mentioned by his successors and by the time of the First Anglo-Afghan War it seems to have been completely forgotten. Had his report been more widely known, some of the issues regarding the northern frontier of Afghanistan might have been seen in quite a different perspective. But then, as I have already pointed out, officers like Pottinger, Lord, Todd and Burnes had their own particular agendas in this regard and Ghulam Sarwar's survey would have been a very large fly in the ointment.

As far as European exploration is concerned, Edward Stirling, William Moorcroft, Major Taylor, Lewis Pelly, and Carl Ludwig Griesbach, to name but a few, were generally neglected. A number of major surveys by native agents also suffered from this arbitrary selectivity. We have already mentioned Ghulam Sarwar's report at the end of the eighteenth century. In the following century, the surveys of Mir Izzat Ullah, *Travels in Central Asia,* 1812-13 (finally published in 1871) and Munshi Faiz Bakhsh's travels in Afghanistan and Central Asia from 1865 to 1872 suffered a similar fate.

After all that has been said about the *Memoranda* series, I am aware that the *wakil* diaries and native agents' reports in L/P&S/5,7, 9 are themselves translations of documents written in Persian, Urdu, Hindustani, etc., the originals of which are not available in the India Office in London. Even if they were, it would take another decade to work through these documents and compare them with their English translations. Fortunately, the English versions of *wakil* reports were thoroughly checked against the original prior to circulation to officials, though there are occasional obscurities in the English text (mainly geographical and proper names) which suggests certain imperfections in the translation.

It is well known that British officials tended to express considerable irritation at the quality of information that native agents' and successive Kabul *wakil*s provided (for a list of the *wakil*s and native agents in Kabul see, Hall, 16, 56). Anyone ploughing through the *wakil* diaries every so often will come across irate and quite undiplomatic notes scribbled in the margins. Though there were occasions when such comments were justified, particularly after the replacing of Mirza 'Ataullah Khan [1885-1891], as the Kabul news writer, the criticism of the native *wakil*s is, in my judgment, much overstated and this attitude is more a reflection of the colonial prejudice that 'natives' could not be trusted to pass on information accurately without exaggeration or embellishment, than an objective assessment of the quality of intelligence these individuals provided. It is important to bear in mind that part of the administration's tetchiness in this matter is due, to some degree at least, to the failure of successive Indian administrations to persuade the Amirs of Afghanistan to allow British officers to be stationed in strategic places around Afghanistan.

The work of a native news writer in Afghanistan was not an easy one. The Afghan administration, especially under the paranoiac regime of Amir 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, tried its best to prevent the *wakil*s acquiring any information other than that which issued from official sources. The house where the agent lived in Kabul, for example, was frequently closely watched. Any Afghan visiting the residence, or found to be passing on information, risked imprisonment and even death.

Successive Amirs tried to bribe the news writers, or otherwise influence the contents of their reports, with varying degrees of success. Dost Muhammad Khan was a master of what we would call nowadays, disinformation. On one occasion, for example, the Amir's

rumour mill was so successful that Calcutta was convinced that a Persian army had arrived before Herat when, in fact, no Qajar troops had crossed the frontier. During the 'Turkistan Atrocities' of 1888-91, the mayor (*kotwal*) of Kabul, Parwana Khan, resorted to a crude form of psychological warfare. He caused the gallows on which the Turkistan prisoners were being brutally put to death to be erected on the parade ground within full view of the news writer's house, thus forcing the agency servants not just to witness the executions but to carry on their duties with the screams of the dying echoing in their ears. When all else failed, the *dak*, or courier, could always be waylaid en route to Peshawar, the contents of the diplomatic pouch read or destroyed and the blame for the 'outrage' attributed to local tribesman beyond the reach of the Amir's writ.

Despite these considerations far too much has been made of the restrictions the native news writers had to face. By and large the *wakil*s and other native secret agents, many of whom risked their lives to keep the British government informed of events beyond the Khyber, did an extraordinary job and far more credit should be given to them for working in circumstances which any British officer would have found intolerable. When one compares the information about events in Afghanistan which issued from the native *wakil*s, local agents, spies, etc. with the same incidents as recorded by Persian histories such as Katib's *Siraj al-Tawarikh*, Khafi's *Padshahan-i Muta'akhirin-i Afghanistan* or the accounts of European explorers and surveyors, it is remarkable how accurate the *wakil* diaries are even in the fine detail.

From the end of the First Anglo-Afghan War in 1842, until the Anglo-Afghan Treaty of 1855, intelligence from Afghanistan was acquired in a very *ad hoc* and unsatisfactory way. A number of pro-British Afghans in Kabul, Jalalabad and Qandahar, continued to send irregular reports of events in the country. Sometimes these reports contain intelligence which is, to say the least, of dubious authenticity. However, since these secret agents worked in complete ignorance of each other, by comparing individual letters from different news writers, one is able to make reasonable judgments about the authenticity of individual items. From 1856 the diaries of the official *wakil*s can usually be cross-checked with intelligence which continued to be provided by these clandestine sources. Even though there was an official native agent in Kabul, the British intelligence service continued to recruit local people as unofficial news writers (including, at one

point, the Wali of Maimana himself) and commission secret exploration of the region, in order to establish independent sources of information. The existence of these 'stringers' and spies is thus extremely useful as a control. Futhermore, the British *wakil* in Mashhad and the Embassy in Tehran reported news of events in Afghanistan, especially in Herat, Badghis and Afghan Turkistan. Thus the L/P&S/9 series provides a further source of comparison and information.

Ironically, the series of reports which are consistently the most inaccurate and untrustworthy is the *Peshawar Confidential Diary* (PCD) that commenced in the middle of the 1870s. Compiled under the direct supervision of the British Political Officer stationed in this outpost of the Raj, the *PCD*s were based on information gleaned from merchants coming down the Khyber and general bazaar sources. As such, the P*CD* was far more guilty of reporting what was derogatorily referred to as 'bazaar gossip' than the Kabul *wakil*. Not surprisingly, the *PCD* frequently gets its facts wrong, sometimes quite spectacularly.

In the present study, I have endeavoured, wherever possible, to base the history on the *wakil* news letters, and/or the original, uncensored, manuscript (or transcript) journals of intelligence agents, political officers, surveyors, etc., filed in L/P&S/5, 7, 9; Proceedings (*IFPC*) or European Manuscripts. This does not preclude, or exclude, reference to the *Memoranda* series, *TFJ*, etc. In some cases it has been impossible to locate the original news letter, journal, etc. and I have been forced to rely either on the official, censored version or the published journal. As well as noting the locations of individual papers, journals and surveys in the footnotes, I have included with the bibliography a list of the most important reports, journals, papers, maps, gazetteers, etc. and their full India Office, British Library or Public Record Office location.

As far as the P&S records are concerned, for the sake of easy access to the individual record, where a folio and/or page number is given, this invariably refers to the internal pagination of the individual volume itself and not to any officially-indexed system. The folio number is usually written in blue (occasionally red) on the top right-hand side of the folio. Just to confuse matters, however, some of the volumes for some reason have two quite different numbering systems. Individual P&S volumes, however, frequently do not have any pagination. Where this occurs I have fallen back on using the India

Office's official register number. In the case of the P:IFPC series, this appears at the top of the individual record, in the case of the L/P&S/5, 7 & 9 series at the front of the individual batch of records filed for that day. The index number generally stands on its own and acts as a sort of internal subject divider. On occasions the same number can include a number of related reports. The early L/P&S/5 series have tagged dividers inserted in the individual volumes. Where such divisions exist I have given the number of the 'enclosure' first and followed it by the individual record number (e.g. encl. 5., no. 12). I have generally found the annual indexes to be of some help, but mainly in identifying whether a particular report was ever filed and where.

It is worth noting here, for any future scholar intrepid, or foolhardy, enough to venture into the Political and Secret Department Records (a single volume of L/P&S/5 can contain between 1,000 to 2,000 folios and to sift through just one year's records may require reading as many as twenty such volumes), that there are two major *lacunae* in the L/P&S/5 *wakil* diary series.

The first was occasioned by the chaos into which the administration was thrown during the period of the Indian Mutiny (1857-58). This, unfortunately, is an important period in the history of Afghanistan since the Amir of Bukhara was actively pursing an anti-British alliance with Dost Muhammad Khan. However, most of the intelligence reports on Afghanistan and Central Asia for this period eventually turned up in Calcutta and were filed in an *ad hoc* manner in later volumes of the L/P&S/5 series, not according to the date that the particular report was written, but according to the month and year when these records finally reached in the filing clerk's in-tray.

The second *lacuna* occurs from about 1860 to 1870; a period when the Political and Secret Department was being 'reorganised'. Fortunately, duplicates of the *wakil* diaries, agent's reports, etc. can be found in the annual files of *Proceedings, Indian Foreign (Political) Consultations* (P:IFPC).

Despite many enquiries, I have not been able to trace the whereabouts of a number of important records, manuscripts, journals and surveys. Apparently the 'B' series of the P:IFPC, including the 'Frontier' and 'Foreign' files, were never brought to England after Independence and some of them even appear to be missing from the National Archives collection in Delhi. Though I have tried to correspond with

the Suvey of India in Simla regarding these missing files and other records, I have been unable to elict any response from them.

Amongst the important manuscripts I have failed to locate are, in chronological order: parts of Edward Stirling's original journal of his travels through Badghis, Afghan Turkistan and Kabul in 1825; Arthur Conolly's private diary of his journey from Kabul to Khiva via Bamiyan, Chakhcharan, Maimana and Bala Murghab in 1840; Eldred Pottinger's journal of 1839 containing an account of his journey from Herat to Kabul through Maimana, Sar-i Pul, down the Balkh Ab river to Bamiyan;[4] Merk's uncensored *Report on the City of Maimana* (1885), which is missing from L/P&S/7 volumes for 1885/6; the *Military Report on the Hazarajat*, written in *c.* 1880 and which is mentioned in the *Records of the Intelligence Party*, and, perhaps most important of all, the extensive collection of photographs, sketches, maps and journals of Carl Ludwig Griesbach which was the outcome of his work with the Afghan Boundary Commission in 1885/6. Notes about these missing records appear in the appropriate place in the text.

A number of Persian sources have been used. Mahmud b. Ibrahim al-Husain's *Tarikh-i Ahmad Shahi* has thrown a good deal of light on the life of Haji Bi Ming of Maimana, whose military alliance with Ahmad Shah Durrani in 1751 was so misrepresented both by the Amirs and British political officers in the following century. Faiz Muhammad Katib's *Siraj al-Tawarikh*, Mirza Ya'qub 'Ali Khafi's *Padshahan-i Muta'akhirin-i Afghanistan* and Sultan Muhammad Khan *The Life of Abdul Rahman Khan, Amir of Afghanistan* (a translation of the *Pand Nama*) have all provided a useful source for comparing individual events with the information in the P&S records. Chapters One and Two have drawn on Raverty's translation of Juzjani's *Tabakat-i Nasiri* and Minorsky's translation of the early, and anonymous geography, the *Hudud al-'Alam*. I have drawn extensively on Raverty's unpublished seven-volume manuscript in the India Office collection, entitled *The History of Heri or Herat*, a work which quotes extensively from Mahmud b. Amir Wali's *Bahr al-Asrar*, an important source for the history of the Tuqay-Timurids and the reign of Nazr Muhammad Khan in particular. Unfortunately, Raverty's *Herat* is extremely frustrating for the scholar since it is almost impossible to know when he is quoting verbatim from a contemporary source and when he is either paraphrasing the manuscript or just

[4] Though Pottinger's original maps have survived in the IOL collection.

expressing a personal opinion. However, since the first two chapters of this work are designed primarily as a survey to provide a context for the subsequent chapters, I have not felt obligated to spend long hours reading the appropriate sections of the India Office's copy of the *Bahr al-Asrar*. Furthermore, the recent publication of Professor McChesney's important book, *Waqf in Central Asia*, has made the task of writing these early chapters that much easier.

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*A Note On Transliterations*

In the course of this work technical terms, personal and place names from a number of languages and dialects have been used. These include terms derived from Arabic, Persian, Afghan Dari, Russian, Anglo-Indian and Turco-Mongolian languages. Since, nowadays, the *lingua franca* in the northern provinces of Afghanistan is Dari, a dialect of Persian, I have generally rendered Perso-Arabic words and commonly used Turkic words in their Dari equivalents. The use of diacritical marks and under or overstrikes have not been used in the text unless absolutely necessary, for it has not been the convention in studies of Afghan history during the Durrani period to use such diacriticals (e.g. Dupree: 1978). I would refer the purist to Prof. McChesney's comments on this subject (1991, xiii-xv) which I fully endorse. Full transliterations of technical terms, names and places have been provided in the glossary, genealogical tables, indexes and maps.

Transliterations of Persian technical terms, place names, etc. have been based on the system of transliterations used by the British Insitute of Persian Studies' *IRAN* journal. The following simplifications and modifications have been made to accomodate differences in pronunciation between Arabic/Iranian Persian and Afghan Dari:

ص، س، ث = s

ت ، ط = t

ذ ، ظ ، ض، ز = z

و as a consonant = w

Dari has four additional vowels: two long, two short. The long vowels are represented by ō (و) and ē (ي) respectively; the equivalent short short vowels by 'o' and 'e'.

Certain commonly-used Arabic, Persian and Turkic terms and titles (e.g. *qizilbash*, *khan*, *mullah*, *Amir*, *shah*, etc) have not been italicised. The same applies with Anglo-Indian words which are now part of the English language, e.g. bazaar, Raj, rupee and technical terms such as *wali*, *sultan*, *amir*, etc. which recurr at frequent intervals.

In the case of *amir*, where this word appears on its own with the first letter capitalised, it invariably refers to the Durrani rulers of Afghanistan. When it is not capitalised, it refers to Uzbek, Turkman, Aimaq or Tadjik military and political commanders in the Balkh appanage.

The Turkic words *bek*, *beki* are rendered by *beg*, *begi*. Russian transliterations have followed the system used by the British Museum. Where geographical names have been Russified, I have reverted to the venacular form (e.g. Kulab not Kulyab; Shahr-i Sabz not Shakhr-i Sabz). Commonly-accepted transliterations of well-known geographical names such as Samarkand, Tashkent, have been retained.

Familiar transliterations of geographical names (Samarkand, Herat, Peshawar) have been retained for the sake of simplicity and ease of identification. However, where the colloquial pronunciation of place names differs significantly from their written equivalents I have preferred the written forms; e.g. Shirin Tagab not Shirin Tagau; Chahar Shanbeh not Charshambe. In the case of Afshar (a district in Kabul), I

have retained the colloqiual form since it is so well known, rather than pedantically transcribing it as Abshar.

*Abbreviations*

i. Abbreviations: Libraries and archives referred to in text, notes and bibliographies

| | |
|---|---|
| BL | British Library |
| BL, MSS | British Library, Manuscripts |
| BL, OP | British Library, Official Publications |
| HMSO | Her Majesty's Stationery Office |
| IOLR | India Office Library and Records (for key to individual records and reports in the IOLR, see, Appendix X) |
| NAI | National Archives of India |
| RGS | Royal Geographical Society |
| RGS(A) | Royal Geographical Society Archives |
| PRO | Public Record Office |
| SOAS | School of Oriental & African Studies |
| WIHML | Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine Library |

ii. Abbreviations: journals and periodicals referred to in notes and bibliographies

| | |
|---|---|
| AF | *Afghanica* |
| AFG | *Afghanistan (Gratz)* |
| AFK | *Afghanistan (Kabul)* |
| AG | *Annnales de Geographie* |
| AS | *Afghanische Studien* |
| BJRL | *Bulletin of John Ryland Library* |
| BMJ | *British Medical Journal* |
| BSOAS | *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* |
| CAR | *Central Asian Review* |
| CR | *Calcutta Review* |
| EJ | *Explorers Journal* |
| EW | *East and West* |
| GRA | *Geographical Review of Afghanistan* |

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|---|---|
| GJ | *Geographical Journal (Royal Geographical Society)* |
| GRA | *Geographical Review of Afghanistan* |
| IRAN | *Journal of the Institute of Persian Studies* |
| JESHO | *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* |
| JIH | *Journal of Indian History* |
| JRAS | *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* |
| JRASB | *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal* |
| JRAS (Bombay) | *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bombay* |
| JRSAA | *Journal of the Royal Society for Asian Affairs* |
| NFA | *Neue Forschungen in Afghanistand* |
| QR | *Quarterly Review* |
| PRGS | *Proceedings of Royal Geographical Society* |
| SI | *Studia Iranica* |

iii. Abbreviations: works of reference referred to in main text

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|---|---|
| CHI | *Cambridge History of Iran* |
| EI | *Encyclopaedia of Islam* |
| SEI | *Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam* |

iv. Other abbreviations

| | |
|---|---|
| A. I. | Anglo-Indian |
| app. | appendix |
| chap(s) | chapter(s) |
| col., cols | column(s) |
| D. | Dari (Afghan Persian) |
| encl., encls | enclosure(s) |
| fol., fols | folio, folios |
| g. | gramme(s) |
| in. | inches |
| kg. | kilogrammes |
| km., kms | kilometre(s) |
| l., ll. | line, lines |
| m. | metre(s) |
| ms, mss | manuscript(s) |
| n. pag. | no pagination or folio number |
| no., nos | number(s) |
| pl., pls. | plate(s) |
| P. | Persian |
| Psh. | Pushtu |

| | |
|---|---|
| R., Rs. | rupee(s) |
| rcvd. | received |
| Scrtry. | Secretary |
| vol., vols | volume(s) |

*Dates*

In chapters One and Two, *Anno Hijra* dates (AH) are followed by AD equivalent e. g. 127/743. In subsequent chapters, unless given as above, all dates are *Anno Domini* (AD). The length of individual reigns, governorships, etc. appear within square brackets thus: [1811-1825]. Rounded brackets are used for dates of birth and death, e.g. (1805-1895).

# CHAPTER ONE

## THE LAND AND ITS SETTING

> [Alexander] taught the Arachosians to till the soil, and persuaded the Sogdians to support rather than slay their parents.... He induced the Indians to accept Greek gods, and the Scythians to bury rather than eat the dead.... He planted Greek institutions all across Asia, and thus overcame its wild and savage way of living.... Greekness was marked by excellence, but wickedness was the way of the barbarians (Plutarch, *De Alexandri Magni Fortuna aut Virutut,* quoted Holt, 25).

The region of Afghanistan, which in the last century was referred to as Lesser Turkistan or, by the British, as Turkistan or Afghan Turkistan, consisted roughly of the modern (pre-1990)[1] administrative provinces or *wilayats*, of Faryab, Juzjan, Balkh, Samangan, Qunduz and Baghlan. The Uzbeks and other Chingizid rulers who preceded the Afghan Amirs, however, referred to the area as the province or appanage of Balkh. During the five hundred years or so of Turkic domination of the area, the boundary in the west was usually drawn on the Murghab river and in the south included the hill forts north of Bamiyan, such as Kahmard and Saighan. The term Afghan Turkistan, or Turkistan, is of very recent vintage and was coined by Afghans and taken up by the British, as a convenient way of describing a region which had previously been ruled by one or other Turkic dynasty.[2]

The Balkh region has played a vital role in the economic, cultural and religious life of Central Asia for thousands of years and is one of the cradles of world civilisation. Even today the area is one of the most economically important regions of Afghanistan. During the reign of the Afghan Amir, Zahir Shah [1933-1973], most of the country's hard currency earnings were derived from the export of the re-

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[1] President Najibullah (overthrown, 1992) changed the provincial boundaries of Faryab and Juzjan province, though I have not been able to acquire any map which shows these administrative changes. Andkhui was removed from Faryab and placed in Juzjan and, apparently, a separate province based on Sar-i Pul was created.

[2] Of even more recent vintage is the name *Wilayat-i Shamal-i Afghanistan* ('Northern Province of Afghanistan'), a term used by General Dostam and his administration to avoid the accusation that he has declared *de facto* independence from Kabul. Since the fall of President Najibullah, many local people began to refer to the area as Khurasan (not to be confused with the Persian province of the same name). According to eye-witness information, in the summer of 1992 there was a sign on the road to Balkh which said, in Persian, "Welcome to Khurasan."

sources of the area; karakul sheep and their skins; leather; carpets, *gilims* and *namads*; rice; wheat; grapes and raisins; pistachios; melons and other produce. It also boasts extensive oil, gas and coal reserves, though, apart from the gas field at Shibarghan, little has been done to exploit these resources. Gold has been panned on the upper Amu Darya for centuries and the mining of Badakhshan's lapis lazuli and rubies dates from a very early period.

Up until recent times, when Mazar-i Sharif gradually became the most important urban centre in Lesser Turkistan, Balkh had been the political and economic heart of the province for millenia. Many centuries before the conquest of Bactria by Alexander the Great in 328 BC, the Achæmenid satrapy was an important agricultural and commercial district, whilst the antiquity of its capital, Bactra, identified by scholars as being on the site of present city of of Balkh,[3] was recognised by Arab geographers who referred to it as 'The Mother of Cities' (*Umm al-Bilad*) (Holt, 28-9, 35-41). Others referred to it as *Balkh al-Bahiyya*, 'Balkh the Beautiful' (Le Strange, 420). Situated

[3] Despite surveys by a number of archaeologists and several excavations, very little evidence of the Achæmenid/Græco-Bactrian city of Bactra has never been uncovered (Ball i, 99-101) and there must be some doubt that the modern settlement of Balkh was the site of Achæmenid Bactra/Zariaspa. Quintus Curtius records that the Bactrus River (modern, Balkh Ab) flowed alongside its walls and that it was situated beneath mount Parapomisus (Holt, 16). By any stretch of the imagination, this description could never be applied to the modern city of Balkh, which lies in the middle of a desert and at the extreme tip of the delta created by the Balk Ab canal system. Curtius's description, rather, suggests that Bactra was located much further south, near the mountains and where the Balkh Ab river is still fast-flowing; that is where the Hazhda Nahr canal network begins, rather than where the waters finally disappear into the desert and marshes. Given that the shrine of Anahita at Zariaspa (see text, below) probably represented a personification of the canal network and embodied the fertility which they brought to the whole region, it would make far more theological sense to site the main temple to the spirit of the Hazhda Nahr where the canals are drawn off from the Balkh Ab river. Such a site is know to exist, though, as far as can be ascertained, no serious survey has ever been conducted in this area. A few miles south of where the Balkh Ab breaks out from the Koh-i Alburz, between the settlements of Chashma-yi Shafan and Boyni Qara, there is an area of rolling plain (*dasht*) and lows hills (*chul*) in which lies a very extensive archaeological site. So large is this site, that it is the only artificial feature to shows up on satellite photographs of Afghanistan (cf. Ball i, sites 186, 596, 138 and ii, 82).

Barthol'd, 77 says that the Arab armies destroyed the complex of Nau Bahar and built a new city two *farsangs* from the old site, though later the areas of former occupation were built on. Even the 'Abbasid mosque of Haji Piyada (Noh Gunbad) is situated more than a mile to the south of the present town of Balkh, which would suggest that, since the arrival of the Arab armies the main centre of population in the area had moved yet again. Faiz Bakhsh, on the word of Mutawakil b. Amran, *qazi* of Balkh, reported that Balkh had been destroyed 23 times in its history, Faiz Bakhsh, "Report on Badakhshan, Balkh and Bokhara, 1865-69," 1872, India Office Library & Records, *Enclosure to Secret Letters from India*, L/P&S/7/270, fols 152-90 (pp. 1-2) (henceforth ESL/270, etc.). Subsequent page references to this report are to the internal pagination and not the record folios.

strategically across intersection routes of the Silk Road, caravans and merchandise from China, the Indian subcontinent, Persia, the Mediterranean basin and other regions of the Eurasian continent, passed through its gates, making the city not just one of the most important urban trade centres of the ancient and mediæval world, but a centre where peoples of diverse races and creeds met, intermingled and exchanged not just goods,but ideas.

From an early period Balkh earned renown for the fertility of its soil and the extensiveness of its agriculture which, in turn, enabled it to sustain a substantial population. Yet from a purely climatic point of view, everything would seem to be against such a development. Cut off from the Indian monsoons by the high mountain ranges to the south and over one thousand miles from the nearest sea, the region has very little rain. What precipitation there is, falls mainly during February, March and April, after which the temperature in the plain rises sharply, reaching a mean of over 38° C by June (Dupree 1978, Chart I, 15-18). During the hot season, dust storms (*khak bad*) sweep out of the sandy deserts which lie south of the Amu Darya, whilst in the winter Siberian winds make the area very inhospitable.

In the mountains to the south, however, the precipitation is higher and, from about November to March, snow falls to the depth of several metres on the high peaks. In the spring the thaw sets in and, as the snow gradually melts, it releases water into hundreds of small valleys. These streams eventually converge to form rivers such as the Ab-i Maimana, the Balkh Ab, the Kokcha and other north-flowing rivers, or run south into the Murghab which flows westwards through the Tir Band-i Turkistan, then dog-legs north until it eventually loses itself in the sands of the Merv oasis.

Water conservation is enhanced by the geological structure of the ranges which make up the northern flanks of the Hindu Kush. A number of limestone plateaus, the most spectacular of which is the Tir Band-i Turkistan, preserve the melting snows in underground caverns that act as natural reservoirs and pour forth a constant supply of water into the rivers even during the height of summer. Often the outpourings from these subterranean caves give rise to spectacular waterfalls, such as those in the valleys of Zang and Shakh in Gurziwan. This same tableland has been deeply eroded by the fast-flowing streams and is bisected by thousands of narrow, winding, river valleys. These ravines provide natural shade for the streams which twist and turn on

the valley floors, preserving them from the high summer temperatures and reducing surface evaporation.

Between the limestone plateau and the plain proper, lies a third geological feature which contributes markedly to the region's fertility. This consists of a belt of high, loess dunes, or *chul*, which have been deposited at the base of the mountains by the strong winds blowing out from the Central Asian steppes. This fine, wind-blown loess, the result of erosion of ice-age moraines, is one of the most fertile of soils. The heavy snows in the mountains to the south, combined with the water-holding properties of the limestone tableland, produce a high water table in these dunes throughout the year, allowing the cultivation of wheat on a very large scale indeed. In places such as Gurziwan, huge surpluses of grain are produced each year from such dry land farming (*lalmi*) on these undulating hills, making them the mainstay of the region's agriculture and food supplies.

From a very early period, human skill and ingenuity have exploited these natural advantages provided by the perennial rivers to turn the region into one of the agricultural heartlands of Central Asia. Wherever a river valley widens out sufficiently for cultivation, settlements have grown up, tapping the waters of the stream to grow wheat, walnuts, pistachios,[4] mulberries and vegetables. In the spring, when both the *chul* and the mountain slopes are clad in fresh, green grass, horses, sheep and cattle are taken out and fattened on their steep slopes. Where the rivers break out from the constrictions of the mountains proper into the plains, larger settlements have taken root and, since the river valleys were also conduits for trade and communications, places such as Maimana, Sar-i Pul, Qunduz and Balkh, evolved into a network of fortified towns which, in turn, became regional capitals or city-states in their own right. The location of these settlements was strategic for other reasons, for they controlled complex networks of irrigation ditches, on which the agriculture of the plains depended, as well as providing power to drive mills and water for the population to drink.

The most famous and extensive of these irrigation networks is that drawn off from the Balkh Ab, known as the Hazhda Nahr, or 'Eighteen Canals' (Map 6). As the Balkh Ab emerges from the narrow gorge in the Koh-i Alburz, a series of artificial ditches carry water,

[4] In the eighth century AH, Badghis was renowned for pistachio forests of such vast extent that Mustawfi recorded that, "many make their livelihood for the whole year round by what they can gather here at harvest time, and it is indeed a wonder to behold" (Le Strange, 415).

not just to Balkh, but to scores of other settlements and towns, which extend like a fan from Mazar-i Sharif in the east to Aqcha in the west. Though we are not sure how extensive the Hazhda Nahr system was in pre-Islamic times, we do know that by the late seventeenth century of the Christian Era, two hundred and seventy one separate villages depended on the system. Unfortunately, at present, the canal system has fallen into neglect, partly as a result of government apathy and partly due to the recent troubles, and many of the smaller canals have silted up. The evidence of hundreds of *tell*s and other ruins throughout the plains of Balkh, suggests that, in an earlier period, the Hazhda Nahr was much more extensive and its population a great deal higher (McChesney 1991, 22-6).

The Achæmenids had an almost religious devotion to maintaining the Hazhda Nahr, (Tarn 1980, 102), indeed, the patron goddess of Bactra, Ardvi Sura Anahita, she of a thousand arms, is reckoned to be a personification of the canal system and the spirit of Bactria's other great water course, the Oxus. Although the Persian Empire was eventually swept away by the Greeks, the engineering and administrative skills needed to keep the system operative were passed down from generation to generation, and from dynasty to dynasty, for the survival of the region depended on the proper maintenance of the canal network. In turn, the administration of the system, which revolved around maintaining a delicate balance between nature's provision and human need, gave rise to an elaborate bureaucracy, which managed the precious resource and ensured an equal distribution of water to each village. In the course of time, hereditary priest-governors arose who controlled both the religious and economic life of the region. Following the conquest of Balkh by the Arab armies in the early eighth century of the Christian Era, the skills of the Barmakid clan, the administrators of the temple complex of Nau Bahar, or, more accurately, Nava Vihara, and owners of extensive estates,[5] were quickly put to good use by the conquerors. Under the 'Abbasids, this family rose to hold the position of *wazir*, the highest administrative post in the Empire.

[5] The Barmakids owned vast estates, eight farsangs long and four farsangs in width. They claimed to be the descendants of Sasanid administrators (Barthol'd, 77, 197).

*Maimana*

The modern town of Maimana is the provincial capital of the wilayat of Faryab and occupies a site of considerable, strategic importance. Situated at the extreme north-western tip of the Tir Band-i Turkistan, at the northern gateway to the Badghis corridor, the town commanded one of the main caravan routes between Persia, Herat and the cities on either side of the Amu Darya. Maimana was also an alternative trade route between the Indian sub-continent and Central Asia, as well as still supplying more local markets in Ghor and the Hazarajat. Before the demarcation and closure of the Russian-Afghan border towards the end of the last century, caravans from Merv and Khiva used to pass through its gates *en route* to Balkh or Kabul. Even today, it remains an important overnight halt for trade between Balkh and Herat.

Though Maimana was to play a crucial part in the struggle against the Durrani Amirs during the last century, its military importance was recognised many centuries earlier. For millenia, the Badghis corridor has been one of the main conduits for invading armies, whether Arab or Persian forces marching against Balkh, or Central Asian Hordes sweeping out of the northern steppes to overrrun the fertile agricultural lands of Khurasan. We know, from objects recovered from the citadel mound, that a fortified settlement of some sort existed on the present site of Maimana by the late second century BC, and its foundation probably dates back to the early Iron Age (Ball i, 178; Ramchandran & Sharma 1956).

Indeed, the very name, Maimana, is rooted in antiquity. According to the Arab geographer, Yaqut, when the Arab armies arrived in the eighth century AD, they discovered a large Jewish population living in the area, which apparently had been re-settled there following the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar in 586 BC (Le Strange, 424;*Hudud al-'Alam*, 330ff.). The town thus became known as 'The City of the Jews'. However, Yaqut claims that as the Arab colonists began to settle down, they were increasingly uncomfortable referring to the settlement as Al-Yahudiyya, Al-Yahudan[6] or Jahudan al-Kubra.[7] The opposition of the Medinan Jews to Muhammad's message was still fresh in the Arab colonists' minds and it was deemed to be a name of reproach and bad luck (Le Strange, 424). The town was

[6] 'City of Jews'.
[7] 'The Great Jewry'.

therefore given the Arabic name, *maimana*,[8] meaning 'good luck,' 'prosperity' or 'auspicious'.[9]

Despite this change of name, however, the indigenous population continued to use variations of Al-Yahudiyya throughout the early Islamic period and it is this name, rather than that of Maimana, which the anonymous, locally-born, author of the *Hudud al-'Alam*, uses in his tenth century geography (*Hudud al-'Alam*, 107, 335).[10] According to another authority, in the Achæmenid period Maimana was called Nisak-i Miyanak (*Hudud al-'Alam*, 335; Modhi 1915). The other centres of population in the region, which came to be known as the Chahar Wilayat, Andkhui, Shibarghan and Sar-i Pul, are all mentioned in early Arab geographies (Barthol'd, 79-80; *Hudud al-'Alam*, 108-10; Le Strange, 423-26).

### *From the Stone Age to the Arab Conquest*

There is evidence that the northern slopes of the Hindu Kush and the Tir Band-i Turkistan were centres of considerable human activity from pre-historic times. Lithic and ceramic material dating from the Middle Palæolithic to late Neolithic/Bronze Ages, have been discovered in caves and open air sites near Belcheragh and Sarchakan, south-east of Maimana (Ball i, 105, 116; Dupree 1970). Excavations by Dupree at Aq Kupraq in the Balkh Ab river valley, uncovered some twenty thousand tooled flints (Ball i, 38), evidence that from the Middle to Late Palæolithic the valley was an important centre for the manufacture of flint instruments. Some evidence of early attempts at sculpture in the same area were also uncovered (Dupree 1978, 260-2; Barger 1939).

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[8] Major H. G. Raverty, *The History of Hiri, or Herat, and its Dependencies*, 7 vols, 1902(?), IOLR, MSS Eur. C.83-89, v(i), 1698, translates *maimana*, as 'right-hand', which is an alternative etymology of the Arabic word (cf. the English word, 'sinister'). He claims the name originated in the thirteenth century AD, following the Mongol conquest when eight Arlat *mings*, or *hazaras*, i.e. military units of one thousand men, were located in the area. The tribes of this contingent constituted the right wing, or hand, of Chingiz Khan's army, from which the settlement derives its name. It is highly improbable, however, that the Mongols would have used an Arabic word, in preference to a Turko-Mongolian one, to describe what was, primarily, a military cantonment and the usage must be earlier than Raverty claims.

[9] This was the etymology universally used by informed local sources interviewed in Maimana in 1977 and 1978, who were doubtless familiar with the mediaeval geographers such as Mustawfi, Yaqut and Ibn Hawkal.

[10] Compiled in 372/982-3, the author was a native of Guzganan.

According to the epic of the *Shah Nama*, the area between Balkh and Herat was the scene of the great struggle between Afrasiyab and the son of Kai Ka'us, Siyavakhsh, in the 'War of the Twelve Champions' (*Davazda Rakh*) (*Hudud al-'Alam*, xxv; Mohdi, 10-11). Some authorities state that Guzganan, from which the modern district of Gurziwan derives its name (Map 5),[11] was the place where Arish's arrow fell to delineate the border between Iran and King Isfandiyar (*Hudud al-'Alam*, xxv-xxxi, 330). Although Tir Band-i Turkistan is the most commonly-used local designation of the mountain range lying between the Murghab and the plains of Lesser Turkistan, it is not known whether the word *tir* ('arrow') in this name has any connection with this legend.

It was in Bactria where Zoroaster is believed by many scholars[12] to have found a base for the propagation of his dualistic philosophy after Vishtaspa, the ruler of the region, gave the Iranian prophet sanctuary (Boyce i, 274-5). By the time Zoroaster appeared on the scene, it would seem that an indigenous cult based around a female deity, the personification of the Hazhda Nahr and Oxus, was already well entrenched. Following the Achæmenid ruler, Artaxexes II's, patronage of the goddess Anahita, the cult of the Bactrian deity appears to have gradually been subsumed into the worship of Ardvi Sura, 'The Undefiled' (Boyce i, 72; iii, 280; Herzfeld ii, 516; Tarn 1980, 102). Anahita's temple of Zariaspa, or Azar-i Asp, with its extraordinary and

[11] Gurziwan is both a town and a district on the northern slopes of the Tir Band-i Turkistan. The former lies to the east of the district, in the Sar-i Pul river basin south of Khwal, whilst the latter lies south of the Shirin Tagab river to the south of Belcheragh. The area, now within the wulswali of Belcheragh, is sometimes locally referred to locally as the Haft Darra ('Seven Valleys'), since running through the district are the seven northward-flowing rivers of Feris, Khwaja Ghor, Badgah, Shakh, Zang, Takhra and Ghulbiyan. These seven streams converge north of Sarchakan where they form the Chashma-yi Khwab which, in turn, flows through a steep and narrow gorge, joining the Shirin Tagab at Belcheragh. The mediæval name of the area was Guzgan or, in Arabic, Juzjan, from which the modern wilayat of Juzjan (or Jauzjan) is derived. In the sources, this name sometimes appeared in the plural form as Guzganan (Juzjanan) which Minorsky in his notes to the *Hudud al-'Alam*, 329ff., derives from a word meaning 'walnuts' or 'walnut trees'; a product for which Gurziwan is still justly famous. Raverty i, 214, claims that the reason for this plural form was that there were two Guzgans, or, more accurately, the area was divided into two by the Murghab river.

During the last fifteen hundred years the boundaries of Guzgan have fluctuated a great deal. In the mediæval period it covered a much wider area than the present wulswali of Belcheragh, possibly stretching as far as Maimana to the west and Sar-i Pul in the east (Le Strange, 426). The present (1990) provincial borders of the wilayats of Faryab and Juzjan have little relation to the ancient boundaries of Guzgan(an).

[12] As well as in ancient Zoroastrian legend. However, Boyce iii, 125-8, later argues for the Sistan or Herat area as a more likely base for Zoroaster's preaching.

majestic golden image, was said to have actually straddled the Bactrus (Balkh Ab) river (Tarn 1980, 102, 114).[13]

Zoroaster himself is generally believed to have been killed in battle near Bactra, *c.* 522 BC,[14] whilst fighting on behalf of his royal patron (Zaehner, 33). Following the Greek conquest of the region, the invaders retained Anahita as the city-goddess and her crown of eight rays and a hundred stars appears on the coins of Demetrius (Tarn 1980, 115). During the early centuries of the Christian Era, Bactra became an important Buddhist shrine-city centred on the extensive monastic communities of Nau Bahar, or Nava Vihara (Barthol'd, 77; Bulliet 1976; Le Strange, 420).

The Alexandrine conquest of Bactria in 326 BC, marked the end of Achæmenid power in the area but not, as implied by the mythologisers of Alexander, such as Plutarch, the beginning of civilisation north of the Hindu Kush. For, although in the two centuries following the Hellenistic occupation, Greek culture and thought permeated all aspects of the civilisation, even to the extent of leaving its fingerprints on Buddhism, which had spread from its birthplace in the Gangetic plain north-westwards into Central Asia and from thence to China, the Achæmenid satrapies of Bactria and Sogdiana were already major centres of civilisation (Holt, 26-9). Indeed, far from being the bringer of democracy and civilised values, Alexander's occupation of Bactria, and in particular his campaigns against the Sogdians, was noted for its barbarity, decadence and despotism. Amongst the more notable 'excesses' committed by Alexander was the brutal mutilation and torture of Basus, the Achæmenid Pretender, the complete extermination of a Greek garrison and Alexander's aspirations to deification (Holt, 50-5).

By the early Christian Era, Persian culture and civilisation had reasserted itself once more under the Sasanids. In 1978 a fresco, dating from between the third and fifth centuries AD, was discovered near Ghulbiyan and probably marks the burial site of a Sasanid prince of the sub-province of Warushan (Grenet, Lee, Pinder-Wilson 1980; Grenet, 134-5).

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[13] See, n. 3, above. The site of this temple complex has never been located. The temple of Ai Khanum, which some have suggested was dedicated to Anahita-Mithra, actually had a canal running through the sanctuary (Boyce iii, 186-8).

[14] Though Boyce, i, 183-91, and *Textual Sources for the Study of Zoroastrianism* (Manchester 1984), 11, argues for a much earlier, Bronze Age, date (*c.* 1400-1200 BC).

Following his defeat by the Arab Muslims under Ahnaf b. Qais in 31/651, Yazdagird III, the last Sasanian monarch, fled across the Murghab to Balkh. For a period of about ten years, he fought a losing battle with the Arab invaders. During this decade the western districts of the province of Balkh were turned into a vast battlefield, as two great cultures and religions battled for political and ideological supremacy. In the end, it was the Arab Muslim armies which prevailed. Yazdagird finally met his end at the hands of the slaves of a mill owner of Bala Murghab who unceremoniously dumped his carcass in the Murghab river, from where it was later recovered and buried with appropriate pomp.[15]

*From Arab to Mongol, 651-1220*

The arrival of the Arab armies brought not only Arab culture, but the new and evangelical religion of Islam, which eventually swept away all other religious systems in Bactria. However, though the arrival of Islam eventually led to the extinction of Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, Nestorian Christianity (Mingana 1925) and the indigenous pagan cults, the process of Islamisation was a long and difficult one. When the Arab armies first arrived in the region in the first Hijra century, they encountered fierce and desperate resistance from the pagan mountain tribes of Guzganan, Gharchistan and Ghor;[16] who quickly earned a reputation for their hardiness, obduracy and pugnacity.[17] Despite numerous attempts by successive Muslim governments to subdue and convert them, as late as the tenth century AD (fourth century AH), the mountain strongholds of Ghor and Gharchistan were still home to the largest pagan enclave in the Islamic world, (Le Strange, 416; *Hudud al-'Alam*, 110). Indeed, during the following century, Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni sent at least three expeditions into the area in an attempt to bring the population within the *Dar al-Islam*. His invasion met with greater success than those of his predecessors and, as each fortress fell, missionaries were appointed to the region to convert the population to Islam (Bosworth, 1977, ch. IX).[18]

[15] Raverty i, 186-91.

[16] Raverty i, 214ff., from Tabari.

[17] Raverty i, 214, 228, 298.

[18] In 1845, the French adventurer, Ferrier, claimed to have visited a remnant of this pagan enclave during his travels from Sar-i Pul to Daulatyar, but the authenticity of his report is questionable as is his report of a bas-relief somewhere in the region of Mirza Wulang; see Lee 1982,

Balkh and Guzganan played a major part in the 'Abbasid revolution. In 121/739 Yahya, the 'Abbasid Pretender, having slain the 'Umaiyid governor of Khurasan, fled to "Gawnganan" where he caused much trouble to the local governor for a number of years. Finally, in 127/743, at the village of "I-nu," Yahya met the son of the governor of Khurasan in the open field, was captured and crucified on the gates of "the city of Guzgan," which was more than likely Maimana (Barthol'd, 193; Wellhausen, 338).[19] Badghis and the mountainous region lying between the Murghab and Hari Rud rivers was also a convenient refuge for heretical and anti-establishment groups. In 149/765 Ashnas, *Ustad-i Shish* (or, *Sis*), laid claim to prophethood, revived the practices of the Fire-Worshippers and caused "vast depredations" in the region. He even succeeded in capturing the great fortress of Nairatu (Qal'a-yi Naraiman) in Badghis for a while, but was eventually subdued in *c.* 150/767 (Barthol'd, 198).[20] His daughter subsequently became the mother of 'Abdullah al-Mamun, the 'Abbasid Caliph.[21]

A more serious political and theological threat to the empire was posed by Hashim b. Hakim, who had been *wazir,* or chief minister, for a time to Abu Muslim, the great 'Abbasid propagandist. Born in Karez of Badghis,[22] Hakim declared himself to be the *Mahdi* and the reincarnation of the *Imamat*, that mystic, gnostic power which, in Shi'ism, is believed to be incarnate in the Imams. Claiming that mortals were unable to bear the light emanating from his face, Hakim donned a veil, which his critics alleged concealed the ravages of smallpox or syphilis, and earned for himself the nickname of *Al-Muqanna'*, 'The Veiled One' (Barthol'd, 199).[23] From *c.* 160-166/776-782, Al-Muqanna' had a considerable following throughout the region, as far north as Bukhara and Samarkand (Barthol'd, 200),[24] and put the government to a great deal of trouble with his raids. About a hundred years later, in 287/900, Abu'l-Bilal, a Karramiyya heretic from Gharchistan,[25] assumed the title of *Dar al-*

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Bivar 1974, and below, ch. 6, n. 2.

[19] Or possibly, Anbar (Sar-i Pul). Raverty i, 349, says he was hanged on a gibbet.

[20] Raverty i, 56; ii, 411.

[21] Raverty ii, 415.

[22] Raverty i, 58. Barthol'd, 199 says he came from "the neighbourhood of Merve."

[23] Raverty i, 57; ii, 416ff. Raverty says the veil was of gold cloth and that Hakim's disfigurement was the result of being hit by an arrow in his eye. According to Barthol'd, the veil was green.

[24] Raverty ii, 417ff.

[25] The exact location and extent of the district, known in medival times as Gharchistan, is difficult to define. The region lay south of, and adjacent to, Guzgan(an) and probably en-

*Anab* ('Master of Punishment', or 'Martyrdom') and gathered some ten thousand followers around his banner until his rebellion was finally put down.[26]

From the late tenth century Guzganan was the centre of an important minor dynasty, the Farighunids, originally clients of the Samanids, who subsequently came under the sway of Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni, to whom they were related by marriage.[27] This dynasty claimed to be the descendants of the mythological Faridun, but little is known of their actual ancestry, except that the family had lived in Guzganan for many generations (*Hudud al-'Alam*, 5-6, 173-7). In 398/1007 Sultan Mahmud and the Farighunid ruler Abu Nasr b. Muhammad, defeated a Qarakhanid army at Charkhiyan, in the plains west of Balkh (Barthol'd, 273; *Hudud al-'Alam*, 177).[28] Some years later, in 407/1016, when Abu'l-'Abbas-i Ma'mun Farighun, the son-in-law of Sultan Mahmud, was killed by his own soldiers, Sultan Mahmud marched in person into the area, defeated the insurgents, put their ringleaders to the sword and entrusted the government of this frontier region to his Chamberlain, Yalangtush, ending Farighunid rule in Guzganan in the process (Juzjani 1970, i:85n). During Mahmud's reign Guzganan was used as a prison and place of banishment for state prisoners, including the Ghaznavid ruler's younger brother, Isma'il, who had dared to dispute Mahmud's succession following the death of their father, Sabuktagin (Barthol'd, 265; Juzjani 1970, i:232, 390, 394).[29]

The Farighunid dynasty was renowned for its patronage of the arts and its court became the resort of poets and scholars. The most famous surviving manuscript dedicated to one of these rulers is the anonymous geographical work, the *Hudud al-'Alam*, compiled by a resident of Guzganan in 372/982-3. According to this work, the Farighunid dominions encompassed Al-Yahudhan (Maimana); the present-day district of Gurziwan; Gharchistan; Talqan (of Badghis); Anbar (Sar-i Pul); Antkhudh (Andkhui); Usburghan (Shibarghan),

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compassed all the tributaries and head waters which flow into the Murghab river. Ghor lay south of Gharchistan and was the name used to described the region which encompassed the feeder streams of the Hari Rud.

[26] Raverty ii, 702.

[27] One of Sultan Mahmud's daughters married 'Abbas-i Ma'mun Farighun.

[28] Raverty ii, 851ff. Minorsky in his notes to the *Hudud al-'Alam* says Abu Nasr may not have been Wali of Guzganan ("Gawngan") but, as the son of the then Farighunid ruler Abu'l-Haris, he had been made commander of the army sent to the aid of Sultan Mahmud.

[29] According to the *Tabaqat-i Nasiri* (Juzjani 1970:i. 81, 397), Isma'il was banished to the fort of Kalinyar of Juzjanan.

and Far-yab[30] (*Hudud al-'Alam*, 4-5). The area was very fertile, well-populated and prosperous. It was particularly noted for its walnuts; a crop which is still grown extensively in the valleys of Gurziwan.

Al-Yahudhan was the residence of the *malik* of Guzganan and nearby at Dar-i Andarra was a strongly fortified military camp. Antkhudh, though a place of cultivation, possessed "few amenities." Anbir was the capital of the principality of Guzganan and an important trading centre, noted particularly for leather. Shibarghan, apart from its, "amenities and ... running water" was not the residence of any major political figure (*Hudud al-'Alam,* 107).[31]

It was over this idyllic, fertile region, that the Mongol Hordes broke like an irresistible tidal wave, sweeping aside the ancient order and changing forever the political and economic face of Balkh.

[30] In the pre-Mongol period, Far-yab was the most important fortress between Balkh and the Murghab. A debate still exists as to its exact location, but the ruins must lie somewhere between Maimana and Andkhui, probably in the area of Yangi Qal'a. Le Strange, 425 identifies it with Khairabad. In the late 1970s Frantz Grenet of DAFA reported extensive ruins in the area of the settlement of Shirin Tagab, which may be the site of Far-yab. It was destroyed by the Mongols and, although the name reappears in later centuries, the centre of trade and population shifted to Maimana. According to Tabari, the town of Far-yab was founded by Firun, the *mardana* of Tukharistan. Raverty says the name Far-yab refers to lands, or tracts of land, watered by means of rivers, canals or *karez*.

[31] Wahidi 1977, 76 quotes the following couplet about the Farighunid period in Gurziwan from Furukhi (Browne ii, 124-9), a contemporary of Firdausi:

در دیار گوزگانان اندرین عهد قریب  چار چیز نامور کرد از پی مزدو ثواب

مسجد آدینه و عالی منار میمنه  سدرود سود یاب و جوی آب نو سراب

CHAPTER TWO

# THE ORIGIN OF THE BALKH APPANAGE, 1220-1722

> BALKH, a large and flourishing town which was formerly the residence of the Sasanian kings. In it are found buildings of the Sasanian kings with paintings and wonderful works which have fallen into ruins, called Nau-bahar. [It] is a resort of merchants and is very pleasant and prosperous. It is the emporium of Hindustan (*Hudud al-'Alam*, 108).

## *From the Mongol Invasions to Timur Lang, 1220-1381*

The arrival of the Mongol Hordes changed the political, economic and ethnic face of the Balkh area and laid the foundation of half a millennium of Chingizid sovereignty over the region. In 617/1220 Chingiz Khan's armies crossed the Amu Darya to avenge the assassination of Mongol envoys at the hands of the Khwarazmian Shah, Muhammad Shah. Balkh, terrified by the Mongols' systematic massacre of cities which resisted their advance, surrendered unconditionally. The mobile Mongol army moved on swiftly through Badghis to Herat,[1] whilst Muhammad Shah ordered the strengthening of his northern defences: a series of impregnable hill forts in the mountains of Guzganan and Gharchistan (Juzjani 1970, i, 363).[2]

The following year, 618/1221, the Mongol army, having devastated Khurasan, returned to Balkh, which had rebelled, took the city by storm and systematically put over fifty thousand inhabitants of the city to death. The sacking of Balkh reduced this ancient metropolis into a heap of ruins (Le Strange, 421).[3] In December the Mongol army besieged Herat, which had also revolted and when it, too, eventually fell a further general massacre took place after which, according to Saifi's *Tarikh Nama-yi Herat*, "no head was left on a body, nor body with a head" (*CHI* v, 316).[4] Over the next three years one after another of the great mountain strongholds of Guzganan, Badghis and Gharchistan was systematically reduced by the Mongols, though often

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[1] Raverty iii, 1147.
[2] Raverty iii, 1148ff.
[3] Raverty iii, 1150.
[4] Raverty iii, 1195.

at great cost to the invaders. Presumed to be impregnable, hill forts such as Nasr Koh of Talqan, Tuluk of Gharchistan, Walkh, Kalyun, Fiwar, Kadas (Qadis?), Ashiyar, Zang ('Rang'), Bandar ('Bindar'), Laghri and many others fell one after another to the invaders, their defenders slaughtered to a man and their ancient defences thrown down (Barthol'd, 455).[5]

The Mongols' systematic extermination of the urban population, combined with their scorched earth policy, which was primarily designed to prevent further rebellions, led to a massive depopulation of the once-populous regions of Herat and Balkh. It also produced severe famine as agricultural activity ground to a halt and the huge herds of sheep and cattle which, as well as providing food and clothing for the population were the main source of income for many, were either slaughtered or seized by the Mongols to feed their own hordes. What population remained after these human locusts had passed through was therefore left without either the means of subsistence or sufficient resources for future planting and breeding programmes. The ancient irrigation systems that had been the lifeblood of the Balkh plains and which had survived innumerable conquests, were destroyed, or fell into disrepair, leaving the desert to fill the vacuum. It is little wonder that Juzjani, the author of the *Tabaqat-i Nasiri*, who was an eyewitness of these terrible events, along with other Muslim historians, felt unable to describe the terrors of the invasions until many years had passed (see, Browne i, 427-34).[6] When, finally, he put pen to paper, the horror of what he had witnessed, still permeated his work.

> From the confines of Balkh and Shibarghan on the east to the neighbourhood of Dawighan on the west, a distance of about seven hundred and fifty miles as the crow flies, the few remaining people, for the period of a full year, had to sustain life on the flesh of dogs and cats and human beings, for this reason that the forces of Chingiz Khan had burnt all the stores, barns and granaries leaving not a grain of corn, and no cultivation whatever existed.[7]

For several decades following the Mongol devastations, cities such as Herat and Balkh were like ghost towns, whilst other important centres of trade, industry and agriculture, such as Talqan of Badghis and Faryab had been reduced to mounds of rubble and were doomed never to

[5] Raverty iii, 1182; iv, 1220-3.
[6] Raverty iii, 1202.
[7] Raverty iii, 1200, from the *Tabaqat-i Nasiri*.

rise out of the ashes. Even today, in areas such as Gurziwan, evidence of the extent of the Mongol devastations can be seen everywhere. Abandoned hill-forts, like the ones in Darra-yi Zang and Ghulbiyan, abound, along with substantial remains of what must have been considerable settlements, such as the site near the village of Darra-yi Shakh where the skulls and bones of the slaughtered defenders still litter the base of the site (Grenet, Lee, Pinder-Wilson 1980; Lee 1982).

Mongol antipathy to urban civilisation, which was rooted in their strongly pastoral, tribal and nomadic tradition, wrought immense changes in the demographic and economic life of the region. Under successive Chingizid governments, Badghis and Maimana were no longer regarded as important trade or agricultural centres, instead they became renowned for their "delightful and paradise-like meads and pastures"[8] which provided high-quality, all-year-round grazing and water for the Mongol war horses and their cattle. Later, Badghis was used by the Chingizid hordes as a safe haven beyond the Murghab, from where campaigns against Khurasan and Khwarazm could be launched, and the resurgence of more sedentary activity and urbanisation only really began again during the eighteenth century, some five hundred years later.

Chingiz Khan died in 624/1227 and his empire was divided amongst his sons, with Ögedei succeeding his father as the Great Khan. Under his more benign rule Khurasan and the Cis-Oxus territory was able to begin the slow process of recovery from the devastations of the earlier invasions (Barthol'd, 463-7). Herat, Badghis and parts of western Balkh eventually came under the control of the Kurt dynasty of Herat. This family were descendants of the Ghorid governor of Qaisar, Taj al-Din 'Osman-i Marghini, whose brother was wazir to the conqueror of Delhi, Sultan Ghiyas al-Din Muhammad (d. 599/1202-3) and initially governed the region as feudatories of the Chingizid Il-Khan (Browne iii, 160). When Taj al-Din died his son, Malik Rukn al-Din Abu Bakr, married the daughter of the Ghorid monarch. Their son, Shams al-Din, succeeded to Qaisar in 643/1245-6, participated in the invasion of India the following year, and was subsequently appointed to the governorship of Herat. His territory included Ghor, Qaisar, Firoz-Koh, Gharchistan, the Murghab and Far-yab as far north as the banks of the Amu Darya (Browne iii, 174-5).

[8] Raverty iv, 1382-3, from 'Abdullah al-Wassaf.

In the spring of 670/1270 Badghis was again overrun, this time by the Chaghatai amir, Baraq Khan, of the Golden Horde. His advance against Marichaq forced Tüshin, the younger brother of the Abaqa, the Il-Khanid ruler, to retire to Mazdaran. The Chaghatai warrior next seized Shibarghan and made Talqan of Badghis his headquarters for operations against Khurasan. Baraq's *ulus*, numbering some one hundred to one hundred and fifty thousand horsemen, spread themselves throughout the area and let their horses and cattle recuperate on the rich pasturelands (*CHI* v, 356-8).[9]

Baraq's invasion created something of a dilemma for Shams al-Din, caught as he was between the Chaghatais and the advancing army of Abaqa. In the end he withdrew to his fortress of Qaisar to await the outcome of the confrontation of the two warlords. In July 617/1270 the Chaghatai forces were soundly defeated on the bank of the Hari Rud and the victorious Il-Khan reconfirmed Shams al-Din Kurt as governor in Herat, though as a result of his equivocation he was never again completely trusted by his Mongol overlords (*CHI* v, 329-30).[10] In 677/1278-9 Shams al-Din was supplanted by his son, Rukn al-Din (d. 705/1305), and he retired to Qaisar, where he remained until his death in 704/1304 (Browne iii, 176).[11] Rukn al-Din in turn, was set aside by his son, Fakhr al-Din. He had been imprisoned for seven years by his father and was only released after the intercession of the Mongol general, Nauroz. Fakhr al-Din, in order to protect his territories in Badghis, allowed the Nikudari tribes, described by one source as "sanguinary, fearless and violent,"[12] to settle in the area and gave them freedom to raid Kohistan, Farah, Sigistan and Guzganan (Barthol'd, 'Juzarwan'). Their arrival led to a further reign of

[9] Raverty iv, 1280. Raverty's history of the various Chingizid dynasties of Balkh relies heavily on the important, unpublished Persian manuscript, *Bahr al-Asrar fi Manaqib al-Akhyar* ("The Sea of Secrets Relative to the Virtues of the Most Excellent") of Mahmud b. Amir Wali of Balkh (born *c.* 1004/1595-6). This work, commissioned by Nazr Muhammad Khan, the Tuqay-Timurid ruler of Balkh, was completed in 1050/1640. Footnoted references to Raverty down to Shah Jahan's invasion of Balkh are mainly taken from his translation of the appropriate sections of this manuscript. Two incomplete manuscripts of the *Bahr al-Asrar* exist, one in the India Office Library in London (presumably Raverty's copy) ms. no. 575; and one in the Oriental Institute, Tashkent (IVAN, ms. no. 1375). The Institute of Central and W. Asian Studies of Karachi has published a translation of the Travelogue (with Persian transcript) which is an account of Mahmud Balkhi's travels to India in 1033/1624, prior to receiving the commission from Nazr Muhammad to write his history, but the historical sections of this important manuscript have yet to be translated.

[10] Raverty iv, 1280, 1284.

[11] Raverty iv, 1329.

[12] Raverty iv, 1307.

terror for the people of the region as the Nikudaris pillaged agricultural settlements and carried away young children at will.[13]

Fakhr al-Din's support of these lawless tribesmen brought him into conflict with his Il-Khanid overlords. In 706/1306 he was forced to admit a garrison, and a governor was installed in the city to keep Fakhr al-Din under control. A short time later, however, he rebelled and put the Herat garrison to the sword with the consequence that in February of the following year Herat was again besieged. The death of Fakhr al-Din during this investment, combined with internal dissension amongst the Il-Khanid besiegers, facilitated a peaceful settlement of the dispute and under the governorship of Fakhr al-Din's brother and successor, Ghiyas al-Din, the boundaries of Kurt territory actually expanded (Browne iii, 176; *CHI* v, 401). By 713/1314-5 Kurt dependencies included Isfizar, Darra-yi Qal'a-yi Koh, Gharchistan and "Guzarwan."[14] The ravages of the Black Death gave Herat a further opportunity to expand Kurt borders and by 747/1346-7 Shibarghan and Andkhui (Indakhud) were included within its borders (Browne iii, 177).[15] The lawless Nikudaris were brought under a measure of central control, which, in turn, encouraged immigration and resettlement. Amongst those who arrived were the Arlat tribes, who established their camping grounds in "Guzarwan."[16] These military successes, however, were but the death throes of the dynasty, for the Kurts were soon to be swept away by the irresistible power of Timur Lang.

*The Timurids, 1381-1501*

Timur Lang (b. 736/1336) came from the Barlas tribe whose family were related to the Chingizids through marriage (*CHI* vi, 42-3). He spent the early part of his reign consolidating his hold on Transoxiana and his first major incursion south of the Oxus did not take place until 782/1381. Timur's primary objective in crossing the Amu Darya was to bring to heel the Kurt ruler of Herat, Ghiyas al-Din, who had shown every inclination to rebel (*CHI* vi, 47-8). However, before attacking the city, Timur sought the advice of Hazrat Ishan[17] Baba

[13] *Ibid.*

[14] Raverty iv, 1374.

[15] Raverty iv, 1380-3, 1436.

[16] Raverty iv, 1462.

[17] The title *ishān*, or ***ēshān***, as it is pronounced in Afghanistan, is synonymous with *saiyid* and is used frequently by Uzbeks, Turkmans and Tadjiks on both sides of the border to desig-

Wali, or Baba Sangu, of Andkhui (d. 787/1386) (McChesney 1991, 43; C. E. Yate, 347), an important Naqshbandi shaikh who was held in high esteem by Timur and his amirs.[18] Indeed, today Baba Wali's tomb, located north-west of the modern bazaar, is the most important shrine in Andkhui.[19]

In response to this request for guidance, Baba Sangu hurled raw meat at the head of Timur, an action which was interpreted as a sign of divine favour and ultimate victory. Fortified by the favourable augury, Timur laid siege to Herat whilst his son, Miran Shah, raided Badghis and around the Murghab, requisitioning fodder and cattle (Browne iii, 186-7).[20] When Herat finally surrendered in the following year, Timur ordered the walls to be pulled down and many of the city's artisans and scholars were forcibly transported to Shahr-i Sabz. Ghiyas al-Din, however, managed to survive as governor of Herat, at least for a few months, but was soon accused of planning a rebellion and Miran Shah was sent to replace him, thereby ending one hundred and thirty years of Kurt rule in Herat (*CHI* vi, 48).

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those who claim descent from the prophet Muhammad. The term is also used, more specifically, for *saiyid*s who are *pir*s or *shaikh*s of one, or other, of the sub-sects of the Naqshbandi Order.

[18] Under the Chingizid system of government an amir was a military commander, usually the head of a Chingizid tribe. In the nineteenth century, however, the same title was used by the Afghan rulers of Kabul. To differentiate, I have used lower case italics for the Chingizid amirs and capitalised the word only when reference is made to the Afghan Amirs of Qandahar and Kabul.

[19] In 1885, C. E. Yate and Munshi Allah Bakhsh of the Afghan Boundary Commission visited the Ishan's tomb. The interior wall of the shrine had an inscription which, unfortunately, they did not record. The dedicatory inscription on the latticed iron grill around the tomb, read:

> On the 20th. Zu'l-Hijja 1088 (13 Feb. 1678) ... during the reign of the Great Khan, Rahmatullah Khan, a much-respected Sirdar of Turkistan, the Hakim of Andkhui—may God protect him from the envious eyes!—the son of the gracious, the greater than the great, the late pardoned Niyaz Mahomed Khan Wali of Ummal Bulad ... the lattice-work of the blessed and sacred shrine of the Chief of Saints and Priests, Baba Sangu, the brave—may God make his grave happy and turn it into paradise!—was completely and safely finished.

The grave was later covered by a wooden frame erected "by the order of Alijah Amin-ul-Doulah, Mir Daulat Khan" in 1289/1872-3 (C. E. Yate 1888, 347-8). Mir Daulat Khan [1865-*c.* 1884] was the last Afshar ruler of Andkhui. I am grateful to Erges Uçkun of the Chopandaz Society of New Jersey for his sketch of Andkhui and information on the Afshar dynasty. This inscription and latttice work has not, apparently survived and was probably removed during the reeign of Nadir Shah [1929-1933] (*personal observation*, May 1995).

[20] Raverty iv, 1467-9. In 1885 Afghan Boundary Commission surveyors reported that tribes in the Deh Miran area of Gurziwan claimed to have been placed in the the region by Timur. They numbered some twelve thousand families of "Uzbeks" (probably Chaghatais) drawn from six sub-clans (Maitland 1888, 231).

In the years that followed, Timur turned his attention to Persia and Asia Minor and in the process probably caused more devastation than the Mongols had a century and a half earlier. In 799/1397 Shah Rukh, another of Timur's sons, became governor of Khurasan with his capital at Herat and, in 806/1403-4, Timur, returning from his victories in the west and on his way to the *quriltai*, or tribal assembly, which was to lead to the invasion of China, passed through Badghis. At Chichaktu the local tax collector (*darugha*) was convicted of extortion and was hung. From there, Timur made a pilgrimage to the shrines in Andkhui,[21] which he had previously placed under the overall supervision of his personal spiritual adviser, Saiyid Baraka (d. 806/1404) (McChesney 1991, 43), and also made the journey to the tomb of Shaikhzada Bayazid (Sultan Abu Yazid Bastami)[22] near Aibak, before returning across the Amu Darya (McChesney 1991, 121).[23]

Following Timur's death in 807/1405 his grandson, Pir Muhammad b. Jahangir, succeeded him, but disputes over the succession were not long in surfacing and Timur's vast empire was torn apart by internecine feuds. Samarkand fell into the hands of another of Timur's grandsons, Khalil Sultan b. Miran Shah, who was later joined by Mirza Sultan Husain, a son of Timur's daughter. Following serious military reverses, Mirza Husain was forced to flee first to Andkhui and then to Shibarghan, where he was received well by Sulaiman. But an army was sent across the Amu Darya against him and he sought asylum with Shah Rukh in Herat, who had his rival put to death (*CHI* vi, 100).[24]

Shah Rukh, meanwhile, consolidated his own hold over the Cis-Oxus territory and appointed his young son, Ulugh Beg, as governor of Andkhui and Shibarghan, under the tutelage of an *ataliq*, Shah Malik (Browne iii, 386). Eventually Shah Rukh marched his army across the Amu Darya and, in May 1409 (811), entered Samarkand without opposition, Khalil Sultan having abandoned the area some time earlier. Ulugh Beg, with the assistance of his ataliq, was made governor of Transoxiana, Shah Rukh preferring to rule the empire from Herat (Browne iii, 381-2; *CHI* vi, 98-101).

During the reign of Shah Rukh, the Great Plague of 838/1435 caused the deaths of over one million people in Khurasan. In Herat,

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[21] Baba Wali was dead by this time.

[22] See nn. 35, 36 and text for the link between the shaikhs and *ziyarats* of Andkhui and Aibak.

[23] Raverty iv, 1491.

[24] Raverty iv, 1495.

four thousand seven hundred persons died in a single day and in the four months and eight days that the plague raged in the city, a total of six hundred thousand people perished.[25] When Shah Rukh died, in 850/1447, general anarchy prevailed throughout the region, as the Black and White Sheep Turkman invasions and the continued civil war between the Timurid princes led to further dismemberment of the empire. Ulugh Beg succeeded his father, but his brief reign was a troubled one. Herat was seized by 'Ala al-Daula, a son of Baisunqur b. Shah Rukh but in the spring of 852/1448 'Abd al-Latif, Ulugh Beg's son, managed to defeat him and take control of Mashhad and Herat (Browne iii, 386-7; *CHI* vi, 106-7). 'Ala al-Daula fled to Shibarghan, then to Balkh and finally found refuge in Badakhshan (Browne iii, 388).[26]

Ulugh Beg's success was short-lived. As he returned from Herat to winter in Bukhara, he was first of all badly defeated by Abu'l-Qasim Babur, another son of Baisunqur, and subsequently by the Uzbeks, as he was fording the Amu Darya (*CHI* vi, 108). This series of embarrassing defeats was followed by the rebellion of his own son, 'Abd al-Latif, whom he had made governor of Balkh. Following his defeat near Samarkand in the autumn of 853/1449, Ulugh Beg voluntarily surrendered himself to his son who allowed him to depart on Hajj, though he ensured that his father never reached his destination (*CHI* vi, 108-9). 'Abd al-Latif's reign lasted all of six months before he too was assassinated and succeeded by 'Abdullah b. Ibrahim, another grandson of Shah Rukh. He, in turn, was opposed from Bukhara by Sultan Abu Sa'id, a grandson of Miran Shah, who defeated and executed 'Abdullah in 855/1451 with the help of the powerful Uzbek general, Abu'l-Khair Khan. Abu Sa'id managed to hold onto power for some eighteen years and in 858/1454 succeeded in regaining control of Balkh and Herat (Browne iii, 388; *CHI* vi, 111-2).[27]

The fall of these two strategic regions precipitated an invasion of Transoxiana by Abu'l-Qasim Babur, whose fortunes had revived following significant military successes in Khurasan. After besieging Samarkand in the summer of 856/1452 'Abu Sa'id agreed to recognise the Amu Darya as their mutual border. Following Abu'l-Qasim Babur's death in 861/1457 his son and heir, Mahmud, was forced out of Herat by another Timurid prince, Ibrahim b. 'Ala al-Daula, who

[25] Raverty iv, 1545-7.
[26] Raverty iv, 1587.
[27] Raverty iv, 1617-9.

himself was obliged to abandon Balkh by the arrival of Abu Sa'id and only managed to reach his capital of Herat by using the difficult mountain routes south of Gurziwan (*CHI* vi, 113).[28]

The fratricidal strife left the door open for an attack by Jahan Shah, the commander of the Black Sheep Turkman, who had carved out a territory for himself in Central Persia and Mesopotamia from the wreckage of Timur's empire. In 862/1458 he took Herat and assumed the rights of *khutba* and coinage, though a rebellion in Azerbaijan soon forced him to make peace with the Timurids. Under the terms of the treaty, Herat was returned to Abu Sa'id (*CHI* vi, 113-5). Abu Sa'id was finally captured and put to death by Uzun Hasan of the White Sheep Turkman in 872/1468, after he had foolishly tried to re-impose Timurid authority over these tribes (*CHI* vi, 115-7). His death led to further fragmentation of Timurid possessions. In April of that same year, Prince Sultan Husain b. Mansur b. Baiqara, entered Herat without a struggle and reigned for thirty seven years over Herat and Balkh (*CHI* vi, 121, 124).

Sultan Husain's peaceful succession was mainly due to the support he had received from Zain al-Abidun and his uncle, Muzaffar al-Din Pir Muhammad, the amirs of the Arlat tribes of Qaisar and Maimana.[29] Having secured Shibarghan and Balkh for Sultan Husain, the Arlats next defeated an army sent against them by Abu Sa'id's heir, Sultan Mahmud, who promptly fled, leaving the amirs free to invite Sultan Husain to take over control of Herat's affairs (*CHI* vi, 121-2). Some years later, in 875/1470, Sultan Husain Baiqara was himself forced out of Herat after Yadgar Muhammad, the Timurid assassin of Abu Sa'id, took his capital with the support of Uzun Hasan. Sultan Husain fled to Qaisar, where he strengthened his alliance with the Arlats by marrying a daughter of one of their chiefs, possibly Latif Sultan Aghacha of Chahar Shanbeh (Babur, 269). After rallying his forces in Maimana, Sultan Husain marched via Almar to Langar and, in a surprise night attack, recaptured Herat and put the drunken Yadgar Muhammad to death. From this point onwards, the descendants of Shah Rukh disappeared from the political arena (Babur, 260; *CHI* vi, 122).[30] Sultan Husain's victory, however, was not achieved without

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[28] *Ibid.*

[29] According to Raverty some eight Arlat *mings* or *hazaras* had occupied this area since *c.*1220, following its conquest by Chingiz Khan, and had remained there from that time forth, Raverty v (i), 1698, 1707, 1725; v (ii), 1923.

[30] Raverty v (i), 1707-12.

cost; the Arlat amir, Pir Muhammad Mirza Sultan of Maimana, being killed during the course of the campaign (Babur, 260).[31]

The death of Yadgar Muhammad dashed Uzun Hasan's hope of dominating Khurasan and Sultan Husain wisely refrained from antagonising the Turkman. During Sultan Husain's long reign, stability and prosperity began to return to the Cis-Oxus area, which had been ravaged by decades of civil war and natural catastrophes. He proclaimed exemption from taxes for two years to all sub-districts and the towns and villages thereof, and the country which had lain neglected was brought under cultivation and began to flourish. Vale and hill were made to bloom, buildings erected, canals opened or repaired, and from Murghab to Merv-i Shah Jan, from Sarrakhs to Merv, the land was cultivated and grew prosperous.[32] Sultan Husain was also a noted patron of the arts. Among the many great artists and literary figures who flourished during his reign, were the poet, 'Ali Sher Nawa'i (b. 844/1441) and the miniaturist, Bihzad.

Another notable event during the reign of Sultan Husain Baiqara was the rediscovery, in 885/1480-1, of the uncorrupted body of 'Ali b. Abi Talib, the cousin and son-in-law of Muhammad, at Khwaja Khair (now Mazar-i Sharif), a small village on the Nahr-i Shahi canal, twelve miles east of Balkh. According to some sources, an earlier mausoleum, built by Sultan Sanjar, had been destroyed by the Mongol invaders (Barthol'd, 79; McChesney 1991, 26-36).[33] Despite overwhelming historical evidence which showed that, following his assassination by Kharijites in 40/661, 'Ali's remains had been interred at Kufa, Sultan Husain gave almost instant official recognition to the rival claims of Khwaja Khair and endowed it in an appropriately munificent fashion (McChesney 1991, 35, 39-45).[34]

[31] Raverty v (i), 1725, 1732.

[32] Raverty v (i), 1716, from the *Bahr al-Asrar*. Yate 1888, 349, claimed, on basis of local hearsay, that in 875-6/1470 a certain Niyaz Khan was granted the governorship of Andkhui by Sultan Husain in place of Shahbash Khan, a Chulash Turkman, and became the primogenitor of the Afshar dynasty of Andkhui, which lasted until the middle of the nineteenth century.

[33] The sources for the discovery of the grave of 'Ali in 530/1135-6 have recently been published and discussed in Prof. McChesney's study of the shrine of Mazar-i Sharif. See too, Faiz Bakhsh, *Badakhshan*, 10-11.

[34] As we have seen in chapter 1, Balkh had had a long association in the popular mind as a cult centre. Achaemenid Bactra had been the focus of the worship of Anahita in her temple of Zariaspa and, later, Balkh was equally renowned for its Buddhist complex of Nava Vihara, or Nau Bahar. Though this shrine was destroyed in the reign of Caliph 'Osman (d. 35/655) (Barthol'd, 77), as late as the last quarter of the tenth century AD it is recorded that the ruins of Nau Bahar, including "paintings (*naqsha*) and other wonderful works (*karkird*)," were still visible (*Hudud al-'Alam*, 108). The refounding of the shrine to the Imam, therefore, could be construed as an attempt to justify long-standing cult practices associated with Balkh and the

Sultan Husain set aside as *waqf* all of the villages fed by the Nahr-i Shahi canal and appointed one of the Andkhui shaikhs,[35] Saiyid Taj al-Din, a descendant of Saiyid Baraka (d. 1404) the spiritual adviser of Timur Lang, as *naqib* and as shaikh, Shams al-Din Muhammad (McChesney 1991, 42-3), a descendant of Abu Yazid Bastami (d. *c.* 877/1472-3), the great Sufi saint whom Timur Lang had held in some veneration (Arberry, 100).[36]

The appointment of these two individuals to the dual guardianship of the newly-established shrine and *waqf*, demonstrated Sultan Husain's skilful manipulation of the discovery to unify disparate religio-political elements within his empire after decades of civil war. The naqib's lineage linked him directly with the first and second Shi'i Imams, whilst the shaikh's background would have satisfied the numerous followers of the mystical Orders. Sultan Husain's apparently uncritical acceptance of the authenticity of the shrine provided official, Sunni legitimacy. Thus the 'Alid shrine sought to transcend diverse and conflicting religious elements (McChesney 1991, 42, 44), a tradition which has continued down to the present, where the dual festivals of Nauroz and *Gul-i Surkh* ('Red Rose', or 'Red Flower')

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Hazhda Nahr canal system, by linking the area with one of the most important religious and political figures of early Islam. This hypothesis finds support from the nature of the annual festival with which the shrine is inextricably linked. Despite being the presumed resting place of the Imam, the annual festival of Nauroz and the Janda Bala ceremony have nothing whatever to do with 'Ali, his martyred sons, Shi'ism nor, indeed, with any figure of Islamic history. Early in the morning of the first day of the Persian/Zoroastrian New Year, which always begins in Afghanistan at the equinox (21 March), a large pole (*janda*) is raised in the forecourt of the shrine, amid prayers for the success of the coming year's crops. Once erected, the pole becomes a focus of healing for the myriads of sick, crippled and mentally-afflicted pilgrims who congregate in the town during the festival.

[35] The Andkhui shaikhs were probably from the same family as the *saiyids* of the *ziyarat* of Charda Ma'sum that lies to the west of the Maimana gate and which C. E. Yate visited in 1885. He reported that, although three of the tombstones had no inscription, the others, belonging to four men, five women and two children, were all descended from 'Ali b. Abi Talib through the line of Husain. The earliest dated tomb was of Amir Saiyid 'Abd al-Matlab (889/1484) (Yate says 1472); the latest, that of "Hamidah Bano daughter of Saiyid Muhammad Kasim," gave the date of her decease as Shaban 984 (Oct./Nov. 1576) (C. E. Yate 1888, 348-9). Yate also reported that the shrine had a Kufic inscription on the interior walls but did not record it. Some of the names of the later Afshar dynasty of Andkhui, e.g. Ghazanfar Khan, also suggest an Imami influence in Andkhui and this may be one reason why a *saiyid* from the area was chosen as the first *naqib* of Khwaja Khair. The shaikhs of Andkhui had played an important part in Timur's conquest of Khurasan and Herat.

[36] There is an interesting link between Abu Yazid and the Mazar-i Sharif shrine. This saint, also known as Sultan Bayazid, is buried in Bastam in Khurasan but the shrine of Hazrat Sultan, between Aibak and Khulm, has "for centuries maintained a regional authority" as the burial place of this saint (McChesney 1991, 120-1). Both shrines are thus rivals to the historic burial places of these saints further west.

attract a huge following from all three sectarian traditions of Afghanistan.[37] During the forty days of Gul-i Surkh, Sunni, Shi'i and Sufi rub shoulders under the protection of a sacred truce with no one faction demanding, or claiming, exclusive rights over the shrine. This dual administration of the Mazar-i Sharif shrine continued probably at least into the second half of the sixteenth century, after which members of the Ansari family, descendants of Khwaja 'Abdullah Ansari of Herat (d. 481/1088) took over as *mutawalli*s, or guardians, of the complex, and have maintained their hereditary rights over the shrine down to the present day (McChesney 1991, 41-2).

The rebellion of Sultan Husain's sons, and particularly Badi' al-Zaman Mirza in Balkh, weakened the northern frontier of Sultan Husain's territory, for although he managed to defeat his offspring in a battle near Belcheragh (902/1487)[38] and subsequently patched up their quarrel, the fragile unity of the rump Timurid empire was increasingly threatened by the propensity of the princes to resort to arms at the slightest provocation. Consequently, when the rising power of the Uzbeks finally decided to challenge Sultan Husain for supremacy, Timurid rule was quickly swept aside.

*The Shaibanid Invasions, 1501-1526*

Despite their name, the Uzbeks were not the direct descendants of the Mongol warrior, Uzbek Khan, ruler of the Golden Horde [1312-1340], though Shaibani Khan (b. 855/1451) himself was a Chingizid, being a descendant of Juchi through Abu'l-Khair Khan. Originally the term Uzbek was used by Chingizid historians to designate all the Turco-Mongol tribes of the White Horde and it was only much later that the term was equated with a dynasty, or used in its present ethno-linguistic sense. Claims that the Uzbeks were the early converts to Islam amongst the Chingizid armies, or that a

[37] In the spring of 1993, whilst fighting was raging between the various politico-religious factions in Kabul, people of all racial groups in Mazar- Sharif, including the newly-arrived refugees from Kabul, were keen to attribute the relative peacefulness of town to the presence of the shrine. That the *Rauza* is still regarded by the ordinary people of Afghanistan as a symbol of unification and integration in a country of such racial and sectarian diversity, is perhaps as fitting a tribute to Sultan Husain Baiqara and the Chingizids as one can find.

[38] "Pilah Chiragh," Raverty v (i), 1755. Badi' al-Zaman fled to the high passes and mountains to the south, "which it was impossible to descend, even on foot." The fleeing soldiers were forced to dismount from their horses and linked themselves together by using their turbans and kamarbands like ropes (Babur, 260; Erskine, 151).

genealogical link existed with Uzbek Khan, are myths of more recent vintage (see, McChesney 1991, 47-8; Erskine, 28, 235ff.).[39]

The Uzbeks had been enlisted by Abu Sa'id in his bid to bring the Timurid empire under his sole control, but the weakness of the Timurid princes and the state of almost constant civil war which prevailed in their empire, merely allowed the Uzbeks to become all-powerful. It was not long before Shaibani Khan seized control of parts of Transoxiana from the Timurids and established himself as an independent power. In 906/1501, having forced the young Zahir al-Din Babur out of Ferghana, Shaibani Khan took Samarkand (Babur, 146ff.) and within a matter of months most of Transoxiana had fallen into Uzbek hands. Shaibani Khan next turned his attention to the province of Balkh and attacked across the Amu Darya. Faced with such a formidable foe, Badi' al-Zaman quit the city, leaving it in charge of his young son. In order to avoid the Uzbeks, who were raiding and pillaging in the plains to the north, the Sultan took the difficult mountain route through Darra-yi Jauz, Gurziwan and Chichaktu. When he finally reached Herat, he begged his aged father to come to his aid,[40] but Sultan Husain procrastinated as to how best to respond to this latest threat to his dominions. Meanwhile, the amirs whom Badi' al-Zaman had left behind in Balkh took the opportunity to fight amongst themselves,[41] thus exposing the province to the tender mercies of the rampaging Uzbeks, who even succeeded, howbeit briefly, in occupying the strategic town of Qunduz (Babur, 242; Erskine, 226).

The main opposition to the Uzbek incursions came from Zahir al-Din Babur, the future Mughal ruler of Delhi, who tried his utmost to spur Sultan Husain into decisive action. But the elderly and infirm Timurid ruler failed to grasp the desperateness of his situation and merely offered Babur a defensive alliance between Mughal and Timurid. Babur, outraged at this feckless strategy, angrily retorted, "how could hope live in tribe or horde when a great ruler like Sultan Husain Mirza ... spoke, not of marching forth to meet the enemy, but only of defence against attack?" (Babur, 191).

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[39] Afghan sources in the last century confused the issue even more by using 'Uzbek' to describe any sedentary, semi-urbanised, Turkic people in the former appanage of Balkh; a confusion which European writers and the Afghan Boundary Commission surveyors (1884-1886) compounded.

[40] Badi' al-Zaman had previously refused to help Babur against the Uzbeks (Babur, 138, 191, 242).

[41] Raverty v (i), 1780. Amir 'Osman, a Turkman, took advantage of the prince's absence to occupy Shibarghan.

Fortunately for Sultan Husain, the Uzbeks were not bent on permanent conquest, at least for the moment, and they retired across the river. Any hope that their incursion was an aberration, however, was dispelled when, in 911/1505, the Uzbeks returned with even greater violence, carrying destruction and devastation as far south as Far-yab and Maimana.[42] Balkh, too, was briefly occupied and Khurram Shah, the Uzbek amir's five year old son, who was related, on the female side, to Babur, was appointed as the new governor (McChesney 1991, 68-9).[43]

Having secured control of the provincial capital, the Shaibanids marched on eastwards, overrunning Badakhshan. Sultan Husain, finally roused to action, appealed to Babur who had recently captured Kabul. The Mughal ruler ordered his army to march to Herat through the mountainous Hazarajat (Babur, 295), but when they reached Kahmard a messenger arrived from Herat with news that Sultan Husain Baiqara had died.[44] Even though Babur had lost patience with the Timurid ruler over his refusal to confront the Uzbeks head-on, the Mughal ruler magnanimously recorded a glowing obituary of the last great Timurid in his memoirs. Despite this set-back, Babur continued his march, passing through the Ajar valley into the upper reaches of the Balkhab. At Saf Koh, intelligence was received that the Uzbeks were raiding around Sangcharak.[45] Qasim Beg was immediately sent against the invaders and defeated them soundly (Babur, 295). After a few days' rest in the meadows of Saf-Koh, which Babur spent in hunting wild sheep and goats, various tribal leaders came and pledged their support. The Mughal army then marched through Gurziwan, Almar, Qaisar and Chichaktu to Darra-yi Bum in the mountains of Badghis, where Babur began to levy taxes (Babur, 296).

Meanwhile, the two sons of Sultan Husain, more used to the good life than military campaigning, wasted valuable time gathering their forces at Herat before setting out for the Murghab. The loyal Arlat

[42] Raverty v (i), 1788.

[43] His mother was Khanzada Begum, a full sister of Babur, who had been forcibly married to Shaibani Khan after his successful conquest of Samarkand (Babur, 18).

[44] Raverty v (i), 1790-2. He died in May 1506.

[45] Babur, 295 has "San and Chah-yak", Erskine, 23, "San and Charek, not far from his line of route." Neither place can be identified as Charikar, as suggested by Beveridge in her note, since this is in the Koh Daman, many miles in the opposite direction, south of the Hindu Kush, and a region where the Uzbek writ did not run. Sangcharak, some 35 miles (55 kms.) east of Sar-i Pul, is much more likely, for it lay ahead of Babur's line of advance. The Uzbeks had been raiding in the Maimana-Shibarghan area for several years, thus an attack on a town near Sar-i Pul would be more likely than one on Charikar.

amirs of Badghis, Qaisar and Maimana, left to fend for themselves, had been badly mauled by the Uzbeks—'Abd al-Qasim, Shiram of Jalayar and Baba Khan b. Khwaja Jalal al-Din Mirak, all being killed in action against the invaders.[46] The Arlats, however, managed to repulse an Uzbek attack on Panjdeh and Marichaq and inflicted heavy losses on the enemy with the help of the "Khurasan light troops and ... Zu'n-nun Beg" (Babur, 296).

Zahir al-Din Babur and the two Timurid princes finally joined forces at Bala Murghab on 26 October 1506. Even as they greeted each other, the Uzbeks, under Haq Nazir, were over-running Chichaktu, a matter of forty miles from their camp, and Babur immediately asked for the Mirzas' permission to launch a counter-attack. However, as the Mughal ruler records, the Timurid princes were "afraid for their own reputation ... [and] ... would not suffer me to move" (Erskine, 242). Indeed, far from going onto the offensive, Sultan Husain's sons urged Babur to winter at Murghab, a proposal to which he assented, taking the opportunity that this afforded to go on pilgrimage to Herat. Later that winter, anxiety about his still-fragile kingdom forced Babur to return to Kabul over the snow-bound passes of Ghor and united action against the Uzbeks was thus fatally postponed (Babur, 308; Erskine, 242).[47]

When winter had passed Shaibani Khan, at the head of fifty thousand men, returned across the Amu Darya, seized Andkhui and marched against the Timurid camp at Baba Khaki (Erskine, 259). As soon as news of the Uzbek advance reached them, the Timurid army melted away. Sultan Husain's sons fled without offering even token resistance in defence of their father's splendid heritage. Only Mir Zu'ulnun Beg, the great general of Sultan Husain, fortified by mystical promises that he would be the instrument by which the Uzbeks would be defeated, made a final, suicidal stand against the oncoming hordes and was cut to pieces, along with a handful of his most devoted followers (Erskine, 274).[48] A few days later Shaibani Khan entered Herat and Timurid rule in Herat ended in a whimper. The sons of Sultan Husain and other members of the royal line either died later in battle against the Uzbeks or were captured and executed by Shaibani Khan. Only Badi' al-Zaman survived for any length of time, dying

[46] Raverty v (i), 1788ff.
[47] Raverty v (i), 1797.
[48] Raverty v (i), 1799.

some ten years later, an exile at the court of Shah Isma'il Safawi (Erskine, 260).

Following the fall of Herat, the Uzbeks continued their inexorable march eastwards and for a while it seemed as if they were destined to follow in the footsteps of Chingiz Khan and Timur Lang. However, despite conquering most of Khurasan and destroying many of the Chaghatai-Timurid amirs, Shaibani Khan met two serious reverses during 915-6/1509-10; firstly against the Kazakhs in Transoxiana and then, when he attempted to conquer the Hazara and Aimaq tribes of Ghor and the Tir Band-i Turkistan. Following this latter defeat and with winter approaching, Shaibani Khan ordered a general release for his troops, who had had many years of hard campaigning without any leave of absence to visit their homes. In effect, the Uzbek chief disbanded his army during the winter, a time when normally no campaigning took place (Erskine, 296). He had not reckoned, however, with the new ruler of Persia, Shah Isma'il Safawi.

Shah Isma'il had succeeded in conquering Tabriz, the capital of the White Sheep Turkman, in 906-7/1501 and ascended the throne with the title of *Shah* (*CHI* vi, 189ff.). The appeal of Badi' al-Zaman Mirza and the threat of Uzbek incursions into Khurasan were probably the main reasons why the Safawid monarch marched his armies east. His arrival near Mashhad caught the Uzbeks by surprise. Shaibani Khan, however, mustered what troops remained to him and marched out against Shah Isma'il, but the Qizilbash troops quickly overran the whole of Uzbek-held Khurasan and forced the remnant of Shaibani Khan's army to take refuge in Merv. A ruse by the Safawid ruler lured the Uzbeks out of the city into a trap and, on 2 December 1510, in a battle at Mahmudabad, some twelve miles from Merv, the Uzbek army was cut to pieces.

Shaibani Khan and five hundred of his closest followers, their line of retreat cut off, sought shelter in a large, high-walled cattle enclosure which had only one exit. Hard-pressed by his attackers, Shaibani Khan and his men tried to jump the wall and flee to the adjacent river. In their panic to escape certain death at the hands of the advancing Persians, they fell one on top of the other and in the mêlée which followed the Khan was smothered to death under a pile of falling, writhing bodies. When the battle was finally over, his body was recovered and his head presented to the victorious Shah Isma'il, who set the skull in gold and used it as a drinking cup. Shaibani Khan's body was dismembered and distributed to various parts of the Safawid Empire

for the amusement of the populace. When Merv fell into the Shah's hands shortly afterwards, every Uzbek man in the city was put to the sword and their women sold into slavery. Nor did the ordinary citizens escape the general massacre. Thus Shah Isma'il proved himself equal to any refinement of cruelty that Shaibani Khan and his Uzbeks had perpetrated (Erskine, 303).

The defeat of Shaibani Khan resulted in the dispersion of the leaderless Uzbek army and the loss of Balkh (McChesney 1991, 69). Some twenty thousand Mughal tribesmen, who had been obliged by the superior strength of the Uzbeks to ally themselves with Shaibani Khan, separated themselves from the fleeing Uzbeks and set out for Qunduz, where they offered their services to Babur in regaining control of Samarkand (Babur, 351; Erskine, 305). The Mughal ruler, unable to resist such an opportunity, marched north through the snow-bound passes of the Hindu Kush, took possession of Qunduz and attacked the Uzbek-held fortress of Hisar. Shah Isma'il, meanwhile, followed up his victory by taking Herat, which he conferred on Husain Beg Saleh, who proceeded to inflict enormous suffering on the Sunni population of the city and surrounding territories.[49]

The following spring (917/1511) Shah Isma'il arrived in Maimana, where he was met by the Uzbek governor of the town and a delegation of other chiefs sent by Taimur Sultan b. Shaibani Khan, who had marched to the banks of the Amu Darya to oppose the Safawid monarch's advance. Shah Isma'il, though he had pressing business in Azerbaijan and the Turkish frontier, forced the Uzbeks to recognise the Amu Darya river as the border of Safawid dominions (Erskine, 308-9). Balkh thus temporarily fell under Persian domination, under the governorship of Bairam Khan Karamantu.[50] At the same time, however, Shah Isma'il entered into an anti-Uzbek alliance with Babur and sent a body of troops, under his wakil, Yar Ahmad Khuzani, Najm-i Sani, to assist Babur in his operations against Samarkand, before returning to Herat (*CHI* vi, 125-7; Erskine, 309, 323).

In October 917/1511 Babur re-entered Samarkand in triumph, amid popular acclaim, but his reliance on the Qizilbash troops of Shah Isma'il, who showed partiality towards the minority Shi'i community and terrorised the Sunni inhabitants,[51] soon led to popular discontent with the Mughal ruler. The following year Babur was forced

[49] Raverty v (ii), 1822.
[50] Raverty v (ii), 1825.
[51] This included the extermination of the entire population of Qarshi.

to abandon Samarkand, following a defeat by the Uzbeks at Ghujduvan, in which the Qizilbash troops were cut to pieces. The Najm-i Sani was captured and subsequently executed, by the Shaibanids. Babur fled to Qunduz, hoping for a further opportunity to re-invade across the Amu Darya, but at the end of 919/1513, after suffering great privations due to famine which was raging in the area,[52] he abandoned any hope of regaining control of his native land and returned to Kabul, where he consoled himself with the conquest of India (Babur, 363; Erskine, 329). The Uzbeks, meanwhile, pushed home their advantage and, in the summer of 920/1513, briefly reoccupied Balkh, only to have it taken from them again by Div Sultan for Shah Isma'il (Babur, 363, 635 n. 2). Reinstated in Balkh, the Safawid governor proceeded to attack Andkhui, which had shown signs of discontent with his rule, and put the whole Sunni population of the district to the sword.[53]

The struggle between Uzbek and Safawid for control of Balkh, was complicated by the reappearance of Muhammad al-Zaman Mirza b. Sultan Husain Baiqara. He had been "in retirement" in "Pash" (probably, the *dasht*, or hill country) of Gharchistan, but still cherished the ambition to carve out for himself a kingdom from the ashes of his father's empire. In 923/1517 he attacked Balkh, which at the time was under the governorship of Ibrahim Chapuk, who appears to have been ruling the city for Shah Isma'il. Babur, who retained a strategic interest in the fate of Balkh, hearing of the Timurid prince's success, abandoned his campaign against Afghan tribes and marched north. His unexpected arrival before Balkh surprised both Sultan Muhammad al-Zaman and the Safawid governor, with the consequence that the Mughal army took the city and made Faqir-i 'Ali governor of the area. Muhammad al-Zaman Mirza fled to Darra-yi Gaz (Jauz?) of Gharchistan, pursued by the Mughals, who eventually captured him and brought the Sultan to Kabul (Babur, 463 n. 3; Erskine, 424).

Following Shah Isma'il's death in 930/1524 Uzbek armies once again crossed the Amu Darya and quickly retook the whole region north of the Murghab river and Hindu Kush mountains, though Badakhshan continued under the Mughals (McChesney 1991, 60). In the spring of 932/1526 Balkh finally fell, this time permanently, to the Uzbeks, aided by the defection of the Mughal governor of Qunduz. The fall of Balkh ended the three-cornered battle between Uzbek,

[52] Raverty v (ii), 1837-8.
[53] Raverty v (ii), 1837.

Safawid and Mughal, for the Cis-Oxus territory, which became the appanage of the Jani-Beg Chingizid clan, whose eponymous founder was a grandson of Abu'l-Khair Khan (McChesney 1991, 53, 66).

*The Chingizid Appanage System*

Since most, if not all, of the nineteenth century Turco-Uzbek 'Khanates' of what the Afghans referred to as Turkistan evolved from the system of government established by the Shaibanids, which in turn took its inspiration from the Mongol period, a brief account of the system of government under the Jani-Begids is necessary at this point, for one of the undercurrents in the subsequent conflict in Balkh was the whole issue of how the province was to be governed.[54]

The legitimate head of the Chingizid empire was a senior descendant of the great Mongol conqueror, who had the right of *sikka* and *khutba*, that is, the prerogative of having his name on the coinage and inserted into the Friday Congregational Prayer. He also commanded respect by virtue of his ancestry, age and position. To all intents and purposes, however, the Khan was only nominally the ruler of the empire. Real power lay with one, or more, of the younger family members, or sultans, who led the army and ran the day-to-day affairs of state in the Khan's name.

Under the Shaibanids, the empire was divided up into appanages under the government of the neo-eponymous clans descended from Abu'l-Khair. Distribution of these appanages was decided at the quriltai, or general assembly of the Chingizid clans, which was convened either on the death of the Great Khan or when newly-conquered territory needed to be apportioned. These appanages, theoretically all of equal status, were ruled as virtually autonomous states-within-the-state. Once installed in his appanage, a sultan had the right of appointment and dismissal, but no authority beyond his own dominions. Indeed, whenever one sultan attempted to annex parts of an adjacent appanage, civil war almost invariably resulted.

Internally, the sultan maintained the same style of devolved government, sub-dividing it between members of his own clan who, in turn, parcelled out their fiefs to military leaders (amirs) as *iqta*'s or *hukumat*s. These amirid governors were given the title, *Hakim*.[55] The

[54] I have followed McChesney's lucid account of appanage politics (McChesney 1991, 51-60); but see also Raverty v (ii).

[55] For a detailed discussion of the amirid system, see, McChesney 1983.

iqta's, however, were not hereditary—at least not until the appanage system began to break down towards the end of the seventeenth century—and regular redistribution of lands took place under Nazr Muhammad and his successors (McChesney 1983).

Individual tribes (*ulusat*) were accorded different status within the empire. A complex system of diplomatic protocol existed at the court of the Supreme Khan and in the audience halls of the rulers of individual appanages. At the apex of the protocol pyramid were the Khan's most senior officials and amirs, who had the right to use the title, *Bi*. Later, under Nazr Muhammad, the amirs of the Ming and Qataghan tribes were amongst the most senior members of the Balkh appanage's court circle (McChesney 1983, 42). The subsequent rivalry between these two tribes was to be one of the most important factors in Uzbek-Afghan relations in the nineteenth century.

The two most important offices within each appanage were the post of *ataliq* and *diwanbegi*; the former being the adviser to, and supervisor of, the appanage sultan. Appointed by the Great Khan, these ataliqs were the eyes, ears and voice of central authority and acted as restraints on the individual ambitions of appanage holders. The appanage sultans were responsible for appointing their own ataliqs to control and advise the amirs. Of the diwanbegi's duties little is known. They probably supervised the area's finances, but were also actively involved in military campaigns. Underlying the whole politico-military structure of the empire was an unquestioned acceptance of, and abiding loyalty to, the Chingizid tradition, which went hand-in-hand with obedience to the Mongol social and political code, the *yasa* and *yusun* (McChesney 1983, 35).

This highly devolved system of government was in direct contrast to the Persian and, subsequently, the Afghan *padshahi*, or monarchical, style of government, as well as to nineteenth century British and Russian imperial theories of the state, all of which influenced the Durrani view of government. Ironically, the original and indigenous Afghan tribal concept of amirship was very similar to that of the Chingizids, the amir being one amongst a number of tribal leaders who were regarded as equals. However, under the influence of Persian and European imperial, political thought, the Durranis soon laid claim to complete supremacy as the 'Shadow of God'; an oriental version of the Divine Right of Kings. It is not surprising, therefore, that the Uzbeks resisted the imposition of an authoritarian, centralised

system of government which eroded half a millennium of devolved power and amirid rights.

The appanage system, like any other system of government, had its weaknesses and did not prevent inter-appanage or amirid conflict. One of its greatest internal weaknesses was the lack of any proper bureaucratic system to ensure regular and systematic collections of taxes. Even as late as 1840 the British traveller, Arthur Conolly, was appalled that Mizrab Khan, the Mingid ruler of Maimana, kept no accounts and was apparently ignorant of the amount of revenue collected by his *diwanbegi*.[56]

*The Shaibanids, 1526-1599*

Following the Uzbek conquest of Balkh in 932/1526, Kistan Qara Sultan b. Jani Beg was appointed governor of the appanage.[57] The following year he sent his forces against Herat and Khurasan, determined to wrest the region from the Safawids. In this, they were helped by the unsettled state of affairs in Persia following the death of Shah Isma'il. For seven months Herat was besieged, at the end of which time famine and disease had brought the city to the verge of capitulation. At the eleventh hour, however, a Persian army of forty thousand strong, under the personal command of Shah Tahmasp, comprehensively defeated the Uzbek amir, Zinish Khan (Erskine, 490ff.; McChesney 1991, 61). As the Persians advanced, reinforcements were sent post-haste to the area from across the Amu Darya but on 10 Muharram, 935 (24 September 1528) , near the village of Jam, Persian artillery proved too much for the lightly-armed Uzbeks, and they were completely routed (Babur, 622; Erskine, 490-2; McChesney 1991, 61). Having lifted the siege of Herat, the Persians soon regained much of Khurasan from the Uzbeks.[58]

The loss of Herat was a great loss of face for 'Ubaidullah Khan, and influential sultans and amirs in Badghis and Maimana,

[56] Capt. Arthur Conolly, *Account of a Journey from Bamiyan to Merv*, 1840, ESL:156, encl. 34, no. 4. No. refers to tabulated divisions within the volume in question, encl. to the number of the individual record within the tabulated divisions. A printed copy of this report can be found also at V:27/69/3.

[57] There is a great deal of confusion in many earlier European histories about the Jani-Begid, or Shaibanid, period in Balkh. I have followed McChesney (1991). Raverty despite using contemporary Persian manuscripts such as the *Bahr al-Asrar*, is very unreliable with his dates. He is also writing at the end of the last century, when little was known about the pre-Afghan history of Balkh.

[58] Raverty v (ii), 1846-7.

disillusioned at their leader's lack of military prowess, began to adopt their own, independent, policy towards Persia. In 942/1535, the amir of the iqta' of Gharchistan, probably with the tacit agreement of Kistan Qara Sultan at Balkh, attacked Herat without consulting the Supreme Khan (Howorth, 723; McChesney 1991, 61).

The death of 'Ubaidullah Khan in 947/1540 further weakened Uzbek power, since it precipitated a period of inter-appanage war. The four main Shaibanid appanages became virtually separate states, with individual sultans laying claim to the title of Khan. In *c.* 1547, Pir Muhammad b. Jani Beg of Balkh (d. 975/1566-7), who had succeeded his nephew, Kistan Qara Sultan, in 951/1544,[59] gave sanctuary to Kamran Sultan, the rebellious son of the new Mughal emperor, Homayun b. Babur, and helped him take possession of the Mughal outposts of Dahan-i Ghuri and Baghlan (Howorth, 723-4; McChesney 1991, 67). This action angered Homayun and, in 956/1549, he marched his army across the Hindu Kush and besieged Pir Muhammad's ataliq, at Khwaja Bagh, in Aibak. Following the surrender of this citadel, Homayun marched to Khulm, paying his respects at the shrine of Shah Aulia' at Astana on the way. After a brief stay in the 'Alid shrine at Mazar-i Sharif, rumours of trouble in Kabul and the arrival of strong Uzbek reinforcements from across the Amu Darya, forced Homayun to retreat. As the Mughal army marched back through the valley of Deragaz, they were attacked by the Uzbeks and scattered to the four winds (Howorth, 724-5).

In 958/1551, Pir Muhammad of Balkh attempted to seize Bukhara. This led to the formation of an anti-Jani-Begid confederacy amongst the Shaibanid clans of Transoxiana. The following year, these confederated Uzbek amirs attacked Jani-Begid holdings in Transoxiana and Khwarazm, forcing them to abandon their appanage rights and retire to Balkh (McChesney 1991, 2). Despite this set-back, in 964/1557, a nephew of Pir Muhammad, 'Abdullah b. Iskandar, who governed in Maimana, managed to take Bukhara for the Jani-Begids, appointed his father as Khan and established himself as the paramount military power in the Shaibanid empire (Howorth, 728-9; McChesney 1991, 62-3, 67).

'Abdullah set out to transform the federal structure of the state into a more Persian-style monarchical system based on a father-to-son succession, in opposition to the Chingizid model where the Khan was

[59] As distinct from Pir Muhammad b. Jani Muhammad Sultan b. Yar Muhammad, the first of the Tuqay-Timurid princes who replaced the Jani-Begids in Balkh.

chosen according to his seniority amongst all the sultans. Predictably, this policy provoked a further bout of inter-clan warfare, which 'Abdullah exacerbated by trying to eliminate all Chingizid rivals to his son's succession. Both the powerful Abu'l-Khairid and Jani-Begid clans fiercely opposed such fundamental changes to the Chingizid system (McChesney 1991, 64).[60] One consequence of 'Abdullah's actions was to precipitate hostilities between himself and his uncle, Pir Muhammad, in Balkh and, when Pir Muhammad died in 975/1567 (McChesney 1991, 67),[61] his son, Din Muhammad, carried on the feud. The campaign, though, went badly for Din Muhammad and, in the summer of 981/1573, 'Abdullah took the city, following a ten month siege (Howorth, 731; McChesney 1991, 67). Initially, 'Abdullah divided the newly-acquired Balkh appanage into five amirships but, following the death of his father in the autumn of 990/1582, when he succeeded to the Khanship, his fifteen year old son and heir, 'Abd al-Mu'min, was given the governorship of Balkh, with Jan Kildi Bi as his ataliq (McChesney 1991, 67).

In 996/1587 'Abdullah resumed his attacks on Khurasan. Following a siege which lasted nine months, Herat fell and the city's Persian Governor, 'Ali Quli Khan Shamlu, was put to death. Two years later he siezed control of Mashhad and 'Abd al-Mu'min, standing in the court of Mir 'Ali Shir, watched whilst his soldiers ran wild, massacring the city's inhabitants, violating the holiest parts of the shrine of Imam Reza and putting to the sword all who had sought sanctuary in the complex. Vast amounts of treasure fell into the hands of the Uzbeks and the priceless library attached to the shrine was destroyed or broken up (Howorth, 735-6; McChesney 1991, 74).

When 'Abdullah died in 1006/1589, the Bukharan and Balkh amirs recognised his son, 'Abd al-Mu'min, as Khan, but other amirs refused to accept the hereditary succession. Despite his attempts to unite them by another campaign into Khurasan, 'Abd al-Mu'min was assassinated by his commanders at Uratepa after a reign of only six months

[60] Howarth, 729 says that 'Abdullah visited his uncle, Pir Muhammad, who was in Shibarghan at the time, and agreed to an exchange of territory. Pir Muhammad was ceded Bukhara in return for 'Abdullah being made master of the Balkh appanage. However, this exchange of fiefs was postponed as a result of the rebellion of Pir Muhammad's son, Din Muhammad, who seized Balkh. Pir Muhammad was thus obliged to march back to his capital and put down the rebellion.

[61] Raverty is inconsistent with his dates. At v (ii), 1871-2, he says Pir Muhammad died in 975/1567, but at v (ii), 1880-1 gives the Hijra date as 974. Skrine & Ross, 190, in their genealogical tables, erroneously give the date of Pir Muhammad's death as 968/1561. Howorth, at p. 729, has the date 974 AH but the next page has 975 AH.

(Howorth, 738; McChesney 1991, 65-6). Although his death was also the end of his family's ambitions to establish their own dynasty, 'Abdullah's persecution of the Chingizid sultans had left a huge vacuum, for many senior members of the Shaibanid house had been exterminated. The result, therefore, was confusion and anarchy throughout the Uzbek empire.

*The Tuqay-Timurids, 1599-1722*

Following the capture of Herat in 996/1588, 'Abdullah had assigned the areas west of the city to Din Muhammad b. Jani Muhammad, who had made an important contribution to the Khurasan campaign. A few years later, in 1001/1592-3, Din Muhammad was shown further marks of favour by being granted control of the frontier territory of Sistan (McChesney 1991, 73-4).

Din Muhammad was a descendant of Tuqay, grandson of Chingiz Khan. His family had taken up their abode in the Astrakhan region on the Caspian, but subsequently Mangqishlaq, the great-grandfather of Din Muhammad. had been forced to flee southwards following the Russian annexation of the region. Mangqishlaq found sanctuary with the Jani-Begids and subsequently took to wife the daughter of a senior member of this clan (McChesney 1991, 72-4).[62] The relationship with the Jani-Begids and his Chingizid pedigree thus made the family of Din Muhammad strong contenders for the Khanship on the death of 'Abd al-Mu'min. Hence, although Pir Muhammad (sometimes referred to by European authorities as Pir Muhammad II), a brother of Iskandar, was appointed as Khan, Din Muhammad called an assembly of his own clan in Sistan which set up Yar Muhammad b. Mangqishlaq, as a rival Khan (Howorth, 739; McChesney 1991, 74-5). Din Muhammad marched to Herat to publicly proclaim this decision and the amirid governor, appointed by 'Abd al-Mu'min, quickly acknowledged the Pretender's authority (Howorth, 739, 744; McChesney 1991, 75).

At this point circumstances beyond Din Muhammad's control intervened in the Tuqay-Timurids' bid for supreme power. News reached Herat that a large Persian army, led by Shah 'Abbas I, was

[62] Jani Muhammad b. Mangqishlaq married Zahra Khanum, a daughter of Iskandar and sister of 'Abdullah (Howorth, 739, 744; Skrine & Ross, 194ff.). Din Muhammad later married, amongst others, the daughter of an official of the shrine of Imam Reza following the Uzbek sack of the city in 1589 (McChesney 1991, 74); see Appendix IV, i.

approaching and the governor persuaded a reluctant Din Muhammad to stay and lead the resistance. In August 1006/1589 Din Muhammad's army was badly defeated and the Sultan himself killed (*CHI* vi, 267; McChesney 1991, 74-5).[63] Din Muhammad's wife and his two young sons, Imam Quli and Nazr Muhammad, escaped from the battle by the skin of their teeth, when a loyal servant, Nadir Muhammad, concealed them in his saddlebags and galloped out of the encampment, despite being wounded in the foot (Howorth, 744).

The mantle of the Tuqay-Timurids fell on Din Muhammad's brother, Baqi Muhammad, who arrived in Transoxiana to find that the Kazakhs, who had recently captured Tashkent and Samarkand, were marching on Bukhara. Baqi Muhammad offered his help and within a short time had dispersed the Kazakh threat (Howorth, 740; McChesney 1991, 76). The following year (1007/1599) Baqi Muhammad, taking advantage of Pir Muhammad's struggle with some recalcitrant amirs, marched to their assistance, entered Bukhara and put the Khan to death. In the ensuing quriltai summoned by Baqi Muhammad, the Chingizid norms of succession were reaffirmed and the innovations of 'Abdullah and 'Abd al-Mu'min overthrown. Yar Muhammad, being the most senior member of the Tuqay-Timurids, was offered the title of Khan, but he declined on the grounds of great age and a wish to spend the remaining days of his life in religious pursuits. Instead, the mantle fell on his eldest son, Jani Muhammad, who became the nominal Head of State (*Sultan-i Suri*) and the first of the Tuqay-Timurid rulers of Bukhara, with rights of coinage and *khutba*. Effective power in the state, however, was in the hands of the dynamic Baqi Muhammad, whose office of the "Real Khanate" (*Sultanat-i Ma'nawi*) was similar to that of heir apparent (Howorth, 741; McChesney 1991, 76-7).

At the time of the quriltai of 1599, Balkh lay outside of the control of Baqi Muhammad, being ruled by 'Abd al-Amin, a nephew of 'Abdullah (Howorth, 745; McChesney 1991, 81). He was quickly overthrown and put to death by Sultan Muhammad Ibrahim, a Shaibanid prince and descendant of Abu'l-Khair,[64] who took Balkh in *c.* 1600 with the help of a Persian army (Howorth, 744-5; McChesney 1991, 81-2). Ibrahim did not last long, dying sometime in 1009/1600,

[63] There is some question as to whether he was killed in the battle, or died later as a result of his wounds (cf. Howorth, 739-40; McChesney 1991, 74-5).

[64] Sources differ about his exact relationship to 'Abd al-Mu'min; see, McChesney 1991, 81 n. 26.

probably as a result of drink. He was succeeded by a certain 'Ubaidullah (Howorth, 745).[65] During his brief reign Ibrahim had alienated influential amirs by appointing an outsider, Khuda Nazar Bi Qunghrat, as his ataliq. One late source also claimed that Ibrahim's pro-Shi'i policies had led to the death of many of the Sunni population, though whether any such sectarian purges took place is highly questionable (McChesney 1991, 81-2). It is more likely that internal rivalries between the Shaibanids and Tuqay-Timurids were the true cause of amirid discontent, for under the Khanship of 'Abdullah and 'Abd al-Mu'min, their power had been severely curtailed. Ibrahim's alliance with the old enemy, Persia, probably did not endear him to the amirs either, as Babur had found out to his cost some years earlier.

One of the main amirid factions in Balkh at this point was led by Baruti Bi Ming, whose son was later to become the first member of this clan to be appointed to the iqta' of Maimana. The Ming tribe were themselves one of the "quadripartite" (*chaharganah*) tribes (*ulus*) of the Tuqay-Timurid line (McChesney 1991, 72) and undoubtedly acted as a fifth column in Balkh for Baqi Muhammad (McChesney 1991, 82). Thus, when Wali Muhammad, another brother of Baqi Muhammad, arrived outside Balkh in 1009/1601, Baruti Bi Ming surrendered the city to him without a fight (Howorth, 745; McChesney 1991, 82).

The conquest of Balkh was an important victory for Baqi Muhammad, for it struck a decisive blow to Safawid power south of the Amu Darya, brought Balkh back under the control of the Khan of Bukhara and prevented the appanage being used as a base by Shaibanid pretenders.

Ibrahim's death had removed one possible rival to the new Khan, but the appanage had provided a sanctuary for two other Shaibanid princes, Jahangir Mirza b. Saiyid Muhammad Sultan, at Shibarghan, and Salim Sultan b. Pir Muhammad II, who had been given the government of Andkhui (Howorth, 745).[66] When news of Wali Muhammad's advance on Balkh reached these two princes, they fled to Persia where they ingratiated themselves with Shah 'Abbas I by returning a famous diamond which had been plundered from the shrine of Imam Reza a few years earlier (Howorth, 745). Wali Muhammad, meanwhile, was confirmed as the appanage-holder of Balkh and became the first of a long line of Tuqay-Timurids to rule the area.

[65] Raverty v (ii), 1887.
[66] Raverty v (ii), 1885-7.

In 1011/1602 Baqi Muhammad marched against the Qarai tribe of Qunduz, with the object of revenging himself for the death of another of his brothers, whom they had killed (Howorth, 745), and massacred the entire garrison.[67] This tribe seems to have had some relationship with the Safawid rulers, for Shah 'Abbas I, accompanied by the two Shaibanid princes, made this attack the *casus belli* for a further invasion of Balkh (Howorth, 745; McChesney 1991, 83).

Initially, the Persian army had significant success and both Andkhui and Shibarghan fell into their hands.[68] The whole region as far as "Biluk Akchi" (Belcheragh? Aqcha?) (Howorth, 745) was laid waste by the Safawids, but lack of water and the outbreak of an epidemic decimated Shah 'Abbas' force. Weakened by thirst and disease, the invaders were quickly dispersed by the Uzbeks with great loss of life. Shah 'Abbas and a few thousand followers fled to Andkhui, which they destroyed, carrying the inhabitants of the town back across the Murghab to Herat. Many Qizilbash troops, as well as the unfortunate citizens of Andkhui, however, perished in the retreat (Howorth, 745).[69]

Sometime during 1014/1606,[70] Baqi Muhammad fell seriously ill and, on the advice of Shaikh 'Alim 'Azizan, he was carried to the Amu Darya and floated on board a ship for several days in the hope that the fresh breezes would cure him. It was all to no avail and the Khan died a short while later (Howorth, 746). Wali Muhammad, who had gone to Qarshi to be with his brother during his final hours, immediately had himself proclaimed Khan (Howorth, 746: McChesney 1991, 94)[71] and appointed his foster-brother, Shah Beg Foladchi, as the temporary governor of Balkh. However, it took a threat of military action before Wali Muhammad was able to persuade his two nephews, Nazr Muhammad and Imam Quli, to recognise his succession (Howorth, 747; McChesney 1991, 94-5).

The following Hijra year (1015), Wali Muhammad sent the fifteen year-old Nazr Muhammad to Balkh as his representative under the close tutelage of an ataliq chosen from amongst Wali Muhammad's own amirs (Howorth, 747; McChesney 1991, 96).

The same year Shah 'Abbas, hoping to take advantage of Baqi Muhammad's death, crossed the Murghab, accompanied by Jahangir

[67] Raverty v (ii), 1890-1.
[68] *Ibid.*
[69] *Ibid.*
[70] See McChesney 1991, 94 n. 68 for the problems of dating Baqi Muhammad's death.
[71] Raverty v (ii), 1891.

Sultan. When news of the Persian advance reached Badghis, Tahir Bi, the amir of Maimana and Chichaktu, Tarkhan Durman of Shibarghan and the heads of the different *hazaras* of "Jolbani" and Gurziwan, dispatched urgent messages to Balkh asking for assistance, but were told that they could expect no help from that quarter.[72] Wali Muhammad, however, sent his own reinforcements to Maimana and, at "Amawza" (Almar?) the Uzbeks attacked and defeated the Shaibanid princes with heavy losses.[73] Jahangir fled to Gharchistan before finally managing to make his way back to Herat. The following year he and his brother returned and marched against Balkh through the mountain regions of Gharchistan. Yet again their Persian army was comprehensively defeated and the Shaibanid princes fled to Gurziwan, where they were captured, taken prisoner and put to death. Thus ended the Shaibanid challenge to the new rulers of Bukhara and Balkh.[74]

To follow up this success, forces from Balkh were sent to raid Persian territory across the Murghab. After attacking Marichaq, the Uzbeks continued on down the river to the very outskirts of Merv, whilst another force went against the fort of Haus-i Khan, Zorabad and the nomadic population of Badghis, until heavy snows and local opposition forced them to retire.[75]

Although the skill and prowess of the amirs of Maimana and Balkh had enabled them to beat back the Shaibanid challenge, internal disputes continued to beset the Tuqay-Timurid Khanate. Wali Muhammad soon established a dubious reputation for "revolting" cruelty (Howorth, 746), having senior advisers of his predecessor, Baqi Muhammad, put to death in a variety of grotesquely novel ways (Howorth, 747). His excess fuelled discontent, which quickly broke into outright rebellion and Nazr Muhammad, whose amirs had already proved their military prowess against the Safawid-Shaibanid challenge, became a rallying point for the rebellion. In 1018/1608 the Walid ataliq of Balkh was assassinated and Nazr Muhammad joined his older brother, Imam Quli, and marched on two fronts against Wali Muhammad. After a brief struggle, the Khan fled to Shah 'Abbas, who received him warmly and gave him eighty thousand troops to reconquer his lost empire (Howorth, 746; McChesney 1991, 96-7).[76]

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[72] Raverty v (ii), 1897-8.
[73] Raverty v (ii), 1899.
[74] Raverty v (ii), 1901.
[75] Raverty v (ii), 1902-3.
[76] Raverty v (ii), 1906.

Imam Quli was installed as the new Khan in Bukhara and sent his diwanbegi to assist the amirs of Chichaktu, Gharchistan and Maimana, who had declared for him. Wali Muhammad's son, Rustam Muhammad Sultan, who was in Darra-yi Jauz of Gurziwan at the time of his father's flight, responded by besieging Amir 'Abdullah Bi Qipchaq in Maimana.[77] A short while later, Wali Muhammad himself marched to Marichaq, crossed the Murghab and, avoiding the forces that his son had tied up before Maimana, pushed on across the Amu Darya. In August 1611 (Jumada II, 1020) he briefly recaptured Bukhara, but Imam Quli quickly regrouped his forces and comprehensively defeated Wali Muhammad in a battle before Samarkand. The deposed Khan was captured and, after seeking the guidance of his spiritual adviser, Imam Quli had him beheaded (Howorth, 746-7; McChesney 1991, 96-7).[78] When news of his father's execution reached Rustam Muhammad, he abandoned his investment of Maimana, which had resisted all his efforts to reduce it, and fled, via Darra-yi Jauz, to Safawid-held Herat, where he was later joined by another son of Wali Muhammad, Muhammad Rahim (Howorth, 747).[79]

The execution of Wali Muhammad in 1020/1611 secured the succession for the heirs of Din Muhammad with Nazr Muhammad confirmed as the ruler of Balkh and, for the next three decades, Nazr Muhammad ruled the appanage as heir apparent. His country extended some six hundred miles from east to west and two hundred miles from north to south (McChesney 1991, 97); a province approximately the size of England and Wales. To the west it included the iqta's of Shibarghan, Andkhui, Maimana, Far-yab, Chichaktu, Gurziwan, Darzab, Gharchistan and Juzjan. The southern border stretched from the banks of the Murghab river southwards to north of the Persian-held outpost of Obeh on the upper Hari Rud (McChesney 1991, 97). The boundary then ran eastwards through "the mountains of Ghur" to Kahmard, north of Bamiyan, which straddled the important caravan route between Kabul and Khulm. Kahmard itself became the iqta' of Yalangtush Bi Alchin, the greatest of Nazr Muhammad's amirs who, amongst other things, was to play a crucial part in the defeat of the Walid pretender, Rustam Muhammad Sultan. From his stronghold, Yalangtush controlled Darra-yi Yusuf, Malikan, the tribal regions of the Tulakji, Saiqanji, Ziragi, Gulgi, Hazara-yi Nekudari

[77] Raverty v (ii), 1910-2.
[78] *Ibid.*
[79] Raverty v (ii), 1910.

and the tribal groups as far south as Ghazni, Qandahar, Zamin Dawar, Ghor and Khurasan. In the east, the appanage included Qunduz, Faizabad, Ishkamish and most of the modern province of Badakhshan, excluding the Wakhan corridor. To the north, Kulab and Termez, on the other side of the Amu Darya, were also under Nazr Muhammad's authority (McChesney 1991, 97-8).

On the strategic Murghab-Badghis border, Nazr Muhammad appointed "valiant amirs" who were responsible for repelling Safawid incursions. Amongst these amirs were: Nazar Bi "Kabjah" (Qipchaq?) in Darra-yi Gharchistan, Buzak "a Karayat Turk" at Far-yab; Mirza 'Ali Beg Naiman at Andkhui and Shah Muhammad Bi, a "Kangkurat Mughul" in Shibarghan. The iqta' of Maimana was entrusted to 'Abdullah Bi Qipchaq, who was also responsible for the forts at Chichaktu, Qaisar, Almar, Yabaghu and other border areas along the Murghab. Later, however, the requirements of Nazr Muhammad's sons for their own sub-appanages led to the consolidation of a number of the amirid holdings. In *c.* 1621 Khusrau Sultan, the third son of Nazr Muhammad, was given Maimana as his sub-appanage with Uraz Bi b. Baruti Bi Ming as his ataliq (McChesney 1991, 99, 117-8).

According to Mahmud b. Amir Wali's *Bahr al-Asrar*, Uraz Bi Ming, who rose to be one of the three most important amirs of Nazr Muhammad's era, began his career as the Royal Falcon-Master (*Qushbegi-gari Khassa*), progressing to Hakim of Termez until his appointment as Ataliq of Maimana. Uraz Bi's first period as ataliq lasted some nine years, until 1045/1635, when Nazr Muhammad sent his eldest son and heir, 'Abd al-'Aziz with Ataliq 'Abd al-Rahman Khan Ushun to take charge of the area. Uraz Bi Ming returned to Balkh, but five years later he was sent back and remained in Maimana until his death, having established his tribe's power in the area and laid the foundations of the subsequent Mingid dynasty (McChesney 1991, 101, 117).[80] For, although as a result of the rebellion of his eldest son 'Abd al-'Aziz in 1057/1647, Nazr Muhammad sent his favourite son, Qasim Sultan, to take over his brother's fief at Maimana (Howorth, 752-3), Ming interest in Maimana continued, as many amirs, by this time, were increasingly reluctant to change their iqta', preferring instead to carve out for themselves a hereditary fiefdom.

The appointment of Uraz Bi Ming as Ataliq of Maimana in *c.* 1621, therefore, must be regarded as marking the beginning of the Mingid dynasty of Maimana and we can dismiss as a convenient

[80] Raverty v (ii), 1910, from the *Bahr al-Asrar*.

colonial fiction subsequent claims by Arthur Conolly and British military historians that this family owed its political existence to the patronage and condescension of Ahmad Shah Durrani.[81] In fact Mingid rule in Maimana predates the Durrani monarchy by more than one hundred and twenty years (McChesney 1991, 99, 117). According to one informed oral source, Hakim Haji Bi Ming, whose presence at the court of Ahmad Shah Durrani in 1751 gave rise to subsequent British misunderstandings about the nature of Uzbek-Afghan relations, was the great-great-grandson of a Tuqay-Timurid ataliq.[82]

The unusual political arrangement of the areas between Balkh and the Murghab, known during the nineteenth century as the Chahar Wilayat ('Four Provinces'), is undoubtedly a survival of Nazr Muhammad's division of Balkh into sub-appanages and explains why, during the Afghan period, the hakims of Andkhui, Shibarghan and Sar-i Pul deferred to the Mingid dynasty of Maimana in respect of foreign relations, even though individual members of the Chahar Wilayat might have been in dispute with each other over issues of succession, territory, water-rights, etc. Indeed, we know that Maimana had been the "chief place"[83] of the western marches of Balkh even before Nazr Muhammad chose it as the centre of a princely sub-appanage and it remained so long after the eclipse of the Chingizid system.[84]

Nazr Muhammad's tenure as the Balkh appanage-holder lasted over thirty years[85] but the claim by Howorth (p. 747) that, "on the side of Persia there was peace for many years, the strong arm of Abbas restraining both Uzbeg (*sic*) and Turkomans from making their predatory raids" is only a half truth. For although Persia avoided any direct confrontation, the Safawids encouraged and supported the Walid Pretender, Rustam Muhammad Sultan, and made him governor of their strategic mountain fortress of Obeh which lay just across the border from Nazr Muhammad's territory.

Shortly after his father's assassination, Rustam Muhammad, without obtaining the permission of his patron, Shah 'Abbas I, left Herat and marched into Gharchistan. At the time Nazr Muhammad was

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[81] For discussion of Conolly's report and other British official histories during the First Anglo-Afghan War, see chapters 3, 5.

[82] Haji Bi Khan Ming b. Haji Allah Nazar Khan b. 'Abd al-Ahad Khan b. 'Abd al-Wahad Khan b. Ataliq Khan b. Qizil Arslan Khan: Ergeš Uçkun, *personal communication.*

[83] Raverty v (ii), 1949-50, from the *Bahr al-Asrar.*

[84] *Ibid.*

[85] For details about internal organisation and tensions in Balkh during this period, see McChesney 1991, 97-103.

occupied beyond the Amu Darya, having gone to assist his brother, Imam Quli, who was campaigning against the Kazakhs (Howorth, 747-8).[86] Rustam Muhammad managed to occupy the town and bazaar of Balkh, but Nazr's deputy, supported by the prince's mother and brothers, held out in the citadel. Nazr's mother cleverly lulled Rustam Muhammad into a sense of false security by offering to give one of her daughters in marriage to the Pretender and promising to use her influence to secure Rustam Sultan an appropriate appanage.[87] This ploy deceived Rustam Muhammad so completely that he took no defensive precautions in case these promises proved worthless. Nazr Muhammad, meanwhile, secretly dispatched messengers to loyal amirs in the area, ordering them to attack Rustam Khan whilst he was still off his guard. When the trap was sprung, Rustam Muhammad's forces were completely routed and his army decimated, forcing the Walid Pretender to flee for his life to the Safawid outpost of Marichaq.[88]

The following year (1022/1613) Rustam Muhammad returned. This time he marched from Herat to Darra-yi Jauz of Gurziwan; the area he once governed. However, fearful of an attack from Maimana, Rustam tried to retire to the mountain fastness of Gharchistan and Obeh, but an army from Maimana intercepted him near Sar-i Haus in the head-waters of the Ab-i Maimana. Rustam Muhammad managed to beat this attack off and the Maimana amirs returned to the plains, regrouped and marched back into Gharchistan by another route. When news of the return of the Maimana army reached Rustam Muhammad he took up a strong defensive position in the pass of "Bazghurid of Chartak."[89] Despite this strategic advantage, the pass was forced and Rustam Sultan fled to Farah, from whence he made his way back to Herat.[90]

In 1023/1614 Rustam again attacked Gharchistan and occupied several outposts. He then proceeded to march against Muhammad Bi "Khitai," the amir of Asiyar, who sent urgent requests for assistance to Shadman Bi at Maimana. Once more the Maimana tribes were assembled and marched to the relief of Muhammad Bi, via a rarely used and difficult route. Rustam Muhammad, whose intelligence network kept him well informed about the movement of Maimana tribes, set

[86] Raverty v (ii), 1914.
[87] *Ibid.*
[88] Raverty v (ii), 1913.
[89] Raverty v (ii), 1914-5. Probably in the upper Murghab, near Jawand.
[90] *Ibid.*

an ambush in the narrowest and most difficult section of the pass. As Shadman Bi ascended the narrow, steep mountain valley, Rustam Muhammad's men rained arrows and gunfire onto the advancing enemy, killing many, including the amir of Maimana himself. The survivors were forced to seek shelter in the many caves which abound in the Turkistan mountains, only making good their escape after nightfall. Yet, despite this success, Rustam Muhammad failed to push home his advantage and retired to Obeh. Nazr Muhammad, meanwhile, appointed Nazar Bi to replace Shadman Bi.[91]

In 1024/1615 Nazr Muhammad felt strong enough to order the Arlat tribes of Maimana and Badghis to resume the raids against Persian-held Badghis and Khurasan. During the winter of 1026/1616-7 there were a series of raids against western Khurasan. Following the death of Husain Khan, *Beglarbegi* of Khurasan in 1027/1617, his son, Hasan Ishar, was made Amir al-Umara and the government of Herat was bestowed on him, whereupon Yalangtush Bi, the amir of Kahmard, attacked the province as far west as Ghuriyan. However, the Uzbeks made the mistake of leaving their main baggage behind in Maimana and Chichaktu. Rustam Muhammad, who still held the governorship of Obeh, saw his chance and looted the supply camp, forcing the invaders to abandon their raid and return back beyond the Murghab.[92]

Three years later (1030/1620) Rustam Muhammad marched his forces to the Murghab, hoping to attack Balkh. Once more he was defeated and retreated to the "lower" Murghab (Marichaq?) where he was reinforced by Qizilbash troops, probably from Herat. With their help, he succeeded in capturing the strategic fortress of Bala Murghab[93] and raided settlements as far north as Andkhui and Shibarghan. Forces from Balkh were sent to repulse them and, with the help of local Jamshidi tribesmen, Bala Murghab was retaken in a surprise night attack. The Qizilbash garrison was put to the sword and its newly-installed Safawid governor sent for punishment to Nazr Muhammad. Nazr Muhammad's forces next turned their attention to Marichaq, which also fell into their hands. He then raided Persian-held Badghis and Khurasan in retaliation for the attacks on Andkhui and Shibarghan the previous year.[94]

[91] Raverty v (ii), 1918, 1927.

[92] Raverty v (ii), 1927.

[93] Raverty v (ii), 1930. Raverty is not clear whether it was Bala Murghab which was attacked. However, Nazr Muhammad's forces are said to have recaptured the town later the same year.

[94] Raverty v (ii), 1937-8.

The following year, Shah 'Abbas I assembled a large army at Nishapur with the two-fold intention of seizing Qandahar from the Mughal emperor, Jahangir, and supporting Rustam Muhammad's war against Nazr Muhammad. The Persian preparations greatly alarmed the ruler of Balkh, who sent an envoy to Shah 'Abbas with a present of fifty horses (Howorth, 751). Rustam Muhammad, meanwhile, taking advantage of the lull in hostilities occasioned by this diplomatic activity, joined forces with Shah 'Abbas before Qandahar, which fell into Persian hands the same year (1031/1622) (*CHI* vi, 267).[95]

Once freed from his duties at Qandahar, the son of Wali Muhammad returned to his fortress in Gharchistan, attacked Chichaktu and laid siege to Maimana. The surrounding villages and countryside were laid waste and the local population forcibly conscripted into the sultan's army. The arrival of strong reinforcements, under Ataliq 'Abd al-Rahman Ushun, however, forced the Walid Pretender to abandon the siege. Yet again Rustam Muhammad took flight, this time to Chichaktu, before making his way back to his fief at Obeh. 'Abd al-Rahman Ushun, who had ordered hot pursuit of Rustam's shattered army, hearing that the Sultan had fled to the mountains, returned to Balkh leaving Yalangtush Bi to continue the attack.

Orders were issued to all amirs of the region[96] to join forces and, despite severe winter weather, Yalangtush Bi succeeded in capturing Rustam Muhammad's stronghold of Obeh, followed, a short while later, by Chakhcharan. Both districts were thus annexed, for a while at least, to Nazr Muhammad's possessions.[97]

Somehow Rustam Muhammad managed to evade capture and fled to Herat. Shah 'Abbas, concerned about the loss of strategic frontier position, opened negotiations with Nazr Muhammad and agreed to send the prince into virtual exile by appointing him governor of Mazdaran, ending, in the process, a decade of war between Rustam Muhammad and Nazr Muhammad.[98]

For the four years prior to the death of Shah 'Abbas in 1038/1629, Maimana, Chichaktu and the border areas of the Balkh appanage had a chance to recover from the ravages of this civil war and the area, once more, began to prosper. However, when news of Shah 'Abbas'

[95] *Ibid.*

[96] Raverty v (ii), 1931, from the *Bahr al-Asrar*.

[97] Raverty v (ii), 1931-2. This may be the undated campaign referred to in Howorth and Vambery which involved some twenty thousand troops from Balkh with assistance from Imam Quli (Howorth, 751).

[98] Raverty v (ii), 1938, 1947.

demise reached Balkh, Nazr Muhammad, freed from his treaty with the Persian king, sent his commanders against Marichaq, Bala Murghab and other border forts, though without achieving any notable successes. In the same Hijra year Yalangtush Bi marched into the Koh Daman, besieged Mughal-held Kabul and laid waste the surrounding countryside (Inayat Khan, 24). Although the Uzbeks failed to take the city, the new ruler of the Mughal empire, Shah Jahan, later used this raid to justify his campaign against Balkh in 1056/1646 (McChesney 1991, 107-8).[99]

In order to counteract the renewed attacks by the Uzbeks in Herat, the Persian governor of Khurasan allowed Rustam Muhammad to resume the campaign against his cousin, Nazr Muhammad. The ruler of Balkh responded by sending his eldest son 'Abd al-'Aziz to take charge of military operations on the Murghab border. 'Abd al-'Aziz, an able if somewhat impetuous, commander, went onto the offensive, besieged the Persian outpost of Marichaq and sent raiders to pillage Khurasan. Problems in Transoxiana, however, led to 'Abd al-'Aziz's recall and his brother, Khusrau Sultan, temporarily took over. Accusing the Persians of harassing Uzbek merchants, Khusrau marched an army against Panjdeh, but was bought off by the beleaguered Safawid governor, who offered to pay reparations. This settlement, however, did not prevent Khusrau Sultan marching off large numbers of the peasantry and nomads to a new location, presumably within his own borders.[100]

The next year 'Abd al-'Aziz returned from beyond the Amu Darya and was formally given Maimana as his sub-appanage, with 'Abd al-Rahman Ushun as his ataliq. In October[101] of that year, he marched from Shibarghan via Maimana to Chichaktu where levies flocked to the prince's flag from all over Gurziwan. After crossing the Murghab, he set out against Nishapur but, after having encountered stiff resistance from the Safawids, the Uzbek army returned to Maimana. A short while later 'Abd al-Rahman Ushun mounted another lightning raid on Badghis. In the space of a few days, he left a swathe of destruction from the perimeters of Herat city to Yabaghu and Chichaktu. Next, the Ataliq launched a surprise night attack on Obeh, which had been reoccupied by Rustam Muhammad, and completely destroyed the fortress. Once more, the luckless Sultan had to flee to Herat,

[99] Raverty v (ii), 1945-8.
[100] Raverty v (ii), 1949-50.
[101] Raverty v (ii), 1952, "The fifth month" of the Arabic calendar, i.e. Jumada I.

where he finally gave up the unequal struggle against Nazr Muhammad.[102]

Over the next two years, the tribes subject to Nazr Muhammad on the Murghab border raided almost unhindered throughout Badghis and Khurasan. Vast areas of fertile land were laid waste, villages looted and their inhabitants pillaged or enslaved.[103] During the autumn and winter of 1046/1636 'Abd al-'Aziz assembled a force in Darra-yi Jauz of Gurziwan, with the object of attacking the fertile countryside around Herat. Unopposed by the Persian governor, they raided up to the very walls of the city, which had closed its gates, leaving the population of the surrounding villages, who had failed to reach the safety of its defences, to be mercilessly pillaged and slaughtered. Finally, the governor of Khurasan, informed of the situation, collected a force in Mashhad and marched to Herat, forcing the booty-laden 'Uzbeks' back across the Murghab.[104]

In 1051/1641[105] the long reign of Imam Quli Khan came to an end. Having suffered from failing eyesight for several years, the Khan decided to exchange his throne for the pursuit of religious contemplation and pilgrimage (McChesney 1991, 104-5), and summoned his brother to Bukhara. Together they went to the mosque for the Friday prayers and when Imam Quli's name was about to be uttered in the *khutba*, the Khan interrupted the prayer leader (*imam*), and commanded that the name of Nazr Muhammad be inserted instead, thereby signifying his abdication (Howorth, 751).

Imam Quli was one of the greatest Chingizid rulers of Central Asia. Under his leadership, Bukhara had flourished and become the resort of the learned and the pious. He had laboured hard to secure the prosperity of his kingdom and, as a consequence, Bukhara had once more become one of the marvels of Central Asian and Islamic culture. Despite the riches he could command, Imam Quli, unlike his Mughal cousins in India, lived a life of self-denial, choosing to regulate his private life according to the strict principles of the Shari'a law, rather than abandon himself to dissipation, luxurious living and indulgence (Howorth, 749-50).

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[102] Raverty v (ii), 1952-3.
[103] *Ibid.*
[104] Raverty v (ii), 1958.
[105] Raverty v (ii), 1961 says 1052/1642, Howorth, 571 gives the date as 1050/1640. For a discussion of dates of Imam Quli's abdication in the Persian sources, see, McChesney 1991, 104 n. 93.

Nazr Muhammad, the new Khan, however, was used to quite a different style of living. His 'moving in' to Bukhara became a major public spectacle, for his vast treasure required a thousand camels alone to transport it. Amongst his possessions he could boast eighty thousand karakul sheep, eight thousand horses, countless brood mares, four hundred chests of orange-coloured satin and much more (Howorth, 751). Nazr Muhammad's surprise accession to the throne, however, was not widely supported by the amirs, who were further alienated by the distribution of new appointments, particularly in removing Yalangtush Bi from Kahmard. Furthermore, he failed to appoint a Tuqay-Timurid sultan to the appanage of Balkh. Instead he sent Nazar Bi Naiman, the father of Khusrau Beg, to govern in his name. 'Abd al-'Aziz, as the Khan's eldest son and the heir apparent, resented this action since he considered Balkh was his by right of succession. Thus, when some time later 'Abd al-'Aziz was ordered by his father to march against rebellious amirs, instead he threw his lot in with the rebel amirs and, in the spring of 1055/1645, took Bukhara and had the *khutba* read in his own name (Howorth, 751; McChesney 1991, 104-7).[106]

Nazr Muhammad fled back to Balkh, where he appointed his grandson, Qasim Sultan, to govern Maimana with Andkhui (Howorth, 752). Meanwhile, the revolt amongst his sons and grandsons spread as it became evident that Nazr Muhammad was in no position to suppress the uprising. In desperation, Nazr Muhammad appealed to the Mughal Emperor, Shah Jahan, for assistance.[107] When the Khan's request reached Delhi, exiled Uzbeks at the Mughal Court encouraged Shah Jahan to believe that an invasion would receive popular support. Since Shah Jahan also had an old score to settle over Yalungtash's invasion of Kabul he sent his son, Murad Bakhsh, across the Hindu Kush, not to help Nazr Muhammad, but to reclaim Badakhshan and Balkh for the Mughals (Inayat Khan, 327-33, 325; McChesney 1991, 107-8).

After an almost bloodless campaign, Balkh fell to the Mughal army on 17 July 1646 (3 Jumada II 1056) (Inayat Khan, 353; McChesney 1991, 74).[108] Nazr Muhammad, realising too late that Shah Jahan had no intention of aiding him in his dispute with his son, had just enough time to gather together some of his vast treasure and

[106] Raverty v (ii), 1961-2.
[107] *Ibid.* Raverty's copy of the *Bahr al-Asrar* ends in the year 1050/1640.
[108] Raverty v (ii), 1961-2.

flee, even as the Mughal prince was pitching his tent in the Bagh-i Murad (Howorth, 752; Inayat Khan, 348-51).

Nazr Muhammad headed westwards to Shibarghan and, with the help of Tardi 'Ali Qataghan, Uraz Bi Ming and troops from Maimana and Chichaktu, he tried to prevent the Mughals making any further advances, but all to no avail. Nazr Muhammad fled further westwards, first to Andkhui, then Maimana eventually making his way to Persian Khurasan. Other members of his entourage, including Sultan Subhan Quli, crossed the Amu Darya and joined forces with 'Abd al-'Aziz Khan in Bukhara (Howorth, 752-3; Inayat Khan, 354-5; McChesney 1991, 107-8).

The Mughal occupation of the Balkh appanage was not a success. They quickly found governing a state, which for generations had been run on lines quite unfamiliar to them, was almost impossible (McChesney 1991, 108). Prince Murad Bakhsh was appointed governor of Balkh (Inayat Khan, 356-7)[109] and he in turn sent governors into the newly-conquered territories from amongst his own Mughal commanders. Raja Pahar Singh, Rustam Khan, Raja Debi Singh, Chandar Man Bondela and Muhammad Khan, along with two thousand matchlockmen and three hundred archers, were stationed in Andkhui. Shibarghan was put in the hands of Jabbar Quli; "Nahr" (the canals?) of Sar-i Pul, Shal and Sangcharak came under the governorship of Khushhal Beg of Kashgar; Aqcha was placed under Shadman Khan, and Nizam Khan was made governor of Mazar-i Sharif.[110]

Within a matter of weeks a disillusioned Murad Bakhsh returned to Kabul without his father's permission (Inayat Khan, 356-7). He was replaced by prince Aurangzeb whose first task was to combat incursions by Uzbeks across the Amu Darya which affected Andkhui, Shibarghan, Termez, Qunduz, Khulm and Mazar-i Sharif (*Astana-yi Imam*) (Inayat Khan, 360ff.). To make matters worse, the Mughals faced severe fiscal problems, for they were unable to collect sufficient revenue from the appanage to sustain their armed presence. The local economy was very soon out of control and the price of grain and other essentials rose steeply (Inayat Khan, 351; McChesney 1991, 108-9).

Nazr Muhammad, meanwhile, reached Persia where he appealed to the new Safawid ruler, Shah 'Abbas II,[111] for assistance. Since Nazr

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[109] Raverty v (ii), 1960. Faiz Bakhsh, *Badakhshan*, 43 says the governor appointed in 1052/1642 was Wazir Sadullah Khan.

[110] Faiz Bakhsh, *Badakhshan*, 43.

[111] Raverty v (ii), 1961-2. Shah 'Abbas I died in 1051/1641.

Muhammad's mother was a direct descendant of the Imam Reza, he was treated with some distinction, despite the years of warfare that had been conducted between the two dynasties (Howorth, 752). He received little, however, in the way of practical help and in the end decided to return and rally his forces on the Murghab. After a short stop at Merv, he made his headquarters at Chichaktu where he was advised by loyal amirs from Badghis and Maimana not to go to Bukhara but to remain in the area and rally the discontented iqta' holders in the western marches.

The Khan's first objective was the Mughal garrison at Maimana. For two months Nazr Muhamamd besieged the fortress, during which operation, Khujam Quli, Nazr Muhammad's diwanbegi was killed during an engagement before the walls. The advance of a large Mughal army under Aurangzeb, though, forced Nazr Muhammad to move the bulk of his force to Belcheragh, leaving Kafsh Qalmaq to guard the western entrance to the upper Shirin Tagab and the Maimana-Andkhui road (Inayat Khan, 375-7). The Mughal army, however, was already overstretched. In the east, Taliqan had fallen to the Tuqay-Timurids (Inayat Khan, 379-80) and in the summer of 1057/1647 'Abd al-'Aziz Khan arrived at Qarshi and sent Beg Oghli across the river towards Aqcha. In a running battle near the village of Timurabad, which lasted seven days, the Mughals only just managed to hold their own (Inayat Khan, 385-8).[112] The issue was decided when Subhan Quli arrived to reinforce his brother, and the Mughal prince, realising that his position was completely untenable, opened negotiations with Nazr Muhammad to ensure a peaceful hand-over of power (Inayat Khan, 390-1).

Shah Jahan, reluctantly conceding that neither his army nor his son had the heart to continue the fight, issued a decree (*farman*) authorising the evacuation of Balkh. Maimana was the first fortress to be surrendered to Nazr Muhammad, followed gradually by one citadel after another. Finally, on 13 October 1647 (14 Ramazan 1057), after an occupation which had lasted less than fifteen months, the Mughals abandoned Balkh (Inayat Khan, 396-400). Their troubles, however, were far from over. On the march south to Kabul through the Hindu Kush, Aurangzeb's army, already badly mauled by the fighting in Balkh, was depleted further when the winter snows arrived early. Thousands died from exposure, or as a result of raids made on the Mughal columns by Hazara tribesmen. Travellers who passed that way months

[112] Raverty v (ii), 1962; Faiz Bakhsh, *Badakhshan*, 43.

later reported finding heaps of bones scattered all over the road (Inayat Khan, 400-3; McChesney 1991, 111).

Almost as soon as the Mughals had left, the internecine strife between the Tuqay-Timurids broke out again. Within a matter of a few months after Nazr Muhammad having re-entered his capital, a disaffected amir laid siege to Balkh and, although he managed to survive this rebellion and to hold onto the appanage for a further three years, Nazr Muhammad was never able to exert the authority that he had before the abdication of Imam Quli (McChesney 1991, 111-2). Finally, in 1061/1651 his son, Subhan Quli, besieged Balkh and forced Nazr Muhammad to abdicate. Like Imam Quli before him, the man who had dominated Balkh politics for nearly fifty years renounced the world and set his face towards Mecca, only to die en route. His body was carried to Medina and buried beside that of his brother (Howorth, 753; McChesney 1991, 112).[113]

The abdication of Nazr Muhammad, however, did nothing to resolve the conflict between his offspring. In 1065/1655 'Abd al-'Aziz, now *de jure* as well as *de facto* Khan of Bukhara, sent his nephew, Qasim Sultan b. Qutluq Muhammad to seize Balkh from Subhan Quli (Howorth, 753; McChesney 1991, 113). For the forty days of the siege, the fertile area around the town was laid waste before the attackers were forced to seek winter quarters in Qutluq's fief of Hisar. The following spring, after negotiation in Khulm, it was agreed that Subhan Quli would renounce his claims to Hisar, Quybadain and Khulm and hand them over to Qasim Sultan. It was only a matter of two years later, however, before Qasim again attacked Balkh, only to be killed in battle. Following Qasim's death, negotiations were opened with 'Abd al-'Aziz through the mediation of Khwaja 'Abd al-Ghaffar,[114] the *pir*, or spiritual guide, of the Khan, and peace was concluded between the two brothers (Howorth, 753; McChesney 1991, 128).

The war between Nazr Muhammad and his sons, the Mughal invasion and the subsequent fratricidal strife precipitated by Nazr Muhammad's death, exacerbated the tendency of regionalism amongst the amirs of Balkh. The growing power and influence of the Ming tribe in Maimana has already been noted. In the eastern part of the appanage, the Qataghan amirs had also risen to a similar position of

[113] Raverty v (ii), 1962.

[114] By the time of his death Khwaja 'Abd al-Ghaffar, an agnate descendant of the Makhdum-i Azam, had become the leading spiritual figure in Balkh (McChesney 1991, 128-9).

prominence. After the Mughal withdrawal from Balkh in 1057/1647, the iqta' of Qunduz and Badakhshan, had been given into the hands of a certain Mahmud Bi and within a decade this individual had become the most important military leader east of Balkh. In 1068/1658 he took Faizabad and began to enrich himself at the expense of the Badakhshanis by a series of looting raids on the settled farms and villages of the mountain region. These plundering excursions were eventually suppressed after the intervention of the sultans. Even so, during Subhan Quli's thirty year reign, Mahmud Bi laid the foundation of Qataghanid power in Qunduz, which later developed into the amirid state that received so much attention from European travellers in the nineteenth century.

As with the establishment of Mingid power in Maimana, British officials in the early decades of the nineteenth century maintained that Qataghanid authority had no antiquity. Alexander Burnes, whose travel journals and official reports were so instrumental in misrepresenting the history of the region, claimed that, "Moorad Beg is the first of his family or countrymen, who has formed so extensive a principality" (Burnes 1834, ii, 347-8). In fact, the opposite was true. Under Mahmud Bi, an ancestor of Murad Beg (Appendix IV, viii), the power and holdings of Qunduz and the Qataghanids were much greater that in the 1830s.

The rise of the Qataghanid amirs from the middle of the seventeenth century, was the natural counter-balance to Mingid domination of the western marches.[115] Not unnaturally, with the break-up of the appanage system south of the Amu Darya, it was these two tribes, and their respective leaders, who were to vie with each other to fill the power vacuum in Balkh and for the right to use of the emotive titles of 'khan' and 'wali'. In the following century, with this rivalry as bitter as ever, both Mingid and Qataghanid amirs sought to secure Afghan support to further their territorial ambitions in the appanage; a dalliance which was to prove disastrous to both Uzbek tribes (McChesney 1991, 117-8).

In 1092/1681 'Abd al-'Aziz Khan, exhausted by countless wars, and sick with cares and amirid feuds, followed in his father's footsteps and abdicated in order to spend the rest of his days atoning for his sins in Medina. He was eventually laid to rest beside the tombs of

[115] The *waqf* donations to the shrine of Mazar-i Sharif, made sometime in the mid 1660s, indicate that there was also an important Ming presence in the area of Khulm (Khush Robat and Hazrat Sultan) (McChesney 1991, 120-2).

his father and uncle (Howorth, 753-4; McChesney 1991, 151). Apart from his military prowess, he was reputed to have been the fattest man of his generation, historians claiming that a four year old child was able to fit easily into one of his boots (Howorth, 755).

The departure of 'Abd al-'Aziz left Subhan Quli Khan as Khan in Bukhara (Howorth, 753-4; McChesney 1991, 152).[116] Early in 1094/1683 he appointed his eldest son, Iskandar,[117] to the Balkh appanage, though he and his other brothers seem to have been kept under house-arrest in the city and were only occasionally brought out to attend public audiences (Howorth, 755; McChesney 1991, 153). In the winter of the same year[118] Iskandar died of poison, his assassination probably instigated by his younger brother, Abu'l-Mansur Sultan (McChesney 1991, 153). Subhan Quli appears next to have appointed Abu'l-Mansur as *qa'alkhan*, or heir apparent, but quickly revoked this decree in favour of another son, 'Ibadullah, whereupon Mansur had his rival assassinated and rebelled. He managed to hold on to Balkh for four months, before he too was assassinated by a female relative in May 1684 (1095) (Howorth, 755-6; McChesney 1991, 154). The only notable event during his short reign was the holding of an extravagant feast.

A fourth son of Subhan Quli, Siddiq Muhammad Sultan, was the next individual to be appointed to Balkh. This individual is portrayed as a pederast and sadist who kept a harem of slave boys and had murderers torn limb from limb, or ripped apart alive. He also had his brothers' assassins hunted down and executed. Although some authors claimed that his vices were the main reason for the discontent and disturbances which marked his period of governorship, a more likely source was Siddiq's apparent attempt to reassert sultanid authority over the appanage's amirs, who by now dominated the political arena. Such a policy ran counter to the interests and ambitions of the powerful Ming, Qataghan and Turkman amirs and precipitated a revolt by the Mingids, who fortified Shibarghan and declared independence (McChesney 1991, 154).

Siddiq's rule was almost as brief as his predecessor's. Subhan Quli, who was occupied with bringing the Khivan amir, Inush, to heel, ordered Siddiq Sultan to assist him, but when the Sultan's

[116] Faiz Bakhsh, *Badakhshan*, 43-4.

[117] *Ibid.* Faiz Bakhsh says another son of Subhan Quli, Sadiq Muhammad, was Balkh's governor who, he asserts, ruled jointly with his brother, Abu'l-Mansur. For a list of the known sons of Subhan Quli, see, McChesney 1991, 152 n.

[118] Faiz Bakhsh puts his death at 1096/1685; Howorth, 755, says he reigned two years.

sympathisers in Bukhara informed him that his father was hard pressed, he returned to Balkh, hoping that his father's defeat would provide an opportunity for him to seize the whole Khanate. Instead, Subhan Quli appealed to Mahmud Bi. The amir of Qataghan marched an army across the Amu Darya, defeated Inush and subdued the rebel amirs of Khojand for good measure (Howorth, 756). As soon as the Khivan threat had dissipated, Subhan Quli marched against Balkh. Siddiq, informed of his father's approach, had two of his brothers, 'Abd al-Ghani and 'Abd al-Qaiyum, put to death and wrote to the Mughal emperor, Aurangzeb, for help. Nothing, however, came of this, since a short while later Siddiq, lured by his father into the royal camp at Khanabad under promise of safe conduct and a royal pardon, was arrested and put to a slow, excruciating death (Howorth, 756; McChesney 1991, 155-6).

Subhan Quli decided that he could no longer entrust Balkh to his heirs and appointed an Uzbek amir instead, though the names and periods of rule of the amirid governors who ruled Balkh from 1097-1109/1685-1697 are very uncertain (McChesney 1991, 156).[119] What is apparent is that Subhan Quli's attempt to bring Balkh back under central authority did not succeed. By not appointing a sultan to the appanage Subhan Quli merely exacerbated the rivalry between the Mingids and Qataghanids. Though representatives of both tribes seem to have held the post of Ataliq of Balkh at one time or another during this interregnum, by the time that a prince of the royal line was again ruling the appanage the whole region had become a battle-ground as rival amirs from west and east fought for supremacy (Howorth, 756-7; McChesney 1991, 156-7).[120]

The struggle between Ming and Qataghan amirs forced Subhan Quli to try and unite the factions by appointing his sister's son, Saleh Khwaja to govern Balkh. This individual was a descendant of Khwaja Abu Nasr Parsa, a renowned shaikh whose tomb was in Balkh. His family had also held the office of naqib at the shrine of 'Ali b. Abi Talib for more than two centuries (McChesney 1991, 158-9).[121] This attempt to unite the rival amirs, however, did not succeed and the following year, following further disturbances, Subhan Quli bowed to

[119] Cf. Faiz Bakhsh, *Badakhshan*, 44-5; Howorth, 756.

[120] For the problem of chronology, see, McChesney 1991, 157n. Mingid rulers and officials are given as: Ataliq Khadim Ming; Yar Muhammad Ming, diwanbegi; Ataliq 'Adil Bi Ming. Qataghanid pretensions centred on the powerful amir, and confidant of Subhan Quli, Ataliq Mahmud Bi b. Murad Beg.

[121] Faiz Bakhsh, *Badakhshan*, 45.

the inevitable and appointed his grandson, Muhammad Muqim b. Iskandar, as qa'alkhan (Howorth, 158-9).[122]

Muhammad Muqim's appointment, apart from being a triumph for the old order, was a victory for the Mingids since Muqim's ataliq, 'Adil Bi, amir of Shibarghan, was from this *ulus*. Mahmud Bi Qataghan, meanwhile, was forced to quit Balkh and retired to Qunduz (Howorth, 758-60).

Muhammad Muqim's reign in Balkh was a troubled one. Following a major incursion by the Persians from Khurasan, who advanced as far as Maimana, the area was only saved by the indispensable Mahmud Bi, who marched to the rescue. The Qataghanid amir's timely intervention tipped the balance of amirid power in his favour, for the Mingids had proven themselves to be incapable of defending the western border (Howorth, 760). From this point onwards Mahmud Bi's power increased to the detriment of the Mingids and by the time of Subhan Quli Khan's death in 1114/1702, his authority in Balkh was such that it was said he regarded Muhammad Muqim as his own foster son.[123]

The other notable event of Muhammad Muqim's reign was the severe earthquake of 1114/1702 (McChesney 1991, 168),[124] which destroyed many ancient monuments in Balkh and did a great deal of structural damage to the shrine of Mazar-i Sharif; the main dome of the *khanaqa*, attributed to Sultan Husain Baiqara, completely falling in on itself. In 1116/1704-5 Muhammad Muqim ordered repairs to the structure, which seemed to have been accomplished in a very short time (McChesney 1991, 168).

Subhan Quli Khan died in 1114/1702 at the age of eighty, having reigned in Bukhara for over thirty years. He was succeeded by his young son, 'Ubaidullah, who was enthroned in the traditional way in Bukhara (McChesney 1991, 162).[125] 'Ubaidullah's main support came from the powerful Manghit amir, Rahim Bi of Qarshi (Skrine & Ross, 204). This individual had married a daughter of Abu'l-Faiz Khan and could justly claim that his connection with Tuqay-Timurids was as strong as Jani Muhammad Sultan's had been when he succeeded the Jani-Begids (Howorth, 767-7). 'Ubaidullah's almost total dependence

[122] *Ibid.*, who claims Muqim only had the title *Wali-yi Balkh* and that he ruled only on condition that Mahmud Bi became ataliq.

[123] Faiz Bakhsh, *Badakhshan*, 47-8.

[124] Raverty v (ii), 1968-9; 'Ghulam Rabbani' (Faiz Bakhsh), *Journey from Cabul to Peshawar*, 1865-66, ESL:260, fols. 849-67.

[125] Skrine & Ross, 199 say that Muqim succeeded.

on his Manghit sponsors meant that the Khan's role was increasingly reduced to a token, legitimising presence, all major decisions being left in the hands of Rahim Bi and his appointees. The day after 'Ubaidullah's accession, Muhammad Muqim, supported by Mahmud Bi Qataghan, held his own investiture ceremony in Balkh and thus, for the first time in the history of the Tuqay-Timurid state, Bukhara and Balkh became centres of rival Khanates.

Initially, things did not go well for the new ruler of Bukhara. In 1115/1703 'Ubaidullah attacked Khanabad, but his army was comprehensively routed by the Qataghanid amir. Later in the same year, Rahim Bi Manghit marched in person against the rebellious governor of Hisar, who promptly allied himself with Muhammad Muqim and Mahmud Bi and together they soundly defeated the Bukharans (McChesney 1991, 164).[126]

In 1119/1707, however, Muhammad Muqim was killed, possibly at the instigation of Mahmud Bi, and the amirs who had supported the Anti-Khan recognised 'Ubaidullah as the legitimate successor of the Tuqay-Timurid dynasty. Probably another reason for this move was anxiety amongst some amirs about Mahmud Bi's pretensions in respect of the Balkh appanage. Following the death of Muhammad Muqim, he had refused to acknowledge 'Ubaidullah's succession and took the unprecedented step of assuming the title of *Khan* (McChesney 1991, 164). Later that year, Mahmud Bi was driven out of Balkh, his supporters purged and 'Adil Beg, the Mingid amir of Shibarghan, re-appointed as ataliq.[127] 'Ubaidullah's authority over Balkh, however, was very limited, for the Mingid and Qataghanid amirs were a law unto themselves and central authority was so weak as to preclude any attempt at military action to bring them to heel. Increasingly, Bukhara's overlordship was seen by the amirs as an imposition and, within two years of the reconquest of Balkh, Mahmud Bi was again challenging for power (McChesney 1991, 164-5).

In March 1711 (1123) 'Ubaidullah, who was trying to organise a second expedition to Balkh to revenge himself for insults offered to

[126] Faiz Bakhsh, *Badakhshan*, 47-8. Both Howorth and Faiz Bakhsh's accounts of Muhammad Muqim's reign are very sketchy and their dates inaccurate. McChesney (1991) has used contemporary manuscripts probably unavailable to these other authorities.

[127] McChesney mentions another Mingid, Khushhal Bi Diwanbegi, son of Muhammad Yar Ataliq Ming, an amir who was influential in Balkh during the Khanship of 'Ubaidullah. Other members of the same family held important positions in Balkh during this century. Yar Muhammad's brother, Adina Bahadur, held the rank of diwanbegi in the 1680s. Adina's son, Muhammad Shukur Bi Ming, endowed a third of Khush Robat near Khulm to the shrine of 'Ali b. Abi Talib (McChesney 1991, 120, 172).

one of his appointees, was assassinated and his sixteen year old brother, Abu'l-Faiz was placed on the throne by Rahim Bi Manghit (Howorth, 767; McChesney 1991, 165).

In Balkh, the desire for a Chingizid head of state remained a strong emotional and cultural need, even though his power had become merely nominal. Following the enthronement of Abu'l-Faiz, 'Adil Bi Ming, Ataliq of Balkh, negotiated safe passage with the Safawids to visit Herat where the descendants of Rustam Muhammad Sultan b. Wali Muhammad were living in exile. The meeting in Herat resulted in a Walid prince, 'Ibadullah Sultan, accepting the invitation to move to Balkh to act as titular head of the appanage. However, since his appointment had been promoted by 'Adil Bi, the return of the Walids to Balkh ensured that the Ming tribe had its hand firmly on the reins of power. This appointment, made without reference to the wishes of the ruler in Bukhara, was one more sign of the growing divorce between the territories north and south of the Amu Darya (McChesney 1991, 167, 194).[128]

'Ibadullah reigned for less than two years and was briefly succeeded, in 1713, by his eldest son, Jahangir. After only a few days in office, Jahangir's brother, Sultan Sanjar, put him to death and assumed control. He ruled for five years before he, too, was assassinated, this time by one of his officials. During his reign, Mahmud Bi Qataghan died during a severe earthquake in Badakhshan (McChesney 1991, 167). Sanjar died in 1130/1718 and was succeeded by another distant relative of Wali Muhammad, Muhammad Sultan, who was brought from Herat. Muhammad's appointment precipitated a revolt by the Qataghan tribe and other amirs, who were discontented with Ming domination of the appanage. Following their defeat, a number of the Qataghan tribes made their home in the Aibak area (McChesney 1991, 167).

Muhammad Sultan's attempts to curb amirid power led, predictably, to his overthrow in 1132/1720, by the Qipchaq amirs, who placed 'Arab Muhammad Sultan on the throne. Little is known about this individual, though it is likely he was also a Chingizid. He survived until *c.* 1732 when his place was taken by Chingiz Muhammad. He, in turn, was succeeded in *c.* 1150/1737-8 by 'Abu'l-Hasan. These last Tuqay-Timurid rulers of Balkh are all referred to by the title, *Bahadur*

[128] Howorth, 762 says Andkhui and Maimana remained part of the Bukharan state under Saiyid Abu'l-Hasan b. Saleh Khwaja. For a discussion of the dates of these Walid and later Chingizid rulers of Balkh, see McChesney 1991, 192-5.

*Khan*, implying they were Chingizids, possibly from the line of Wali Muhammad (McChesney 1991, 166-8).

The break-up of the Chingizid appanages and the rise of the amirs weakened the ancient empire and undermined the inherent strengths of this devolved system of government. Individual amirs and tribal groupings carved out for themselves hereditary fiefdoms and brooked no interference from the centre. By the end of the first decade of the seventeenth century the Khan in Bukhara ruled only with the consent of the Manghit amir, Rahim Bi, and had no power of independent action. In Balkh, the same applied to the Walids, who merely provided a legal facade for Mingid domination. The fragmentation of Uzbek power, both north and south of the Amu Darya, made the Tuqay-Timurid realms ripe for invasion and conquest. It was not long in coming.

In the second decade of the eighteenth century, Herat was governed, on behalf of the Safawids, by Asadullah Sadozai, an Abdali Afghan. In 1130/1717 he broke away from the decaying Persian empire and struck coins in the name of his father, 'Abdullah Khan, the titular head of the tribe (Dupree 1978, 324). The Abdalis quickly subdued Ghuriyan and Badghis, extended their power up to the left bank of the Murghab and installed their own governors. Encouraged by these successes and the good pasturage that Badghis afforded, Abdali tribesmen began to migrate to the area and establish settlements.[129] By 1140/1727 Marichaq, the strategic fort which had been so often fought over by Uzbek and Persian, was under Allah Yar Khan Abdali, who was later to rule Herat in his own right.[130]

The conquest of Badghis brought Afghans into direct contact with the Uzbek tribes of Qaisar and Maimana for the first time. Initially, the arrival of the Sunni Abdalis was regarded as a positive move by the Mingid amir of Maimana and in 1130/1718 Uzbek and Abdali combined in a joint attack on Persian Khurasan which caused much destruction in the province. The Uzbeks, numbering some twelve thousand men under Safi Quli, were finally put to flight by an army of thirty thousand men, though later the Abdalis, with the help of their Uzbek allies, succeeded in defeating the Persians and retaining their hold on Herat (Howorth, 762).

In 1131/1719, the Abdali ruler of Herat was heavily defeated by Mahmud, son of Mir Wais, the Ghilzai governor of Qandahar at the

[129] Raverty v (ii), 1980-1.
[130] Raverty v (ii), 1998.

inaptly named village of Dilaram. This defeat sparked off a bitter fratricidal struggle in Herat which weakened Abdali power. Mahmud, honoured by the Safawids for defeating their Afghan rivals, took advantage of the crumbling power of Sultan Husain Safawi, invaded Persia and briefly held Kerman, until he was forced to return and deal with a revolt in Qandahar (Dupree 1978, 324). Some two years later the Ghilzais returned and in 1134/1722 laid siege to the Safawid capital of Isfahan, forcing the Shah, Sultan Mahmud, to abdicate and publicly proclaim Mahmud as his legal successor (*CHI* vi, 323-4; Dupree 1978, 325ff.).[131]

The overthrow of the Safawids by the Ghilzais was an important landmark in the shifting balance of power in the region. The decline of the Safawid monarchy in Persia was paralleled by the decay of Chingizid authority in Bukhara and Balkh. This power vacuum provided the opportunity for the two most powerful Afghan tribes, the Abdalis in Herat and Ghilzais of Qandahar, Farah and southern Persia, to replace the Safawids and Mughals as the main power south of the Hindu Kush, and to mount a challenge to Chingizid control of Balkh. It was, therefore, but a matter of time before Uzbek and Afghan were to be locked in a bitter war for supremacy though, for a while at least, this clash of wills was postponed while both Uzbek and Afghan fought side-by-side, carving out a fleeting empire for an obscure Turkman from northern Khurasan who, in his early life, had spent four years as a slave of the Uzbeks.

[131] Raverty v (ii), 1987.

CHAPTER THREE

# NADIR SHAH AFSHAR, HAJI BI MING AND AHMAD SHAH DURRANI, 1722-1772

> Nothing can exhibit a more striking contrast to the government of the Afghauns than that of the Uzbeks. In Bokhaura and Ferghauna at least, every thing is in the hands of the sovereign; there is no vestige of popular government, and scarcely any trace of aristocracy ... no separate jurisdictions exist even in the wandering hordes. There are no assemblies of the tribe, or its elders, as amongst the Afghauns, either for the conduct of its affairs or for the settlement of disputes (Elphinstone ii, 186).

## *Nadir Shah's Occupation of Balkh, 1731-1747*

The overthrow of Safawid power and the Afghan conquest of Isfahan, resulted in Persia becoming a battleground between rival armies and factions, who vied for control of the dismembered Safawid Empire (Browne iv, 133). After some eight years of civil war Tahmasp Isma'il, the heir to the Safawid throne, with the backing of his powerful and ruthless Turkman amir, Nadir Shah Afshar, finally gained the upper hand. Mashhad fell to Nadir in 1726[1] and three years later, following the defeat of Allah Yar Khan near Islam Qal'a and before Herat, the Abdalis were also subdued. The following year Isfahan was recaptured from the Ghilzais but, though Tahmasp Isma'il was proclaimed Shah, the real authority lay with his Afshar general. A matter of two years later, Nadir forced Tahmasp II to abdicate and his infant heir was placed on the throne instead. The following Nauroz (21 March 1736), Nadir finally abandoned all pretence and assumed the purple in his own right, thus ending the Safawid dynasty (Browne iv, 134; Dupree 1978, 328-9).

The revolt of Zu'l-Faqar Khan in Herat in 1731, and the overthrow of Allah Yar Khan, brought Nadir Shah once more to Khurasan (Dupree 1978, 329-30; Singh, 13). Allah Yar Khan managed to escape from Herat and fled to Marichaq, where he mustered a body of troops from amongst the Abdali colonists and indigenous Aimaq tribes and sent them to assist Nadir, who had laid siege to Herat.[2]

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[1] From henceforth dates will be AD unless otherwise stated.

Whilst the siege was in progress, Nadir sent a column of troops to attack and subdue Maimana and Chichaktu. They seem to have reached as far north as Andkhui; at least its ruler acknowledged Nadir's authority, for his "rebellion" is given as one of the reasons for Reza Quli's subsequent invasion of Turkistan in 1737 (Dupree 1978, 330; Lockhart, 53, 163-4; Singh, 397).[3] Unfortunately, we know very little about this expedition and nothing is said about how Abu'l-Hasan Khan of Balkh reacted to this incursion into his territory, for Lockhart, in his biography of Nadir Shah, like most colonial historians of Afghanistan, takes very little interest in events beyond the Hindu Kush (see McChesney 1991, 199).

Zu'l-Faqar Khan of Herat finally surrendered in August 1731[4] and Allah Yar Khan Abdali was reinstated. Allah Yar Khan, however, soon broke out into rebellion and Nadir was forced to return to Herat and deal with its turbulent Afghan ruler. During this second campaign, Nadir Shah attacked and subdued the stronghold of Obeh, where the Afghans had secured some of their stores. An attempt by Afghan troops from Herat to prevent this was beaten off. From Obeh, Nadir marched once more into Badghis, this time seizing the Abdali stronghold of Marichaq where Allah Yar Khan had sent his family for safety. All Afghan attempts to recapture this fortress were to no avail.[5] On 28 Feb. 1732[6] Allah Yar Khan surrendered and was allowed to leave for Multan. Nadir Shah stripped the Abdalis of their power and installed a Persian governor instead (Champagne, 24; Dupree 1978, 330). Some six thousand Afghan families were exiled to Mashhad and Nishapur, though, following the fall of Qandahar, they were allowed to return (Dupree 1978, 330; Singh, 13).[7]

In 1736 Nadir's eldest son, Reza Quli Khan, was made governor of Khurasan and the following year, possibly using the excuse of disturbances in the Maimana-Andkhui area, Nadir ordered his son to march into Badghis. According to Lockhart, the object of Nadir's wrath was the Turkman amir, 'Ali Mardan,[8] "governor" of Andkhui,

[3] Raverty v (ii), 2009-10; but see McChesney 1991, 199.

[4] According to Raverty, v (ii), 2026, the date of surrender was 17 Safar 1144 which he converts to 9 August 1731, but if the Hijra date is correct, the proper AD date is 22 August. Dupree 1978, 330 says Herat surrendered in July.

[5] Raverty v (ii), 2025ff.

[6] 1 Ramazan 1144; Raverty v (ii), 2030.

[7] Raverty v (ii), 2032.

[8] Lockhart calls him 'Ali Mardan Khan Afshar, but the use of 'Khan' is quite unwarranted since this title was only used by the Chingizid ruler, whilst amongst the Pushtuns, Khan had a much less specific meaning. From the Nadirid occupation onwards amirs of the Qataghan,

who had "rebelled" (McChesney 1991, 199 n. 3; Howorth, 762-3; Lockhart, 163-4; Vambery 1873, 340).[9] Making his base at Marichaq, Reza Quli quickly subdued Chichaktu and then marched against Andkhui, presumably via Maimana. Since 'Ali Mardan showed no signs of submitting, Reza Quli set out to secure the defection of the Qara and Salor tribes by bribing them on an enormous scale. Despite the defection of these Turkmans, 'Ali Mardan held out for six weeks before finally surrendering. The unfortunate amir was sent as a prisoner to Herat, where he was subsequently executed (Howorth, 762-3; Lockhart, 163; Vambery 1873, 340). Sulaiman Khan, possibly a relative of the executed governor, was appointed in his place.

The next citadel to fall was Shibarghan, followed by Aqcha, and in July 1737,[10] Reza Quli marched against Balkh (Howorth, 763). Abu'l-Hasan Khan, faced with overwhelmingly superior forces, wanted to submit immediately, but Saiyid 'Khan', the Ming ataliq, persuaded him to resist (Lockhart, 163; McChesney 1991, 198). Saiyid Ming barred the Persian advance with a series of deep trenches behind which the Uzbeks arrayed their forces, but the superiority of the invaders' artillery, some of which was of European manufacture, soon broke the back of the resistance and they were defeated with heavy loss of life (Howorth, 763; Vambery 1873, 340). The unfortunate Abu'l-Hasan was captured and sent to Qandahar with other notables from the area, whilst the ataliq made good his escape (Lockhart, 166; McChesney 1991, 198-9).

The conquest of Balkh so pleased Nadir Shah that he showered extravagant gifts on his son, including three hundred dresses of honour, "high-bred" horses adorned with gold, bejewelled saddles and bridles, and twelve thousand gold pieces (Vambery, 340).[11] Encouraged by his successes and his father's adulation, Reza Quli decided to carry the battle across the Amu Darya and attack Abu'l-Faiz in Bukhara. Qarshi easily fell into his hands and, with Bukhara at his mercy, it seemed only a matter of time before the Chingizids went the way of the Safawids. Abu'l-Faiz Khan was saved, however, by the

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Ming and other tribes are frequently referred to indiscriminately as Khan. Lockhart also used the term Afshar very loosely; cf. below, when referring to the Salor and Qara who are quite separate Turkman tribes. However, by claiming that the "governor" of Andkhui was an "Afshar," he implies that Nadir Shah had a tribal link with this individual and hence some claim over Andkhui when, in fact, no such relationship existed.

[9] Raverty v (ii), 2035.

[10] For the problem of dating the Nadirid conquest of Balkh, see McChesney 1991, 198 n.1.

[11] Vambery calls them ducats.

intervention of Ilbars, the now-independent amir of Khiva, who joined with his Bukharan rival in order to oppose the invaders, whose presence was a threat to them both. In a battle at Qarshi, Reza Quli was defeated and Nadir Shah, concerned that his son's defeat would precipitate an invasion of Balkh and force him to abandon the siege of Qandahar, recalled his son and informed Abu'l-Faiz that Reza Quli had acted without orders (Howorth, 763).

Though the threat of a Bukharan invasion was thus removed, Nadir Shah did not let matters rest there and he set out to secure the loyalty of Rahim Bi and other Manghit amirs in Bukhara by the secret distribution of large bribes. He also worked hard to break up the fragile coalition between Bukhara and Ilbars by exploiting their long-standing differences. So successful was this policy of divide and rule, that the two rulers were soon at each others' throats once more (Skrine & Ross, 200).

The re-emergence of these divisions in Transoxiana left Nadir Shah free to complete the conquest of Qandahar, which fell in 1738. The following year, he marched his army into India; a campaign which culminated in the sack of Delhi. A few months after the fall of the Mughal capital, Nadir Shah returned northwards, laden with booty. Meanwhile, news of the fall of Delhi had reached Bukhara through the mercantile grapevine and the Bukharan ruler, deeply worried about the Persian despot's intentions, sent an ambassador to meet Nadir. Abu'l-Faiz Khan's envoy met the triumphant ruler at his camp in Peshawar, where he handed over a letter from the Khan which was so abject and maudlin that it left Nadir Shah in no doubt that, were the conqueror of Delhi to march across the Amu Darya, Bukhara would be completely at his mercy:

> I am the last off-shoot of an ancient line. I am not powerful enough to withstand a monarch so redoubtable as thou and so I keep myself apart, offering prayers for thy welfare. If, however, thou shouldst deign to honour me by a visit, I will show thee the regard due to a guest (Howorth, 763; Skrine & Ross, 201).[12]

The invitation to "visit" Bukhara was quickly acted on by Nadir, since there were other pressing reasons to move into Turkistan. During his absence in India, there had been further trouble in Herat, as well as depredations in Khurasan by Uzbek tribesmen subject to Ilbars (Dilworth, 70, 101; Howorth, 763) which Reza Quli had been unable

[12] Quoting from 'Abd al-Karim Bukhari; see also Raverty v (ii), 2036.

to suppress. As a consequence of these attacks, a number of Persians had been taken prisoner and sold into slavery. Nadir sent ambassadors to Ilbars to request the release of these individuals and the resolution of these grievances. Ilbars, however, put all but one of Nadir's envoys to death and the sole survivor of this mission was sent back, minus his nose and ears, to convey a message of contempt and defiance (Dilworth, 70; Howorth, 913).

Such deliberate insults could not go unavenged. Nadir ordered his army to march to Herat and sent instructions to Reza Quli to join forces with him in Badghis, where they would mount a joint attack on Ilbars and visit Bukhara in order to determine the extent to which Abu'l-Faiz Khan was willing to submit to him. Father and son met at Qara Tepa, near Marichaq (Lockhart, 186ff.).[13] Reza Quli had brought with him ten thousand men,[14] whilst Nadir had brought along all the loot from his Indian campaign, including three hundred battle elephants (Skrine & Ross, 201).

Before entering Turkistan, an entertainment of unparalleled extravagance and magnificence was held at Qara Tepa, probably on the flat top of this ancient citadel mound. All the plunder from Delhi was displayed during the course of the banquet, which was held in an enormous tent adorned with gold poles and fringes of stringed pearls manufactured in India for the specific purpose of celebrating the triumph (Skrine & Ross, 201; C. E. Yate 1888, 102, from the *Tarikh-i Nadiri*). But the centre piece of wonder was the Peacock Throne, designed and crafted by a European jeweller, and seized from the *Divan-i Khas* of the Mughal king of Delhi (Skrine and Ross, 201 n.). The celebration was not, however, a totally joyous occasion since it marked the beginning of Nadir's suspicion that his son, Reza Quli, was plotting his assassination in order to seize power himself. Accusing his son, ironically, of excessive harshness in his government, Nadir later dismissed him as governor of Khurasan and finally had him put to death (Lockhart, 186).[15]

Having celebrated his recent conquests in lavish style, Nadir Shah marched his forces through Marichaq, Chichaktu, Maimana, Andkhui and on to Balkh (Lockhart, 186).[16] From Balkh he moved

[13] Raverty v (ii), 2036-7. Qara Tepa is located in the Kushka valley. In 1886 it was a large mound fifty foot high by a hundred yards square at its top, surrounded at the base by a moat. It presently lies within the Republic of Turkmenistan (C. E. Yate 1888, 102-3, n.).

[14] *Ibid.*

[15] Raverty v (ii), 2039.

[16] *Ibid.*

north-westwards along the south bank of the Oxus to Qarqi,[17] where he was met by Ataliq Rahim Bi Manghit with presents and supplies for his vast army (Skrine & Ross, 201-2). Together they marched to Charjui where Nadir's men threw a bridge across the river and, leaving half his army to guard his priceless treasures, Nadir pushed on to Qaraqul, a fortress one day's march from Bukhara itself. On 12 September 1740 (Howorth, 764) Abu'l-Faiz Khan, along with his chief courtiers, came out to greet Nadir with presents of horses and other suitable gifts. The heir of one of the most exalted dynasties of Central Asia abjectly abased himself at the feet of the conqueror of Delhi and was honoured by being raised to a seat in Nadir Shah's presence and given gifts suitable to his rank (Howorth, 764; Skrine & Ross, 201-2).

In the formal negotiations which followed, a treaty was drawn up which recognised the Amu Darya as the border between Nadir and Abu'l-Faiz Khan's domains. Exactly how far down the course of the Oxus this border was drawn is not stated, but presumably Charjui was ceded to Nadir, as was Bukharan territory south of the Amu Darya to the point where Abu'l-Faiz's territory ended and that of Ilbars commenced (Lockhart, 186).[18] To seal the treaty, Nadir agreed to marry Abu'l-Faiz's daughter and her sister was bestowed on Nadir's nephew (Howorth, 764; Skrine & Ross, 202). Rahim Bi, the Manghit kingmaker, was well-rewarded for his support of Nadir, being elevated to the rank of Khan and given command of six thousand Turkistan levies (Howorth, 764; Skrine & Ross, 202).

Having settled matters with Bukhara, Nadir Shah turned his attention to the troublesome principality of Khiva, whose ruler had dealt so harshly and contemptuously with his envoys. Khiva was invested and, after three days of relentless cannonade, Ilbars was forced to throw himself on the mercy of a ruler who was as ruthless as himself. The relatives of Nadir's slaughtered ambassadors demanded that the Khivan be put to death and Ilbars, along with twenty-one of his principal officers, was executed (Howorth, 913). Nadir then returned to Charjui, where he demonstrated his contempt of Abu'l-Faiz by returning the daughter whom he had married only a few weeks earlier. Having thus settled matters to his satisfaction, Nadir withdrew to Khurasan, though Rahim Bi stayed with him at the head of the Uzbek and Turkman force (Howorth, 764-5). Sometime later, when Abu'l-Faiz Khan faced a serious challenge from rebels in the Ferghana oasis, he

[17] Howorth, 765 says Qarshi, but this is not on the way to Charjui.

[18] R. Watson, *The Boundaries of Persia*, 15 Dec. 1864, SLEP:167, no. 1 of 1865.

applied to Nadir for assistance, and twelve thousand men under Rahim Bi were dispatched and forced the rebels back from before Bukhara (Howorth, 764).

*Nadir's Occupation of Balkh and Its Repercussions*

The ten year occupation of the Balkh appanage by Nadir's Persianised administration was an important watershed in the history of Lesser Turkistan. The overthrow of Abu'l-Hasan Khan in 1737 by Reza Quli, brought to an end half a millennium of Chingizid domination of Balkh and created a power vacuum which the Afghans eventually filled when Nadir Shah's fragile empire collapsed.

As with the Mughal invasion in the previous century, the Persian forces of occupation did not find it easy to control affairs in the province. They brought with them a political world view which revolved around a highly centralised, absolutist system, which was diametrically opposed to the federal appanage system of the Chingizid Khanate. Not unexpectedly, this produced considerable resentment, especially when the Iranians began to impose their own administrators. Governors and fiscal agents were assigned to each town and implemented requisitions ordered by the central authority. When these impositions were resisted by the amirs, military force was used.

The Persians mercilessly exploited the province. The male population was either conscripted into the army, or sent to work as forced labourers in Khurasan. Grain and other supplies were expropriated to feed the conquerer's troops in complete disregard of the economic needs of the indigenous population of the appanage (McChesney 1991, 207). In 1742 alone, during the operations against Khiva, a levy of four thousand *kharwar*s of grain was made on Balkh (McChesney 1991, 200-1). When Nadir Shah's governor, Niyaz Khan, was unable to meet this target, despite having at his disposal all the means of state coercion, he lost his job. In Balkh, the price of grain rose by between five and seven hundred percent, to levels which the area had not experienced for nearly a century. Most of the seed grain for the following year's harvest was also seized (McChesney 1991, 201-2).

The tyranny of the Nadirid occupation, and the powerlessness of the local amirs to organise any effective resistance, led to the channelling of local resentment into a millennialist movement led by a charismatic leader from the region of Obeh called Rasul; though whether

this was his actual name, or a title given to him in virtue of the widely-held belief that he was a prophet, is unclear.

Rasul had moved from Obeh to Ghazni, where he had created a considerable stir by his ability as a cabalist necromancer and a large number of disciples gathered around him. In the summer of 1741, following the advice of one of his followers, he travelled north and arrived before Andkhui at the head of possibly as many as fifty thousand disciples (McChesney 1991, 205-6). The reason for his choosing Andkhui is unclear, but it must have had something to do with the importance of the place in the religious life of the province. Andkhui was the burial place of Hazrat Ishan Baba Wali, or Baba Sangu, the shaikh whose advice Timur Lang had sought prior to his invasion of Khurasan. It was also a saiyid from this town whom Sultan Husain Baiqara had appointed as the first naqib of the most important shrine in the Balkh appanage, that of 'Ali b. Abi Talib at Mazar-i Sharif. Outside Andkhui, on the Shibarghan road, was another important 'Alid *qadamga*, Shah-i Mardan. This region, therefore, was an ideal place for Rasul to commence operations amongst the dispirited and oppressed population of the province, providing, as it did, an emotive religious and historical backdrop to his millennialist and egalitarian message (McChesney 1991, 206ff.).

The arrival of Rasul at the head of a vast crowd of palm-carrying devotees posed a considerable dilemma for the Persian governor of the town and the shaikh was forbidden admittance. News, however, soon spread that remarkable miracles had been performed by Rasul, who had turned palm fronds into bread. In a matter of days, his camp was besieged by vast crowds of desperate and dejected people. It was not long before he was being referred to as Hazrat Ishan; a direct allusion to his great forebear, Baba Sangu. The possibility of such a movement becoming a rallying point for nationalistic sentiment was not lost on the Persian occupiers and the governor of Andkhui went in person to Rasul's camp hoping to expose him as a charlatan. However, when he saw for himself the wonders (*karamat*) which the Ishan performed before his own eyes, the governor himself became a disciple and bestowed on him many gifts (McChesney 1991, 206).

News of the miraculous powers of Rasul spread to Balkh and he was invited by some of the religious personages to move to the capital where he continued to attract a multitude of impoverished and marginalised people who had suffered much as a result of the oppressive policies of the Persian occupiers. Outside Balkh, he was greeted by a

crowd of between fifty and sixty thousand, acclaiming him as the "Apostle of the Age" (*Rasul-i Muddati*) and the "True Imam" (*Imam Bi-Haq*).

In order to reinforce the growing Mahdi-ism of his message, Hazrat Ishan decided to take up his abode at the shrine of Mazar-i Sharif. In doing so, he sent a veiled message to the Persian occupiers that he was the true representative of the Imam's teaching, and not the Shi'i invaders. The guardian (*mutawalli*) of the shrine, Khwaja Ni'mat Ansari, made a room available for the Hazrat and soon multitudes of sick and maimed were flocking to the shaikh. His miracles continued to amaze the populace, particularly when he raised to life two decapitated bodies before the very eyes of the Nadirid governor of Balkh, Niyaz Khan, and Khwaja Ni'mat Ansari (McChesney 1991, 207-8).

His message and wonders made a particular impression on the Qipchaq tribe which occupied the Balkh plains and the north-facing mountain slopes of the Hindu Kush. Following the defeat of the Ming ataliq, Saiyid Khan, in 1737, the Qipchaqs had been the main opponents of the Persian occupiers. 'Ismatullah Beg, the amir who acted as a mediator between his tribe and Niyaz Khan, acknowledged, on behalf of his tribe, the Ishan's powers and placed his whole *ulus* under Rasul's spiritual authority and leadership. From this point onwards, the followers of the Hazrat became increasingly militarised. Muhammad Kazim,[19] who gives the most detailed account of this movement, blames the shift to armed uprising on the Qipchaq chief, but militant resistance to oppression is implicit in Islamic eschatology of the Mahdi, as is the belief that the appearance of this justice-restoring individual is but a precursor to the return of the miracle-working prophet, 'Isa b. Maryam, who will slay the anti-Christ, *al-Dajjal*.[20] It is not difficult, therefore, to understand why Hazrat Ishan's preaching, accompanied as it was by extraordinary miracles, was seen as implicit criticism of the Shi'i invaders, who had overthrown the ancient order and brought with them tyranny and hardship on an unprecedented scale. How much Rasul himself encouraged such political aspirations is not clear, but he seems to have made no attempt to discourage the militarisation of his disciples (McChesney 1991, 207-9).

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[19] *Nama-yi 'Alam-ara-yi Nadiri*, I have paraphrased McChesney's account of this uprising, McChesney 1991, 203-13.

[20] See MacDonald's article, "Al-Mahdi," *SEI*, 310-3.

The Qipchaqs final broke out in revolt in the autumn of 1741 and was initial successful. A Persian force from Balkh was defeated and the capital besieged. Niyaz Khan next tried to break out from Balkh by attacking the Qipchaq's western flank but he was forced back by an army of some sixty thousand rebels. However, during this battle, 'Ismatullah Beg was seriously wounded and his followers, confident in the Hazrat's powers to cure the incurable, carried the injured Qipchaq amir to Mazar-i Sharif (McChesney 1991, 209).

Unfortunately for Rasul, his powers deserted him just when they were most needed and the chief died. The failure to restore to health the man who had risked his life for the Ishan's cause, destroyed public confidence in his claims and the whole Qipchaq tribe abandoned Rasul to his fate. By the middle of December 1741 the Ishan found himself alone in the shrine of Mazar-i Sharif. The *mutawalli* of the shrine, who anyway had been placed in a difficult position by the shaikh's presence, realised that the rebellion was over and ingratiated himself with his Persian overlords by ensuring that the populist leader was arrested and executed by Niyaz Khan (McChesney 1991, 209-10).

In the reprisals that followed, the Qipchaq tribe was decimated. Special troops were sent by Nadir Shah to stamp out all vestiges of resistance and thousands were slain or enslaved. Six thousand five hundred tribesmen, chosen by lot, were beheaded and their skulls made into a pyramid. The Ishan's closest disciple, who had announced him in the villages as "Lord of the Age and Time," was buried alive in this grisly tomb. It was reported that his screams continued for many days until death finally released him from his agony (McChesney 1991, 210).

The repression served to further fragment a society which was already beginning to lose any central authority. Furthermore, Nadir's persecution and decimation of the Qipchaq's ulus strengthened the power of the Ming and Qataghan amirs for up to this point in time, the Qipchaqs had been one of the main power-brokers in the region. Thus the decade of Nadirid government in the appanage exacerbated the tendency to regionalism. This was accentuated by the demands Nadir Shah made on the wilayat for troops to replenish his army, which drained the province of Persian forces. In order to keep a sort of peace, Nadir's governor was obliged to rely increasingly on local Uzbek tribes to police their own people. Thus when, in 1745/6 Kulab and Badakhshan revolted against high taxation, the uprising was

suppressed by an army made up entirely of Uzbeks recruited from the appanage. The reliance on local levies strengthened the hands of local Uzbek amirs, particularly Hazara "Khan" Qataghani, a direct descendant of Mahmud Bi,[21] the amir of Qunduz who, despite having given sanctuary to Ataliq Saiyid Ming following his defeat by Reza Quli Khan in 1737, had eventually made his peace with the invaders. From *c.* 1746, following the Badakhshan campaign, he began to adopt a more independent stance, realising that the Persian governor was not in a position to enforce his will over his territory.

*Balkh and the Kingdom of the Afghans, 1747-1751*

Following the assassination of Nadir Shah in June 1747 by his Persian commanders, who decided to "breakfast off him ere he should sup off them" (Browne iv, 137), the empire he had carved out for himself broke into three parts. In Persia, Nadir's nephew, 'Ali Quli, succeeded his father, but he was quickly killed by his brother, Ibrahim, who in turn was assassinated in 1749 by supporters of Nadir's grandson, Shah Rukh. Shah Rukh too was deposed and blinded but, contrary to the traditional practice which disqualifies the blind from kingship, he was later reinstated and reigned in Mashhad until 1796 (Browne iv, 138). Meanwhile, in Qandahar, the Afghans asserted their independence by the election of Ahmad Shah of the Abdali tribe, a younger brother of Zu'l-Faqar Khan the former ruler of Herat, as their commander, or Amir. Following a dream, Ahmad Shah caused the name of the Abdali tribe to be changed to Durrani (*dur* = pearl) and henceforth he was known as Ahmad Shah Durrani (Dupree 1978, 332-3).

Balkh was evacuated by the remaining Nadirid contingents without too much difficulty (McChesney 1991, 214-5), but their departure left a huge power vacuum. The old Chingizid order had been swept aside during the decade of occupation and control of Balkh was henceforth to be disputed between the Ming and Qataghan tribes, until Balkh was invaded by Sardar Muhammad Akram Khan in 1849. No attempt was made to re-establish a Chingizid as the nominal head of the Balkh Khanate, partly because there were few legitimate claimants and partly because events in Bukhara made it obvious that there was no hope of reviving the Tuqay-Timurid dynasty.

[21] For his genealogy and discussion of the conflicting claims in the sources, see McChesney 1991, 214 n.

When news of Nadir's death reached Ataliq Rahim Bi Manghit at his camp in Charjui, he kept the news a close secret and hurried to Bukhara. With the dust of the journey still on his coat, he went to the royal palace and demanded an interview with Abu'l-Faiz Khan. Having gained access to the Khan's chamber, he ordered the unfortunate ruler to be seized and imprisoned in the Mir 'Arab *madrasa*. Rahim Bi's action produced a quick response from the rump of Nadir's army, which had been sent to suppress an uprising in Ferghana. When they heard of Nadir's death and the confinement of Abu'l-Faiz, they abandoned their operations in the east and besieged Rahim Bi in Bukhara. Nothing daunted, Rahim Bi cleverly exploited the ethnic and tribal divisions within their ranks and succeeded in persuading the Ghilzai contingent to change sides. Weakened by this defection, the Persians abandoned the siege, negotiated safe passage back across the Amu Darya and returned to their own country. Immediately the Ghilzai defection had been achieved, Rahim Bi had the wretched Abu'l-Faiz Khan put to death (Howorth, 765). 'Abd al-Mu'min, who had the dubious distinction of being Rahim Bi's son-in-law, was then set up as a figure-head to give a token respectability to Rahim Bi's putsch.

There could have been little doubt in anyone's mind that the Manghit amir was now the true ruler of Bukhara and it was but a matter of time before he, or his heirs, made away with the Tuqay-Timurid line altogether (Howorth, 765). A few years later, in 1751, Rahim Bi had 'Abd al-Mu'min assassinated, after he had shown himself to be rather too independently-minded, and placed 'Ubaidullah, a son(?) of Abu'l-Faiz in his place. However, before eighteen months of his reign had been completed, he too had been deposed.

Rahim Bi's domination of the Chingizid Khan in Bukhara was a further impetus for individual amirs in Balkh to operate independently. The abandonment of the province by the Persians was seen by the Ming and Qataghan amirs of Maimana and Qunduz as an opportunity to lay hold of the 'Ancient Supremacy' and claim for themselves the titles of *Khan* and *Wali-yi Balkh*.[22] Haji Bi Ming, amir of Maimana,[23] was the first to take advantage of the break up of Nadir's empire. He

[22] Translated by nineteenth century commentators as 'Governor of Balkh', but wali is better translated in the context of the Chingizid domination of Balkh as 'Regent'.

[23] After Bukhari (McChesney 1991, 214-5). Muhammad Kazim mentions another Mingid, Musa Khwaja Uzbek, in connection with the take-over at Balkh. However, since Haji Bi, or Haji Khan, as the sources call him (though this title was formally given to him later), is mentioned in other contemporary histories, such as the *Tarikh-i Ahmad Shahi* (see below), it is more likely that it was he who took control after 1747.

seized control of Balkh, but a few weeks later his great rival, Hazara Bi of Qataghan, ousted him (McChesney 1991, 215). Realising that their military might was equally balanced and that he needed allies to defeat the Qataghanids, Haji Bi made the fatal mistake of approaching the newly-elected Amir of the Afghan tribes, Ahmad Shah Durrani.

*British Perceptions of Balkh in the Post-Nadirid Period*

The political situation of the province of Balkh, following the death of Nadir Shah, has attracted little comment from historians, mainly because the focus of European attention from 1747 onwards had been concentrated, more or less exclusively, on the rise of Afghan power in Qandahar and, later, Kabul. Even today, historical works on Afghanistan still reflect this bias (e.g. Dupree 1978). The reason for this is not difficult to pin-point. In the nineteenth century, the rivalry between Britain and Russia, known inappropriately by the Kiplingesque sobriquet, 'The Great Game', resulted in British sponsorship of 'Afghanistan'—or perhaps, more accurately, the Amirs of that country—as a buffer between the Tsarist empire and British India.

This often uncomfortable alliance resulted in British military and political officials relying heavily on Afghan sources for historical information on the early Durrani period. There is strong evidence (see below and chapter 6) that British ignorance of Central Asian history and the traditional alignments beyond the Hindu Kush, was manipulated by both Sadozai and Barakzai Amirs in order to extend their power up to the Amu Darya or even Bukhara. The remoteness of Turkistan from India, Uzbek, Aimaq and Turkman involvement in the slave trade,[24] and the executions of Conolly and Stoddard in Bukhara in 1842,[25] were further factors which restricted European contact with Turkistan and Bukhara and contributed to British prejudice against the Uzbeks and "The Man-Stealing Turcomans" (Marvin 1881).

Underlying all of the British frontier policy was a European obsession with classical history, and Alexander the Great in particular.

[24] Sadozai support of the slave trade during the First Anglo-Afghan War (cf. Yar Muhammad Khan's sale of Qizilbash, Hazaras and his political opponents into slavery) was generally played down by the British, for obvious political reasons, as was the forcible enslavement of Uzbeks, Hazaras and Kafirs by 'Abd al-Rahman Khan from 1889 onwards—well after the Uzbek-Turkman slave trade had been suppressed by the Russian conquest of the Central Asian Khanates.

[25] For a discussion of how these executions continued to dominate Anglo-Bukharan relations well after the deaths of Nasrullah Khan and Dost Muhammad Khan, see chapters 5 & 6.

Successive generations of British political and military officers, viceroys and civil servants were educated in a system which was steeped in the Greek and Latin works which Alexander's conquests spawned. When, at the turn of the nineteenth century, the East India Company's attention was drawn to the Central Asian region, it was to these sources that officials turned for information about the human and military geography of the regions beyond the Khyber and the Amu Darya.[26] The journals of explorers and military strategists, such as Edward Stirling, Alexander Burnes, Arthur Conolly and many others, are shot through with references to Herodotus, Plutarch, Quintus Curtius Rufus, etc. Explorers and travellers made copious notes about the locations of the geographical places mentioned by classical geographers, while others, like Burnes, made collections of Bactrian coins, or sought to identify races such as the Kafirs or Pushtuns as the descendants of Greek settlers. Implicit in all of these enquiries, was the assumption that Central Asian history began with Alexander and that little had changed, in strategic or political terms, since 326 BC.

Since oriental and archaeological studies of the area were in their infancy it was possible for 'authorities' on the area to leap over more than two millennia of invasion, migration and religious revolutions to sustain the myth that since Alexander drew his border on the Oxus,[27] Britain too, should regard the same river as the 'natural' boundary of 'Our Indian Possessions'.

Furthermore, the population of Transoxiana which, in the nineteenth century, was dominated by the Manghit Uzbek dynasty of Bukhara and other semi-independent Turkman and Uzbek amirs, was viewed very much in the manner of Plutarch's mythological view of barbarian Sogdiana in *De Alexandri Magni Fortuna aut Virtute*. The region's "wild and savage way of living" was personified for both British and Russian officials in the slave trade; a traffic which had to be "overcome" by the modern heirs of Alexander. If the slave traders could not be 'civilized' then they had to be beaten for "wickedness was the way of the barbarians" (quoted Holt, 25). This Plutarchian myth can be detected in the journals of early European explorers of Central Asia in the 1820s and 30s and was reinforced and consolidated as a consequence of the unavenged executions of Conolly and

[26] See, for example, Fraser-Tytler's comment (p. 142) on Lord Lytton's ardent espousal of the 'Forward Policy' in 1878-89 which led to the Second Anglo-Afghan War.

[27] In fact Alexander did not stop at the Oxus, but conquered the satrapy of Sogdiana as far north as the Sir Darya (Jaxartes) river.

Stoddard at the hands of Nasrullah of Bukhara in 1842. Since Britain was unable itself to destroy the power of the rump Chingizid state either side of the Amu Darya, the alternative was to encourage its break up and demise by sponsoring the expansion of the Durrani state in the south and through tacit connivance with the southward expansion of the other European imperial power in the region, Russia.

Not that this classical world view is peculiar to the nineteenth century colonial mind. It also pervades the work of Tarn (Tarn 1948 & 1980) and the writing of British officials of this century, such as Fraser-Tytler, who was himself an active participant in British Central Asian policy. Fraser-Tytler's historical survey of Afghanistan begins with a reference to the *Meteorologica* of Aristotle and Alexander's conquest (Fraser-Tytler, 3-4). Even more extraordinarily, he subsequently constructs an elaborate defence of British Central Asian policy during the last century based entirely on the precedent of the Græco-Bactrian kingdom, and pointedly ignores half a millennium of Chingizid domination of the Amu and Sir Darya plains:[28]

> No ruler of India can afford to allow a powerful and potentially hostile state to occupy or outflank the great frontier barrier of India - the mountains of the Hindu Kush. This is the simple (*sic*) fact which has come down to us through history, it is a fact which ... still remains, even today, in spite of all modern inventions and devices, as true as when, over two thousand years ago, the Greeks crossed the Hindu Kush to found the first European Empire of India (Fraser-Tytler, 142).

Despite the illogicality, even ridiculousness, of such an argument, it has been the basis of an unchallenged truism that has underlain more than a hundred and fifty years of British involvement in Afghanistan and Central Asia. In European terms, it is as if the present Italian government were to lay claim to England and Wales on the basis that the Roman empire's northern border had been drawn at Hadrian's Wall and were to add insult to injury by subsidising the French to enforce their presumed rights.

Even today, western scholarship maintains its dalliance with the romance of Alexander, preferring classical geographical terms, such as 'Oxus', 'Jaxartes' and 'Paropamisus', which are meaningless to the local population unless, of course, they have received a western education.[29] British, French and, to an extent, Russian archæological

[28] See also Fraser-Tytler, Part III, "The Lessons of History," 275ff.

[29] For contemporary examples, see Dupree 1978 (though he prefers Amu Darya to Oxus), Yapp 1980 *et al.*

exploration of Afghanistan in this century has perpetuated this obsession, concentrating on sites which are presumed to have Alexandrine, and hence, European, associations.

The cumulative effect of these prejudices was to lead, eventually, to the northern border of Afghanistan being drawn on the Amu Darya. As a corollary, it became highly inconvenient to dig too deeply into the pre-Nadirid history of the Balkh appanage, since one only had to scratch the surface to discover uncomfortable facts which ran counter to both British and Russian beliefs about the 'natural', 'scientific' frontiers of India and Central Asia.

Another factor which distorted British perceptions of the frontier issue was the inaccuracy of intelligence on which Central Asian policy was based. In the first half of the nineteenth century, British officials relied almost exclusively on the reports of British officers and military travellers, which were regarded as authoritative by policy-makers and historians. More often than not, however, these reports were poorly researched and were the result of the author's selective and subjective interpretation.[30] Many of the sources were oral and originated with individuals who had a vested interest in interpreting or distorting facts to their own advantage. Policy-makers not only lived thousands of miles from the events in question and were thus unable to gauge the effect of their policies on the indigenous population, they were also many years removed from the foundation of the Durrani Amirship, the invasions of Nadir Shah, and the last days of the Chingizid Khanate.

By the time Britain began to take an interest in affairs beyond the Indus and officers were able to conduct surveys in the area, nearly a hundred years had passed since the election of Ahmad Shah Durrani, the death of Nadir Shah and the break-up of the appanage system. Yet British officials constantly sought to legitimise their decisions about frontiers on the basis of what occurred in the middle of the seventeenth century.

From its inception, therefore, British Central Asian and Afghanistan policy was built on a foundation of sand, being constructed on a heady cocktail of Alexandrian romanticism and unreliable, partial and prejudiced sources. It is no wonder that British colonial strategy in Central Asia bears little relation to historic precedent, or that regions which had ancient cultural and political

[30] E.g. the debate about the exact location of Khwaja Saleh on the Amu Darya, which rumbled on throughout the century.

affinities with each other were divided by arbitrary borders into states which were never united by consensus but merely sustained by military might and European sponsorship. It is hardly unexpected therefore, in an age which has witnessed the collapse of both the British and Russian empires, that so much ethnic conflict has broken out in territories formerly controlled by these powers. Afghanistan is no exception and the present conflict is an inevitable outcome of policies pursued by Britain, Russia and the Afghan Amirs, over the last two centuries.

### *Haji Bi Ming's Embassy to Ahmad Shah Durrani, 1751*

Arthur Conolly's brief account of Haji Bi and the Mingid dynasty of Balkh and Maimana,[31] written in 1840, is a good example of this concoction of historical inaccuracy, classical romanticism and partisan manipulation. For over a hundred and fifty years, this laconic report has been the basis for nearly all histories of Balkh and Maimana, from the days of Ahmad Shah Durrani to the flight of Amir Dost Muhammad Khan in 1839.[32] Even today, scholars still treat Conolly's memorandum as if it were authoritative.[33]

Conolly's source for his history of the Mingid dynasty was a certain Saiyid 'Abbas, a Persian scribe (*mirza*) who accompanied his mission on the recommendation of Alexander Burnes. Saiyid 'Abbas, according to Conolly's own account, claimed to have lived some ten years in Maimana, where he had practised medicine and enjoyed "the favour and intimacy" of Mizrab Khan, Wali of Maimana at that period.[34] According to the Mirza, or rather Conolly's interpretation of his material, the rise of the Mingid dynasty came about in the following way:

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[31] Conolly, *Bamiyan to Merve*, 1840.

[32] Cf. Afghan Boundary Commission, *Gazetteer* (1895) ii, 217-8; J. Talboys Wheeler (1869) and many others. Future references in text to *Gazetteer*, with appropriate edition date and volume number, refer to the Afghan Boundary Commission's Gazetteer, vol. ii, *Afghan Turkistan* (editions in 1895, 1907 and 1919) and vol. iii, *Herat* (1910). Other, earlier, Gazetteers, e.g. MacGregor (1871), are referred to by author's name. A complete set of the ABC Gazetteer's are located in the IOLR at L/MIL/17/4/1-4 with route maps and indexes. See also *Curzon Collection*, MSS Eur., F112.

[33] The Afghan Boundary Commission's Gazetteers were recently republished by Adamec (1979 for the volume on Afghan Turkistan) with very little critical appraisal of their historical material. Unfortunately, this has led to the perpetuation of certain historical perceptions which have little basis in fact, cf. McChesney 1991, 220 and n.

[34] Conolly, *Bamiyan to Merve*, 1840.

> Hajee Khan, the founder of the ruling family belonging to the Oosbeg tribe of Mingeah, was a soldier of fortune in Nadir Shah's army together with Ahmed Khan Abdowlee. When the latter, after the murder of the Persian monarch [Nadir Shah], had made himself King of the Afghans, Hajee Khan repaired to his Court and Ahmed Shah, who was bent upon retaining (*sic*) all that Nadir Shah had conquered, appointed his old comrade Walee of Meiminna and Bulkh on condition of his furnishing certain military aid at call. Meiminna at that time was not a place of importance enough to have a money currency, its substitute was the Kerbus, or common cotton cloth of the native handlooms, as at this day among the Huzerahs, and Hajee Khan's seat was at Bulkh, one of his relatives remaining as his deputy at the latter place. Ahmad Shah moreover to help his former associate in arms to maintain a good appearance on the frontier gave him territorial grants upon territory in the province of Heraut to the amount of twelve or fourteen ploughs, a grant which was enjoyed by his descendants up to the last Walee fourteen years ago when it was resumed by Shah Kamran.[35]

Such is the substance of Conolly's terse history of Haji 'Khan'. Though McChesney (1991, 220) speculates that Saiyid 'Abbas might have been familiar with Reza Quli Khan's *Mulhaqat-i Rawzat al-Safa-yi Nadiri*, the number of inaccuracies this report contains would suggest that much of the mirza's information was based on hearsay.

We have seen how, immediately after the evacuation of the province by the remnant of Nadir's forces in 1747, Haji Bi Ming of Maimana had seized Balkh and established himself as wali to the detriment of his Qataghanid rival, Hazara Bi, only to be ousted by the amir of Qunduz a few weeks later. Thus, even before Ahmad Shah was elected as Amir of the Afghans, or the Durrani leader conferred on Haji Bi the title of *Wali-yi Balkh*, the Ming amir had ruled both Balkh and Maimana in the immediate post-Nadirid era. Indeed, he was chief of arguably the most powerful Uzbek tribe south of the Amu Darya.

Fortunately, we no longer have to rely on Conolly as our sole source for the history of Haji Bi Ming, for the *Tarikh-i Ahmad Shahi* of Mahmud b. Ibrahim al-Husaini deals in some detail with events in Balkh during Ahmad Shah's reign. At the time of his visit to Qandahar, Haji Bi Ming is called Hakim of Maimana; a position we know he had held since at least 1747, and probably much earlier (Mahmud, 126b). The *Tarikh* gives the date of the meeting between the Uzbek and Afghan amirs as, "the year that Ahmad Shah had his victories in the West," that is 1163/1750-1, which is when the Afghans re-took

[35] *Ibid.*

Herat and not immediately after Ahmad Shah's election, as implied by Conolly (Mahmud, 126b; McChesney 1991, 220; Singh, 83).[36]

Haji Bi Ming, along with a number of other elders (*aqsaqalan*), probably from the Chahar Wilayat and territories west of Balkh, came to Qandahar and complained about the exactions of Rahim Bi Khan, the Manghit Ataliq of Bukhara, who had overthrown Abu'l-Faiz Khan in 1747 (Mahmud, 126b). Though the *Tarikh-i Ahmad Shahi* does not say so in as many words, we can deduce that the arrival of these Turkistani[37] amirs was more than likely a direct result of the Afghan seizure of Herat, for its fall had brought Afghan troops to within striking distance of the Murghab river—the traditional border between Maimana and Herat, the Uzbek and Persian Empires.

Conolly, if we can trust him on this point, claims that Haji Bi and Ahmad Shah had fought together under Nadir Shah, and no doubt the hakim saw an opportunity of exploiting an old friendship by obtaining Afghan assistance to throw his Qataghan rival out of Balkh and of re-establishing his own supremacy. The alleged extortions of Rahim Bi's tax collectors provided the excuse that Ahmad Shah required to justify his intervention beyond the Hindu Kush for, as Conolly points out, the Durrani Amir saw himself as the rightful heir to the Nadirid empire; a belief which he was to pass on to his successors. The interference of the Bukharans across the Amu Darya could be construed as a breach of the treaty between Nadir Shah and Abu'l-Faiz Khan and, even though such agreements were only valid until the death of one or other of the contracting parties, a *casus belli* was needed to justify the Afghan intervention. The presence of Bukharan officials suggests that Rahim Bi Manghit was trying to re-assert a measure of Bukharan authority over the Balkh appanage, and Maimana in particular.

The main purpose, therefore, of the meeting between Ahmad Shah Durrani and Haji Bi Ming, was to arrange for a Mingid-Durrani alliance against the Qataghanid amir of Balkh and to force Rahim Bi Manghit's army back across the Amu Darya. 'Ataullah Khan Turkman, who had already commanded a combined Afghan-Uzbek force in Isfahan under Ibrahim Khan, was appointed as supreme commander (*sipah salar*) of Turkistan, with Mukhless Khan Durrani in charge of the Qizilbash troops. They were sent north, though neither

[36] Raverty vi, 2969.

[37] Turkistan was the name by which the province of Balkh was known to southerners (cf. preface; McChesney 1991, 220). It is still used in local parlance by the Aimaqs and Tadjiks living in the Tir Band-i Turkistan and the upper Murghab to distinguish their mountain area from the northern plains.

the route of their march, nor the details of their campaign are recorded by Mahmud's history (Mahmud, 100b, 128a-b, 167a). He does mention, however, that prior to his return to Turkistan, Haji Bi Ming was appointed Chief Collector of Taxes (*Sahib-i Ikhtiyar*) in Turkistan and allowed to assume the emotive title (*laqab*) of *Khan* and *Wali-yi Balkh*.[38]

*Haji Bi Ming as 'Khan' and 'Wali-yi Balkh wa Maimana'*

Mahmud al-Husaini makes it plain that he was well aware of the significance of these titles for the Chingizid (McChesney 1991, 220) and it is hard to believe that Ahmad Shah Durrani, who had fought alongside Uzbeks under Nadir Shah, failed to understand the implications of such concessions. The Nadirid occupation of Balkh and the subsequent assassination of Abu'l-Faiz Khan by Rahim Bi Manghit had left not only Balkh, but Bukhara, without any Chingizid as titular head of the Uzbek state. Haji Bi Khan seems to have had pretensions to fill this void—indeed, it is possible that, like Rahim Bi, he had some family link with the Chingizid line, possibly through marriage. What these titles thus indicate is the importance that Ahmad Shah attached to his alliance with Haji Bi and the high price that the Afghan Amir was prepared to pay pay to secure it. Once the amir of Qataghan had been subdued, Haji Bi was to become the new Chingizid ruler of the Balkh appanage. At the same time his status as Hakim of Maimana was enhanced by the more exalted style of address, *Wali*, a title which deliberately harked back to the age of the Tuqay-Timurids.

It seems, however, that Haji Khan Ming did not reside in Balkh during his period as *Wali-yi Balkh*. Mahmud, in contradiction to Conolly's account, indicates that Haji Khan Ming's actual place of residence was Maimana and, during the period of the judicial commissioner which Ahmad Shah established in *c.* 1755/6 to investigate alleged oppression by Haji Khan, the Wali of Balkh was living in Maimana and rarely visited Balkh unless pressurised by the commissioner to do so (Mahmud, 356b, 357a, 517a).

This arrangement seems, at first, to be somewhat curious and we must look at the function of this office in the following century to understand the exact nature of Haji Khan's position.

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[38] From henceforth Mahmud refers to Haji Bi as "Haji Khan Ming, *Wali-yi Balkh wa Maimana*."

The concept of an Uzbek as *Wali-yi Balkh* persisted under the Durrani monarchy until at least the onset of the First Anglo-Afghan War in 1838. Despite the increased dominance of Afghan power and the presence of a Kabul-appointed governor of Balkh, the Amir also appointed an Uzbek counterpart who had the right to this title. In the late 1830s the individual who held this post was reckoned to be the "Paramount Lord" of the Uzbeks (Harlan 1939, 28-9). He always held this office concurrently whilst actual holding the hakimship of another district of Turkistan.

The case of Ahmad Beg, the eldest son of Mir Qilij Beg, Hakim of Khulm, is a good example of this dualism. In 1811 he was appointed by the Afghan ruler of Kabul, Shah Mahmud, as governor of Aibak, but at the same time was made *Wali-yi Balkh.* Some years later, it was conferred on Mir Qilij's second son, Baba Beg, after he had poisoned his elder brother (Moorcroft ii, 399). Through his tenure as *Wali-yi Balkh* Ahmad Beg remained in Aibak and never lived in Balkh. Yet he was responsible for the collection of the annual tribute (cash and kind) which the amirs of Turkistan paid as *nazarana* to Kabul.

At the time of Ahmad Beg's appointment, Sardar Najibullah Khan Surkhani was the Afghan governor of Balkh, exercising a token authority over the city of that name, on behalf of the Amir. Expenses incurred in virtue of this office, however, were disbursed to him by his Uzbek counterpart. This, of course, gave Ahmad Beg and his successors considerable power, since they controlled the purse-strings of the Afghan Resident.

The Uzbek *Wali-yi Balkh* also acted as the agent and spokesman for all the Uzbek tribes in their dealings with the Afghan power and *vice versa* (Ferrier 1858, 101; Izzat Ullah, 81, 85).[39] This link between the title of *Wali-yi Balkh* and the collection of state tribute goes some way to explain the kinds of duties Ahmad Shah expected of Haji Khan Ming when making him his Sahib-i Ikhtiyar in Turkistan.

Although the Uzbek wali was non-resident in the appanage capital, we can see that this office was far from being honorary. That it was a much coveted appointment is evident, inasmuch as both Mingid and Qataghanid dynasties fought bitterly for the privilege of having this title conferred on them by the Amir of Kabul. It clearly retained a strong historical association for the Uzbeks in the same way that, in Britain, the title 'Prince of Wales' is held by the heir apparent to the throne. This position confers no political or judicial power over

[39] See also Chapter 4 for the position of Afghan governors of Balkh.

Wales, neither does it involve residence in the Welsh capital, yet there are few in Britain who do not know that the holder of this title is second only in rank to the reigning monarch.

We have seen how, although Conolly's history of Haji Bi Ming has some similarities to that of Mahmud al-Husaini, the relationship between the Afghan Amir and Haji Bi is interpreted in a completely different way from the actual situation that obtained in 1751. Conolly portrays Haji Khan as a "soldier of fortune" (i.e. a mercenary) who supplicates the Afghan ruler, as his superior, to grant him some appointment in Turkistan on the grounds of an old army acquaintance. Haji Bi was not, however, some stateless adventurer begging favours, but a governor of Balkh and Maimana long before his appearance in Qandahar and prior to Ahmad Shah Durrani's elevation to the Amirship of the Afghan tribes.[40] His tribe, and doubtless members of his own immediate family, had held senior posts in the Chingizid administration of the Balkh appanage since the days of Ataliq Uraz Bi Ming and Nazr Muhammad Khan and were among the major power brokers for over a century prior to the foundation of the Durrani dynasty.

Conolly's account is also anachronistic. In 1747 'Turkistan' lay outside of Ahmad Shah's dominions and the Amir had no power to appoint anyone to govern Balkh. Nor was the appanage under his power in 1751, when Haji Bi and the other elders came to Qandahar. Conolly therefore is highly misleading when he states that at the time of Haji Bi's visit, Ahmad Shah Durrani was "bent upon retaining all that Nadir Shah had conquered," for it is impossible to retain what one never possessed. Indeed, up to that point, no Afghan or Abdali had ever ruled Balkh, Maimana or, indeed, any part of what the Afghans referred to as Turkistan. What Ahmad Shah (and his successors) sought, was the assertion of Afghan power in the appanage of Balkh, in emulation of Nadir Shah Afshar's earlier conquests.

By 1751, Maimana was a place of some importance and Conolly was wrong to devalue its economic and political significance by implying that it had no proper monetary system. Maimana straddled

[40] Thus one of the central problems implicit in Conolly's biography of Haji 'Khan' is clarified by the contemporary source. If Haji Khan Ming was merely a "soldier of fortune," why did Ahmad Shah entrust an apparently powerless and positionless Uzbek mercenary with the dual governorship of the strategic and prestigious provinces of Balkh and Maimana? Conolly's claim that the appointment was made merely on the basis of an old army friendship and "on condition of his [i.e. Haji Bi Ming's] furnishing certain military aid at call," is ludicrous. Indeed, the very fact that Haji Bi Khan Ming was given these positions should have indicated to Conolly that this individual was a person of considerable political standing amongst his own people prior to his appointment by Ahmad Shah Durrani.

an important trade route between Khurasan and Bukhara and its population had become increasingly sedentary over the previous hundred years as trade had prospered. This is one reason why, under Nazr Muhammad, Maimana became the centre of a princely sub-appanage government and was regarded as the chief place west of Balkh. Since Shaibanid times, the tribes around Maimana had played a major *rôle* in defending the borders against Safawid encroachment. We know that on the eve of the Nadirid invasion, the cis Oxus territory was prosperous and trade was on the increase. A new bazaar complex had been built in Qunduz, which included shops, storage facilities and workshops for some thirty different trades. By the early 1700s there was a more or less unified currency system operating throughout the province and Bukhara, based on the Subhan Quli tanga (McChesney 1991, 200-1). Although the Nadirid occupation destroyed trade and the local agricultural economy, by the time of Timur Shah Durrani the revenues of Balkh, including Maimana, were paid in both cash and kind.[41] Indeed, it is inconceivable that caravan traders were not able to use both Bukharan and Persian currencies in Maimana at the time of Nadir Shah's conquest. The presence of many Jews and Hindus in the town and the rest of the province in the early 1820s is an indication of the need for currency transactions; the non-Muslims being used as brokers and bankers because of the Islamic proscription of usury. In fact, Conolly contradicts himself on this point. Later in his report, he informs us that Ahmad Shah established a government mehman khana, or guest-cum-post house, in the area. A tax of one *tuman*[42] per village (or 360 ploughs, or *jarib*s, of land) and an estate (*jagir*) of twelve or fourteen ploughs in Herat were set aside to cover the costs of establishing a postal and communications systems between Qandahar, Herat and Balkh. Conolly, therefore, admits that Bukharan currency was in circulation at the time of the meeting between Haji Bi and Ahmad Shah.

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[41] *Report of Ghulam Sarwar, Native Agent of the Hon. East India Company, on Special Mission to the Country of Shah Zemaun, 1793-1795*, 7 June 1797, IOLR, P:Bengal Secret Consultations, 41, n. pag. (henceforth, Ghulam Sarwar, 1797). Hall, 4 has the wrong location for this report in her footnote.

[42] For monetary units, linear measurements, etc., see Appendix II.

*'Turkistan' and Ahmad Shah Durrani, 1751-1772*

Having established the exact nature of the relationship between Haji Bi Ming and Ahmad Shah Durrani, the Balkh campaign, which was the most important outcome of the meeting between the two amirs, takes on quite a different perspective. Ahmad Shah, in effect, agreed to assist the Mingids in re-establishing their control over Balkh in return for a nominal Afghan presence in the appanage capital. Attempts by British officers in the nineteenth century to claim that the Afghans annexed or incorporated the area into their kingdom are, therefore, quite untrue (McChesney 1991, 221).

The army sent into 'Turkistan' consisted not only of Afghans, but also Qizilbash troops, with support from Uzbeks probably drawn from Maimana and the Chahar Wilayat. The primary objective of this 'invasion' was not the Afghan annexation of Balkh, as Dost Muhammad Khan was later to attempt, but to defeat the Qataghanid amir, throw him out of Balkh and establish Haji Bi Ming as the pro-Durrani wali, which would leave Ahmad Shah free to pursue his campaigns against India without fear of an attack from the north. By the "fifth regal year", or the summer of 1752/1165, these aims had been more or less achieved. Hazara Khan Qataghan had been ousted from Balkh (Mahmud, 147b; Singh, 99; Vambery 1873, 356) and Haji Bi Khan Ming had assumed control of Balkh with Sardar 'Ataullah Khan Turkman in overall command of military affairs in the region. Problems, however, soon arose between the Afghans and the Qizilbash, after the latter tried to involve Ilbars, the Khan of Khiva and Urganj, in the affairs of the province. Eventually, the Afghans forced the Qizilbash regiments to quit the province, though in the process they undermined their own hold over the area (Katib i, 16; Mahmud, 167a).

The weakness of the Durrani alliance encouraged the Qataghan tribe under Mizrab Bi b. Hazara Bi, who had succeeded his father in 1753, to rebel (Mahmud, 292b). In response, Ahmad Shah was obliged to send a further five thousand men, under Khanjan Khan Sardar, from Hindustan in order "to facilitate the dispersing and concluding of this matter of momentous purification" (Mahmud, 301a). An (unnamed) son of Haji Khan Ming was also sent towards Balkh to attack the western borders of Qataghan and, with the help of other nobles of Turkistan,[43] they forced Mizrab Bi, "to bow the

[43] جمعی دیگر از ترکستان

shoulder to the Lord of the World, the Centre of Adornment" (Mahmud, 301a). This success was followed up by the subjugation of Badakhshan, after which Haji Khan Ming, along with other victorious Afghan and Uzbek leaders, went to Qandahar, where Ahmad Shah generously rewarded them (Mahmud, 301a).[44]

A few years later, in 1755/6, Haji Bi Khan Ming visited the Durrani Amir again, this time at Kabul, and petitioned to be appointed as *sardar* of Turkistan in place of 'Ataullah Khan Turkman, promising that he would increase the amount of revenue and keep the province quiet. This request was granted and thus the alliance between Mingid and Durrani was further strengthened to the detriment of the Qataghanids (Mahmud, 354a-b). However, Haji Khan abused his new position and resorted to extortion and brutality. The *Tarikh-i Ahmad Shahi*, admittedly hardly an impartial authority, accuses him of being, "innately and wantonly evil and tyrannical"[45] and consequently alienating "both small and great" (Mahmud, 354a). Thus, when eventually, a delegation of notables from the appanage complained to Ahmad Shah about Haji Khan's rapacity, cruelty and oppression the Amir appointed an Afghan, Saiyid 'Ataullah Khan, as Judicial Superintendent (*Darugha-yi 'Adalat*)[46] to investigate these allegations (Mahmud, 354b).

When Haji Khan heard that reports of his oppressions had reached the ears of the Amir, he moderated his exactions and did his utmost to frustrate Saiyid 'Ataullah's investigations. So successful was he in this, that the judicial investigator was forced to demand a further mandate for his enquiries from Ahmad Shah, who reconfirmed his appointment. To demonstrate his displeasure with Haji Bi Ming, the Amir stripped him of his post of sardar and sent Nawab Khan 'Alikozai in his place (Mahmud, 354b, 355a). This decision had a salutary effect on Haji Khan, who realised that the Amir no longer regarded him as indispensable and was prepared to take a more interventionist stance in Balkh which coul only be to the detriment of the indigenous amirs. Haji Khan therefore made a pretence of having reformed his ways, at least for a while, but in fact the appointment of the Sardar aroused considerable suspicion amongst the amirs that the Afghans were trying to take over the province (Mahmud, 355a).

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[44] Faiz Bakhsh, *Badakhshan*, 49.

[45] بجر و ستم مفطور و معتاد

[46] McChesney 1991, 221, translates this title as 'Military Ombudsman'.

To counteract the rising inflluence of the Afghans, Haji Khan Ming began to plot with Izbasar, the Hakim of Shibarghan,[47] who was discontented with the appointment of an Afghan as sardar, and together they broke out in rebellion. The security situation deteriorated rapidly and Allah Nazr Khan, whom the *Tarikh* calls Ataliq of Turkistan, had to ask Ahmad Shah to send reinforcements. When they arrived, Allah Nazr Khan and Nawab Khan marched against Izbasar. The attack, however, did not go well and they were forced to return empty-handed to Balkh after Wali Muhammad Khan Jawansher was fatally wounded during the siege of Shibarghan (Mahmud, 355b-356b). On his return, Nawab Khan 'Alikozai quarrelled with 'Ataullah Khan and Ataliq Allah Nazr Khan over their various areas of responsibility. The result was that the army split up into different factions as each leader took umbrage and they returned with their followers to their respective power bases (Mahmud, 356b). Nawab Khan then asked Haji Khan and the elders and rulers of Turkistan to come to Balkh to discuss their grievances. Haji Khan appears to have attended this meeting, which he used as a forum to voice his own complaints about Sardar Nawab Khan, whom he evidently distrusted. However, 'Ataullah Khan and Allah Nazr Khan brought about a temporary reconciliation between the two and Haji Khan received a Royal Pardon for "past faults and misdemeanours" (Mahmud, 357a).

Izbasar and other Uzbek leaders of Turkistan, however, continued to oppose Nawab Khan's appointment and sought the assistance of Bukhara. In 1761, Shah Murad, a relative of Rahim Bi, sent Musa Khwaja with an army of six thousand men across the Amu Darya and laid siege to the strategic fortress of Aqcha, the western gateway to Balkh. When this news reached Nawab Khan, 'Ataullah Khan Turkman and Daniyal Khwaja were sent at the head of a small force to hold Aqcha, whilst urgent messages were sent to Ahmad Shah requesting reinforcements. Meanwhile, Izbasar marched his own army to Aqcha and deceived 'Ataullah Khan into believing that he had come to mediate in the dispute. Completely fooled, 'Ataullah Khan Turkman accompanied Izbasar to Shibarghan, leaving Musa Khwaja free to occupy Aqcha and reclaim it for Bukhara (Mahmud, 514b).

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[47] Shibarghan at this period seems to have been an important centre of culture, especially for the illumination of manuscripts. In Febuary 1988 I was shown a finely illustrated copy of the *Diwan* of 'Ali Sher Nawa'i in the possession of a mullah from Andkhui in Khurasan camp, Pakistan. It was signed by Saiyid Khan-i Aznab b. Qazi Naman and dated Shibarghan, 1167 (AD 1753-4).

Perhaps realising that he had been duped, 'Ataullah Khan quickly abandoned his mission and returned to Balkh, forcing the population en route to abandon their villages and come into the city. Musa Khwaja, however, informed of his movements, ambushed him somewhere near the village of Dilbarjin, and it was only the timely intervention of Daniyal Khan, who was dispatched post-haste with five hundred men, that saved the day. Musa Khwaja and the Bukharans fled, leaving behind some three hundred of their number dead, with many more wounded or taken prisoner. 'Ataullah Khan celebrated his victory over the Bukharans by building a pyramid out of the decapitated heads of his enemies (Mahmud, 515a).

Despite this defeat, Aqcha remained in Bukharan hands and Nawab Khan assembled an army of five thousand men to reduce the city. On the approach of Nawab Khan's force, Khwaja Musa marched out to meet the Afghans in the open field, but was again defeated and fled to Izbasar at Shibarghan (Mahmud, 515b-516a). Khwaja Musa's son continued to hold out in the citadel of Aqcha, where he was besieged for forty days, during which time Sardar Nawab Khan was unable to make the slightest impression on the walls with his artillery (Mahmud, 515b). Khwaja Musa, meanwhile, with the help of Izbasar, assembled a force of eight thousand men and set out to lift the siege of Aqcha but was defeated yet again, this time by a combined force of 'Ataullah Khan and Haji Khan of Maimana who, despite having refused to co-operate any further with the judicial investigation, had decided that it was in his interests to support Ahmad Shah's representative (Mahmud, 515b, 516a).

The failure of Izbasar and Khwaja Musa to relieve Aqcha resulted in a military stalemate. Sardar Nawab Khan was unable to take the citadel, but Izbasar and Khwaja Musa were incapable of defeating the Afghans in the open field. As a result, 'Ataullah Khan Turkman asked Haji Khan Ming, in his capacity as *Wali-yi Balkh*, to choose an envoy to negotiate terms with the Bukharans. Haji Khan appointed a certain Mullah Gul Muhammad for this task, but the besieged soldiers would not agree to come out of their stronghold until 'Abd al-Hakim (whose title, *Shaikh 'Alisalam*, indicates that he was an important religious personage) and Allah Nazr Khan, Ataliq of Balkh, were present to guarantee their safe passage. When these dignitaries arrived, the Bukharans surrendered, although Khwaja Musa's son, along with his wives, was captured and does not seem to have been included in the

amnesty. Their surrender concluded this attempt by Bukhara to reimpose its authority in Balkh (Mahmud, 516b).

Having secured Aqcha, 'Ataullah Khan Turkman ordered Nawab Khan and Haji Khan Ming to advance on Shibarghan and subdue the rebellious Izbasar, promising Haji Khan the governorship of the area if he was successful (Mahmud, 516b). Izbasar, hearing of this, wrote to Nawab Khan and tried to make peace. 'Ataullah Khan Turkman was at that time in Shibarghan, possibly trying to bring Izbasar to heel without the necessity of further military action. Whatever the reason for his visit, it proved fatal for the Sipah Salar. We have seen how Nawab Khan and 'Ataullah Khan Turkman had already quarrelled over their respective areas of authority and a bitter hatred appears to have sprung up between them which had been suppressed during operations against the Bukharans. Now, however, Nawab Khan seized his opportunity to settle old scores. When Izbasar's letter arrived, the Sardar informed the amir of Shibarghan that if he was serious about being reconciled he should have 'Ataullah Khan Turkman put to death. Izbasar agreed, and the Sipah Salar was conveniently assassinated. Nawab Khan, having achieved both the pacification of Shibarghan and the death of his arch rival, returned to Balkh, leaving Shibarghan in the hands of Izbasar, and Haji Khan Ming of Maimana cold-shouldered (Mahmud, 516b, 517a).

Meanwhile Saiyid 'Ataullah Khan, Ahmad Shah's judicial commissioner, continued his futile attempts to bring Haji Khan Ming to account. Once more he ordered the Wali of Maimana to come to Balkh, but Haji Khan informed him that, instead of appearing in person, he was sending one of his tribal leaders[48] in his stead. A short while later, Haji Khan's son, Nazr Sultan, reached Balkh but, as his reply had not been to the Darugha-yi 'Adalat's liking, he was badly treated. Eventually, however, a face-saving agreement was reached and Nazr Sultan was allowed to return to Maimana with the usual gifts and presents. Following his visit, Saiyid 'Ataullah Khan's enquiries into Haji Khan's affairs seem to have ended and the matter is not referred to again by the *Tarikh* (Mahmud, 517a).

In 1768, Rahim Bi Manghit of Bukhara died. During his final years, Rahim Bi had suffered from depression and the affairs of state had been left to his wazir, a Persian slave called Daulat Bi. Following the decease of the Manghit amir, this individual seized control of Bukhara, assumed the title of *Ataliq* and placed Daniyal Khan, a

[48] خد خدا

relative of Abu'l-Faiz, on the throne.[49] Some two years later, however, Daniyal Khan died and Daniyal Bi's son, Ma'sum or Shah Murad, took over (Skrine & Ross, 205).

In the same year that Rahim Bi Manghit passed away, there was further trouble in "Balkh and Badakhshan," which had been stirred up by the Qataghan amirs, and Ahmad Shah was forced to send his wazir, Shah Wali Khan, with an army of six thousand men, to deal with the disturbances (Katib i, 27; McChesney 1991, 225; Singh, 319). When Shah Murad heard about this, he marched to the assistance of the rebels which caused Shah Wali considerable concern. He wrote to the Durrani Amir, who gathered another force and marched into Turkistan by way of Maimana, Andkhui and Shibarghan to deal with this threat. Shah Murad again crossed the Amu Darya and marched on Balkh, whose population had also rebelled (Katib i, 27). This show of force deterred the Bukharan ruler from his attempt to invade and negotiations were opened which resulted in the two parties agreeing that the Amu Darya should "separate the jurisdictions of their two powers" (McChesney 1991, 225).

The Afghan-Bukharan treaty of 1768 is important for, in the following century, the British used it as a justification for promoting an Afghan state which included Balkh. Ahmad Shah, however, never entertained the idea of direct rule or annexation. Even after the agreement of 1768, Lesser Turkistan was seen as a foreign country, and was regarded as such well into the second half of the next century. It was a region, however, in which the Durrani rulers had a strategic interest, since it abutted their territory. It was a source of additional revenue for the Afghans and they maintained a nominal influence in the region through local leaders such as Haji Bi Ming or, later, the Qataghanids of Khulm, who collected the annual tribute. Thus the treaty of 1768 was an acknowledgement by Bukhara that Balkh lay within the Afghan sphere of influence and the newly-established Manghit dynasty agreed to abstain from armed intervention in the region. As such it merely confirmed the *status quo*; a reassertion of the treaty worked out in 1751 between Haji Bi Ming and Ahmad Shah. It is impossible to equate it, as British officials did later, with the settlement made between Nadir Shah and Abu'l-Faiz Khan, which was forced on Bukhara by the Persian ruler following his annexation of Balkh (McChesney 1991, 226-7).

[49] Sources disagree about his relationship to former rulers of Bukhara; for a discussion of the various claims see Howorth, 67.

The most significant aspect of the treaty of 1768, namely the surrender by Shah Murad of the *khirqa*, or mantle, of the Prophet to Ahmad Shah Durrani, was completely missed by European historians in the last century. In order to avoid a confrontation with the Afghans, the Manghit ruler agreed to hand over this most sacred of relics after the Afghan Amir requested it as part of the terms of peace.[50] The khirqa was a powerful religious symbol, visible evidence of the mystic power of inspiration and *baraka* that was the centre of a cult as popular as that of the 'Alid shrine at Mazar-i Sharif. As in mediæval Europe, the possession of relics directly associated with, or which had been in the possession of, the founders of Christianity, was a means of legitimising sovereignty, so the transfer of the khirqa from Bukhara to Ahmad Shah, provided the nascent Durrani state with the credibility it lacked. The khirqa had been in the possession of the dominant Hanafi power in Central Asia for over five centuries, and its surrender signified a dramatic shift in regional balance of power in favour of the Afghans. The glory, as it were, had departed, and with it, by implication, went the divine sanction which had maintained the Chingizids in power (Katib i, 27-9).

It is no wonder that Ahmad Shah made the most of this acquisition. The relic's progress to Qandahar was accompanied by an extraordinary show of religious devotion, donations and pageantry and the establishment of a qadamga at every stage to act as a reminder to all and sundry of its passing. When it finally arrived in Qandahar, at that period still the Afghan capital, Ahmad Shah commissioned a building which was to house both the khirqa and his own body after he died. However, it seems that the mantle was never actually placed in the mausoleum, for the *'ulama* of the city opposed the use of such an important relic as a political tool (Katib i, 28; McChesney 1991, 222-4). This did not prevent Ahmad Shah's successor actively seeking to convert what was a symbolic transference of authority, into direct sovereignty over the appanage of Balkh.

[50] For the story of the cloak and how it came to be in the possession of Bukhara, see McChesney 1991, 222-7; Katib i, 27-9.

CHAPTER FOUR

# FROM JAN MUHAMMAD KHAN TO 'ALI YAR KHAN, 1772-1829

> There has been an infiltration of Turkish tribes into Afghanistan from a very early date (Fraser-Tytler, 55).

## *Shah Murad, Timur Shah and Balkh, 1772-1793*

According to Conolly, Haji Bi Ming died shortly before Ahmad Shah, probably around 1772, and was succeeded by his son, Jan Muhammad Khan.[1] The fate of Nazr Sultan, who acted as his father's representative during Ahmad Shah's judicial investigation of Haji Bi's affairs, is not given in the *Tarikh-i Ahmad Shahi*. As it was traditional for rulers to send their heirs to perform such tasks, it is not unreasonable to suggest that Nazr Sultan was the eldest son of Haji Bi, who would have been expected to succeed to the governorship of Balkh and Maimana. Conolly, however, makes no mention of this individual, although we know from a contemporary source that Jan Khan was ruling Maimana in 1793.[2] It would seem, therefore, that Nazr Sultan died, or was killed, before his father passed away, leaving his younger brother, Jan Khan, to succeed to the waliship of Balkh, though he continued to reside in Maimana.

In October of the same year,[3] Ahmad Shah Durrani, despite many pilgrimages to tombs of famous saints, finally succumbed to a virulent disease, possibly some form of cancer, which had gradually eaten away his nose, throat, chest and, finally, his brain (Katib i, 29-30).[4] He was succeeded by his son, Timur Shah, who reigned for twenty years (Dupree 1978, 340; Hall, 3). In 1775, following opposition from some Qandahari tribes, Timur transferred the capital of the Afghan kingdom to Kabul (Dupree 1978, chart 12; Hall, 3). At the same time, revolts and disturbances arose in Balkh, possibly as a result of

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[1] Conolly, *Bamiyan to Merve*, 1840; Ergeš Uçkun, *personal communication*.

[2] Ghulam Sarwar, 1797.

[3] Raverty vi, 2083, has September 1771/1185, but see Katib i, 29.

[4] His nose had been completely eaten away by disease and had been replaced by a diamond stud.

attempts by the new Amir to bring the region more under his own authority, for Conolly records that the new Afghan Amir stripped Jan Khan Ming of the title of *Wali-yi Balkh* and appointed an Afghan as governor of the province.[5]

Timur's interventionist policy precipitated a number of disturbances which were exploited by Shah Murad Bi Manghit of Bukhara who, in 1784, had put out the eyes of 'Abd al-Ghazi, and usurped his power, though he made sure that the Khan was kept alive to provide a semblance of legitimacy to this *putsch*.[6] Assuming the title of *Amir al-Mu'minin*,[7] or 'Commander of the Faithful' (Akiner, 271; Skrine & Ross, 205-6), the new Manghit Khan ambitiously set out to reconquer territory which had once been part of the Chingizid state. A year after seizing power, he marched against Merv with six thousand men.[8] During the course of this campaign, Shah Murad destroyed the ancient *band*, or irrigation dam, which had been built by Sultan Sanjar and which was the prime source of water for the agriculture of this ancient oasis. Merv was forced to capitulate and thirty thousand people were forcibly deported to Bukhara (Howorth, 769-71; Katib i, 41). To replace them, Shah Murad ordered the region to be colonised by the people of Shahr-i Sabz and Bukhara (Katib i, 41).

Shah Murad next turned his attention to Balkh and Aqcha,[9] which he claimed, rightly, had long been subject to the rulers of Bukhara, and demanded that Timur Shah's newly-appointed Afghan governor be recalled.[10] When the Amir failed to comply with this ultimatum, Shah Murad marched his army to the Amu Darya and, sometime during the summer of 1788, crossed the river into the area of Balkh or Aqcha, ignoring the warnings sent to him by Timur Shah, who was campaigning in Multan at the time (Elphinstone ii, 304-5; Howorth, 771; Katib i, 41).[11] Although the Durrani Amir was unable to attend to this threat in person, some forty thousand soldiers, under 'Abd al-Latif Khan and other sardars, were sent to Balkh. Despite the size of this army, however, the Afghans were "not able to cope successfully"

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[5] Conolly, *Bamiyan to Merve*, 1840.

[6] Ghulam Sarwar, 1797.

[7] This title was previously used by the Caliphs and was also assumed by the Durranis.

[8] Elphinstone ii, 305-6 says the invasion of Merv took place in the spring of 1789 and claims Shah Murad had an army of 100,000 men.

[9] Ghulam Sarwar, 1797.

[10] *Ibid.*

[11] Faiz Bakhsh, *Badakhshan*, 50.

with Shah Murad, though whether there was any battle between them is not stated (Lall i, 145).[12]

Timur returned to Kabul in August and prepared to set out in person for Balkh. However, after marching only a few miles ("seven coss") from his capital, news reached him that fighting had broken out between factions in Shah Murad's army, during which one of the Manghit ruler's sons had been killed. So serious had this dispute been, that Shah Murad had been forced to abandon his campaign and retire to Qunduz, "a place of his own jurisdiction."[13] There were even reports that Shah Murad himself had been killed.[14] Timur, relieved not to have to negotiate the passes of the Hindu Kush during the winter snows, returned to Kabul, where he laid plans to attack the Bukharans the following spring (Elphinstone ii, 305-6).

During the winter, Shah Murad seems to have been occupied intriguing with Uzbek amirs in Aqcha and Balkh (*Gazetteer* (1895) ii, 35; Howorth, 771). In order to lull Timur Shah into a sense of false security, he wrote to the Afghan ruler, in an obsequious manner, assuring his rival that his conquests were purely altruistic and for the good of Islam. Since the Bukharan ruler made no mention of relinquishing any territory in Balkh, nor promised to desist from any further acts of aggression, Timur dismissed the platitudes as mere hypocrisy. Elphinstone, summarising the contents of Timur's riposte, records that Shah Murad was informed that:

> Ahmed Shauh had always been on friendly terms with the state of Bokhaura: that Timoor had maintained the same relations; that Shah Moraud had for some time been encroaching on the Dooraunee empire, and had always averted a war by speedy explanations and humble professions; taking care, however, always to secure the point he had in view; that he had at last seized Mour [i.e. Merv], and had driven away the Sheeah inhabitants, and had given as a reason his wish to convert them to the true Mahommedan faith; it urges, that no state can have a right to interfere with the subjects of another on account of their religion; and then points out the inconsistency of Shauh Moraud's zeal on this occasion, with his detaining Timour Shauh by his encroachments from clearing India of Hindoos, Jews, Christians, and other unbelievers; and with his wars against the people of Sher Subz and Khojend and the Toorkomauns, who were undoubtedly Soonees... These nations have appealed to [Timur], and he has been

[12] *Intelligence from Kabul* (henceforth, *IK*), 14 Sept. 1788, *Calendar of Persian Correspondence*, VIII, 1788-9, no. 798, p. 331.

[13] *Ibid.* The text has "Kundur/Cundeesh" but Qunduz is certainly meant here, see Elphinstone ii, 305-6. Faiz Bakhsh, *Badakhshan*, 50 says that the invasion of Balkh had been precipitated by the rebellion of Kabad Khan, Timur's governor in Qunduz.

[14] *Ibid.*

> determined, by Shah Moraud's conduct towards himself, to take up their quarrel: he then announces his intention of moving immediately to Toorkistaun, and requires Shah Moraud to come to him in person to settle their differences (Elphinstone ii, 305).

In order to ensure that the people of his realm were aware of the cause of his hostilities with Bukhara, Timur Shah ordered copies of this letter to be made and had them widely distributed throughout the major cities of his kingdom.[15]

The following spring, Shah Murad's army arrived at Kilift, on the right bank of the Amu Darya (Elphinstone ii, 305-6; Vambery 1873, 356-7), where he wrote another letter to Timur demanding that the Afghans evacuate Balkh and Aqcha.[16] Timur refused, and marched to Balkh at the head of some one hundred to one hundred and fifty thousand men (Howorth, 771). Despite the size of this army, Timur Shah's force was beset with internal divisions (Ferrier 1858, 100-2)[17] and the Amir travelled slowly and by short marches northwards, in the hope that a peaceful settlement of the dispute could be found (Elphinstone ii, 305-6; Katib i, 41).[18] Meanwhile Balkh, Aqcha and the Chahar Wilayat all declared for Shah Murad (Elphinstone ii, 196; Ferrier 1858, 100-2; Talboys Wheeler, vii-viii). The Afghan governor of Balkh was expelled and the Bukharan ruler was invited by the local *amir*s to appoint a governor of his own choosing. In response, Shah Murad sent a small detachment of troops, under the command of his brother, 'Omar Khushbegi, to secure Aqcha, whilst Allah Berdi Tauz of Qurghan Tepa raided throughout the province and cut off the provisions and fodder of the advancing Afghan army (Elphinstone ii, 156-7, 305).

Rather than risk an all-out confrontation with Shah Murad, Timur took advantage of Bukhara's preoccupation with Aqcha and Balkh to march on Qunduz, which he attacked and forced to pay tribute (Elphinstone ii, 196).[19] Having succeeded in wresting this important region from Bukhara, Timur advanced on Aqcha, via Balkh. Exactly what happened next is uncertain. Tahmat Bi Uzbek, the Bukharan military commander in Aqcha, seems to have abandoned his position and retreated, or fled, beyond the Amu Darya where he rejoined the

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[15] According to Elphinstone, a large number of these letters were still in people's possession in Kabul as late as 1809.

[16] Ghulam Sarwar, 1797.

[17] *Memorandum on the Northern Boundaries of Affghanistan*, 1869, ESL:263, fols. 71-7.

[18] Lal i, 145 says the army commander was Sardar Safraz Khan.

[19] Faiz Bakhsh, *Badakhshan*, 50; *Timur to Viceroy*, 8 Nov. 1790, 23 April 1791, CPC, IX, 1790-1, no. 1156, p. 249; no. 1633, p. 330.

main Bukharan army (Vambery 1873, 358). Meanwhile, the Afghans marched almost unopposed into Aqcha (Elphinstone ii, 306). This was in September 1789 (Katib i, 41). According to the *Saraj al-Tawarikh*, Shah Murad then sent thirty thousand cavalry across the Amu Darya at night, in an attempt to encircle the Afghans. But Timur Shah, informed of the Bukharan plan, placed his army across the route of the advancing cavalry and, after a bloody encounter in which some six thousand Uzbeks were killed, the Amir won the day.[20]

Following the Afghan victory, both sides showed considerable anxiety to settle the dispute without resorting to further conflict. Timur Shah's commanders were still arguing amongst themselves and the rebellion of the chief of the Upper Momunds required his urgent attention (Elphinstone ii, 306-7). Shah Murad, chronically short of cash to pay his troops, realised that once the Afghan army withdrew he would still be able to dominate affairs in Balkh and it was in his interests to come to some agreement with the Afghans (Lall i, 146).[21] The Manghit ruler therefore sent the principal religious leader of Bukhara to Timur's camp and "gave him the credit of a victory" (Elphinstone ii, 306; Katib i, 41).[22] Bukhara, however, gained Afghan recognition of its recent conquests beyond the Amu Darya in exchange for re-confirming the Amu Darya as the border between their two realms (Ferrier 1858, 101-2; Katib i, 41; Vambery 1873, 358.).[23] Shah Murad also conceded the right of the Amir to appoint an Afghan as governor of Balkh and Aqcha, along with a small bodyguard of Afghan soldiers, known as the *Kohna Nokar* (literally, 'Old Retainers'), who were the remnants of the Afghan garrison, or their descendents, that had been in Balkh since the days of Ahmad Shah Durrani.[24] The treaty, in accordance with tradition, was made

[20] Izzat Ullah, 78 reported that in Kilift there was a stone fort which had been built by Shah Murad to commemorate those, "who fell in battle against Timoor Shah, King of Cabul," which indicates some fighting may have taken place in, or around, the banks of the Amu Darya.

[21] Ghulam Sarwar, 1797.

[22] Pottinger, *Memoir on the Country between Herat and Cabool, the Paropamisian Mountains and the Amoo*, 3 Dec. 1839, ESL:145, encl. 7 [black], no. 20.

[23] Ghulam Sarwar, 1797.

[24] The Kohna Nokar's responsibilities were limited to the protection of the Afghan Resident (wali), and, by implication, the defence of the citadel (*arg*) of Balkh which, by the early 1800s was the normal residence of the Amir's representative (Izzat Ullah, 61, 81, 85). Any other trouble was dealt with by the Uzbek wali and the amirs, not the Afghans. According to Ghulam Sarwar's report, under Zaman Shah the Kohna Nokar of Balkh numbered 2,900 cavalry with 11 guns, with a further 1,000 cavalry and 4 guns at Aqcha, the latter place being regarded as a frontier post and "a very strong place." Earlier, under the waliship of Hukumat Khan Durrani, Ghulam Sarwar reports that the Afghan resident lived in Aqcha along with the bulk of his Afghan troops. Only a small force of 250 cavalry, under Rahmatullah Khan, were stationed in

binding on the two rulers until the death of one or other of the contracting parties (Katib i, 41; Vambery 1873, 358), though in the following century British officers claimed that this agreement was made "in perpetuity."[25]

By the time matters had been settled between Timur Shah and Shah Murad, winter had set in and heavy snows had fallen in the passes of the Hindu Kush, through which the Afghan army's route lay. Even though Timur left his artillery train behind in Balkh in order to accomplish the march south more quickly, many of his troops died from exposure as they battled their way back through the deep snow to the Afghan capital (Elphinstone ii, 306; Katib i, 41). Finally, in October 1790,[26] the Afghan Amir re-entered his capital, but his army was decimated and the bulk of his artillery was as good as lost. This did not prevent Timur, on his return, writing to the Governor-General of India informing him that he had subdued "some refractory chiefs of Turkistan" as well as taking Qunduz. In reply he received a brief note of congratulation.[27]

For the rest of Timur's reign, the province of Balkh remained divided. In the west, Maimana and the Chahar Wilayat aligned themselves with the Manghit rulers in Bukhara, whilst in the east Mir Qilij Beg of Khulm ruled in all but name from Balkh to Badakhshan and offset the power of the Ming and Manghit dynasties through an alliance with the Afghan Amirs in Kabul (Ferrier 1858, 101-2;

Balkh. The importance of the defence of Aqcha was necessitated by the Bukharan threat across the Amu Darya. Elphinstone ii, 198, claims that not less than 5,000 Kohna Nokar had been recruited for the purpose of forming a bodyguard for the Afghan governor, but this may be a total figure rather than indicating how many troops were stationed in the north at any one time.

By the turn of the nineteenth century, service in Balkh was so unpopular that the Amir of Kabul offered a bounty of five tumans to anyone who enlisted for duty north of the Hindu Kush. Even so, many who took up this generous offer quickly returned to Kabul. Consequently, recruits were usually drawn from "the lowest orders" and by *c.* 1809 their number had dwindled to less than 1,000, though some later reports put the figure somewhat higher (Harlan 1939, 31). They had been given land and houses in the town in lieu of pay. According to Harlan, *loc. cit.*, the Kohna Nokar were not allowed to bear arms and were ineligible for any positions within the Uzbek administration. Elphinstone, *loc. cit.*, states that by 1808 they were housed exclusively in the *arg* of Balkh, though Harlan, writing in 1838, reported that they were more dispersed, with the bulk of them resident in the area of Mazar-i Sharif and Balkh. Some of these old soldiers had intermarried with local Uzbeks, and consequently were much more sympathetic to the local culture and customs, cf. *Memorandum on the Northern Boundaries of Affghanistan*, 1869.

[25] See, *Lord to Macnaughten*, 6 Nov. 1839, ESL:145, encl.. 6 no. 8; *Todd to Macnaughten*, 26 Feb. 1840, ESL:149, encl. 49.

[26] 27 Muhurram (7 October); *Timur to Viceroy*, 8 Nov. 1790, 23 April 1791.

[27] *Ibid. Letter to Timur*, 27 May 1791, CPC, IX, 1790-91, no. 1241, p. 265. A certain Ghulam Muhammad al-Husain was in Kabul at the time as the Company's Ambassador at the Court of the Amir, CPC, VIII, no. 321, pp. 123ff., for this correspondence.

McChesney 1991, 231-2). A descendant of Mahmud Bi Qataghan, the eighteenth century amir of Qunduz (Elphinstone ii, 196-7),[28] Mir Qilij 'Ali Beg had cast in his lot with Amir Timur Shah at the time of Shah Murad's invasion of Balkh and had made the most of this alliance by helping himself to the important region of Hazrat Imam, knowing that the Afghans were in no position to argue. Following Timur's treaty with Bukhara, Khulm's power and authority over Qataghan, Balkh and the western marches of Turkistan increased even further, for Qilij Beg persuaded the Amir to transfer most of the powers of the Wali of Balkh, once the prerogative of the Mingids of Maimana, to himself and his heirs. From this point onwards, until the Afghans took Khulm in 1849, the Amirs of Kabul conferred the title of Wali-yi Balkh on one, or other, of the descendants of Mir Qilij 'Ali Beg. Even Qunduz was subordinated to the power of the ruler of Khulm and was governed by Qilij Beg's brother, Kokdad Mirza, father of the famous Murad Beg (Elphinstone ii, 197). There is no contemporary evidence for later European claims, based on disingenuous information provided by Kamran Shah of Herat and his wazir, Yar Muhammad Khan, that at this time Maimana and the Chahar Wilayat had been detached from the province of Balkh and placed under Herat. Nor is there any contemporary evidence to support Kamran's claim that the heir to the Maimana Khanate was obliged to reside in the Sadozai capital.[29]

Khulm's domination of Qataghan and the eastern marches of the appanage of Balkh, inevitably meant that the authority of the Afghan governor of Balkh was so eroded that he could barely claim to rule the town of Balkh itself. By the end of Timur's reign this office was

[28] Izzat Ullah, 80 writing in 1813, describes Mir Qilij 'Ali Beg as about sixty years old, with a slightly greying beard, small eyes and spacious forehead. His dress was according to the Uzbek style, with a small turban and the traditional embroidered cap. His government was strict but not severe, thieves being pilloried rather than put to death, at least for first offences. He had acquired a reputation for justice and piety. He had four wives, thirteen sons and twelve daughters. Elphinstone ii, 199-200 gives the following description of him:

> Killich Ali Beg is about sixty years old; he is a handsome man with a red and white complexion. He has a few grey hairs on his chin for a beard, small eyes, broad forehead, and Uzbek attire. On his head he wears a cap, and over it two turbans twisted up together. He wears an Uzbek shirt and a gown, over which is a girdle, wound round his loins, with a long knife stuck in it; and over the whole he generally has a robe of cotton or other cloth of some sober colour... He does not always wear boots ... but only when he rides; he carries a short stick in his hand, and takes a great deal of snuff. Killich Ali is honest, just, well disposed, kind to his subjects, judicious and discriminating in his treatment of his servants, economical in his expenses, vigilant and well informed in the affairs of his government. He gives bread and broth to a hundred poor persons daily.

[29] Pottinger, *Memoir*, 1839; Ghulam Sarwar, 1797.

said to have been the least sought appointment in the gift of the Afghan Amir. No-one was prepared to govern "these turbulent cities" (Ferrier 1858, 101). The ruler of Khulm, who collected and controlled the revenues of Balkh and the disbursement of the Afghan Resident's expenses, provided the unlucky individual who had been nominated to this remote outpost barely enough to keep body and soul together. As a consequence, the reluctance of any self-respecting Afghan to take up this appointment became legendary and caused much amusement amongst the local population. The peripatetic entertainers (still a common sight in northern Afghanistan) even taught their monkeys to throw dust over themselves when asked whether they wanted to be governor of Balkh (Ferrier 1858, 102). Arguably, Timur's insistence on maintaining a token Afghan presence in an area which was independent of Kabul in all but name, was more detrimental to Afghan interests than if Balkh had been abandoned altogether, for it demonstrated to all and sundry how weak and ineffective the ruler of Kabul had become.

*Zaman Shah, Shah Murad and Balkh, 1793*

Matters became worse following the unexpected death of the Amir in 1793. In late April of 1793,[30] Timur Shah left Peshawar for Kabul and sometime during the ride, his horse started, causing the crown on his head to fall to the ground; an omen which Timur took to mean that his overthrow was imminent. A few days later he was suddenly seized by a pain in the kidney, which was followed by acute dejection, fever and severe headache.[31] He managed to reach Chaharbagh, between Jalalabad and Kabul, where his son, Zaman Shah, hearing of his father's illness, was waiting anxiously. After celebrating the 'Id al-Fitr festival, father and son rode to Kabul, where the Amir's condition worsened. In mid-May, Timur Shah, realising he was dying, summoned his counsellors, nominated Zaman as his successor, and made his heir vow that his older brothers, Homayun and Mahmud, would keep their

[30] 10 Muharram 1207/21 April 1793, *IK*, 21 April-12 June 1793, CPC, X (1792-93), no. 1569, pp. 320-1, though another report says he left on 1 Shawwal/12 May 1793, but this allowed him only 8 days to march to Kabul according to the same report, *News respecting Zaman Shah, son of Timur Shah enclosed in a letter from Ghulam Sarwar*, 23 Aug. 1793, CPC, X, no. 1738, p. 360.

[31] *IK*, 21 April-12 June 1793; *IK*, rcvd. 31 July 1793, CPC, X, no. 1537, pp. 1792-3. For a discussion of the possible long-term illness that Amir Timur Shah, and subsequent Afghan rulers, suffered from, see Lee 1991a.

fiefs of Qandahar and Herat when he succeeded to the Amirship.[32] Timur Shah finally expired in the early hours of the morning a few days later.[33] Immediately the news was broken to the Court, serious disturbances broke out in Kabul as the sardars plundered the bazaars, killing some one hundred people in the process.[34] It was several days before order was restored and Zaman Shah installed as the new ruler.[35]

Inevitably, Zaman's older brothers disputed the succession and a civil war ensued which lasted for over twenty years (Elphinstone ii, 307-8; Fraser-Tytler, 67-8). Timur's eldest son, Homayun, who was governor of Qandahar, refused to accept his younger brother's right to Kabul, enlisted the support of another brother, Mahmud, who controlled Herat and, helped by "powerful Turkish chiefs," declared war on his younger brother (Dupree 1978, 365-6; Elphinstone ii, 307-8).[36] Zaman responded quickly, sending thirty thousand troops towards Qandahar under Sher Muhammad, son of Shah Wali Khan[37] and managed to defeat Homayun by bribing many of the opposing sardars into changing sides.[38] Homayun fled to Baluchistan, whilst Zaman Shah's forces took possession of Qandahar. Mahmud, meanwhile, afraid that Herat would also be attacked, "meekly submitted"[39] and was confirmed in his governorship of that city in accordance with Timur Shah's wishes. After an abortive attempt by Homayun to recover Qandahar, he too tendered his allegiance and received a Royal Pardon.[40] Shah 'Abbas, another of Timur's sons who ruled in Peshawar, was not so fortunate. He was lured to Kabul and imprisoned.[41]

A few weeks after Timur's death, Shah Murad of Bukhara, freed from his treaty obligations to the Afghans, sent a small force across

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[32] *IK*, 21 April-12 June, 31 July 1793. *IK*, rcvd. 27 Aug. 1793, CPC, X, no. 1598, p. 327. It is not true, as some authorities claim, that Timur died intestate and that this was the cause of the civil war which followed. Contemporary sources show that he had specifically nominated Zaman Shah as his heir as soon as he realised that he was dying.

[33] At midnight on 20 May, according to *IK*, 31 July 1793, but *IK*, 21 April-12 June 1793, says he died at 3.00 a.m. on 10 Shawwal/21 May, whilst *News respecting Zaman Shah*, 31 Aug. 1793, gives the date of decease as 9 Shawwal/20 May.

[34] *IK*, 31 July 1793.

[35] *Ibid. IK*, 21 April-12 June 1793, says it was on 15 Shawwal 1207/26 May 1793.

[36] *IK*, 21 April-12 June, 31 July, 1793.

[37] *Letter from Ghulam Sarwar (News Respecting Zamaun Shah)*, 23 Aug. 1793, CPC, X, no. 1738, pp. 361-2.

[38] *Ibid.*

[39] *IK*, 23 Aug. 1793.

[40] *Letter from Ghulam Sarwar*, 31 Aug. 1793; *Letter from Ghulam Muhammad Khan*, 20 Dec. 1793, CPC, X, nos. 1739, 1966, pp. 361, 400.

[41] *IK*, 27 Aug. 1793.

the Amu Darya towards Balkh (Elphinstone ii, 309).[42] Muhammad Khan Siya Mansur Khan, the Afghan governor of Balkh (Elphinstone ii, 309),[43] marched out to meet the Bukharans with four thousand men, but was ambushed, defeated and taken prisoner.[44] Balkh was then besieged (Elphinstone ii, 309; Vambery 1873, 358),[45] but the garrison refused to submit and held out for four months in the *arg*. Frustrated by this unexpected resistance, Shah Murad threatened to put Mansur Khan to death if they did not surrender and, when the garrison remained unmoved, the unfortunate governor was executed before their eyes. Despite such tactics, Balkh continued to hold out, anticipating that a relief force would be sent from Kabul (Elphinstone ii, 309).[46]

When Zaman Shah heard of the Bukharan attack, he returned in haste to his capital (Vambery 1873, 358-9) and gave every sign that he was planning to march in person against the Bukharans. Shah Murad, however, hearing of the Afghan Amir's preparations, offered to negotiate with the Afghan government on the basis of previous treaties between the two countries. Zaman Shah, beset by civil war and other rebellions, was more than happy to settle the affairs of Balkh so amicably and agreed to meet with Bukharan ambassadors in Kabul (Elphinstone ii, 309-10; Talboys Wheeler, vii-viii). Once more Bukhara agreed to regard the regions south of the Amu Darya as within the Afghan sphere of interest, in return for a reaffirmation that native peoples would be allowed to run their own affairs (MacGregor, 142; Vambery 1873, 358-9). As soon as the agreement was concluded, Shah Murad lifted the siege of Balkh and retired across the river. The Amir handed control of the province of Balkh over to Hukumat Khan Durrani, though he, and the bulk of the troops were stationed, at least initially, at Aqcha, with a much smaller force, under Rahmatullah Khan, in Balkh. As soon as affairs north of the Hindu Kush were settled, the Amir marched his army back to Kabul to resume his wars in the south.[47]

Despite Zaman Shah's prompt actions during the first few months of his reign, he had secured only a temporary peace for his troubled realm. This was mainly due to his own lack of administrative skill.

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[42] *IK*, 21 April-12 June 1793 says that there were only 1,500 Bukharans.
[43] *Ibid*
[44] *Ibid*. The report implies that it was Shah Murad who was defeated.
[45] *Ibid*.
[46] Cf. Ghulam Sarwar, 1797.
[47] *Ibid*.

Rather than consolidating his hold over the territory he already possessed, Zaman Shah, like his father and grandfather before him, was obsessed with the invasion of India. Taking little account of the potential threat from Herat, he marched southwards and took possession of Peshawar, hoping to muster sufficient forces to attack across the Indus (Elphinstone ii, 309; Dupree 1978, 365; Ingram, 36, 60, 126, 179).

*The Report of Ghulam Sarwar, 1793-1795*

Reports of Afghan preparations to invade India caused alarm to the East India Company, who feared that war with Zaman Shah was imminent. In order to ascertain the exact state of affairs beyond the Indus, a native agent, Ghulam Sarwar,[48] was sent to Peshawar and Kabul to obtain first-hand intelligence about the little-known Afghan kingdom. During his journeys, which lasted from March 1793 to February 1795, Ghulam Sarwar accumulated a great deal of valuable information and, by the judicious use of Company rupees, compiled a considerable amount of intelligence about the Afghan government's financial and military affairs, including copies of maps in the Amir's archives (Hall, 4).[49] Ghulam Sarwar's report is the first systematic analysis of the Kingdom of Kabul commissioned by the British and predates the work of the Elphinstone Mission by over a decade.

The expenses of the twin city-states of Balkh and Aqcha had long exceeded the revenues and a large sum was sent annually from the central treasury to meet the deficit. The revenues of Balkh consisted of tribute of 1,700 horses and 22,000 sheep, in addition to which a further 400,000 rupees was raised in taxation. The expenses of the government's representative in the city were; 150,000 rupees for "Tioldars;" Rs. 320,000 for the pay and upkeep of the garrison and defence, and Rs. 45,000 which was set aside for charitable donations, presumably the upkeep and maintenance of important shrines such as Mazar-i Sharif and Khwaja Parsa of Balkh. The shortfall of Rs. 115,000 was sent, in cash, to Balkh, by the Kabul treasury. Aqcha's

[48] According to Prasad, 39 another native spy, Ghulam Ahmad, was at the Court of Zaman Shah in 1797 and reported occasionally to the East India Company. There was also an agent stationed in Sind, "to obtain correct information of the motions and condition of Zeman Shah," Ingram, 212.

[49] Ghulam Sarwar's report consists of several hundred pages. The maps, copied from those commissioned by the Durrani Amirs, are not filed with the India Office's copy. I have been unable to trace their whereabouts.

revenues came to Rs. 180,000 whilst the expenses of the state exceeded this figure by Rs. 70,000 which was also made up by central government. Balkh with Aqcha, however, did send 4,700 horses and 22,000 sheep annually to the Afghan capital. Thus the maintenance of a token presence north of the Hindu Kush cost the Afghan treasury just under two lakh rupees a year, whilst nearly five hundred thousand rupees were allocated to defence and the upkeep of the Balkh garrison and the support of Hukumat Khan Durrani, the Afghan governor.

Khulm and its associated satellite territories, like the other states of the province of Balkh, made no contribution in cash to the Kabul government, but sent an annual *nazarana* of 1,200 horses and 15,000 sheep.[50] According to Sarwar, "a deduction has long been made for cash, for charity, and other expenses," but no further details of the income or expenses of this state are included in his report. Qunduz's annual tribute of livestock amounted to 1,000 horse and 10,000 "vulaitee" (*wilayati*, or native?) sheep with "a deduction from government for his expenses" of 210,000 rupees—equivalent to the total sum realised by the state from land rents.[51] When reporting on the countries west of Balkh, Sarwar makes no mention of Shibarghan or Andkhui's accounts, but he does gives some details of Maimana's revenues under Jan Khan Ming, whom he refers to as "king" and his family as "royal."[52] An annual *nazarana* of eleven thousand sheep and twelve hundred horses was sent to the Amir by the wali, whose expenses are given as one lakh rupees, the equivalent to the sum realised from land taxes. State expenditure included thirty-five thousand rupees for Jan Khan Ming's establishment, ten thousand rupees which was set aside for "charitable assignments," presumably *waqf* payments for the upkeep of shrines, mosques and associated lands, and sixty-five thousand rupees for *jagir* holders, which was offset by a grant from the central Afghan treasury.[53] No mention is made of income from transit duties, or the trade in karakul skins, horses, iron,

[50] Earlier, Sarwar gives the figure of 11,000 sheep and states that this tribute had been given jointly by Khulm and "Indkho," though why Khulm should be linked with Andkhui is not explained in the report, unless "Indkho" is another place near Khulm, such as Ishkamish. No mention is made of the revenues of Andkhui and nothing is said at all about Shibarghan.

[51] In a statistical section towards the end of his report, Sarwar has separate entries for "Khoollum and Inakho," "Districts under Meer Ally Khan" and "Districts under Nufseer Khaun." It is unclear which regions these latter two individuals governed, but they appear in the section dealing with Balkh and Lesser Turkistan.

[52] An earlier reference in Sarwar's report refers to the Wali of Maimana as Jahan Khan, but this is probably a translation or clerical error.

[53] Ghulam Sarwar, 1797.

salt, or agricultural and industrial items, which we know from early nineteenth century European sources, were the mainstay of Maimana's trade. However, Sarwar was concerned solely with the revenues and incomes derived from, or apportioned to, these regions by the Afghan government. Internal trade and revenue was the prerogative of the wali and hence did not come within his terms of reference. More than likely, the Afghans had no information about the internal finances of these states anyway. Sarwar lists Andkhui, Khulm and Qunduz as distinct provinces.

### *The Question of the Maimana Succession, 1790-1831*

Arthur Conolly and the sources which follow him, state that Jan Muhammad Khan Ming of Maimana predeceased Timur Shah in *c.* 1790,[54] but we know from Ghulam Sarwar's report that this was not the case and the Mingid ruler was still alive in 1793. Other contemporary reports also force us to rethink the chronology of the Mingid dynasty down to 1830. Though Conolly is vague about events in Maimana following the death of Jan Khan, he does give estimates of the number of years each wali reigned, as well as some brief biographical material.

According to his account, Jan Khan was succeeded by an unnamed son who was quickly deposed and blinded by a younger brother, Muhammad Rahim Khan,[55] who reigned in Maimana for "some years." Rahim Khan in turn was killed by another of his younger brothers, Ahmad Quli Khan,[56] who ruled "ten or twelve years." He too was assassinated and succeeded by a son of Rahim Khan, 'Ali Yar Khan, who was "only a lad" at the time he came to the throne.[57] 'Ali Yar reigned "sixteen years" before he succumbed to cholera. Writing in

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[54] Conolly, *Bamiyan to Merve*, 1840. Cf. Talboys Wheeler 1869; MacGregor 1871; *Gazetteer* (1895) ii; Peacocke 1888.

[55] *Ibid.* Ergeš Uçkun, *personal communication.*

[56] *Ibid.* This was his full title and names according to Ergeš Uçkun. Amir Khan & Taimus 1888, 240-1 say Ahmad was Rahim's son, but this is quite untrue.

[57] Conolly, *Bamiyan to Merve*, 1840, refers to him as Allah Yar Khan, as does Ergeš Uçkun, probably on the basis of European sources. Pottinger, *Memoir*, 1839 uses this name in the copy of his original report, which is in the Political and Secret Department files, but the printed report in the *Memorandum* series (PSDL:G/10) has "Ali Yai (*sic*) Khan." Stirling 1991, 284 the only European to have visited Maimana during his reign, calls the Mingid ruler "Ally Yar." In Moorcroft's unpublished journal, *Bukhara and the Return from Bukhara*, July-Aug. 1825, MSS Eur. D.245, fol. 276, Moorcroft records that he requested letters of introduction to the ruler of Maimana whom he refers to as "Alu Yar Khan." Given that both Stirling and Moorcroft call him 'Ali Yar Khan, I have preferred these contemporary reports.

November 1840, Conolly states that 'Ali Yar Khan's death took place "fourteen years ago," i.e. in 1826.[58] He was succeeded by 'Abd al-Mu'min Khan, a son of Ahmad Quli Khan. He survived for a matter of only "five or six months," when he was poisoned and his older half-brother, Mizrab Khan, seized power and reigned until his death in 1845.

On the basis of Conolly's estimated lengths of reigns, and the fact that the death of 'Ali Yar Khan Ming was presumed to have occurred in 1826, or fourteen years before Conolly was in Maimana, official publications and gazetteers produced by the British Indian administration in the last century gave the following approximated dates for the reigns of the walis of Maimana up to, and including, Mizrab Khan.

| *Ming rulers of Maimana* | *Conolly* | *'Official' Dates* |
|---|---|---|
| Haji Bi Khan | not given | 1747-1772 |
| Jan Khan | not given | 1772-1790 |
| Rahim Khan | "some years" | 1790-1798 |
| Ahmad Khan | "10 or 12 years" | 1798-1810 |
| 'Ali Yar Khan | "6 years" | 1810-1826 |
| 'Abd al-Mu'min Khan | "5-6 months" | 1826 |
| Mizrab Khan | "14 years ago" | 1826-1845 |

Ghulam Sarwar's report, as we have seen, shows that Jan Khan was still alive in 1794/5; that is well after the death of Timur Shah Durrani. The date of 1826 for the death of 'Ali Yar Khan must also be discounted. Edward Stirling, a Scottish civil servant of the East India Company, was in Maimana in late 1828 and recorded in his journal that 'Ali Yar Khan was still alive (Stirling 1991, 284-6). 'Ali Yar's death can, however, be reasonably accurately placed. Alexander Burnes,[59] writing in early 1838, states that Mizrab Khan succeeded his brother "about six years ago," whilst the Persian mirza, who provided Conolly with his history of Maimana, claimed to have lived in Maimana "in the favour and intimacy of Mizrab Khan" for ten years,[60] which implies that Mizrab Khan had been reigning for at least a decade. It is reasonable to assume that Conolly's mirza, interviewed in October 1840 (1256), would have based his estimate of ten years on the Hijra calendar. Thus both sources give good reason for us to

[58] *Ibid.*

[59] Lt. Alexander Burnes, "Herat with a Sketch of the State of Affairs in the Surrounding Countries," Feb. 1838, in *Political, Geographical and Commercial Reports and Papers*, etc. Calcutta, 1838, MEIR:90 (for the uncensored report see ESL:130, fols. 122-31). The published report has been erroneously dated 1837.

[60] Conolly, *Bamiyan to Merve*, 1840.

believe that the latter half of 1831/1247 is a more accurate date for the commencement of Mizrab Khan's reign.[61] Although Talboys Wheeler (pp. vii-viii) rather curiously claims that the period between 1820 and 1830 in Maimana was one of "domestic tragedies," without, apparently, any authority, he gives the date of 1830 for the accession of Mizrab Khan.

Furthermore, Stirling provides sufficient genealogical evidence about the Mingid dynasty for us to be able to say that 1798 is too early a date for the death of Rahim Khan, for 'Ali Yar Khan was "not more than twenty-four or twenty-five years of age" in 1828 (Stirling 1991, 284). Since 'Ali Yar Khan was the son of Rahim Khan, the assassination of Rahim Khan could not have taken place any earlier than 1804.[62] We must also place the end of Ahmad Quli Khan's reign later than 1810 (MacGregor, 143). Conolly mentions a son of Ahmad Quli Khan, Subhan Quli Khan, who fled to Sar-i Pul in *c.* 1831, following the death of 'Ali Yar Khan, and became the focus of a local war between the two states. Though Conolly does not give his exact age, he does call him a "lad," implying that he was, at the most, a teenager at the time of his flight.[63] If Ahmad Quli died in 1810, his son would have been an adult of at least twenty years old by the time he left for Sar-i Pul. His father was therefore more likely to have died some years later.

If we combine the information provided by Ghulam Sarwar, Burnes and Stirling, we conclude that 1804 is a much more likely date for the assassination of Rahim Khan, whilst the start of Mizrab Khan's reign was probably 1831. These conclusions tie in well with the dates supplied by one authoritative oral source.[64] It is, however, still possible to reconcile these conclusions with Conolly's figures for the lengths of individual reigns, provided we take his lower figure of ten years for the reign of Ahmad Quli Khan.

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[61] Neither Elphinstone nor Izzat Ullah give the names of any of the rulers of the Chahar Wilayat. The India Office L/P&S/5 series for the years 1828-30 has very little material on Maimana and nothing on the death of 'Ali Yar Khan.

[62] Conolly, *Bamiyan to Merve*, 1840; Pottinger, *Memoir*, 1839.

[63] *Id.*

[64] Ergeš Uçkun, *personal communication.*

| *Mingid Rulers of Maimana, 1747-1845*[65] | *Revised Dates* |
|---|---|
| Haji Bi Khan | *c.* 1731-1772 |
| Jan Muhammad Khan | 1772-1795(?) |
| Eldest son of Jan Khan (unnamed) | *c.* 1795 |
| Muhammad Rahim Khan, second son of Jan Khan | *c.* 1795-1804 |
| [*Birth of Mizrab Khan to Ahmad Quli Khan*[66] | *c.* 1798] |
| [*Birth of 'Ali Yar Khan, eldest son of Rahim Khan* | *c.* 1804] |
| Ataliq Ahmad Quli Khan, younger brother of Rahim Khan | 1804-1814 |
| [*Birth of Subhan Quli Khan to Ahmad Quli Khan* | *c.* 1813/4] |
| 'Ali Yar Khan, oldest son of Muhammad Rahim Khan | 1814-1830 |
| Persian Regent for infant child of 'Ali Yar Khan | 1830 |
| 'Abd al-Mu'min Khan, son of Ataliq Ahmad Quli Khan | 1830-1831 |
| Mizrab Khan, half-brother of 'Abd al-Mu'min Khan | 1831-1845 |

This revised chronology is consistent with Conolly's claim that 'Ali Yar Khan was "only a lad" when he took control of affairs in Maimana. In 1814 he would have been ten or eleven years of age. Subhan Quli would have been about fifteen or sixteen, when, as a "lad," he was taken to Sar-i Pul.

We conclude, therefore, that Jan Muhammad Khan Ming of Maimana died, in unknown circumstance, in *c.* 1795 and his death plunged the province into fratricidal strife which was the mirror image of the civil war being fought out on a wider arena between various Afghan princes. Jan Khan's eldest son and heir was soon deposed and blinded by his younger brother, Rahim Khan, who managed to hold on to power for several years.[67]

*Herat and the Break-Up of the Afghan Kingdom, 1797-1809*

In 1797, Shah Mahmud of Herat rebelled again, aided by a grant of ten thousand rupees from the British native agent in Persia, Mehdi 'Ali, who hoped thereby to keep Zaman Shah so busy with internal affairs that he would be unable to mount any invasion of India (Prasad, 42-3; Yapp 1980, 25-7). Mahmud assembled a formidable army of twenty thousand men (Elphinstone ii, 316), which included many amirs of the Aimaq, Hazara, Turkman and Uzbek tribes drawn from Khurasan, Ghor, and Maimana (Champagne, 49-50; Elphinstone ii, 310-11; Prasad 42-3, 380).[68] Zaman Shah, hearing of the rebellion, was forced to return from operations beyond the Indus and march to

[65] Including full titles and names as provided by Ergeš Uçkun
[66] "About forty," Burnes, *Herat*, 1838.
[67] Conolly, *Bamiyan to Merve*, 1840.
[68] Raverty v (ii), 2095-7.

Qandahar, where he assembled an army of some fifteen thousand men and set out for Herat. Despite his "injudicious arrangements" (Elphinstone ii, 316), which brought him to the brink of disaster, Zaman Shah managed to defeat his rival in an encounter on the Helmand, helped by the defection of one of Mahmud's Aimaq allies, Qilij Khan Timuri,[69] who declared for Zaman Shah and seized the citadel of Herat after Mahmud had left for Sistan. The Durrani governor, whom Mahmud had left behind, also changed sides.

As disaffection spread throughout Mahmud's army, the Afghan prince fled with his son, Kamran, back to Herat but was refused admission and was forced to seek refuge in Persian territory (Elphinstone ii, 317; Dupree 1978, Chart 21). Meanwhile, many of the sardars in his army, along with some of the Aimaq chiefs, fell into the hands of Zaman Shah,[70] who followed up his success by occupying Farah and Herat.[71] Zaman Shah, however, pardoned the Aimaq chiefs of Badghis and Maimana and allowed them to return to their own country (Champagne, 51; Elphinstone ii, 310; Prasad, 42-3).[72]

Despite his success at Herat, Zaman Shah still showed no interest in consolidating his realms, preferring to pursue the chimera of Indian conquest. With his mind clouded by the dreams of past glories, he returned to Peshawar where he began to assemble yet another army to march across the Indus (Elphinstone ii, 310-11). At the end of 1798, however, news reached him that Fath 'Ali Shah of Persia had attacked Khurasan and the Amir was forced to return in such haste to Peshawar

[69] *Ibid.* Raverty says Zaman took Qilij prisoner. According to the Afghan Boundary Commissioners, the Timuri tribe was of Arab descent and named after Amir Timur Gurgan, or Timur Lang, who gave a number of captive Arab families to Mir Saiyid Qasim, known as Mir Saiyid Kalal, who lived near Bukhara. He was a descendant of 'Ali b. Abi Talib. Later, Timur gave one of his daughters in marriage to Saiyid Kalal's son, Mir Shams al-Din Muhammad, who moved to Herat after his father's death. Shams al-Din's tomb is said to be at Khwaja Tak, outside the city walls. This individual was granted lands in Zamin Dawar and elsewhere. The descendants of Shams al-Din Muhammad became powerful chiefs and by the time of Timur Shah Durrani they were located around Gulran of Badghis under the leadership of Haji Khan, whose son is the Qilij Khan mentioned in the text. Following the defeat of Zaman Khan by Shah Mahmud, the Timuri tribe felt unable to stay in the country and migrated to Khaf. A small number of the clan, who seemed to have already become separated from the main tribe by this time, remained in Sabzawar. In 1885 the Khaf Timuris numbered 2,500 families, or about 10,000 individuals, under Darwish 'Ali Khan, a descendant of Qilij Khan (Maitland 1891, 271-6; Schurmann, 53-5). During the nineteenth century, intelligence reports often confuse the Taimanis with the Timuris (or Taimuris), but since the Timuri tribe were so small and mostly living in Persian territory, it is almost always the Taimani Aimaq that is being referred to.

[70] Raverty v (ii), 2095-7.

[71] *Ibid.* Raverty claims Zaman appointed Firoz al-Din as his *na'ib.* Dupree 1978, chart 21, after Elphinstone ii, 318, says the governor was Prince Qaisar, son of Zaman.

[72] *Ibid.*

that he lost his guns whilst crossing the Indus (Elphinstone ii, 317). When he finally reached Herat, Zaman Shah announced he would spend the rest of the year in the city, putting the affairs of the province in order and making proper arrangements for his western defences, since the presence of Mahmud with the Persian army posed a serious threat to security (Elphinstone ii, 317-8). However, when reports reached Herat that Fath 'Ali Shah had withdrawn from Khurasan, Zaman Shah quit the city to winter in Qandahar.

The Amir had under-estimated the resourcefulness and determination of his rival, who remained behind in Khurasan and persuaded the chiefs of Qa'in and Birjand to aid him in an attempt to recapture Herat. Together they marched with ten thousand men across the border, defeated Prince Qaisar and laid siege to the city. These early successes, however, quickly evaporated. Mahmud's confidence in his Persian supporters was cleverly undermined by supporters of Zaman Shah, who had infiltrated the enemy camp. Fearing that a plot was afoot to assassinate him, Shah Mahmud fled during the night, abandoning his army to its fate (Elphinstone ii, 318) and made his way, via Maimana, to the court of Shah Murad of Bukhara.

At first the refugee Afghan prince was well received, but an ambassador from Zaman Shah, who had been dispatched to Bukhara post-haste, publicly remonstrated with Shah Murad about the legitimacy of giving asylum to a rebel and, as a further inducement, offered a huge bribe to the Manghit Khan to betray Mahmud. Shah Murad was unwilling to break the code of honour and sanctuary, but had no wish to incur the wrath of Zaman Shah. To overcome this dilemma, he persuaded Shah Mahmud to embark on a pilgrimage to Mecca, thus allowing the refugee to leave Bukhara under the protection of a sacred truce. Once on the road Mahmud, with more earthly matters on his mind, abandoned the pretence of pilgrimage and fled once more to Persia (Elphinstone ii, 319). A few months later, in December 1799 (Howorth, 774),[73] Shah Murad of Bukhara was dead and his son, Saiyid Haidar Tura, succeeded him.

In the spring of 1800, Fath 'Ali Shah returned once more to Khurasan accompanied by Shah Mahmud, who had received further promises of support from the Persian monarch in his bid to regain Herat (Elphinstone ii, 320). Once more Zaman Shah was forced to march to the defence of Herat, but returned in some haste to Kabul when, in early autumn, Fath 'Ali Shah quit Khurasan after signally failing to

[73] 14 Rajab 1214/12 Dec. 1799, Skrine & Ross, 207.

fulfil his promises to the unfortunate Afghan prince, whom he left high and dry in Khurasan (Elphinstone ii, 320-1). Just when Mahmud's fortunes seemed to have reached their lowest ebb, Fath Khan Barakzai, the eldest son of Payinda Khan, "animated with the spirit of revenge and hatred to Shauh Zemaun" (Elphinstone ii, 321), arrived in Khurasan. He persuaded Mahmud to abandon his reliance on Persia and to seize the initiative himself by marching on Qandahar. At the head of a mere fifty horsemen, Shah Mahmud left for Sistan, where he was welcomed with open arms by its chief, Bahram Khan, who gave his daughter in marriage to Mahmud's eldest son, Kamran Mirza. The success was quickly followed by the capture of Qandahar, after a brief siege.

It was only when news of the fall of the former Durrani capital reached Zaman Shah that the Afghan Amir set out to deal with the threat posed by Mahmud, but even then he failed to take his rival seriously and left the bulk of his force behind him in Peshawar under his brother, Shuja' al-Mulk. As a consequence of this lack of foresight, Zaman Shah was defeated, captured and blinded. Shah Mahmud marched on Kabul, which fell without much trouble, and had himself proclaimed the new Amir; his brother, Firoz, being appointed to govern Herat. Mahmud, however, only held onto power until 1803, when he in turn was overthrown by Zaman's brother, Shuja' al-Mulk, who showed unusual clemency by not putting out the eyes of his rival when it was within his rights to exact revenge for the blinding of his brother (Elphinstone ii, 323-7).

Following Shah Shuja''s conquest of Kabul, Herat remained in the hands of Shah Mahmud's family under Prince Firoz al-Din, a full brother of the deposed Amir. Kamran Mirza b. Shah Mahmud also took refuge in the city. In 1806, Kamran tried to seize Qandahar from Shah Shuja''s governor, Qaisar, but he was forced to return when news reached him that a Persian army was marching against Herat in revenge for raids made by Firoz on eastern Khurasan (Elphinstone ii, 347). Firoz rallied some fifty thousand men, mainly from the Aimaq tribes of Badghis who "were raised to great enthusiasm" (Elphinstone ii, 347), by the influence of Hazrat Allah Berdi, *Sufi al-Islam* (1725-1806), an Uzbek shaikh who originally came from the vicinity of Maimana. He had seen service with the Manghits of Bukhara and had distinguished himself to such an extent that he had quickly been promoted to high rank. Whilst campaigning near Merv, though, he had a vision of Khwaja Khizr which caused him to abandon a military

career for the life of contemplation. His subsequent preaching was so popular that the Hazrat excited the jealousy of the ruler of Bukhara. He fled across the Amu Darya and took up residence some thirty miles east of Herat, at Karukh.

On the approach of the Persian force the shaikh, now in his early eighties, declared holy war (*jihad*) against the Qizilbash and marched into battle at the head of his followers, mounted on an elephant (N. H. Dupree 1977, 334). In a battle on 19 June 1807 (22 Rabi' II, 1222) Firoz was badly defeated, after failing to secure the crossing over the Hari Rud and being outflanked by the enemy. In a desperate attempt to break out the Afghan forces charged the massed ranks of the Persian army but were cut to pieces. Firoz's Aimaq allies fled in panic, many of them drowning in the rush to ford the river. Hazrat Sufi al-Islam was surrounded and, despite putting up a valiant struggle, he was finally killed by an arrow through the heart and his bodyguard massacred to the last man (N. H. Dupree 1977, 334). The Persians took revenge on the Hazrat by cutting his body into pieces and burning it to ashes (Elphinstone ii, 348; Katib i, 75). What little was left of the shaikh's mortal remains was collected by devotees and interred at Karukh where his grave rapidly became a major local centre of pilgrimage (N. H. Dupree 1977, 334).

Firoz al-Din managed to escape the massacre by the skin of his teeth. He fled to Herat and prepared the city for a prolonged siege. Fortunately those troops who survived the battle quickly regrouped and were reinforced from the south under Malik Qasim. Unwilling to risk a protracted war with the Afghans and hearing of his father's death, Muhammad Mirza, the Qajar prince who had led the Persian army, offered stiff terms, which Firoz wisely accepted. Having agrred a treaty, the Persian army returned to Khurasan, leaving the Afghans to fight amongst themselves (Elphinstone ii, 348; Katib i, 75).

### *Balkh, Internal Developments, 1804-1814*

The history of Maimana, Balkh and Qataghan in the first decade of the nineteenth century is quite uncertain and only scattered, often contradictory, references appear in European sources. We have seen how, *c.* 1804, Muhammad Rahim Khan Ming was assassinated by his younger brother, Ahmad Quli Khan.[74] Though the murdered wali's

[74] Conolly, *Bamiyan to Merve*, 1840 states that Muhammad Rahim Khan was "killed by his subjects," but this is merely a euphemism for a *coup d'état.*

new-born child, 'Ali Yar Khan, was spared the same fate as his father and lived to reign another day, the overthrow of Rahim Khan was the latest incident in a bloody feud between Jan Khan's sons, which left a sanguinary and bitter legacy to their descendants. Ahmad Quli Khan was closely related to Zu'l-Faqar Sher Khan his governor of Sar-i Pul, which at the time of Ahmad Quli's accession was a sub-district of Maimana,[75] having married a sister of Zu'l-Faqar.[76] The new ruler of Maimana had also married a Persian slave woman whom he regarded as more than a mere concubine, since the son he had by her, Mizrab Khan, was eventually to rule Maimana. Zu'l-Faqar Sher Khan's family had also inter-married with Persian-speaking (*farsiwan*) women from Kabul for several generations. Zu'l-Faqar Sher's own mother was a *farsiwan* and he himself was married to a woman from Kabul. According to Ferrier, Zu'l-Faqar's facial appearance was more Persian than Uzbek (Ferrier 1857, 225).

It is more difficult to be precise about who ruled the other two states of the Chahar Wilayat during the reign of Ahmad Quli Khan of Maimana. In 1988, the author was shown a manuscript of Persian poetry written in Shibarghan in 1800/1215 or 1804/1219 which was dedicated to Erich Khan b. Daulat Khan. Stirling informs us that Erich Khan was the father of Manwar Khan, the ruler of Shibarghan at the time of Stirling's visit in 1828 (Stirling 1991, 287). It is more or less impossible, in the present state of knowledge, to state accurately who ruled Andkhui at the turn of the nineteenth century, though it is more than likely to have been Rahmatullah Khan Afshar whose father, Sulaiman Khan, according to Stirling "was appointed governor of the district by Nadir Shah" (Stirling 1991, 286).

Ahmad Quli Khan appears to have consolidated Maimana's ancient ties with Bukhara by a formal confirmation of Bukharan sovereignty over the Chahar Wilayat, for Conolly informs us that Ahmad Khan was given the prestigious title of ataliq by Haidar Khan Manghit,[77] a reward, no doubt, for his loyalty. The Elphinstone Mission confirms that Andkhui, and by implication the whole western part of Lesser Turkistan, was a part of the "Kingdom of Bukhara," used Bukharan currency and was "independent," that is, not part of the Afghan

[75] See Strachey, *Memoir on the Revenue and Trade of Cabul*, 1811, H. Misc. 659 (ii); Lt. F. Irvine, *Memoir on the Climate, Soil, Products and Husbandry of Afghanistan and the Neighbouring Country*, 1809, H. Misc. 659 (iv). Ahmad Quli may well have appointed Zu'l-Faqar Sher Khan as Hakim of Sar-i Pul in 1804.

[76] Conolly, *Bamiyan to Merve*, 1840.

[77] *Ibid.*

kingdom of Shah Shuja'.[78] As a result of the civil war between Timur Shah's sons, the Durranis lost what nominal influence they had over Maimana and the Chahar Wilayat by the early 1800s. A token presence, however, in the form of an Afghan governor at Balkh, still remained.

In Qataghan the real power lay with Qilij 'Ali Beg of Khulm who continued the alliance with the Afghans which had begun during the reign of Timur Shah (Elphinstone ii, 197). Maimana's cultivation of its links with Bukhara had, as we have seen, resulted in the Mingid rulers being stripped of the title of *Wali-yi Balkh* by Timur Shah. Sometime later Zaman Shah, in order to offset the Bukharan influence in the west, conferred this title on the eldest son of Mir Qilij, Ahmad Beg, and even gave him the right to call himself ataliq, possibly in direct response to Ahmad Khan Ming's elevation to the same status by Haidar Khan Manghit of Bukhara (Elphinstone ii, 188, 197). This appointment consolidated the alliance between Khulm and Kabul and marked a complete turn-about of Afghan policy towards the Balkh appanage since the days of Ahmad Shah Durrani. The supremacy of the Ming tribe of Maimana was overturned and their old rivals, the Qataghanids, had assumed the mantle of the paramount tribe, at least in the eyes of the Afghan Amir in Kabul.

This realignment was an inevitable result of Timur Shah's decision to move his capital from Qandahar to Kabul in 1775/6. The Badghis corridor and Maimana were no longer the most direct route from the Afghan capital to Balkh. This now ran via Bamiyan, Aibak and Khulm. Thus, though the Afghans could allow Maimana to go its own way, in order to protect the northern flanks of the Afghan dominions from Bukharan invasion it was essential to maintain close, friendly relations with Mir Qilij Beg and Khulm. The only alternative to such a policy was to extend Afghan sovereignty beyond the Hindu Kush by direct annexation of the plains of Aibak and Khulm which were the gateway to Kabul.

According to Faiz Bakhsh,[79] in the civil war which followed Haidar Khan Manghit's accession in Bukhara (1799/1800), Qunduz and Balkh were seized by a certain Qata Khan. His two sons, "Tor" (Tora?) Khan and Khudayar Khan, expelled Qara Khan b. 'Aliwardi Khan. These rebels were themselves soon ousted by Haidar Khan

[78] Strachey, *Memoir*; Irvine, *Memoir*; Lt. I. Macartney, *Memoir of a Map of Caboul and the Adjacent Country*, 1818, H. Misc. 659 (iii).

[79] Faiz Bakhsh, *Badakhshan*, 51.

Manghit, who presumably sent an army across the Amu Darya to restore the authority of Qara Khan.[80] A laconic reference to an Afghan "victory over the Uzbeks in Bulkh (*sic*)" in 1802 (Elphinstone ii, 331),[81] may indicate that Qilij Beg of Khulm, with the help of the ousted Durrani governor, had managed to re-establish control over Balkh in the name of Shah Shuja'. Whether this battle for Qunduz had anything to do with the struggle between Haidar Khan Manghit and his three paternal uncles, 'Omar Bi, Fazl Bi and Mahmud Bi, which marked the early months of his reign, we do not know (Howorth, 780-2). However, in 1805-6/1220 envoys from Haidar Khan and Qilij Khan came to the court of the then Afghan ruler of Kabul, Shah Shuja' al-Mulk, which resulted in the Amir marrying the virgin daughter of the Bukharan ruler (Katib i, 69). By *c.* 1808 the ruler of Qunduz is named as "Khaul Daud" Khan of Qataghan. This name is actually a mutilation of the ancient Chingizid title, Qa'alkhan, and the district was probably under the authority of Kokan Beg, father of the famous Murad Beg (Elphinstone ii, 200; Howorth, 855; Appendix, IV, viii).

In 1809, Shah 'Abbas, a nephew of Shah Shuja', managed to escape from imprisonment in Kabul and made his way to Balkh, where he was welcomed by the Afghan governor. Shah Shuja', too occupied in dealing with an uprising in the south, requested his faithful ally, Qilij 'Ali Beg of Khulm, to deal with this rebellion. More than willing to comply with this royal plea, Qilij marched his force to Balkh and expelled both Shah 'Abbas and the Afghan governor. Though Shah Shuja' sent a replacement, probably Sardar Najibullah Khan Surkhani (Izzat Ullah, 61, 81, 85), who was still in Balkh in 1812/3, Qilij Khan became, to all intents and purposes, the *de facto*, if not *de jure*, ruler of Balkh, Qataghan and Khulm (Elphinstone ii, 197).

The following year, Ataliq Ahmad Quli Khan Ming of Maimana, after a reign of some ten years, fell victim to the poisoner's art.[82] Ahmad Quli's two sons, Mizrab Khan and 'Abd al-Mu'min Khan, fled for their lives to seek sanctuary at Mazar-i Sharif,[83] whilst the young son of Muhammad Rahim Khan, 'Ali Yar Khan, a child of about ten, was placed on the throne. Though the sources do not say so, it would be reasonable to suppose that 'Ali Yar Khan personally had had little to do with the death of his uncle and that he was merely

[80] *Ibid.*

[81] Dupree 1978, chart 21 expands this by claiming, "North Afghanistan *(sic)* holds out for Zaman Shah."

[82] Burnes, *Herat*, 1838.

[83] Conolly, *Bamiyan to Merve*, 1840.

a pawn in the long-standing family feud. A notable feature of the reign of 'Ali Yar Khan is the powerful influence that freed Persian slaves had in his administration. His *'arzbegi* was a certain 'Abd al-Din ("Abadin") from Qa'in, who had been captured as a very young child on one of the many raids made into Persian Khurasan and brought to Maimana in a saddle bag. Following this individual's rise to power, he introduced two of his brothers into positions of influence in 'Ali Yar Khan's government. The diwanbegi at the time of the wali's death was a Persian and was even appointed Regent for 'Ali Yar's infant heir.[84] The Household Guard, which 'Ali Yar Khan's father, Muhammad Rahim Khan, had apparently formed from slaves, may also have been predominantly raised from captives of Khurasan origin.[85]

Shortly after the murder of Ahmad Quli Khan, Zu'l-Faqar Sher Khan, sub-governor of Sar-i Pul, took advantage of the weakness of his overlords to declare independence. After some fighting, he succeeded in carving out for himself a country which stretched north and east of the Shirin Tagab from Qurchi and the Mirza Wulang pass to the borders of Shibarghan (*Gazetteer* (1895) ii, 285; MacGregor, 645; Stirling 1991, 296). This added another dimension to the rivalry between Ahmadi and Rahimid clans in Maimana, for Zu'l-Faqar Sher Khan was related by marriage to both branches of the ruling house of Maimana; 'Ali Yar Khan eventually married one of the amir of Sar-i Pul's daughters.[86]

Having broken away from Maimana, Zu'l-Faqar Sher took the offensive against Manwar Khan of Shibarghan and, sometime in the mid 1820s, seized the important district of Qaflatun, or Chahar Burj, the region from where the rivers that irrigate Shibarghan rise, and diverted the streams for his own use, causing much hardship to the population in the plains to the north in the process (Ferrier 1857, 202; Stirling 1991, 294).

In the same year that Ahmad Quli was assassinated (1814), the tragic figure of the blinded ex-Amir of Kabul, Zaman Shah passed through Khulm on a pilgrimage to the shrine of 'Ali at Mazar-i Sharif. After being sumptuously entertained by the ageing Qilij 'Ali Beg of Khulm[87] and performed the *ziyarat* rites at the tomb of Shah-i

[84] *Ibid.*
[85] *Ibid.*
[86] *Ibid.*
[87] He was between sixty and seventy years old, Izzat Ullah, 80; Elphinstone ii, 191.

Mardan, he continued his pilgrimage northwards to Bukhara, where he was well received, given the young daughter of Amir Haidar in marriage and promised Manghit support for the conquest of Balkh (Howorth, 855). However, there was no serious intent on Haidar's part to help Zaman take possession of a province which the Bukharans still claimed sovereignty over and it was not long before Zaman Shah found that his stay in Bukhara had turned to imprisonment. Eventually he managed to make his escape and fled to Persia via Maimana,[88] from whence he departed to perform the pilgrimage to Mecca (Howorth, 855).

*Sadozai Herat, 1814-1829*

In 1814 Persia renewed its threats against Herat and Firoz requested his brother, Mahmud, who had succeeded in overthrowing Shah Shuja', to send Fath 'Ali Khan to his aid. When Fath Khan arrived in Herat, however, he had Firoz arrested and sent to Kabul to explain his "equivocal dealings with Persia" (Hall, 7). Firoz's property was looted and a half-brother of Fath 'Ali Khan, Dost Muhammad Khan, who later became one of the greatest of all Afghan Amirs, violated his rival's harem and was forced to flee for his life to Kashmir (Dupree 1978, chart 21; Hall, 6-7). In a further twist of fortune, Shah Mahmud himself was overthrown in 1818 and retired to Herat. His *wazir*, Fath Khan, however, was not so fortunate and was blinded. This action, not unexpectedly, precipitated a further round of hostilities and blood-letting between the Sadozai and Barakzai clans (Elphinstone ii, 350-1; Fraser-Tytler, 68; Hall, 6-7).[89] Shah Mahmud's expulsion from Kabul marked the end of the Sadozai dynasty's control of Kabul, with the exception of the brief reign of Shah Shuja' al-Mulk who was reinstated, under British patronage, in 1839. A rump Sadozai kingdom, however, continued to exist in Herat until the city finally fell to Dost Muhammad Khan in 1862.

Despite establishing himself in Herat, Shah Mahmud failed to escape from the internecine strife which had beset the Afghan ruling family. In 1824, the Sadozai ruler was overthrown by his own son, Kamran Mirza and, fearing for his life, he sought sanctuary at Khwaja

[88] Raverty vi, 2137. Zaman's visit may explain Mizrab Khan's cryptic comment to Conolly: "when members of that house [the Sadozai] fell into misfortune they found hospitality here," Conolly, *Bamiyan to Merve*, 1840

[89] Raverty vi, 2135.

Ansari's tomb in Guzargah, from whence he upbraided his heir for his "wicked" conduct. Kamran, however, was completely indifferent to such paternal rebukes and, after six months' residence at the shrine, Shah Mahmud fled across the Murghab to request help from 'Ali Yar Khan of Maimana (Conolly 1834, ii, 414-5).[90] Aided by the leader of the Jamshidi Aimaqs, Darwish 'Ali Khan, Maimana sent three thousand men across the Murghab to attack Herat. Kamran, meanwhile, allied himself with Persia, and six thousand men with four guns, under Arghan Mirza, were dispatched to deal with the threat from Badghis (Forrest, 8).

When the Persians reached Herat, they combined with two thousand of Kamran's own troops led by his son, Jahangir Mirza, and marched to the Murghab (Conolly 1834, ii, 414-5; Forrest, 8). Details of the ensuing battle are sketchy, but it appears that spies betrayed Kamran's line of advance to Shah Mahmud and his allies, who prepared an ambush. "In the grey of the morning" (Conolly 1834, ii, 414-5) the Aimaqs and Uzbeks surprised the advancing Persians and completely defeated them. Following this resounding victory, Shah Mahmud marched to Herat but, due to his "want of resolution," the Sadozai ruler decided to entrench himself outside of the citadel rather than storming the walls. The result was that all the benefit of the Badghis victory quickly dissipated (Conolly 1834, ii, 414-5) and the siege was a miserable failure. Shah Mahmud fled back across the Murghab, where he was given sanctuary by the Sunni Hazaras of Qal'a-yi Nau (Conolly 1834, ii, 414-5).[91]

Kamran refused to allow his father any peace and marched at the head of his army into Ghor, sweeping aside an Aimaq army which had been sent against him. All supply routes to the Aimaq mountain strongholds were cut and within a short space of time the Sunni Hazaras were starved into handing over Shah Mahmud, who was taken back to Herat by his son, but stripped of all power. Broken by a life of almost perpetual fighting and civil war, Shah Mahmud passed away the following year (1827) (Champagne, 99-100; Conolly 1843, ii, 414-5; Forrest, 8).[92]

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[90] Raverty vi, 2149-50. One contemporary French traveller said he went to Farah, *Itinerary from Yezd to Herat and from Herat to Kabul via Kandahar*, in, Forrest, 8.

[91] Raverty vi, 2125.

[92] Raverty vi, 2125, 2149-50. Raverty claims that Kamran deliberately destroyed his father's health.

*The Re-assertion of Bukharan Sovereignty, 1817-1829*

Qilij 'Ali Beg, amir of Khulm, died in 1817 at a ripe old age (Dupree 1978, chart 21; Izzat Ullah, 80; Howorth, 855)[93] and with his demise the power of Khulm went into a steep decline. For several years prior to Qilij 'Ali's death, his nephew, Murad Beg, amir of Qunduz (Izzat Ullah, 89), had been intriguing with Qilij's second-born son, Baba Beg.[94] In 1812, Baba Beg had poisoned his older brother during a feast and became both heir to his father's throne and the prestigious title of *Wali-yi Balkh* (Burnes 1834 i, 202-3; Harlan 1939, 32ff.; Howorth, 855; Izzat Ullah, 81; Moorcroft ii, 399-400). When Qilij Beg eventually passed away, however, Baba Beg discovered that his erstwhile protector and sponsor had grown so powerful that he was obliged to subordinate himself to the amir of Qunduz in order to hold on to power in Khulm.

Mir Baba Beg's enforced alliance with Qunduz was not to the liking of the Afghans and when Dost Muhammad Khan became Amir of Kabul in 1826, he stripped Baba Beg of his title, *Wali-yi Balkh* (Howorth, 855; Izzat Ullah, 80-1; Moorcroft, ii, 399ff.). Instead the Afghan Amir conferred it on Baba Beg's younger brother, 'Ali Mardan Beg, known generally by his title *Mir Wali*, who ruled independently from Aibak. Murad Beg, meanwhile, signified his new-found authority over Qataghan by striking coins in his own name along with the words "Mother of Cities," the Arabic name for Balkh, signifying, thereby, that he claimed to be the lawful ruler of the Chingizid

[93] Later sources give the date of his death as 1824 or 1826, cf. Burnes 1834 i,. 347; Talboys Wheeler, vii-viii, 35.

[94] Moorcroft ii, 399ff., seems to imply there were only two sons of Qilij 'Ali, Baba Beg and Muhammad Ahmad Beg. Subsequent authorities reflect this confusion, e.g. Howorth, 855. However, Izzat Ullah, 81 records the names of the three eldest sons of the ruler of Khulm as: firstly, Ahmad Beg, aged 20, governor of Aibak and *Wali-yi Balkh*, who was poisoned in 1812; secondly, Baba Beg ruler in "Yunayee, Ureek," aged 16; thirdly, 'Ali Mardan Beg, aged 14, governor of Darra-yi Yusuf. By the time of Moorcroft's visit in 1825, "Mohammed Ahmed Beg, the second son of the late Mir Kalich Ali, who had assumed the title of Wali or 'Protector of Balkh'" was governing Aibak (Moorcroft ii, 399-400), but later Moorcroft records that, "the third son, our new acquaintance [i.e. Ahmad Beg], had endeavoured to assert his independence and occupied Aibek" (Moorcroft ii, 400). Moorcroft also refers to Baba Beg, then ruler of Khulm, as the "second son" of Mir Qilij (Moorcroft ii, 400, 413). The confusion in Moorcroft's account can be explained when we realise that Muhammad "Ahmad" Beg was the second surviving son of Qilij Beg, but his third born son. Baba Beg was the second oldest but, as the eldest surviving offspring of Qilij Beg, he had succeeded at Khulm on the death of his father (Alder, 331; Burnes 1834, i, 202-3; Harlan 1939, 27-8, 33-6). The person Moorcroft refers to as Muhammad Ahmad Beg is the same individual as Muhammad Amin Beg Khan, Mir Wali of Khulm. See also, Harlan 1939, 34-6 for details of the disagreements which ensued following the death of Qilij Beg. Harlan's account differs in some points from that of Moorcroft.

appanage in opposition to the Afghan-sponsored wali (Burnes 1834, ii, 228-9).

The death of Qilij 'Ali Khan and the divisions which had appeared amongst the amirid rulers of Qataghan, encouraged Haidar Khan of Bukhara to fill the vacuum. In 1817 he marched across the Amu Darya and overthrew the last vestiges of Afghan authority in Balkh without, apparently, any opposition. Ishan Saiyid Parsa Khwaja Naqib,[95] the pir of the Gauhari shaikhs of Qasan near Qarshi, a descendant of Timur Lang, through his daughter[96] and hence a Chingizid in his own right, was appointed as the governor of Balkh. As a direct challenge to both the Afghan-backed Mir Wali and the independent amir Murad Beg in Qunduz, Haidar Khan allowed Ishan Naqib to assume the title of *Wali-yi Balkh* (Harlan 1939, 29; Moorcroft ii, 490). Ishan Naqib's eldest son, Saiyid Muhammad Uraq, usually referred to as Ishan Uraq,[97] was put in charge of the important fortress of Aqcha. Maimana, under 'Ali Yar Khan, along with the rest of the Chahar Wilayat, submitted to Bukhara, though the Wali retained his family's long-standing alliance with the Sadozais by sending an annual *nazarana* of horses and other gifts to Shah Mahmud at Herat (Conolly 1834, ii, *Appendix* I, 261-3; Fraser, *Appendix* B, 121; Harlan 1939, 27), a relationship which British political officers and Yar Muhammad of Herat were later to completely misrepresent for their own political ends (Conolly 1834, ii, 261-3; Fraser, *Appendix* B, 46, 121).[98]

Ishan Uraq, his brother, Ishan Sudur[99] and other relatives of Ishan Khwaja Naqib were destined to play a major part in the wars of

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[95] These names are all religious titles and the governor's personal name(s) are not known. According to the family's own genealogy, Ishan Khwaja Naqib was a descendant of Saiyid Mir Haidar Qutb al-Din of Medina whom Timur Lang brought to Bukhara in 1348-9/750, along with a number of other saiyids. The family were given land at Qasan, near Qarshi (Nasaf). The shrine of Ishan Khwaja Naqib is in the village of Fuladi, a short distance outside Qasan. Despite the name, he does not appear to have come from the same *shaikh*ly line as Abu Nasr Parsa, whose shrine is at Balkh. Saiyid Mohai al-Din Gauhari, *interview*, Mazar-i Sharif, April 1993. For the genealogy of Ishan Parsa Khwaja Naqib Gauhari, see Appendix IV, vii and Plate VIII.

[96] Saiyid Mohai al-Din Gauhari, *interview*, April 1993. Saiyid Mir Haidar Qutb al-Din was given Timur's daughter, Gauhar, in marriage. From this union ten sons resulted, of whom only Saiyid 'Abdullah outlived his father, and was consequently recognised as a *pir* of their sub-Order of Naqshbandi Sufism.

[97] European sources say Ishan Sudur was the eldest son, but according to the Gauhari family, who are well-versed in their family history, Ishan Uraq was the oldest. This is consistent with the *Siraj al-Tawarikh*. Today the family refer to Ishan Uraq as, *Hakim-i Mustaqel*, Saiyid Mohai al-Din Gauhari, *interview*, April 1993.

[98] Burnes, *Herat*, 1838; Pottinger, *Memoir*, 1839; Conolly, *Bamiyan to Merve*, 1840. The issue of misinformation about the Chahar Wilayat's affiliations is discussed in Chapter 5.

[99] *CD*, 29 April-5 May 1864, P:IFPC/204/73, no. 40 of June, fols. 102-3.

independence which took place during the last half of the century though, regrettably, little is known about them apart from occasional, and often cryptic, references in native agents' reports, political diaries and the journals of European travellers. Each different province of Bukhara had a naqib. These were men of exalted political and spiritual importance. Apart from being the guardians of important shrines and the heads, or pirs, of various sub-Orders of Naqshbandi Sufism (Khanikov, 251ff.), the naqibs were entrusted with considerable political power under the Manghit dynasty of Bukhara. Sir John Malcolm, in his *History of Persia* (Malcolm ii, 256-60), records that the Ishan Naqib of the northern border town of Jizakh rose to the exalted rank of chief advisor to Daniyal Bi and no-one could obtain an audience with the Bukharan ruler without first having to address himself to this individual. This individual was related, on the distaff side, to the ruling house, his mother being the daughter of Daniyal Bi Khan. He was extremely wealthy. His personal cup was made of "pure gold ornamented with silver" whilst his guests drank from vessels of silver inlaid with gold (Malcolm ii, 254). In 1825, when Ishan Khwaja Naqib of Qasan was governing Balkh, another Ishan Khwaja "Nukieb," the governor (i.e. hakim) of Karmina ("Karameena"), which lies between Bukhara and Samarkand, was executed "on suspicion of his entertaining ambitious projects."[100] This would suggest that the Manghit dynasty placed considerable trust in these individuals for, as well as their being deferred to in spiritual matters, they were put in charge of strategic provinces within the Bukharan realms. The pedigree of Ishan Naqib of Balkh was equally exalted and by appointing a descendant of Timur Lang to govern the capital of the former appanage, Haidar Khan was clearly trying to reaffirm the Chingizid link between Balkh and Bukhara.

We know from Moorcroft's journals that Ishan Naqib of Balkh was born around 1785 and that by 1825 his face had been badly disfigured by the loss of his nose from an unknown disease, possibly leprosy or venereal disease (Moorcroft ii, 493). He also informs us that the Ishan's maternal uncle was Saiyid Shuja' al-Din, the *mutawalli* of the shrine of Mazar-i Sharif. This links him, on his mother's side, with the Ansari shaikhs who had held the guardianship of the ziyarat since the days of Sultan Husain Baiqara (Moorcroft ii, 490). Later, in the 1860s, Ishan Uraq and his nephew were to marry daughters of Muzaffar Khan Manghit, the then ruler of Bukhara.

[100] Moorcroft, *Bukhara and the Return from Bukhara*, 49.

As a result of the deaths of Moorcroft and his fellow-Europeans in Balkh during 1825, which British sources believed was the result of the avarice and treachery of Ishan Naqib and the *mutawalli* of Mazar, the generation of European travellers and adventurers who followed these pioneer explorers wrote highly uncomplimentary accounts of the rulers of Balkh, Mazar-i Sharif and Qunduz. Yet Moorcroft himself praises Shuja' al-Din of Mazar, in particular, for the warmth of his welcome, after he finally extracted himself from the clutches of Murad Beg of Qunduz. The *mutawalli*, Moorcroft records, showed, "the greatest kindness, promising us every assistance in his power, and giving us unsolicited letters of recommendation to the governor of Balkh and to the Hakim Bè, or chief minister,[101] of Bokhara" (Moorcroft ii, 490). Shuja' al-Din Mazari is described as being about forty-five years of age, of middle stature with a plain, unaffected manner. He was more Tadjik in appearance than Uzbek (Moorcroft ii, 490).

Josiah Harlan (Harlan 1939, 32ff.), the mercenary adventurer employed by Dost Muhammad Khan in 1838/9 in the campaign against Murad Beg and Balkh, is typical of the generation which followed Moorcroft. On the basis of hearsay, he alleged that Shuja' al-Din slowly and secretly poisoned the whole of Moorcroft's party (Harlan 1939, 32-3) and paints a highly uncomplimentary picture of the *mutawalli*, though he conceded that the guardian of the 'Alid shrine was a poet of some reputation and a patron of the arts.

> He is a man of grave address and dignified deportment, but his character is full of duplicity and political tergiversation. He is addicted to literary pursuits and is said to be a good poet. He covets the reputation of a mediator and is frequently referred to for the settlement of feuds in which occupation much of his time is passed... His best friends would be relentlessly sacrificed to the prospect of immediate benefit. He has been known to foment disputes, quarrels and intrigues among his neighbours for the purpose of extending his power. He is an unprincipled politician and unworthy of confidence... He is ... a bad man of mysterious motives and of hidden resolves, of cruel, cold and heartless principles but not reckless of a fair name (Harlan 1939, 32-3).

Since Shuja' al-Din had opposed Dost Muhammad's invasion of Qataghan and Balkh, and Harlan was in the Amir's pay, it is hardly surprising to find that the 'General' had few good words to say about his opponent.

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[101] That is, the *khushbegi*.

Ishan Saiyid Khwaja Naqib ruled Balkh in the name of the Manghits of Bukhara for over twenty years [1817-1838].[102] Since during the same period the Afghans continued to squabble amongst themselves, the Bukharan governor had little to fear from Kabul. The main opposition came from Murad Beg of Qunduz, who resented Bukharan intervention and continued to claim the right to govern the region. During the 1820s and 1830s the ruler of Qataghan raided outlying districts of Balkh, carrying away the population, and caused much devastation to the delicate network of the Hazhda Nahr irrigation system (Harlan 1939, 28; Moorcroft ii, 444). Sometime during the winter of 1824/5 under the leadership of Ishan Naqib, 'Ali Yar Khan, the rulers of the Chahar Wilayat, Shuja' al-Din of Mazar and the Mir Wali joined together in an attempt to bring Murad Beg to heel (Gregorian, 57-8; Moorcroft ii, 444, 452-3). Despite mustering an army that numbered some eight thousand men, Murad Beg brought into the field an army nearly twice this size and successfully fought off all attempts by Ishan Naqib and his allies to subdue him. Murad Beg was undoubtedly helped by the death, at the end of 1826, of Haidar Khan of Bukhara, for this event precipitated the usual power struggle between rival claimants, which took some eighteen months to resolve. Had Haidar Khan been able to support Ishan Naqib against Qunduz, the reunification of the Balkh appanage might well have been accomplished and the history of Afghanistan and Central Asia would have taken quite a different course.

### *The Travels of Moorcroft and Stirling, 1825-1829*

In 1825, the first of a number of British explorers reached Turkistan. William Moorcroft, accompanied by Trebeck, Guthrie and a large retinue of Indian servants, crossed the Hindu Kush in a vain attempt to find suitable cavalry horses for the East India Company's stud (Alder 1985; Moorcroft 1979).[103] However, despite his

[102] Later, European writers claimed that Murad Beg of Qunduz seized Balkh in, or around, 1826 only to be forced out again by Bukhara. These reports are based on later sources, such as Burnes, and are confused with the Bukharan incursion of 1838/9. There is no contemporary evidence to suggest such an event took place in *c.* 1826; Dupree 1978, 369; *Gazetteer* (1895) ii, 335; MacGregor, 194; Talboys Wheeler, pp. vii-viii, 34).

[103] Though extracts from Moorcroft's journals were published after his death, they were far from being a comprehensive account of his travels and the record of his last journey, from Bukhara to Balkh and Andkhui, remains unpublished, along with a vast amount of Moorcroft's letters and other reports. The majority of these papers are in the India Office Library's *Moorcroft Collection*, MSS. Eur. D.253-4; C.68-9 or in individual Proceedings series. See Alder's

disappointment and tragic death, his reports, journals and unpublished papers still remain an important source for the history of the area. Without them, very little would be known about the state of affairs in Khulm, Qunduz, Balkh and Bukhara during an important and formative period of Uzbek-Afghan relations.

In 1825, Moorcroft's party passed through Aibak, Khulm and Qunduz and were badly treated by Murad Beg, who accused them of spying, hoping thereby to extort as much money and property from them as he could. Moorcroft only finally broke free from his clutches after making a daring, secret journey to Taliqan to appeal to Murad Beg's spiritual guide, Pirzada Qasim Khwaja Jan, who ordered his disciple to grant the foreigners safe passage out of his territory (Moorcroft ii, 456ff.). From Qunduz, Moorcroft left for Bukhara, travelling via Mazar-i Sharif and Balkh, where Ishan Khwaja Naqib and his uncle denounced Murad Beg's treatment of the travellers as "bringing shame upon all Turkistan" (Moorcroft ii, 490).

On his return from Bukhara, Moorcroft was faced with the dilemma of which route to take back to India. He had no desire to risk trying to reach Kabul and India through territory controlled by Murad Beg and so he began to make enquiries about the western route, via Andkhui, Sar-i Pul, Maimana and Herat (Alder, 356-7).[104] As he passed through Qarshi *en route* to the Amu Darya, he persuaded the local governor to write letters of recommendation to 'Ali Yar Khan of Maimana in order to facilitate his return through the Chahar Wilayat.[105] After crossing the river, however, Moorcroft went first to Aqcha and then to Balkh, presumably remembering the friendliness of the reception his party had received from Ishan Naqib earlier in the year. Once again, Moorcroft records how the Wali of Balkh made him welcome and he decided to leave the majority of his party in Balkh whilst he reconnoitred the route through the Chahar Wilayat (Alder, 356-7). The rest of the sad story is shrouded in mystery. Moorcroft reached Andkhui safely and was planning to travel to Maimana when he fell victim to a fever and died in the town on 27 August 1825. Following his death, Yulduz Khan, the ruler of Andkhui, is alleged to have impounded his baggage until a suitable ransom was paid for its release by other members of the party who had accompanied him to Andkhui (Alder, 361).

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superb biography for individual references and papers.

[104] Moorcroft, *Bukhara and the Return from Bukhara*, 276.

[105] *Ibid.*

The death of Moorcroft signalled the break-up of his party. The survivors of the Andkhui expedition returned to Balkh with the decomposing body and buried it in an unknown grave in the western part of the city (Alder, 361).[106] A few weeks later Guthrie succumbed to Balkh's unhealthy climate and, despite warnings from Ishan Naqib about the unreliability of Shuja' al-Din's promises of help, Trebeck moved the survivors to Mazar, hoping to escape the fever. Despite this precaution, he too died from a combination of fever and exhaustion. Askar 'Ali, one of the surviving Indian servants whose uncorroborated account of these events has been accorded a far greater credibility by Europeans than it deserves, later claimed that, following Trebeck's death the *mutawalli* of Mazar-i Sharif briefly abdicated in favour of his brother in order to absolve himself from his oath to protect the survivors. His family thereupon proceeded to help themselves to the party's baggage and other property (Alder, 362; Harlan 1939, 33; Stirling 1991, *Appendix* A). After a period of imprisonment, some of the Indian servants managed to escape and made their way towards Maimana and the Murghab but were captured by the Hazaras, who sold them as slaves to the Uzbeks of Almar. Askar 'Ali, having finally discovered their whereabouts, claims to have ransomed them and together they made their way back to India (Alder, 362-3; Stirling 1991, *Appendix* A).

Some three years after these events, the Scotsman, Edward Stirling (Stirling 1991), travelled from Mashhad to Kabul through the Chahar Wilayat. Unfortunately, despite the growing interest in Central Asian exploration during the late 1820s, Stirling never published his journal and only part of his manuscript has survived (Stirling 1991, xxii-xxvi). In many ways Stirling's journey was more remarkable than Moorcroft's, for he was accompanied by a single Indian servant and funded his travels from his own pocket. Disguised as an Indian *hakim*, or physician, Stirling left Mashhad in the autumn of 1828 and travelled to Kabul *via* Sarrakhs, Bala Murghab, Almar, Maimana, Sar-i Pul, Mazar-i Sharif, Khulm and Bamiyan. His journey through the Hindu Kush was accomplished during the winter of 1828/9 and the caravan he was travelling with had to force its way through heavy

[106] Alexander Burnes claimed to have identified Moorcroft's grave, but he made no attempt to mark the site for posterity and his description of its location is so vague as to be useless. Alder (*personal communication*) tried to locate Moorcroft's grave in the 1970s, but failed, mainly, I suspect, because the town plan of Balkh has changed completely since 1825. The city and bazaar were completely rebuilt, along with most of the other northern towns such as Maimana, in the 1930s (Byron, 249).

blizzards and drifting snow. When he finally reached India, in the spring of 1829, Stirling had become the first European of his generation to return alive from Turkistan. In the process he had pioneered the route from Bala Murghab to Balkh via Maimana, the Shirin Tagab and Sar-i Pul and his report on Maimana and the surrounding principalities is an important complement to Moorcroft's journals, since none of Moorcroft's party ever reached this town. Regrettably, the authorities in Calcutta, completely indifferent to Stirling's remarkable journey, rejected a claim for reimbursement of expenses and dismissed him from his post because he had overrun his leave of absence by some three weeks (Stirling 1991, ix-xxii & *Appendix* E). Given such apathy, and Stirling's subsequent blindness, it is remarkable that so much of his journal has survived.

Stirling confirms that under 'Ali Yar Khan Ming, Maimana and the Chahar Wilayat were regarded as a dependency of Bukhara, remarking that, "at present Ally Yar Khan is said to be on good terms with Buhadur Khan, the Ameer of Bokhara. He sometimes sends embassies and keeps up his connection with the Ameer" (Stirling 1991, 286). The boundaries of Maimana extended northwards beyond the low chul hills to beyond the confines of Butkhak, Khairabad and Daulatabad. In the south, Maimana extended as far as "the lofty hills of the Paropamisian." Eastwards, the state controlled the majority of the Shirin Tagab valley and Gurziwan, as far as Qurchi, whilst the Aimaq tribes of the Jamshidis and the Sunni Hazaras,[107] situated between Maimana and the Murghab, though having internal autonomy under their own chiefs, were dependent on 'Ali Yar Khan (Stirling 1991, 284-5).

Sher Muhammad Khan, chief of the Sunni Hazaras, who was to subsequently play such an important part in the defence of Herat during 1838, ruled his tribe from Angurak. A blood feud, however, existed between Sher Muhammad and his relative, Bairam Khan,

[107] The Sunni, or Qal'a-yi Nau, Hazaras are one of the Chahar Aimaq groups of Badghis and Ghor and are quite distinct from the Shi'i Hazaras of the Hazarajat. Sher Muhammad Khan's genealogy is given as: son of Sikandar Khan b. Agha Sultan (who is reported to have been the founder of Qal'a-yi Nau) b. Kafilan Sultan. According to the Boundary Commission's Intelligence Party, who made a particular study of the Chahar Aimaq tribes, the Sunni Hazaras were a colony of Shi'i Hazaras from the Hazarajat located in the area by Nadir Shah Afshar. Their first chief was Mir Kush Sultan b. Kafilan Sultan. They were originally located on the Murghab, probably at Angurak, but later moved their capital to Qal'a-yi Nau. This must have happened between 1828 and 1838. Sher Muhammad Khan held the title of *Nizam al-Daula* which had been bestowed on him by Shah Kamran. For genealogies and history of the Sunni Hazaras, see Maitland 1891, 87-106; Appendix V, ii.

probably arising from Sher Muhammad Khan's usurping of the chieftainship of the tribe following his assassination of his paternal cousin, Bunyad Khan, earlier in the decade (Maitland 1891, 87, 92-4; Appendix V, iii). Bairam Khan had migrated to "Jam" (Turbat-i Shaikh Jam), taking with him a number of families who had remained loyal to him, and submitted to Fath 'Ali Shah of Persia. Stirling was not impressed by Angurak, its "unprincipled chief," or its population, and claimed that it was "inhabited by the most profligate set of men" (Stirling 1991, 262-3).

Jamshidi[108] territory included Marichaq ("Marchagah"), which had recently been acquired by the Aimaqs from Persia. Qurmach was under Muhamad Zaman Beg Jamshidi, whom Stirling says was a cousin[109] of Darwish 'Ali Khan b. Yalangtush Khan, the overall chief of the tribe whose headquarters was at Bala Murghab (Stirling 1991, 250-55, 258-9). According to Stirling, the Jamshidis had only been in the area since the days of Yalangtush Khan Jamshidi, having moved from "near the ancient town of Bagis" after a dispute with the Murghab Turkmans (Stirling 1991, 260-1; Maitland 1891, 60-66). The Sunni Hazaras, the Jamshidis and Maimana acted together in forming raiding parties against Khurasan, which brought back much booty and many slaves.

Contrary to later nineteenth century European claims, slave-trading and raiding were far from being the sole, or even main, occupations of these tribes. The Aimaqs, Sunni Hazaras, Turkmans and Uzbeks kept vast flocks of sheep, cattle and horses, which were grazed on the "prolific, verdant and fattening" pastures of Badghis. Grain and fruit were also extensively grown throughout the region (Stirling 1991, 261), but probably the main cash crop was pistachio nuts which, even in 1886, were still a significant part of the local economy (Maitland 1891, 91).

Stirling found Maimana to be a large and prosperous town with a population of ten to fifteen thousand souls, mainly Uzbeks, Hazaras and captive Persians. More than half of this population still lived in tents that had been enclosed by low walls. Maimana had a number of shops and a weekly bazaar (Stirling 1991, 285-6). Its importance as a

[108] The Jamshidis are another of the Chahar Aimaq tribes of Badghis, who claim a descent from the famous, howbeit mythological, figure of Jamshid. For the history and genealogies of the Jamshidi Aimaq, see Maitland 1891, 57-83; Schurmann, 49-72; Appendix V, i.

[109] The Afghan Boundary Commission's history of the Jamshidis, however, says that he was a nephew of Darwish 'Ali Khan. Muhammad Zaman Khan was later put to death by Khan Agha in *c.* 1842; Maitland 1891, 57-8, 62.

pivot of Central Asian trade is shown by the fact that caravans from Herat, Mashhad, Sarrakhs, Balkh, Andkhui, Bukhara, Merv and Urganj all passed through the town. Amongst other things being traded along these routes were iron from Bukhara and salt[110] from Bukhara and Shibarghan (Stirling 1991, 292). Another important revenue-earner for the state was its bloodstock, and traders as far west as Mashhad came to buy horses. Stirling makes it clear that the breeding of these animals was far from being a haphazard matter. A deliberate attempt to improve the bloodstock of Almar had led to "the importation of one or two famous stallions" some years earlier (Stirling 1991, 286). Wheat and barley were the main grain crops in the region, but a considerable amount of fruit, including watermelons, walnuts and olives, was grown. Grapes were less plentiful and raisins had to be imported, though Stirling noted some vineyards on the south-facing slopes of the Ab-i Maimana (Stirling 1991, 286).

State revenues came from taxation on land which consisted of a tariff of one bag in forty on agricultural produce from the "old Usbak proprietors." Newer land holders, "from proprietors of a different tribe who have lately acquired proprietary rights," were taxed at between one fifth and one quarter, in kind. Stirling, unfortunately, says little about this "tribe" who had recently been settled on the land, but this does suggest that the movement towards a more sedentary lifestyle was continuing apace as the revenue from trade and agriculture increased. Sheep, goats and cattle were all taxed at one fortieth of the annual stock, though with smaller flocks 'Ali Yar Khan just took a number of the best animals (Stirling 1991, 285).

One of the wealthiest persons in Maimana, outside of the ruling family, was the barber, who was no mere hairdresser but the local surgeon who performed bleedings (the panacea for all forms of sicknesses) and circumcisions. Several Hindus and Jews were living in Maimana and had become very wealthy money-lenders, acting as brokers for local traders and caravans (Stirling 1991, 285). Maimana, like all the Uzbek states of the Chahar Wilayat, was an *entrepôt* for Persian and Shi'i Hazara slaves, a trade which appalled Stirling. Irregular cavalry from Maimana frequently joined raiding parties attacking Khurasan. One result of this "Afracean business" (Stirling

[110] Salt was a major commodity in Asia, a fact recognised by the British in India, who maintained a strict monopoly over it. In Central Asia, apart from its obvious domestic uses in bread and other foods, salt was a vital part of the diet of the vast flocks of sheep which roamed the plains and *chul* of Turkistan and Badghis.

1991, 234) was that a large number of Persian captives lived in the town.

Maimana's army consisted of a five hundred strong corps of hereditary household guard, called *ghulams* (i.e. slaves). These janissaries, or their fathers, had also served under Rahim Khan Ming. They were "all equipped and mounted by himself ['Ali Yar Khan] ... attached to him by time, favours and expectations, and by a regard to their families who are all within his grasp" (Stirling 1991, 285). The *arg*, or citadel, built of brick and mud, struck Stirling as "particularly lofty" (see Plates I, II, IV). Today, this *arg* has been demolished, and the local cinema and a tea-house are the only buildings to be seen on the citadel mound. Stirling stayed inside the walls of the fort, being allocated rooms in the *mehman khana*, or state guest house (Stirling 1991, 273).

Though Stirling never visited Andkhui or Shibarghan, he did record some details about these states in his journals. Andkhui's ruler was 'Abd al-'Aziz Khan b. Yulduz Khan b. Rahmatullah Khan b. Sulaiman Khan, an Afshar Turk, though Stirling wrongly claims this tribe was of Arab extraction. He estimated the population of Andkhui at between eight and ten thousand families, with an army of four to five thousand irregular cavalry. Small pomegranates and horses were the most notable products of the area, though it also boasted some good arable land and pasturage. A caravan, consisting solely of Andkhui pomegranates, arrived in Mashhad whilst Stirling was in that city. A feud existed between Maimana and Andkhui, though Stirling gives us no reason for this local rivalry (Stirling 1991, 285-7).

Shibarghan was ruled by Manwar Khan b. Erich Khan. The standing army of this state was a mere two thousand cavalry, but the people of the area had a reputation for being brave and warlike. Shibarghan, too, was on bad terms with Andkhui. The area's agriculture depended heavily on the irrigation supplied by rivers running from the north-facing foothills of the Tir Band-i Turkistan. This, as we have seen, made the state vulnerable to attacks from a hostile Sar-i Pul which, at the time of Stirling's visit, had cut off the water (Stirling 1991, 287).

Stirling's travels marked something of a watershed in British exploration of Central Asia. Though Moorcroft and his party had a political dimension to their travels, their journey to Bukhara was primarily commercial in nature (Alder, 64, 209ff.). Stirling too, though asked by the military *attaché* at the British Embassy in Tehran

to report to Calcutta on potential invasion routes to India, was primarily a civil servant fulfilling a personal dream during his leave of absence and was not employed by the East India Company's political or military establishment on an intelligence-gathering mission.[111] When he returned, government officials took the position that Stirling was a private traveller who undertook his journey "solely under the impulse of [his] own inclination" (Stirling 1991, 341).[112] The apathy which greeted his return from Central Asia extended up to the Governor-General's Council itself and Stirling, like Moorcroft before him, was denied any say in the formation, or rather the transformation, of the Company's Central Asian policy, which occurred in the early 1830s. By the time Stirling finally published his observations on possible invasion routes to India, in 1835, the travels of Alexander Burnes and others had transformed British perceptions of the strategic importance of Afghanistan for the defence of India.

Stirling's travels marked the end of private exploration and he and Moorcroft were succeeded by a younger, more radical breed of Central Asian explorers: political and military officers who were employed by the East India Company with the specific brief of acquiring intelligence about a little-known area. Their reports and recommendations formed the basis of a new, more interventionist, strategy towards the rulers of the Afghan city states. Ironically, many of this rising generation of politico-military travellers were themselves to die violently at the hands of the very peoples whose destiny they sought to control.

[111] Malleson, 158, one of the few later historians of the nineteenth century to give credit to Stirling for his pioneering travels, calls him "Captain" Stirling and confuses Stirling's account of Maimana with that of Izzat Ullah.

[112] *Edward Stirling to Chief Secr. to Govt., Fort William*, 2 July 1830; *Swinton to Stirling*, 23 July 1830, P:126/17, nos. 95, 96 of 23 July 1830.

CHAPTER FIVE

# 'ABD AL-MU'MIN KHAN AND MIZRAB KHAN, 1829-1845

*If you go to Bukhara, you're mad,*
*You're worthy of chains and the prison house*
(Rumi, *Mathnawi*)[1]

## *The Struggle for the Succession, 1829-1831*

'Ali Yar Khan's life was terminated suddenly around 1829,[2] when he fell victim to cholera[3] which was raging throughout the region that year, causing thousands of deaths (*Gazetteer* (1907) ii, 43). The untimely death of the wali in his mid-twenties created a crisis of succession, for 'Ali Yar Khan's only child was a boy two or three years of age.[4] As the heir to the throne was a minor, 'Ali Yar Khan's diwanbegi, a Persian slave, was appointed Regent. This individual was a native of "Kaum" (Qa'in?; Qum?) in Persia who had been taken captive as a small child, but had risen to prominence under the patronage of the dead wali and his family. It may well be that he was one of the brothers of 'Abd al-Din, 'Ali Yar Khan's *'arzbegi*, whom Stirling informs us had been promoted to high office. The appointment of a Persian and a Shi'i as Regent in this Sunni principality, was a highly unpopular action and he did not last long. A few months later the diwanbegi's "insolent airs,"[5] led to his murder, at the hands of unknown assassins, on his way home from the bazaar.[6]

'Ali Yar Khan's infant heir was untouched by this murder, but there is sufficient evidence to believe that the Regent's assassination was the work of a rival faction who supported the claims of the exiled

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[1] گر بخارا میروی دیوانۀ لایق زنجیر و زندان خانۀ
According to Katib I, 15 this was the augury which Dost Muhammad Khan took before fleeing to Nasrullah Khan of Bukhara in 1840.

[2] Burnes, *Herat*, 1838; Conolly, *Bamiyan to Merve*, 1840; cf. Pottinger, *Memoir*, 1838. See Chapter 4 for the problem of dating.

[3] Pottinger, *Memoir*, 1839; there were unsubstantiated rumours that the wali had been poisoned, Burnes, *Herat*, 1838.

[4] Conolly, *Bamiyan to Merve*, 1840.

[5] *Ibid.*

[6] *Ibid.*

sons of Ahmad Quli Khan, who were 'Ali Yar Khan's main rivals to the throne of Maimana. We have seen how, following the poisoning of Ataliq Ahmad Quli in 1814, his two sons fled for their lives and, for the duration of 'Ali Yar Khan's reign, Mizrab Khan and 'Abd al-Mu'min Khan had been forced to live as impoverished exiles in Mazar-i Sharif. When news of the untimely death of 'Ali Yar Khan reached Mazar, the two brothers moved to Shibarghan, "to be ready for any good fortune that might turn up."[7] For the Hakim of Shibarghan, Rustam Khan, who had recently succeeded his father, Manwar Khan,[8] was married to one of Mizrab Khan's daughters and had espoused the Ahmadi cause.[9]

The movement of the two exiles, coming as it did on the heels of 'Ali Yar Khan's death, but before the assassination of the Persian Regent, suggests strongly that Mizrab Khan and his brother had prior warning of a plot to overthrow their rivals. This hypothesis is strengthened by the fact that, instead of appointing another Regent to uphold the rights and succession of 'Ali Yar's child, Mizrab Khan and 'Abd al-Mu'min Khan were "invited," presumably by the Regent's assassins, to take control of Maimana's affairs.[10] Furthermore, when Mizrab Khan and 'Abd al-Mu'min returned to Maimana, no provision was made for the infant heir of 'Ali Yar Khan to become wali once he attained his majority. Subsequent events were to demonstrate all too clearly that the murder of the Regent marked a significant change in the balance of power in the Khanate, for it was not long before Mizrab Khan ensured that the Rahimids could never again challenge his family's right to rule.

Shortly after the diwanbegi's assassination, Mizrab Khan and his brother returned to Maimana where they were acclaimed as the new rulers. Once installed in the citadel, however, relations between the two half-brothers quickly deteriorated. Mizrab Khan, though the eldest son of Ahmad Khan, was only half Uzbek, the son of a Persian slave girl. He was passed over in favour of his half-brother who,

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[7] *Ibid.*

[8] The two half-brothers probably left Mazar-i Sharif in 1829. According to Stirling, Manwar Khan was still ruling Shibarghan in 1828. Following the death of 'Ali Yar Khan, Mizrab Khan and his half-brother had gone to Shibarghan before being recalled to Maimana. Given the close relationship between Mizrab Khan and Rustam Khan, this would suggest that Rustam Khan was already in power by the time the two sons of Ahmad Khan were guests in Shibarghan. Rustam Khan may have been the son of Manwar, but this is not stated categorically in either Conolly's or Pottinger's reports.

[9] Conolly, *Bamiyan to Merve*, 1840.

[10] *Ibid.*

being of "pure" (*sic*) Uzbek stock, was made wali and Mizrab Khan was forced, for the time being at least, to accept the inferior position of *na'ib* or deputy.[11]

'Abd al-Mu'min, however, reigned for only five or six months and his end was as violent as that of his predecessor's. Sometime in the middle of 1831 he was seized with, "a pain in the glands of his throat, and shortly died,"[12] leaving Mizrab Khan free to assume control of Maimana's affairs. The new wali's position, though, was far from secure. Mizrab Khan had already experienced the strength of local prejudice regarding his birth. The infant heir of 'Ali Yar Khan, along with several powerful relatives of Muhammad Rahim Khan, was still living in the *arg*. The manner of 'Abd al-Mu'min's death, furthermore, gave rise to widespread rumours that Mizrab Khan had done away with his half-brother. As accusations of foul play grew stronger, the new wali cunningly set out to divert suspicion away from himself whilst, at the same time, providing the necessary excuse to exterminate the only people who posed a threat to his succession.

A negro slave woman in the service of 'Ali Yar Khan's mother was put to the torture and, after being badly beaten and burnt, the unfortunate woman confessed to having administered poison to 'Abd al-Mu'min Khan in his tea, under orders from her mistress, "a woman of spirit and intrigue."[13] News of the slave's confession was relayed to the grief-stricken mother of 'Abd al-Mu'min Khan, who had returned to Maimana with her son.

What happened next became a matter of much dispute in the following years. According to sources close to Mizrab Khan, this woman, overcome with grief and rage, ordered Mizrab Khan's personal bodyguard to destroy 'Ali Yar's child, the baby's grandmother and other influential members of the Rahimid clan. In the ensuing blood bath all the senior members of Rahim Khan's family perished,[14] though exactly how many persons died at the hands of these janissaries is not known. Conolly, who gives the most detail of these events, states that, though the infant son of 'Ali Yar Khan was killed, his wife survived and was forced to marry Mizrab Khan. Eldred Pottinger's account of the same events contains details which appear to contradict Conolly. He claims that "on his [i.e. Mizrab Khan's]

[11] *Ibid.*
[12] *Ibid.*
[13] *Ibid.*
[14] *Ibid.*

accession, his first act was the murder of his predecessor's women and children; one child escaped to his grandfather, Zoolpikar (*sic*) Khan, of Sir-i-pool."[15] In other words, Pottinger would have us believe that, though some members of Rahim Khan's family were killed, one of the most important members of this clan, a son of 'Ali Yar Khan, survived. We know from Conolly that there was only one child of the former ruler alive in 1831, rather than the several implied by Pottinger, and though it is possible that this child could have survived the slaughter, it seems highly unlikely.

Pottinger's confusion of the boy who escaped to Sar-i Pul with the young child of 'Ali Yar Khan is understandable in the light of the complex relationships that existed between the amir of Sar-i Pul and two branches of the Mingid dynasty of Maimana. The problem is clarified by Conolly when, later in his account of Maimana, he lists the causes of the war between Mizrab Khan and Sar-i Pul that followed Mizrab Khan's accession. He gives three reasons for this conflict:

> First, the mother of the murdered infant was Zulficar Shere's *daughter;* next the Seripol chief's *sister* had been one of the *wives* of Mizzab (*sic*) Khan's father to whom she had borne a son named Soobhar (*sic*) Kouli Khan, now alive at Seripool. This boy was at Meiminna at the time of the last murders, when some of his servants, fearing that he also would be made away with, fled with him to Seripool.... A third, and for an Oosbeg more bitter, cause of quarrel, was this. On Allahyar (*sic*) Khan's death, Abdool Mohmid Khan took possession of all his wives, except one, who had been sent a little before to the house of her father the chief of Andkooee. Zulficar Shere bore the appropriation of his daughter by Abdool Mohmid Khan, as he was of pure Oosbeg race, but when, on the poisoning of the latter the half born brother took reversionary possession of the same lady, the old father's ire broke beyond bounds and he exerted ... his utmost hostility against Mizzab Khan.... [my emphasis].[16]

Conolly's report reveals that the fugitive Mingid heir who found refuge at Sar-i Pul was not the infant *son* of 'Ali Yar Khan at all, but rather a *half-brother* of Mizrab Khan. Pottinger's confusion is understandable, given the amount of inter-marriage there had been between relatives of Zu'l-Faqar Sher Khan and the Mingids of Maimana. The mother of 'Ali Yar Khan's only child was a daughter of Zu'l-Faqar Khan,[17] whilst the refugee prince who had fled to Sar-i Pul was the son of Zu'l-Faqar Khan's sister. To confuse matters even further, a

[15] Pottinger, *Memoir*, 1839.
[16] Conolly, *Bamiyan to Merve*, 1840.
[17] Burnes, *Herat*, 1838.

second sister of the ruler of Sar-i Pul had been married to Rahim Khan and was the mother of 'Ali Yar Khan (Appendix III, ii). Pottinger, knowing that Zu'l-Faqar Sher Khan had set up the "boy,"[18] Subhan Quli Khan, as pretender to the Maimana throne, not unnaturally assumed that he was the son of 'Ali Yar Khan when, in fact, he was Mizrab Khan's half-brother.

It is not surprising to see why Zu'l-Faqar Sher espoused the cause of Subhan Quli Khan, since Mizrab Khan was implicated in the murder of possibly two of the beglarbegi's sisters. To add insult to injury Mizrab Khan had appropriated to his harem the surviving wives and concubines of 'Ali Yar Khan and 'Abd al-Mu'min Khan, including 'Ali Yar Khan's chief wife, the daughter of Zu'l-Faqar Sher Khan.

Apart from the assassination of 'Ali Yar's infant heir and the grandmother and wife of Rahim Khan, a female relative of the Mir Wali of Khulm, who had married into the Rahimid line, also perished.[19] Mizrab's refusal to return these women to their fathers, all of whom were important dignitaries from the surrounding states, gave him some insurance against possible retaliation by these rulers though, in the case of the ruler of Sar-i Pul, it merely exacerbated the blood feud.

Later, Mizrab Khan tried to distance himself from any guilt in these murders, and told Conolly that his personal bodyguard[20] was "used without his knowledge and God, to whom he must render account of all, alone knows the truth."[21] However, Mizrab Khan had the strongest motive for doing away with both 'Abd al-Mu'min Khan and the family and heirs of Rahim Khan, nor is it likely that Mizrab's janissaries would have acted without their master's approval. We must, therefore, assume that Mizrab Khan instigated the poisoning of his half-brother and condoned, even if he did not order, the extermination of the Rahimid line.

A protracted war between Maimana and Sar-i Pul was the immediate outcomes of Mizrab Khan's seizure of power; a war which was to last until the death of Zu'l-Faqar Khan in 1840. Shortly after Mizrab's accession, an army from Sar-i Pul, possibly assisted by discontented

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[18] Conolly, *Bamiyan to Merve*, 1840.

[19] Pottinger, *Memoir*, 1839.

[20] We do not know whether these janissaries were the same as 'Ali Yar Khan's personal guard which he had inherited from his father, Rahim Khan, or if Mizrab Khan had raised his own force, either in Maimana or during his period of exile in Mazar-i Sharif.

[21] Conolly, *Bamiyan to Merve*, 1840. This avowal indicates much greater doubt about the truth of what happened than Conolly's English translation suggests.

landowners in the eastern parts of Maimana, forced the new ruler of Maimana out of Gurziwan and the upper Shirin Tagab valley, marching to within six miles ("two fursukhs") of Mizrab's capital,[22] before the wali managed to push the attackers back east of Belcheragh possibly aided by the severe famine and typhus epidemic of 1833.[23] Mizrab Khan, however, was unable to regain control of the upper reaches of the Shirin Tagab, Gurziwan and Qurchi, which remained under Sar-i Pul until after Mizrab's death. The population of eastern Maimana also continued to cause trouble for Mizrab Khan throughout his reign.[24]

The invasion by the Beglarbegi of Sar-i Pul[25] was compounded by other external problems. Mizrab Khan had antagonised the ruler of Andkhui, 'Abd al-'Aziz Khan,[26] one of whose daughters had been married to 'Ali Yar Khan. This woman had escaped the sanguinary events of 1831 only by the accident of having been on a visit to her father in Andkhui. When news of the Maimana murders reached Andkhui, her father refused her permission to return. 'Abd al-'Aziz had never been on very good terms with the rulers of Maimana, despite the intermarriage between their families, and Mizrab Khan's bloody accession to the throne, followed as it was by a curt demand that 'Abd al-'Aziz return his daughter to Maimana, merely made matters worse. Like Zu'l-Faqar Sher Khan, 'Abd al-'Aziz continued to be hostile to Maimana right up to the time of his death, from unknown causes, in *c.* 1835 (Talboys Wheeler, 16),[27] when the new ruler of Andkhui, Shah Wali Khan, reversed the policy of his predecessor

[22] *Ibid.* Pottinger, *Memoir*, 1839. The Sar-i Pul army reached as far as "Kureh Shakhu" according to Conolly, but this place cannot be located. It may be Chashma-yi Safed, Qara Shaikhi or Darra-yi Shakh of Gurziwan, though this latter place is much more than two farsangs from Maimana.

[23] The typhus killed 8,000 persons in Herat city alone, and as many as 25,000 others in the surrounding districts died as a result of disease and starvation during 1833, *PWD*, 22 April-19 May 1833, SLEP:95, fol. 408.

[24] Burnes, *Herat*, 1838; Conolly, *Bamiyan to Merve*, 1840; Pottinger, *Memoir*, 1839.

[25] According to Pottinger, *Memoir*, 1839, Zu'l-Faqar Sher also annexed territory in Balkhab and subjugated Mullah Mu'min the Hazara amir of Zaranj ("Zarung").

[26] Conolly, *Bamiyan to Merve*, 1840.

[27] 'Abd al-'Aziz Khan was ruling when Stirling visited Maimana at the end of 1828 and since Conolly in 1840 implies that the hostility which arose between the (unnamed) ruler of Andkhui and Mizrab Khan was over the issue of a daughter of the then ruler of Andkhui, who was married to 'Ali Yar Khan, we deduce that 'Abd al-'Aziz was still alive in 1831 and was the individual in question whose daughter was the subject of the dispute. We know that by 1838 the ruler of Andkhui was Shah Wali Khan. In the absence of any more definitive date for the death of 'Abd al-'Aziz, I have given it as *c.* 1835; cf. Burnes, *Herat*, 1838; Pottinger, *Memoir*, 1839; *Royal Firman read in Public Mosque in Tehran*, Oct. 1838, in, *Political Dept. Papers, 1834-1839*, PSDL:A7, no. 39, fol. 90.

and re-established friendly relations with Maimana.[28] Mizrab Khan's coup also angered the ruler of Herat, Kamran Shah, who confiscated the hereditary *jagir* which had been given to Haji Bi Ming by Ahmad Shah Durrani, the income from which had supported the costs of frontier defences in Badghis and a government *mehman khana* in Maimana.[29]

*Maimana's Administration and Ecoonomy Under Mizrab Khan*

Internal challenges to Mizrab Khan's authority came from the traditional Uzbek landowners who, under the Chingizid system still operating in the amirid territories, held their land against the provision of military support to the wali (see below). Many of the *mingbashis*, *yuzbashis* and *onbashis* owed allegiance to 'Ali Yar Khan's family, for some of them had been given "proprietary rights" under this ruler.[30] In order to neutralise these powerful individuals, Mizrab Khan forced them, or their heirs, to live in the city of Maimana and forbad them to build any fortifications or observation towers in their villages. In some cases, the lands of those considered too influential were confiscated and distributed amongst Mizrab Khan's personal bodyguard, presumably as a reward for their part in the revolution, as well as to secure his interests in the outlying areas.[31] It may be that the four provincial governors of Maimana mentioned by Pottinger were also senior commanders of this band of ghulams.[32] The number of Mizrab Khan's household guard was increased to three thousand, of whom a thousand were resident in the *arg* at any one time to provide a quick response to any uprising within the city.[33] The reorganisation of the political and military structure of the Khanate ensured that any unrest was nipped in the bud and must have been one of the main reasons why Mizrab Khan managed to keep control of the reins of power

[28] Conolly, *Bamiyan to Merve*, 1840; Burnes, *Herat*, 1838; Pottinger, *Memoir*, 1839. In the printed version of Pottinger's report [PSDL:G10] the ruler of "Andkoee" is mistakenly referred to as Afghan.

[29] Conolly, *Bamiyan to Merve*, 1840.

[30] *Ibid.* Pottinger, *Memoir*, 1839.

[31] Pottinger, *Memoir*, 1839.

[32] *Ibid.*

[33] *Ibid.* Conolly, *Bamiyan to Merve*, 1839 says there were only 1,000 *ghulams* and I have assumed that this figure refers only to those soldiers actually resident at any one time in the *arg*. Pottinger implies that some of the personal guard were stationed outside the capital in order to better hold down the countryside and support Mizrab Khan's commanders, who were also drawn from their ranks.

despite considerable internal and external opposition. Pottinger's cynical and uncomplimentary assessment of Mizrab Khan as "dull, inactive, cowardly and time-serving"[34] can, therefore, be dismissed as baseless prejudice. Rather, what we know of Mizrab Khan indicates that, though he was ruthless, he showed considerable military, political and administrative acumen.

Mizrab Khan's abilities showed themselves in other ways. He encouraged trade with the surrounding states and during his reign there was a marked upturn in the region's prosperity which gave a further fillip to a drift towards a sedentary lifestyle (Merk, 265; C. E. Yate 1888, 337). The trend towards the urbanisation of the settlement of Maimana was thus accelerated, with a considerable increase in the number of shops and permanent houses located within the city walls. Another sign of Maimana's prosperity was the commissioning, by Mizrab Khan, of a large and imposing burnt brick madrasa and mosque in the eastern part of the city, which was completed in 1251/1835-6[35] and today still bears his name (Plate VI).

In keeping with the custom current amongst Uzbek rulers on both sides of the Amu Darya, Mizrab Khan did not keep "regular accounts"[36] and both Pottinger and Conolly found it difficult to assess the amount of revenue Maimana realised from its various commercial, agricultural and personal taxes and duties. In accordance with the Chingizid pattern, Mizrab Khan employed a diwanbegi, who provided the wali with an income equivalent to eighty thousand Kabuli rupees (ten thousand Bukharan tilas) per annum for his expenses.[37] In return, the diwanbegi was allowed to raise as much revenue as he could from the various taxable activities of the population of Maimana which, in 1840, amounted to one and a half lakh rupees.[38] Both Pottinger and

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[34] *Ibid.* Conolly, *Bamiyan to Merve*, 1840, gives a far more complimentary picture of Mizrab Khan.

[35] According to the *abjad*, or numerical value, of the Persian word *ghamyar* (1000 + 40 + 10 + 1 + 200 = 1251/1835-6, 'Abd al-Ra'uf Nafir, *personal communication*, 1988.

[36] Conolly, *Bamiyan to Merve*, 1840.

[37] Pottinger, *Memoir*, 1839 says "about half a lac," or 50,000 rupees. Lord, in 1838, gives the following exchange rates in Qunduz with their English equivalents:

1 *tila* = 4½ - 5 Indian rupees (9/-)
5 *tangas* = 1 Indian silver rupee (2/-)
8-9 *pice* = 1 silver *janga* (4¾d.)
1 pice = 2 farthings
1 Kabuli rupee = 26 *pul*

The Kabuli rupee was one eighth alloy and exchanged with the Indian rupee at a rate of 15:9, Dr. P. B. Lord, *Report on the Bazaar of Koondooz*, etc., 1838, ESL:130, fols. 494-514.

[38] Pottinger, *Memoir*, 1839.

Conolly believed this income could be manifoldly increased "if anything like system were introduced."[39]

The burden of taxation was mainly placed on "resident strangers and people of the town"[40] but a land tax was also demanded from certain landlords. Pottinger gives the following breakdown of Maimana's revenue and taxation which he acquired during his visit in 1839:[41]

| | |
|---|---|
| Land: | "A tithe", which in Stirling's day (1828) was either $\frac{1}{40}$ or ¼ depending on the individual's status. |
| Livestock: | 2% on sale of cattle and sheep; $\frac{3}{22}$ of a tila on sales of horses and camels.[42] |
| Gardens: | (i.e. *bagh,* orchards/vineyards), 1 tila, or 7 Kabuli rupees, each. |
| Houses: | ½ tila [3½ rupees] per unit. |
| Shops: | 6 tilas [42 rupees] per unit. |
| Merchandise: | 2% |
| Transit dues: | $\frac{3}{11}$ tila per camel load of iron (from Bukhara); $\frac{5}{22}$ tila on other goods. |
| Minerals: | A government monopoly operated on the mining of sulphur, alum and saltpetre ("nitre"), the raw materials for the manufacture of gunpowder. |
| Personal: | Turban tax; cloak tax; religious capitation tax, or *jiziya,* on non- Muslims (Hindus and Jews). |

The high taxation on shops in Maimana is some indication of how profitable the caravan trade had become to Maimana. Mizrab Khan also taxed the nomadic Arab community of Maimana, taking three tilas per annum in lieu of land rent, in return for which they had the right to graze their cattle and sheep within his territory.[43]

About one quarter of Maimana's agricultural land was irrigated (*abi*), the rest being dry land (*lalmi*). The yields from *abi* and *lalmi* lands were considerable; some 22,600 *kharwar*s, or nearly six thousand tonnes of grain.[44] More than three hundred and sixty

[39] *Ibid.* Conolly, *Bamiyan to Merve*, 1840.

[40] Pottinger, *Memoir*, 1839.

[41] *Ibid.*

[42] Conolly met the diwanbegi's tax collectors in Hashtomin in late autumn 1840, where they were collecting a tax of one sheep in forty for the wali. This was presumably the annual collection of livestock due to Mizrab Khan, rather than a tax on individual sales.

[43] Conolly, *Bamiyan to Merve*, 1840.

[44] *Ibid.* A *kharwar* is a variable weight (Appendix II, i). Though the modern Kabuli kharwar is equivalent to 80 *ser* or 1,248 lbs (566 kg) (Glassman, *Appendix* XII), in the last century it was somewhat lighter, around 560 lbs (254 kg). 22,600 kharwars thus equals 5,740,400 kg. The yield from *abi* land was 5,400 kharwars (1,371,600 kg); from *lalmi*, 17,200 kharwars (4,368,800 kg). Lord, reporting in 1838 on the bazaar of Qunduz (Lord, *Report on the Bazaar*

villages, each with one or more ploughs, lay within the boundaries of Maimana; each plough's crops being estimated at some fifteen kharwars, or nearly four tonnes.[45] This figure reflects the great fertility of the *chul* of the Maimana area and the abundance of perennial water that flows off the Turkistan mountains.

Additional revenue accrued to Maimana through the sale and barter of slaves, but neither Conolly nor Pottinger, who were both appalled at this trade in human flesh, could bring themselves to quantify the amount of revenue this form of commerce brought to Maimana or the other states of Lesser Turkistan. Conolly, however, informs us that slaves were a standard unit of barter. Towards the latter part of Mizrab Khan's reign, Herat had glutted this market, since Wazir Yar Muhammad Khan had been selling large numbers of captive Hazaras and Herati Shi'is to the rulers of the Chahar Wilayat. Slaves were valued according to their ethnic origin. In 1840, Hazaras fetched only moderate prices, whilst young men and women from "Kaum" (Qa'en?), Birjand, or of Qizilbash origin, fetched the best prices.[46]

Estimates for the population of Maimana during Mizrab Khan's reign vary considerably. Burnes, who never visited the Chahar Wilayat, reported that the town of Maimana consisted of "about five hundred houses, but the strength of the chief consists in his 'ils', or moving population."[47] Stirling, writing ten years earlier than Burnes, estimated the population of the whole area at between ten and fifteen thousand "souls" (Stirling 1991, 286), whilst Ferrier, who was in Maimana just after Mizrab Khan's death, claims that the Khanate's population was fifteen to eighteen thousand families (Ferrier 1857, 197). It may be that Stirling's figure is actually the number of households, rather than individuals. Between 1837 and 1840 Maimana became a haven for tens of thousands of refugees from Herat and Balkh (Harlan 1939, 27-9).

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*of Koondooz*, 1838) gives the following values for weights in use at this period:

1 *mann* = 8 *ser* Kabul (115 lbs 3oz.)
1 *ser* = 4 "chawk" (*chaharak*?) (14 lbs 6 oz.)
1 "chawk" = 4 *pau* (3 lbs 9 oz.)
1 *pau* = 2 *khurd* (14 oz.)
1 *khurd* = 10 *toli* (7 oz.)

[45] *Ibid.* On his earlier travels through Persia and Afghanistan, Conolly wrote the following in respect of Herat's land usage which has relevance to Maimana at this period. "The produce is calculated from the number of ploughs that are rated against the villages of each district, for every plough is averaged to turn up land for three kharwars of seed. The soil of Heraut returns at a medium calculation, tenfold, and at this rate produce is estimated" (Conolly 1834, ii, 6).

[46] Conolly, *Bamiyan to Merve*, 1840.

[47] Burnes, *Herat*, 1838.

*Population, Army & Revenues of the Chahar Wilayat, 1828-1845*

MAIMANA

| *source* | *ghulams* | *cavalry* | *foot* | *others* | *total* | *population* | *revenue*[48] |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Stirling[49] | 500 | 2-4,000 | 8,000 | 12,500 | na | 10-15,000* | na |
| Burnes | na | na | na | na | 6,000 | 500*# | na |
| Pottinger | na | 3,000 | 10,000 | 25,000 | na | 38-50,000 | na |
| Conolly | na | 1,000 | 10,000[50] | 4,000 | na | 15-150,000 | na |
| Ferrier | 1,000[51] | 1,500 | 8-10,000 | 12,500 | na | 15-18,000* | £20,000 |

ANDKHUI[52]

| *source* | *standing army* | *total force* | *population* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Stirling | na | 4-5,000 | 8-12,000 |
| Burnes | 500 horse | na | na |
| Pottinger | 400, no reserves | na | over 100,000 |
| Ferrier | 2,400[53] | 7,200 | 15,000 |

SAR-I PUL

| *source* | *standing army* | *total force* | *population* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Stirling | na | na | 10,000 # |
| Burnes | 1,000 horse | na | na |
| Pottinger | 3,000 militia | 50,000 | na |
| Ferrier | 4,000[54] | 12,000 | 70,000[55] |

SHIBARGHAN

| *source* | *standing army* | *total force* | *population* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Stirling | na | 2,000 horse | na |
| Burnes | 5-600 horse | na | na |
| Pottinger | 600 militia | na | over 55,000 |
| Ferrier | 2,500[56] | 6,000 | 12,000# |

* = families or households
\# = population of capital alone
\+ = minimum figure
na = not available in source

The organisation of the armies of the Chahar Wilayat was on similar lines to that of other Uzbek and Turkman states. In 1838/9 'General' Harlan gives the following account of the way in which these rulers organised and raised their militias:

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[48] Revenue estimates are in Kabuli rupees, unless otherwise indicated.

[49] Sources are listed from earliest to latest and cover the period 1828 to 1845.

[50] The printed version of Conolly's report at V:27/69/3 gives the figure of only 1,000 but in the original copy in ESL:156, the figure is 10,000, "a tenth of whom are slaves."

[51] Listed as "foot" but this probably refers to the *ghulams* stationed in and around the *arg*.

[52] Conolly gives no figures for the rest of the Chahar Wilayat and his name has been omitted from the columns.

[53] 1,800 horse, 600 foot.

[54] 2,000 cavalry, 2000 infantry.

[55] 18,000 persons in the town and not more than four times this figure in the whole Khanate.

[56] 2,000 horse, 500 foot.

> Every man who is a landholder is liable to be called upon for the performance of military duty. This service is the tenure by which he is enfiefed of his lands.... When a foray is intended, the chief causes proclamation to be made on a public market day, in some conspicuous part of the town, to the effect that at a specified period their attendance is expected at the capital for service. The time of service is certified, which seldom exceeds fifteen days. The people are punctual in meeting at the appointed time; they proceed upon the expedition martialled under their respective village leaders and on the day their time of service expires everyone scampers off and returns to his native village without the ceremony of leave-taking or dismissal. It sometimes happens, when unlooked for obstacles retard their operations, that the chief is obliged to leave unfinished an important enterprise and hurry away with his dispersing forces to the shelter of his stronghold.... Grants of lands [are] made to prominent individuals in Jaghire, or upon plan of Knight's Tenure, in return for which the recipient binds himself to serve his superior at all times when called upon, and engages to attend upon his chief with a specified number of followers, well mounted and accoutred for actual service. He is supposed to be always able to obey a summons on a sudden notification (Harlan 1939, 60-1).

## *The Family of Mizrab Khan Ming*

Mizrab Khan was in his early thirties when he began to reign in Maimana[57] probably in the second half of 1831. Sometime before he took control of affairs in Maimana, Mizrab Khan had given his daughter in marriage to Rustam Khan of Shibarghan. Mizrab's accession as Wali of Maimana thus increased the prestige and influence of Rustam Khan in the region, for although later in the century Shibarghan was to become the most important principality of the Chahar Wilayat next to Maimana, at this period it was probably the smallest and least important of the 'Four Provinces' (Ferrier 1857, 202).[58] Throughout his reign, Mir Rustam Khan, "proud of the accession to power by this connection" (Ferrier 1857, 202) proved to be Maimana's staunchest ally. The hakim's personal bravery, and the peace, justice and prosperity which he brought to his country, made him both a popular ruler and a "formidable opponent" (Ferrier 1857, 202). When Maimana and Shibarghan acted together, as they frequently did, few amirs between the Amu Darya and the Hindu Kush could risk challenging their combined power.[59] It was this alliance which prevented Zu'l-Faqar Sher Khan of Sar-i Pul from making any headway against Mizrab Khan,

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[57] Burnes, *Herat,* 1838, who says Mizrab Khan was "about forty" in 1838.

[58] See also, Pottinger, *Memoir*, 1839.

[59] *Ibid.* Burnes, *Herat,* 1838; Conolly, *Bamiyan to Merve*, 1840.

since he was constantly threatened at his rear by the armies of Shibarghan. Rustam Khan also maintained a bitter feud with Andkhui's rulers, which seems to have continued well after 'Abd al-'Aziz Khan had passed away. In this he was doubtless encouraged by his father-in-law.

Despite the assassination of his half-brother, Mizrab Khan retained the loyalty and services of at least two of his (full?) brothers, 'Abd al-Muhammad and a younger brother, 'Abd'l-Nazr.[60] Mizrab Khan's eldest son, and the future ruler of Maimana, was Hukumat Khan,[61] who was already "grown up" in 1838.[62] His second son, Sher Muhammad, was a half-brother to Hukumat Khan (Ferrier 1857, 197ff.).[63] His other sons are given variously as Shadman Khan (Campbell, 265)[64] and another half-brother of Hukumat Khan, Husain Khan (Merk, 263).[65] A full sister of Husain Khan was subsequently married to Khan Agha, who later became chief of the Jamshidis (Maitland 1891, 63).

### *British India and 'Afghanistan' Policy, 1830-1838*

Information about domestic events in Balkh and Maimana during the early years of Mizrab Khan's reign is very scant. The first few years of the 1830s, however, were important for the Chahar Wilayat inasmuch as they marked the beginning of an important shift in Britain's Central Asian policy, which was to be the foundation of 'The Great Game'; the competition between Britain and Russia for political control of Central Asia. Britain, in particular, was destined to become embroiled in the affairs of the territory increasingly referred to as 'Afghanistan', an intervention that eventually led to the partition of tribal and cultural groups such as the Pushtuns, Baluchis, Tadjiks, Uzbeks and Turkmans, by arbitrary boundaries which had more to do with Britain's obsession with the defence of India against Russian invasion than the historical alignments of the indigenous peoples.[66]

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[60] 'Abd al-Muhammad Khan acted as Conolly's *mehmandar* during his visit in 1840; 'Abd'l-Nazr(?) Khan was sent to Herat to make arrangements for Mizrab's token submission to Kamran in the summer of the same year, Conolly, *Bamiyan to Merve*, 1840; *Todd to Macnaughten*, 4 Sept. 1840, ESL:153, encl. 124, no. 47.

[61] Conolly, *Bamiyan to Merve*, 1840.

[62] Pottinger, *Memoir*, 1839.

[63] *Ibid.*

[64] Campbell's travels, however, are mostly fiction, and no reliance can be placed on this claim.

[65] Vambery 1863, 249 says he was the son of Hukumat Khan.

[66] See Yapp 1962, 521, 523 who rightly observes that Dost Muhammad Khan had little, if any,

The First Anglo-Afghan War (1839-1842) is probably the most written-about period of Afghanistan's history (e.g. Dupree 1978; Fraser-Tytler 1967; Norris 1967; Yapp 1980, *et al.*) and it is not the intention of this work to go over ground already covered by other scholars. Rather, it is an attempt to examine how and why, in the course of this short, but bloody, campaign, Britain came to regard the Balkh appanage as an integral part of Afghan dominions and developed an almost irrational prejudice against the indigenous rulers of Turkistan, the Manghit dynasty of Bukhara, and Uzbeks and Turkmans in general, prejudices which were to condition all future policy in the region. This is an aspect of British policy which western scholars have, by and large, ignored, and accounts of The First Anglo-Afghan War have concentrated, almost exclusively, on developments in the south.[67]

As a consequence of the occupation of what is now southern Afghanistan and the presence of military observers in Herat, British officers had unprecedented opportunities to survey parts of Afghanistan and Balkh which, by 1838, still remained largely unexplored. Numerous confidential reports were submitted to the Government in India and were subsequently published in highly censored versions. These formed a corpus of information about Afghanistan and the countries north of the Hindu Kush, which became the bedrock of all future British histories of the region. Most, if not all, of these officers unashamedly believed that the Amu Darya was the 'natural' line of defence for India. Many of them advocated annexation of the province and the garrisoning of Balkh with British troops. Their official reports must thus be treated with considerable care, since this, and other, colonial imperatives are reflected in them. Indeed, in their eagerness to support their particular outlook on Central Asia, many officers resorted to the used of arbitrary, dubious, and even, on occasions, fictitious historical precedent, conveniently provided by individuals such as Yar Muhammad Khan of Herat or the Mir Wali of Khulm, who had their own axes to grind north of the Hindu Kush. By adeptly exploiting these officers' prejudices these individuals hoped that they would be able to increase their power and territory in the region with the connivance and support of the foreigner.

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concept of 'Afghanistan' in the modern, national sense, during the First Anglo-Afghan War. Instead he appealed to different religious, tribal and ethnic feelings in order to muster opposition against the British invaders in both Balkh and the Afghan-dominated south.

[67] See Yapp 1962, who is the exception.

British officials generally took as their starting point for their claim that the Afghan frontier included the appanage of Balkh, either Nadir Shah's conquest of Balkh or his treaty with Abu'l-Faiz Khan. This in itself is quite extraordinary since Nadir Shah was a Persian invader and in no way connected to the Durrani Amirate which rose out of the ashes of his empire. On other occasions, the argument advanced is that at the time of Ahmad Shah Durrani's accession to the 'throne' in 1747, Balkh and Lesser Turkistan were as much a part of the Afghan realm as Qandahar. As we have already seen (Chapter 3), these claims do not stand up to close scrutiny, which explains why, on occasions, British political officers were wont to move the goal posts to suit their own convenience. There was never any close enquiry made about the situation prior to Nadir Shah's invasion of Balkh, nor any attempt to investigate the exact relationship that existed between Ahmad Shah Durrani and Haji Bi Ming, or the other amirid rulers of the appanage.

Such enquiry, of course, was not necessary, since the further one dug into the history of the region, the more awkward and embarrassing questions about the legality of British policy and the Durrani claims to sovereignty over Balkh became. All that was required was a sufficient number of pseudo-historical precedents to justify publicly a policy which was never intended to be based on scholarly research, but which was motivated by and large by imperial self-interest.

The arbitrariness, even cynicism, which marked British frontier policy in Afghanistan reveals itself starkly when one examines the British attitude towards the Afghan claims to Peshawar and the North-West Frontier Provinces, territory which every knowledgable British official knew had been very much a part of Ahmad Shah Durrani's dominions in a way that Balkh never was. Yet despite the Afghan government's strong claim to sovereignty over the territories between the Khyber and the Indus, Britain refused to countenance any suggestion that Peshawar be handed back to the Amirs and later, after the defeat of the Sikhs, Peshawar and the whole of the Punjab was arbitrarily annexed to British India without the slightest reference to the rights of the ruler of Kabul. Indeed, at the time of the First Anglo-Afghan War, Britain took the opportunity to help itself to Kalat, a region whose rulers had long been clients of the Afghan Amirs (Yapp 1980, 264-6).

Until the early 1830s, Britain had, by and large, remained "indifferent" (Yapp 1980, 201) to the Afghans and the struggle between Barakzai and Sadozai sardars which had resulted, by 1830, in Kabul,

Qandahar and Herat being governed by separate rulers. Occasionally, as during the reign of Timur Shah [1772-1793], concern had been expressed by the British authorities in India about possible invasions of the Punjab by the Afghans and a few years later, in the first decade of the nineteenth century, there was some fear that Napoleon would try to emulate Alexander the Great and march an army through Persia to the Indus. This latter threat had resulted in the first official British mission to the Afghan Court of Shah Shuja' al-Mulk, led by Mountstuart Elphinstone. The only long-term benefit this visit produced, however, was the first systematic account of Afghan history and culture to be published by a European (Elphinstone 1972).

In 1831 Arthur Conolly travelled overland through Persia and Afghanistan to India. In association with Charles Trevelyan, Conolly wrote an official report for the East India Company on his travels,[68] in which he challenged the prevailing assumptions of what Yapp terms the "Malcolm School" (Yapp 1980, 208),[69] which saw Persia as the sole bulwark against any possible invasion of India from Britain's latest foe, Tsarist Russia. 'Afghanistan', rather than Persia, Conolly argued, was the most strategic country of Central Asia and only a strong, united Afghan kingdom, allied, of course, to Britain, could protect India's North-West Frontier (Yapp 1980, 208ff.).[70] Though the then Governor-General of Bengal, Lord Bentinck, rejected any direct British involvement in Afghanistan, implicit in Conolly's recommendations, he did endorse a proposal that further information about Turkistan and Afghanistan should be obtained. Alexander Burnes, who had already distinguished himself by his exploration of the Indus in 1831, was chosen and sent to Kabul, from whence he crossed the Hindu Kush to Balkh and Bukhara.

Far from being a pioneer exploration of Central Asia, Alexander Burnes' journey to Bukhara during 1832 covered little new ground geographically, the real pioneers being Moorcroft, Stirling and Masson, in the previous decade. Burnes, for example, never visted Maimana, Andkhui or Sar-i Pul whilst Moorcroft had already pioneered the route to Bukhara some years earlier, though at the time of Burnes' travels, he had yet to receive any public recognition for many years of tireless travel and exploration in Central Asia. Burnes, on the

[68] Lt. Arthur Conolly & C. E. Trevelyan, *Papers on the Trade of Afghanistan and the Country between the Indus and the Caspian*, 1831, MEIR:59.

[69] Named after Sir John Malcolm (1769-1833), British Ambassador to Persia [1799-1801, 1807-1810] and Governor of Bombay [1827-1830].

[70] *Ibid.*

contrary, became an instant celebrity. Fêted and honoured as 'Bukhara Burnes' by London society and awarded the Royal Geographical Society's gold medal, he was able to make his opinions on the Central Asian question known at the very highest levels of government, both in England and Calcutta, where they received a great deal more attention, and were regarded with much greater respect, than they deserved.[71]

In a series of secret reports submitted to the Government,[72] Burnes expanded on the radical views of Arthur Conolly, arguing that Khiva, Herat and the Oxus were the strategic pivots for the defence of India and had to be protected, at all costs, from Russian domination. To accomplish this, Burnes advocated an alliance with Dost Muhammad Khan of Kabul, rather than the Shah of Persia—whose relations with Britain were already in terminal decline. Afghanistan, he argued, should become the new, and sole, Central Asian buffer between Russia and India. Burnes thus advocated a much deeper involvement in Afghanistan's affairs than Britain, to that point, had ever contemplated. British indifference to Afghan politics should be replaced by a policy of indirect and, if necessary, direct interference, in order to maintain its strategic interests. Provided that Dost Muhammad Khan[73] was prepared to support these aims, all would be well for him, but

[71] At least one dissenting voice was raised amongst all the Burnes hysteria. Major D'Arcy Todd (1808-1845), a Royal Engineer who later served in Herat during the first Anglo-Afghan War, was attached to the British Embassy in Persia and was asked to critique Burnes' military intelligence on Afghanistan. Having read the material, Todd wrote a scathing indictment of Burnes' report. The information, argued Todd, lacked any proper technical precision. It contained sweeping generalisations about the passability, width and all-weather status of routes for a modern European army encumbered with artillery and the report's conclusions were muddled, unjustified and unjustifiable. He even accused Burnes of plagiarizing older, out-of-date reports (Moorcroft? Stirling?), without due acknowledgment and presenting his 'findings' to Government as if they were the results of his own research and route surveys. As well as Burnes' incompetence as a surveyor, Todd maintained he was naïve to the point of being ridiculous when he claimed that a British army would have little difficulty in subduing Afghanistan. "It does not appear to me," Todd wrote, "that the country ... would submit without a struggle to the power of strangers, infidels and invaders." A member of the Secret Committee, having read Todd's Observations, wrote in pencil on the back of the memorandum (fol. 465): "These observations [i.e. by Todd] give rise to a very painful suspicion that Lt. Burnes has been much over-rated as an accurate narrator," Todd, *Observations on the Military Memoir of Cpt. Burnes on Afghanistan*, 2 July 1837, SLEP:102, fols. 420-63. Charles Masson, the explorer and British news writer in Kabul, was another who took a profound dislike to Burnes (see Dupree 1978, 383; Yapp 1980, 191).

[72] Burnes, *Report on the Countries between India and Russia*, 1838, 4 vols, MEIR:78-82, also see vol. 91.

[73] Burnes believed that Britain should abandon the Sadozai line, represented by the exiled Shah Shuja' al- Mulk, and recognise Dost Muhammad Khan, who was from the rival, Barakzai, clan.

were he to prove unco-operative, or if Russian influence were to spread to the Amu Darya or Afghanistan, some form of direct intervention would, by implication, be required to protect British interests. This more aggressive and interventionist approach was to lead, in the short-term, to the disaster of the first Anglo-Afghan War and, ironically, to Burnes' own untimely death (Yapp 1980, 125, 208-9; Dupree 1978, 370; Fraser-Tytler, Chapters V-VI).

Burnes recommended that a British Commercial Agency should be established in Kabul to stimulate trade between India and Turkistan and "check intrigues and satisfy both Afghans and Uzbeks that the vaunts of Russia are unmeaning and empty" (quoted from, Yapp 1980, 211). In 1837 Burnes returned to Kabul, not this time as a private traveller, but in an official capacity to discuss a commercial treaty. The negotiations, however, quickly became dominated by political, rather than commercial, matters, precipitated in part, by the Persian siege of Herat and the submission of Maimana to 'Ali Yar Khan, Asaf al-Daula, the governor of Khurasan (Yapp 1980, 216ff.; Dupree 1987, 368).[74]

*Balkh and the Persian Siege of Herat, 1837-1838*

Maimana and the Chahar Wilayat were drawn into the 'Great Game' not by events in Kabul, but as a result of the long-standing struggle between the Persians and Afghans for control of Herat. Herat, as we have seen, had been the strategic fortress on the eastern frontier of the Safawid empire, and its first line of defence against any Uzbek invasion of Khurasan. The governorship of Herat had eventually passed into the hands of the Abdalis, who initially ruled the region as subjects of Persia, but in the early part of the eighteenth century, had declared their independence. Despite the overthrow of the Safawid empire, the Qajar dynasty, which finally succeeded to the purple after the death of Nadir Shah, did not abandon Persia's claim to sovereignty over Herat and by 1838 several unsuccessful attempts had been made by the Qajars to recapture the region from the Afghans. In 1833 'Abbas Mirza sent his son, Muhammad Mirza, to attack the city, but the death of the Shah, in October of the same year, obliged the

[74] Though he was sent to negotiate a commercial treaty, Burnes interpreted his brief as being essentially political. Consequently his discussions with the Amir of Kabul had little to do with trade. Unfortunately, Burnes was not the ideal man for such a delicate task and his political judgment was frequently clouded by his own arrogance, ambition and political immaturity.

Persian prince to lift the siege. However, Muhammad Mirza vowed that, once he had secured the throne of Persia, he would return and avenge himself on the city that had the timerity to resist his army (Champagne, 116).

In July 1837 the Persian monarch, defying British protests, returned at the head of a large army to fulfil his sanguinary promise.[75] Apart from a desire to avenge his wounded honour, Muhammad Shah saw the conquest of Herat as the first step in fulfilling an ambitious plan to extend Persia's influence up to the Amu Darya[76] and to deal out retribution to the slave-trading amirs of Badghis, Turkistan and Khwarazm, who had turned much of the Persian province of Khurasan into wasteland. Sir John MacNeill, the British ambassador at Tehran, even claimed that the Persians planned to combine with the Russians and march on Khiva.[77]

Kamran Shah, the Sadozai ruler of Herat and Yar Muhammad Khan, his wazir, had little hope of holding on to Herat by their own efforts. Both were deeply unpopular and the population, terrorised by the inhumanity of their overlords and dispirited by the economic decline that had impoverished the city (Gregorian, 53),[78] were hardly likely to put up much of a fight. The internal repressions in Herat and the threat of invasion, had precipitated the flight of some ten thousand Aimaq families across the Murghab into Maimana territory, though they were treated no better there, for Mizrab Khan, apparently, sold many of them into slavery.[79] Nor were Herat's crumbling fortifications in any state to withstand a serious assault and they were inadequately defended, the Herat army consisting of a few thousand badly-equipped soldiers. Furthermore, not only had Herat to deal with the Persians, but the independent Barakzai sardars of Qandahar had a long-standing feud with Kamran Shah over Sistan and were secretly encouraging the Persian attack for their own ends.[80] So hopeless was the situation that, even before a shot had been fired, or the Persian army reached Herat, Kamran Shah was planning to "bolt."[81] His flight

[75] For the political background to the siege of Herat, see Yapp 1980, chap. 4; Champagne 1981.

[76] *Leech to Burnes*, 5 Feb. 1838, ESL:130, fols. 139-41.

[77] *McNeill to Palmerston*, 30 Oct. 1837, SLEP:104, fols. 59, 62.

[78] See, Todd, *Report on Results of Observations and Enquiries upon the State of Herat*, 2 Oct. 1839, ESL:144, encl. 11 (Secret & Confidential), fols. 420-65 (fol. 4 of report).

[79] *Todd to Macnaughten*, 26 Feb. 1840.

[80] *Kohun Dil Khan, Chief of Candahar, to Asef ul-Dawleh, Governor of Khorasan*, n.d. 1837, SLEP:103, fols. 63-5.

[81] *McNeill to Palmerston*, 7 Dec. 1837, SLEP:104, fols. 316-7.

was only prevented when the Sunni Hazara amir, Sher Muhammad Khan of Qal'a-yi Nau, vowed to fight to the death for Kamran and promised the Sadozai leader sanctuary amongst his tribe in the event of the city falling into Persian hands.[82]

Sher Muhammad Khan Hazara was the most loyal and important source of support available to Kamran Shah. For many years he had underpinned the Sadozai governorship of Herat and prevented Wazir Yar Muhammad Khan overthrowing Kamran and assuming the purple himself. As a reward for his services, he had been given the title of *Nizam al-Daula* by Kamran (Maitland 1891, 94-5).[83] Prior to the Persian invasion in 1833, Sher Muhammad Khan had organised a confederacy of Aimaq, Uzbek and Turkman tribes which, united under the banner of Sunni Islam, bound themselves to the defence of Herat against the Shi'is.[84] Not only so, but Sher Muhammad had been instrumental in persuading Mizrab Khan of Maimana to overcome his suspicion of Yar Muhammad and join the *jihad.* To confirm this agreement, the wali had sent a gift of horses to Herat and received a robe of honour (*khalat*) in return, unaware that this customary exchange of presents would be used a few years later to support Herat's claim for sovereignty over the Chahar Wilayat.[85] Faced with a renewed Persian assault on Herat, Sher Muhammad Khan, aided by the son of Shah Kamran, Prince Nadir Mirza, once more exerted his considerable diplomatic abilities and revived the tribal confederacy under his leadership and that of Mizrab Khan of Maimana and 'Abd al-Rahman Turkman (Katib i, 132). Before Muhammad Shah had marched his army to Herat, some ten to twelve thousand horsemen, drawn from the Sunni Hazaras, the tribes of the Chahar Aimaq and the Chahar Wilayat, had assembled around Qal'a-yi Nau and were threatening to attack the Persian flanks as they marched east (Katib i, 132).

In order to counteract this threat, Muhammad Shah ordered twelve thousand of his best soldiers with nine guns to march from Turbat-i Shaikh Jam to Qara Tepa[86] under the leadership of Yar Muhammad Khan, Asaf al-Daula, governor of Khurasan (Katib i, 132).[87] In

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[82] *Ibid.*

[83] Burnes, *Herat,* 1838.

[84] *Ibid.*; *PWD,* 29 July-29 Sept. 1833, SLEP:95, fol. 769.

[85] Burnes, *Herat,* 1838; Conolly, *Bamiyan to Merve,* 1840; Pottinger, *Memoir,* 1839; Maj. R. L. Taylor, *Memorandum on Meimeneh,* 1 Feb. 1858, ESL:253, fols. 865-71.

[86] They marched via Karez, Kuhsan and Qush Rabat.

[87] I have followed Katib's, *Siraj al-Tawarikh,* which gives a detailed account of the Persian

November, Sher Muhammad Khan went in person to Herat to strengthen Kamran's resolve and renew his pledge to fight to the death even though, by this time, the Asaf al-Daula was already marching on Sher Muhammad's capital of Qal'a-yi Nau. By the middle of that month, the governor of Khurasan had seized Qara Tepa and the inhabitants of the area fled, leaving Muhammad Zaman Jamshidi at Kushk with just six thousand men to oppose the Persian advance (Katib i, 132-3). After some desperate fighting, the Jamshidis were scattered, losing two to three hundred men killed and as many again taken prisoner. After a halt of three days, the Asaf al-Daula's force marched into Qal'a-yi Nau. Cash and property to the value of half a million tumans, presumably the contents of Sher Muhammad's treasury, also fell into his hands; a welcome acquisition for an army perpetually short of money (Katib i, 133).[88]

Following the Jamshidis defeat, Sher Muhammad Hazara decided not to risk defending his capital, thus tying up the bulk of his forces in the citadel. Instead, he ordered his men to move "far out of reach of Asif ul-Dauleh in the Dasht-i-Tahaboy,"[89] the high limestone tableland of the Nakhjaristan plateau which was bisected by hundreds of precipitous, serpentine river valleys and made up part of the Murghab watershed around Chaman-i Bed, Sur Ghul and Darra-yi Bum. By this time the confederate army at Marichaq had swollen to fifteen thousand men, composed of elements from the Aimaq, Uzbek and Turkman rulers of Badghis, Ghor, Murghab, Panjdeh, Maimana, the Chahar Wilayat, Khiva, Bukhara and Urganj, with Mizrab Khan of Maimana as Commander-in-Chief. Whilst the Asaf al-Daula pondered his next move, the Sunni confederates decided to split their forces, half being sent against the main siege army at Herat whilst the rest tried to tie the Persian invaders down in the mountains, thus

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campaign in Badghis and Maimana. For British sources, see: *Stoddard to McNeill*, 29 Oct., 10 Dec. 1837; *McNeill to Palmerston*, 27 Nov. 1837, SLEP:104, fols. 231ff., 316-317, 428. *Pottinger to Macnaughten*, 25 May 1838, ESL:141, encl. 33, no. 3, says there were less than 10,000 Persians sent to Badghis; Lord estimates their numbers as thirteen thousand, with eight guns, but claimed these figures were exaggerated, *Lord to Burnes*, 27 Dec. 1837, ESL:134, encl. 4 [red], no. 34. *Leech to Burnes*, 5 Feb. 1838, gives the figure of 20,000 men with 11 guns.

[88] *Stoddard to McNeill*, 10 Dec. 1837; *Journal of Mirza Agha*, 21 Nov. 1837, SLEP:105, fol. 193. British reports of the Persian operations in Badghis and the Murghab are confused and Katib does not give any date for the fall of Qal'a-yi Nau. However, Stoddard implies that Qal'a-yi Nau fell before 10 December. Mirza Agha's report probably relates to the battle with the Jamshidis which led to the fall of the Sunni Hazara capital.

[89] *McNeill to Palmerston*, 7 Dec. 1837.

preventing them from returning to assist the main army that was laying siege to Herat.[90]

Despite having captured Qal'a-yi Nau, the Persian army was faced with a very difficult dilemma, since the Sunni confederation remained undefeated and out of reach in the inaccessible tableland of the upper Murghab river. The severe winter cold and frost, which come much earlier to the mountains than they do in the Herat plains, had already arrived,[91] making it impossible for the Asaf al-Daula to winter in Qal'a-yi Nau; especially when such a large enemy concentration, familiar with the mountain terrain, was poised to swoop down on him at the first opportunity. The Persian commander therefore decided to try and disperse the enemy forces and push on, across the mountains, to Bala Murghab in order to prevent the Sunni Hazaras and their allies carrying out their threat to march to the relief of Herat. Thus, after a rest of ten days at Qal'a-yi Nau, he gave the order to march, hoping to seize Bala Murghab before the worst of the winter weather cut his army off from its extended supply lines (Katib i, 133).

The Asaf al-Daula's route passed through some of the most difficult terrain in Afghanistan. Hundreds of deep, narrow gorges twist and turn through the limestone plateau. The paths over the mountains and through the valleys are mere sheep tracks, hardly wide enough to allow a single person to pass in safety, let alone an army laden with heavy artillery, munitions, pack animals and other encumbrances. The passes are precipitous in the extreme and the rock underfoot slippery, even in fine weather. In fact, it was ideal terrain for ambush and the hit-and-run tactics so beloved by the hill tribes of the area. A few miles short of the settlement of "Pada Kaj," Muhammad Zaman Jamshidi, Sher Muhammad Khan Hazara and Shah Pasand Khan Firozkohi[92] swooped down on the floundering Persians. A ferocious,

[90] British sources for the Asaf al-Daula's march from Qal'a-yi Nau to Qaisar are: Conolly, *Bamiyan to Merve*, 1840; *Meer Afzal to Dost Mohamed*, 23 Dec. 1837; *Leech to Burnes*, 27 Dec. 1837, 5 Feb. 1838; *Todd to Macnaughten*, 26 Feb. 1840; *McNeill to Palmerston*, 30 Dec. 1837, SLEP:104, fol. 413; *Stoddard to McNeill*, 7 Jan. 1838, SLEP:105, fols. 258-9; *Afzal Khan to Dost Mohamed*, rcvd. Kabul, 23 Dec. 1837; *Mihr Dil to Ameer of Caboul*, rcvd. 15 Jan. 1838, in *Military Papers 1841-43*, 96, 117.

[91] Stirling found the head-waters of the Shirin Tagab frozen solid when he crossed the Mirza Wulang pass at the end of November and by late December he encountered blizzards and deep, drifting snow as he crossed the Hindu Kush (Stirling 1991, 293-4, 313-5).

[92] The Firozkohi are another of the Chahar Aimaq tribes of Badghis and Ghor who occupy the areas around Qadis, Chakhcharan and the northern watershed of the upper Murghab, namely the south-facing slopes of the Tir Band-i Turkistan around the district known severally as Laulash, Filawar and Bandar. According to their own oral histories, recorded by the Afghan Boundary Commission's Surveyors, they took their name from a mountain of this name near

four hour battle ensued, which ended only when the Aimaqs withdrew. Two hundred and fifty Aimaq tribesmen lay dead in the field, but they had succeeded in inflicting even heavier casualties upon the Asaf al-Daula's men before they broke off the engagement and allowed the Persians to occupy "Pada Kaj" (Katib i, 133).

From this *manzil*, the Asaf al-Daula sent forward two regiments of regular infantry under his nephew, Iskandar Khan, as a vanguard. Not surprisingly, they took the wrong turning and became lost in the tangle of narrow ravines. As Iskandar Khan's column entered the narrow gorge, an Aimaq force blocked the valley behind them whilst the Firozkohis cut off the Persian line of advance and their access to water. Having trapped the enemy in the defiles, the Aimaqs opened fire into their flanks, killing a number of Persians and causing havoc amongst the rest. Many of their horses were shot dead and Iskandar Khan himself was wounded by a bullet. Despite his injury, Iskandar Khan ordered a redoubt to be formed from the corpses of horses and men as a protection against the merciless fire being poured down on them from the surrounding mountain sides, for since all escape routes were blocked, the Persian force had no choice but to try and defend their position as best they could until relief reached them from the main army (Katib i, 133).

Fortunately for Iskandar Khan, the Asaf al-Daula, having arrived at the pre-arranged camping ground and seeing no sign of the other column, began to be concerned. Suddenly, the sound of musket fire reached him and he realised that Iskandar Khan had lost his way and been ambushed by the Sunni Confederates. Even so, as it was nearly dark, the Asaf al-Daula did not bother to go to the rescue, instead he passed an anxious night and early the next morning sent a relief force of cavalry and infantry to find and succour Iskandar Khan. They reached him in the nick of time, for Iskandar Khan had almost given up hope of rescue. However, just when the reinforcements appeared to have gained the upper hand, a further three thousand Aimaq cavalry arrived and the Sunni Hazaras, Firozkohis and Jamshidis turned back

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Samnan in Persia and were driven eastwards by Timur Lang. Shah Pasand Khan of Robat was the amir of the Darazi clan. His genealogy is given as; son of Husain 'Ali Khan b. Saiyid Nazar Khan b. Rahim Sultan, who was the first chief of the Firozkohis. According to Pottinger, Shah Pasand was at odds with Maudud Quli Khan, *amir* of the Firozkohi Aimaqs of Qadis and Lash, whose father, Bahram Khan, had been slain by Shah Pasand. As a result of this feud, Maudud Quli defected to the Persians. The *Siraj al-Tawarikh*, however, flatly contradicts Pottinger's report and claims that the Aimaq leaders acted in concert against the Asaf al-Daula. Cf. Pottinger, *Memoir*, 1839; Burnes, *Herat*, 1838. For a detailed history and genealogical charts, see Maitland 1891, ii, 107-161; Appendix V, iii.

and attacked the Persian army with renewed vigour. At the height of this battle, Rahimdad Sultan, an amir of the Sunni(?) Hazaras was mortally wounded and the Aimaq broke off the engagement, allowing the Persians to limp back to the main camp (Katib i, 133).

Following this sanguinary battle, the Asaf al-Daula continued his push to the Murghab, this time using a local guide, Haji Beg, who had pretended to defect to the Persians. In reality, he was acting on orders from Sher Muhammad Hazara, and having deliberately led the Persian army into a ravine where a Turkman force lay in ambush, Haji Beg promptly disappeared. Trapped in the narrow gorge, the Persians were easy pickings for the Turkman marksmen. Hundreds of the Asaf al-Daula's men died in the hail of bullets and for the whole night the Persians, reduced to taking cover behind their horses and pack animals, were picked off one by one by the Turkman snipers.

The following morning, with hundreds of his men lying dead and wounded on the floor of the ravine, the Asaf al-Daula, realising that to stay put was suicidal, ordered his men to fight their way out towards Bala Murghab. Iskandar Khan, still suffering from the wounds he had received in the earlier battle, was ordered to lead an advance party to "Khwaja Kandu" (Khwaja Kenti), south of Chichaktu and, somehow or other, he succeeded in reaching this settlement. Then, as they tried to enter the village, they were attacked once more, this time by Uzbek forces, and several of his men were captured. When the Asaf al-Daula heard of this, he sent two hundred more soldiers to help his son, but they too were soon surrounded by a force of Hazaras and their line of retreat cut off. Once more, the members of the Persian relief force were obliged to use their horses as shields until the main force arrived and the enemy retreated (Katib i, 133-4).[93]

The forced march through the Tir Band-i Turkistan had cost the Persians dear. Several thousand of the original force of twelve thousand men had perished and the Asaf al-Daula had yet to confront the main Sunni army, which had moved up the Murghab towards Chichaktu to bar any further advance. The Persian general wrote a frantic letter to the Shah, still encamped before Herat, pleading for reinforcements to be sent post-haste, and three thousand additional troops, supported by a huge artillery train of thirty-two guns, was sent to his aid (Katib i, 134).[94] A high rate of casualties was not the only problem

[93] See also, *Stoddard to McNeill*, 10 Dec. 1837, 7 Jan. 1838; *Meer Afzal to Dost Mohamed*, 23 Dec. 1837; *Lord to Burnes*, 27 Dec. 1837; *Leech to Burnes*, 5 Feb. 1838.

[94] *Leech to Burnes*, 5 Feb. 1838. *Mihr Dil Khan to Ameer*, 15 Jan. 1838 reported that the Asaf

besetting Asaf's men; they were chronically short of supplies. Once installed in the comparative safety of Khwaja Kenti, the Persians raided the surrounding countryside and managed to bring in five thousand sheep along with the twenty shepherds who were tending them. However, the majority of the Jamshidi and Firozkohi tribes, numbering some thirty seven thousand households (*ui*), had already decamped with all their cattle and portable property down river from Bala Murghab and were beyond the reach of the Asaf al-Daula. Sher Muhammad Hazara, Muhammad Zaman Jamshidi and Shah Pasand Khan Firozkohi, meanwhile, went to Maimana, where they made arrangements with Mizrab Khan, Khalifa 'Abd al-Rahman Turkman and Shahzada Nadir Mirza to strengthen defences in four separate locations across the Persian line of advance on Chahar Shanbeh (Katib i, 134).

Even when the reinforcements from Herat arrived, the Asaf al-Daula's army was still greatly outnumbered,[95] though there was some small encouragement when news reached him that another Persian force had managed to prevent an army of six thousand Taimani Aimaqs in Obeh from attacking him in his rear.[96] Across the Asaf al-Daula's line of advance lay a force of some twenty thousand Uzbeks, Aimaqs and Turkmans. Once more the Persian governor ordered his men to prepare for battle and, leaving a large force behind to guard his baggage, they marched out against Mizrab Khan. On, or around 20 December 1837, the Asaf al-Daula finally came face-to-face with the main confederate army in the relatively open country between Khwaja Kenti and Chahar Shanbeh.[97] Four times the Sunni Confederate cavalry charged the massed ranks of the Qizilbash but each time they failed to break the lines, mainly due to the devastating effect of the large Persian artillery train, which may have numbered as many as forty guns.[98] The fire-power from the Qajar guns finally

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al-Daula had asked the Shah for permission to retire to Mashhad because of their "sad condition."

[95] *Stoddard to McNeill*, 7 Jan. 1838; Conolly, *Bamiyan to Merve*, 1840; *Leech to Burnes*, 5 Feb. 1838; *Royal Firman*, Tehran 1838; *Persian Firman issued to Governor of Kirmanshah*, 1838, in, *Political Dept. Papers Relative to the War between Persia and Afghanistan*, PSDL:A7, vol. i, part ii, no. 38, 90.

[96] *Afzal Khan to Ameer*, 23 Dec. 1838; *Mihr Dil to Ameer*, 15 Jan. 1838; *Bikload Khan to Kohun Dil*, 25 Dec. 1838, in, *Military Papers, 1841-43*, 117.

[97] *Pottinger to Macnaughten*, 25 May 1838, says the battle took place at Marichaq but Katib is much more precise as to the location of this, the main battle of the campaign.

[98] Katib says the Asaf al-Daula only took seven guns into the attack, but he admits that he was not sure exactly whether, or to what extent, the Persian army had been reinforced. I have preferred the account given by Stoddard, who was in the Persian camp before Herat.

forced the Sunni army to take up static, defensive positions and the Asaf al-Daula, finally fighting the sort of battle he understood, ordered a frontal assault on the enemy's trenches and "totally defeated" them with "great slaughter."[99] Mizrab Khan, "ran without once stopping until he shut himself up in his fort"[100] whilst the Asaf al-Daula's army looted their enemy's baggage train and executed the seven hundred prisoners who had fallen into their hands during the course of the battle. Three days later, the Persian army entered Chahar Shanbeh in triumph, from whence they marched, unopposed, to Qaisar via Chichaktu and Alti Khwaja (Katib i, 134).[101]

Mizrab Khan, meanwhile, was sending frantic messages to Murad Beg and other rulers of Balkh informing them of the advance of the Persian army on Maimana and begging for aid.[102] However, Murad Beg, hardly a friend of the Mingids at the best of times, had made too many enemies in Balkh and the Chahar Wilayat to march to Mizrab Khan's aid, even if he had wanted to do so. He informed Dr. Lord, who had been sent to Qunduz by Alexander Burnes, that, "even if I wished how ... could I go there [i.e. to Maimana]? Bulkh is closed, Sirepul is closed, Akcha is closed, what road shall I go?"[103] Lord watched the Persian advance with considerable apprehension, for Britain had opposed the Qajar expedition against Herat and now it seemed as if the whole of Lesser Turkistan was at the mercy of Persia. At the end of December, he informed Burnes:

> If the Persians take Meimina, which there seems no reasonable doubt, there is nothing earthly to prevent their taking Bulkh and then all this country is at their mercy. There is neither hill nor fort to protect it. Murad Beg is totally powerless out of his own territory.[104]

Even after the Asaf al-Daula had actually retired from Qaisar, Lord continued to report to Burnes the imminent arrival of the Persian army and claimed that Mizrab Khan of Maimana, as a condition of his

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[99] *Lord to Burnes*, 27 Dec. 1837; Katib i, 134, does not give the number of Sunni dead.
[100] *Ibid.*
[101] *Ibid. McNeill to Palmerston*, 23 Feb. 1838, SLEP:105, fol. 174; *Stoddard to McNeill*, 7 Jan. 1838.
[102] Prince Nadir Mirza, son of Kamran, fled to Bukhara and appealed to Nasrullah Khan for help but was told, "precipitantly to leave the city," *Burnes to Macnaughten*, 20 Feb. 1838. Lord said that only a "kalun sirdar" (important commander) had been sent to Bukhara, *Lord to Burnes*, 27 Dec. 1837.
[103] *Lord to Burnes*, 27 Dec. 1837.
[104] *Ibid.* See also *McNeill to Palmerston*, 23 Feb. 1838.

submission, had been forced to cede the Qizilbash free passage through the Chahar Wilayat for their march on Balkh.[105]

As the Persian army moved ever nearer Maimana, Mizrab Khan, unable to rally any significant support, had to choose between submitting and trying to withstand a winter siege for which he was completely unprepared. Though the citadel of Maimana had a reputation for strength and his people were reckoned some of the bravest and most determined fighters in the area, the walls of the city and the *arg* were not built to withstand the kind of artillery barrage which the Asaf al-Daula would be able to bring to bear on them. Maimana was overlooked by high loess hills and the Persian guns, sited on these elevations, would be able to fire over the walls directly into the city. Mizrab Khan therefore decided to sue for peace and sent his son, Hukumat Khan, along with ambassadors from the Aimaq and Chahar Wilayat, to Qaisar and offered to submit to Persian authority.

The Asaf al-Daula, "glad to be quit of one thorn in his flank,"[106] appointed Ja'far Quli Khan, a Kurd, as his ambassador, and sent him to Maimana to discuss terms, for the Persian general was as eager as Mizrab Khan to avoid further, costly confrontation. Winter had arrived and the Asaf al-Daula's men were not equipped for the biting cold of Badghis. Aimaq and Turkman irregulars had also regrouped and were raiding his over-extended supply lines. More importantly, the Asaf al-Daula had exceeded his orders by marching to Qaisar and his many enemies in the Persian camp at Herat had used this, and his recent embarrassments in the Turkistan mountains, to intrigue against him.[107]

The Persian ambassador was met at Almar by Sher Muhammad Khan Hazara and Muhammad Zaman Jamshidi with an escort of a thousand men and was conducted with appropriate pomp and ceremony to Maimana. When they reached the city, "all the people of the city and the environs came out to meet him" and for sixteen days Mizrab Khan entertained the Persian ambassador and negotiated terms of submission (Katib i, 134). Mizrab Khan agreed to hand over his son, Hukumat Khan, as security for the good behaviour of Maimana and the Chahar Wilayat. Sher Muhammad Khan Hazara and Zaman Khan Jamshidi provided similar hostages from amongst their

[105] *Lord to Burnes*, 30 Jan. 1838, ESL:130, fols. 148-55.
[106] Conolly, *Bamiyan to Merve*, 1840.
[107] *Stoddard to McNeill*, 7 Jan. 1838; *Pottinger to Macnaughten*, 25 May 1839; *Pottinger to Leech*, 12, 13 March 1838, in Forrest, 99-100.

immediate family, who were sent to Herat in order to proffer their submission to the Shah in person (Katib i, 134).[108] Hukumat Khan, however, was not kept in the Persian camp, and he appears to have been sent back to his father accompanied by Mirza Wali, a Persian ambassador, who remained in Maimana to ensure Mizrab Khan observed the terms of the treaty.[109] Mizrab Khan also undertook to remain neutral throughout the remainder of the Persian campaign, "and engaged that if the Persians took Herat he would transfer his allegiance to the Persian monarch as ruler of that city."[110] In addition, he was forced to "bring in every sort of supply for the [Persian] army,"[111] an important condition since the Asaf al-Daula's men were in great straits. 'Abdullah Khan Qipchaq, brother[112] of Shah Pasand Khan, was furthermore obliged to remove twelve thousand households of Qipchaq, Maududi and Firozkohi tribesmen from Qaisar back into their mountain homes. A short while after this treaty was agreed, Mizrab Khan sent his nephew to the Qajar camp at Herat bearing a letter in which he besought the Shah not to force Maimana to admit a garrison; a request which was favourably received (Katib i, 134-5).

For the remainder of the Persian siege of Herat, Mizrab Khan remained faithful to his agreement even though, by doing so, he incurred the anger of Yar Muhammad Khan of Herat and the Khan Hazrat of Khiva who, in the spring of 1838, tried to organise a second Sunni confederacy against the Persians. Maimana's refusal to budge from its undertakings was probably one of the main reasons why Khiva's plan failed. In retaliation the Khan Hazrat threatened to "lay waste the province of Maimana if [Mizrab Khan] persisted in refusing to act against the infidel"[113] and took Panjdeh from the Turkman, claiming it was compensation for Khivan support of the Sunni Confederates the previous winter.[114]

As soon as Mizrab Khan had concluded his peace with the Asaf al-Daula, the Persian army in Badghis returned across the Murghab to seek out suitable winter quarters. It was now January and the fierce winter weather was upon them. Opposition by the tribes of Badghis

[108] Conolly, *Bamiyan to Merve*, 1840; Pottinger, *Memoir*, 1838; *Burnes to Macnaughten*, 20 Feb. 1838; Taylor, *Meimeneh*, 1858.
[109] *Royal Firman*, Tehran 1838; *Royal Firman*, Kirmanshah 1838; Pottinger, *Memoir*, 1838.
[110] Conolly, *Bamiyan to Merve*, 1840.
[111] Taylor, *Meimeneh*, 1858.
[112] So source, but he may well have been his brother-in-law, given that he came from a different tribe.
[113] Conolly, *Bamiyan to Merve*, 1840.
[114] *Todd to Macnaughten*, 26 Feb. 1838.

was also on the increase and the Asaf al-Daula requested further reinforcements so that he could fight his way back across the mountains, something which he was unable to do, "without regular infantry, guns, ammunition and horse being sent, along with clothes for wintering at Qala-i Nau,"[115] grossly exaggerating the numbers of tribesmen opposing him at the same time.[116] Muhammad Shah, however, was in no mood to assist his governor. Angered by his general's disobedience, the Shah wrote on the bottom of this petition: "Who ordered him to go towards Meimuna? He went of himself and he may get back as he can."[117] Somehow or other the Asaf al-Daula managed to recross the Murghab, but he was unable to reach Qal'a-yi Nau and was forced to winter in the high plateau-land north of Jawand, around Chaman-i Bed.[118] The unauthorised march on Maimana thus effectively cut off the Asaf al-Daula from the main Persian force in Herat for the remainder of the winter. For over three months several thousand of the best Persian troops, along with much of the artillery train which was needed for the siege of Herat, were holed up in the inaccessible tableland of the Tir Band-i Turkistan. Throughout this unpleasant winter sojourn, they were subjected to continual harassment from local tribesmen, who amused themselves "by cutting off the grass cutters and other wanderers about the neighbourhood of the [Persian] camp."[119] Their position was not helped by the stream of contradictory orders emanating from Court officials in the camp before Herat. As a result, it was not until 12 March 1838 that the Asaf al-Daula was sent a clear order from the Shah himself to return to Herat.[120] His army finally rejoined the main Persian force at Herat at the end of March or beginning of April, a few weeks before the first attempt to take the city by storm.[121]

[115] *Stoddard to McNeill*, 7 Jan. 1838.

[116] *Ibid.* "The eels (sic) he has been torturing will writhe round and destroy him.... These eels are 200,000 horse, 40,000 Hazaras, 70,000 Maimanees, 90,000 Teke Turkomans."

[117] *Ibid.*

[118] There is also a Chaman-i Bed on the Kushka river, north of Herat, but earlier reports state that the Asaf al-Daula was trying to reach Qal'a-yi Nau and the district in the upper Murghab would seem the more likely. Doubtless the snows on the mountains had much to do with why the Persian force failed to reach Qal'a-yi Nau. *Pottinger to Burnes*, 12, 13 March 1838 says that Chaman-i Bed was 18 farsangs (50 to 60 miles) from Herat, but this is a considerable underestimation for either place.

[119] *Pottinger to Burnes*, 12, 13 March 1838.

[120] *Ibid.* After much complaining about these contradictory instructions, an investigation was instituted. The *Wazir* was held responsible for the confusion and was put to death by Muhammad Shah

[121] *Ibid.* The *Siraj al-Tawarikh* offers no explanation for the gap between the signing of the treaty with the Aimaq tribes and the Chahar Wilayat and the return of the Asaf al-Daula. Katib

The contribution of the Aimaq, Uzbek and Turkman alliance to the defeat of the Persian siege of Herat has been almost completely ignored by Western historians.[122] Instead, when discussing the reasons for the Persian failure, most authorities point to the incompetence of the Persian military, the heavy diplomatic pressure brought to bear on Muhammad Shah by the British, who in August 1838 broke diplomatic relations with Persia and threatened to declare war on the Shah (Yapp 1980, 278, 286), and the bravery of the Irishman, Lt. Eldred Pottinger, later dubbed 'The Hero of Herat', who had travelled incognito to the city a few months prior to the siege and managed to rally the dispirited defenders (MacGregor, 376; Dupree 1978, 372; Yapp 1980, 148).[123] Yet this Sunni confederacy was the main reason for the unexpected survival of Herat during the winter of 1837/8 and Burnes certainly did not exaggerate when he wrote that "without the aid of Sher Mahomed Khan, Herat could have no hope against Persia."[124] Yar Muhammad too, when he tried to inspire, or perhaps shame, the Barakzai sardars of Qandahar into coming to his aid, urged them to "imitate the Shah of Bokara and Khorasan, the people of Toorkistan and the Toorkman who are coming to gain the honour of martyrdom.... Come quickly and save the honour of the nation."[125]

The confederate resistance to the Asaf al-Daula was undoubtedly a major factor in the failure of the Persian attack on Herat. Even before commencing the investment of the city, Muhammad Shah Qajar had been obliged to send one third of his force, consisting of twelve thousand of his best troops with eight guns, to oppose a combined force of

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gives the date of the governor's return as early Zu'l-Hijja 1254 (May 1839), but by that time the Persian siege had been raised and he presumably meant 1253. Even so, May is too late and I have preferred Pottinger's eye-witness report.

[122] As far as I can ascertain Fraser-Tytler's laconic reference to this campaign is the most comprehensive account given by a recent historian.

> In February 1838 the British envoy ... reported from Tehran that the city was holding out well, but that the Persians had penetrated north-eastwards as far as Maimana and had so cut off any hope of assistance reaching the Afghans from that quarter (Fraser-Tytler, 99).

In contrast, Katib, realising the importance of this campaign to the overall failure of the Persian attack on Herat, goes into great detail.

[123] For Pottinger's life (1811-1843) see Diver (1912); Pottinger (1983); Kaye 1904, ii, 204-92. Pottinger's private journal of his time in Herat and his subsequent travels through Badghis and the Chahar Wilayat do not appear to have survived, though Kaye (1904) appears to have had access to some private papers when he wrote his life of Pottinger. Pottinger died in Hong Kong, soon after the end of the First Anglo-Afghan War.

[124] Burnes, *Herat*, 1838.

[125] *Mohamed Khan to Candahar Chiefs*, n.d. (Dec.?) 1837, in *Military Papers on Afghanistan, 1841-43*, 118.

some twelve to fifteen thousand tribesmen. Arrayed against the Asaf al-Daula was no rag-tag army, but a formidable coalition of the most feared and mobile cavalry in Central Asia. The subjugation of the Sunni confederates took several months of hard campaigning, from the end of October 1837 to about the middle of January 1838, and was only achieved at the cost of a large number of casualties. So hard-fought was the campaign, Muhammad Shah was obliged to send several thousand more men into Badghis, along with much of the artillery which had been brought to batter down the walls of Herat.[126] Despite the Asaf al-Daula's victory at Khwaja Kenti, the Persian General was prevented from returning to Herat by the onset of winter. In all, he was over five months in Badghis and the Turkistan mountains. Thus, what started as a large-scale foray against the Aimaq, quickly developed into a major, and extremely bloody, campaign which seriously depleted Persian strength. It is no wonder, therefore, that during the absence of the Asaf al-Daula the Persian siege of Herat made little progress and it was only after he had rejoined the main army that Muhammad Shah felt strong enough to order the first serious assault on the city walls.

*The Failure of the Burnes Mission, 1838*

Whilst the Asaf al-Daula was licking his wounds in Chaman-i Bed, Lord's report of Persian successes in Badghis was having an important influence on the continued negotiations between Burnes and Dost Muhammad Khan in Kabul. Britain had consistently discouraged Muhammad Shah from attacking Herat, believing that Russia planned to dominate Central Asia through an alliance with the Persians, a belief that was reinforced by the presence of Russian soldiers and advisers in the Shah's army.

In late November, or early December, 1837 this conviction was further strengthened when a young Russian officer, Captain Vitkevich, arrived in Kabul with orders to promote an Afghan-Persian alliance (Yapp 1980, 234-6). Although Vitkevich's visit was in response to an earlier appeal in 1835/6 by Dost Muhammad Khan for Russian help against the Sikhs and Shah Shuja' al-Mulk, the presence

[126] According to British intelligence reports, over two-thirds of the Persian artillery was eventually committed to the defeat of the tribal confederacy. The whole force at Muhammad Shah's disposal was 36,000 men with 66 guns. The Asaf al-Daula's column initially consisted of 12,000 men with 8 guns, to which were added at least a further 3,000 troops and 32 guns.

of a Russian ambassador in Kabul and the prospect of a treaty between Persia and Afghanistan, under Russian protection, made the securing of the Amir's friendship even more urgent as far as Burnes was concerned. He also realised that Vitkevich's arrival served to strengthen Dost Muhammad's negotiating position, for if the Amir was not satisfied with the terms offered to him by Britain, he could always turn to the Russians.

Burnes had been allowed very little room for manoeuvre by Calcutta and he was hard pressed to demonstrate that an alliance with Britain would bring sufficient rewards for the Afghans and meet the Amir's demand for *'izat wa ikram*, 'honour and respect' (Yapp 1980, 236ff.). Lord's worrying report which claimed that Balkh was at the mercy of the Asaf al-Daula, reached Kabul at the end of February 1838 and Burnes concluded, not unnaturally, that the fall of Herat was merely "a matter of time."[127] Assuming that the Asaf al-Daula was probably already marching against Balkh, thus posing a serious threat to Kabul, Burnes, in a last ditch attempt to secure Dost Muhammad Khan's signature on a treaty, took matters into his own hands. Without seeking official approval for his action, he pledged British support for the Amir's claim to Peshawar and promised East India Company assistance for the Barakzai sardars at Qandahar, if Herat fell to Muhammad Shah, or Persian forces threatened to attack the former Afghan capital. Burnes, however, did not inform Dost Muhammad Khan that these offers were done without his superiors' approval or knowledge, for he remained naïvely optimistic that he could convince Calcutta that these policies were the best course to follow in the circumstances.

Far from being commended, however, Burnes was sternly rebuked for his *ex officio* offer and, in an embarrassing interview with Dost Muhammad Khan, he was obliged to confess that he had acted independently. Reporting the outcome of this meeting, Burnes sought to justify his actions to Calcutta on the basis of the reports he had received from Herat and Balkh during the early months of 1838:

> Affairs to the west were getting every day more complicated, the Persians having not only held their position before Herat, but overrun Maimuna and the adjacent States, being now actually without any people between them and Cabool itself, excepting the Huzarees, who are all of the Shiah persuasion, and linked by religion and alliance to the Kuzzilbash faction in the city ... The

[127] *Burnes to Macnaughten*, 20 Feb. 1838, in, *Military Papers, 1841-43*, 152-3.

> consternation at the present time regarding Herat is such that they [i.e. the people of Kabul] believe themselves the next victims of Persia if that city falls.[128]

At the time, Burnes did not know that the Asaf al-Daula had been forced back across the Murghab by the cold, or that the Persian operations in Badghis did not have the appproval of Muhammad Shah. Had he been aware of this at the beginning of January 1838, Burnes would have realised that there was no imminent Persian threat to Balkh and he may well have been less inclined to take such a desperate course of action. As it was, the Afghan winter had not only thwarted the Asaf al-Daula. Lord's letters from Qunduz, informing Burnes of the Persian withdrawal, took several weeks to reach Kabul across the snow-bound passes of the Hindu Kush and by the time they arrived it was too late for the British to try again.

Having had his hands tied by Calcutta, Burnes was, in effect, trying to persuade the Afghan Amir to arrange an agreement which, whilst being highly beneficial to Britain, offered Dost Muhammad Khan absolutely nothing in return, either in terms of territorial concessions, internal security or financial incentives. As a consequence, at the end of April 1838 Burnes left Kabul empty-handed. In the wake of this diplomatic charade, Dost Muhammad Khan brought the Russian ambassador, Vitkevich, out of cold storage and gave him an official welcome, though later Burnes' counterpart too was to be disowned by his superiors.

Meanwhile, in India, British officials, convinced that Dost Muhammad Khan was unreliable and believing that he would allow Russia to dominate Central Asia, began to plan for his overthrow and the reinstatement of the exiled Sadozai ruler, Shah Shuja' al-Mulk (Yapp 1980, 238).[129] In the end, however, it was the 'invasion' of Balkh from another quarter which provided a salutary reminder that there was another power in Central Asia which had historic claims to the territory south of the the Amu Darya.

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[128] *Burnes to Macnaughten*, 23 Feb. 1838, in, *Military Papers, 1841-43*, 155-7.

[129] Yapp 1980, 244 says the plan to overthrow Dost Muhammad Khan had already been mooted by the Governor-General in December 1837, i.e. whilst Burnes was still in Kabul.

*Balkh: Bukharan and Afghan Intervention, 1838-1840*

Nasrullah Khan of Bukhara, although he had refused to assist Kamran Shah against the Persians, had every reason to be concerned about the state of affairs south of the Amu Darya, for Mizrab Khan's recent treaty with the Asaf al-Daula significantly changed the balance of power in the region and posed a threat to the slave trade from which Bukhara profited considerably. Not only so, but a Chingizid, Ishan Khwaja Naqib, still ruled Balkh in the name of the Manghits, though he was in no position to defend the province against the Persians.

Over the last decade Ishan Naqib had been more and more hard-pressed by Murad Beg of Qunduz, who had raided the settlements scattered along the eastern canals of the Hazhda Nahr, seized Balkh outposts and sold or enslaved thousands of Ishan Naqib's subjects. Many more, particularly the Tadjiks in the south of Qataghan, had been transported by Murad Beg to the unhealthy reed jungles of the Amu Darya, where they died in their hundreds (Burnes 1834, i, 346; Harlan 1939, 28-9). So desperate had the situation become that Ishan Khwaja Naqib, either too timid or weak to risk facing his powerful neighbour in the open field, contemplated flight (Burnes 1834, i, 346), something that many thousands of ordinary citizens of the region had already done, seeking refuge within the borders of Maimana (Harlan 1939, 28-9).

Finally, sometime in 1837, Murad Beg seized control of one of the eastern canals, probably the Nahr-i Shahi, which as well as being one of the most important of the Hazhda Nahr system was the main source of revenue for the shrine at Mazar-i Sharif, and began to fortify the villages (Harlan 1939, 29).[130] Murad Beg's aggression, the ineffectual and costly rule of Ishan Khwaja Naqib[131] and the threat posed to Balkh by the Asaf al-Daula, forced Nasrullah Khan to take military action to defend Bukharan interests. In November 1837 a Bukharan army of four thousand men crossed the Amu Darya (Harlan 1939, 29)[132] and marched to Balkh, where Ishan Naqib was deposed

[130] *Burnes to Macnaughten*, 6 Dec. 1837, in, *Military Papers, 1841-43*, 76-7.

[131] The Amir of Bukhara paid the governor 2,000 tilas of revenue from the town for his personal expenses and the defence of the area (Burnes 1834, ii, 370).

[132] So, *Burnes to Macnaughten*, 6 Dec. 1837, but the actual date the Bukharan army reached Balkh cannot be firmly fixed. It was certainly a winter campaign, since in February 1838 Burnes reported that Nasrullah "had just dislodged" Murad Beg from Balkh, Burnes, *Herat*, 1838. However, Pottinger, *Memoir*, 1839 records that "the King of Bokhara crossed the Amoo this spring," i.e. a year later, a date which is followed by the Afghan Boundary Commission (*Gazetteer* (1907) ii, 43-4). Burnes and Harlan are contemporary and I have followed Burnes in

and sent as a prisoner to Bukhara.[133] In his place a certain 'Abd al-Jabbar Bi was appointed.[134] Ishan Naqib's son, Ishan Saiyid Uraq, who had been governing Aqcha for his father, fled to the Mir Wali of Khulm who, since his father's death, had gained a measure of autonomy from Murad Beg. The Mir Wali received the fugitive Ishan warmly and, helped by Shuja' al-Din of Mazar-i Sharif, they plotted the overthrow of Nasrullah Khan's governor and the containment of Murad Beg (*Gazetteer* (1907) ii, 44; Peacocke, 324; Talboys Wheeler, 36).

Having settled the affairs of Balkh and Aqcha, the Bukharan army, swelled by another five thousand locally-recruited soldiers, marched against Murad Beg to force him to destroy his forts on the Hazhda Nahr (Harlan 1939, 29).[135] Murad Beg, however, offered no resistance, demolished his fortress and abandoned control over the canal network. However, in order to ensure that Bukhara would gain no benefit from the irrigation system, Murad Beg destroyed those canals which lay within his power prior to abandoning the region (Harlan 1939, 29).[136]

Having pushed back Murad Beg, Nasrullah Khan did not bother to pursue the war any further. Instead, in the spring of 1838, he turned his attention to the Chahar Wilayat. The arrival of a Bukharan army at Balkh and the overthrow of the governor of that city, must have placed these amirs in quite a dilemma. Having recently been forced to submit to the Asaf al-Daula and with his army camped threateningly in Qal'a-yi Nau, the risk of a Persian spring offensive against Balkh was still a strong possibility. Mizrab Khan, however, decided that, despite the presence of a Qajar ambassador in Maimana, he would send his son to pay his respects to the Manghit Khan at Balkh.[137]

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dating this incident in the winter of 1837/8; cf. Conolly, *Bamiyan to Merve*, 1840 where the arrival of Nasrullah Khan is placed shortly after Maimana's defeat by the Persians.

[133] Nothing further is heard about Ishan Khwaja Naqib, though given that his sons fled to Khulm, it may well be that Nasrullah had him executed. According to Saiyid Mohai al-Din Gauhari, *interview*, 1993, who visited Qarshi in 1992, Ishan Khwaja Naqib is buried in the family graveyard near Qasan.

Nasrullah's *khushbegi* had opposed Bukharan action across the Amu Darya and was demoted to the governorship of Qarshi, *Burnes to Macnaughten*, 6 Dec. 1837.

[134] Pottinger, *Memoir*, 1839. Lord calls him "Pir Nazar Bi." The disparity between 'Nazar' (Nazr?) and "Jabbar" may be the result of a copyist's error. 'Pir' is a synonym for 'ishan', *Lord to Macnaughten*, 11 June 1840, ESL:151, encl. 85, no. 41.

[135] Burnes, *Herat*, 1838.

[136] *Ibid.*

[137] Pottinger, *Memoir*, 1839. Maimana's "tribute" (actually, *nazarana*) to the Bukharan ruler was a present of nine slaves.

Nasrullah, however, was dissatisfied with Maimana's profession of loyalty and a section of the Bukharan army was ordered to march towards Shibarghan.

Apart from Maimana's treaty with Persia, one of the main causes of Bukharan displeasure lay with Mizrab Khan's closest ally, Rustam Khan of Shibarghan. He had recently plundered a group of nomadic Ersari Turkmans who had fled Panjdeh the previous year to escape the exactions of Sher Muhammad Khan Hazara.[138] Hoping to find more amenable surroundings in the Chahar Wilayat, these Turkman tribesmen had tried to migrate to the borders of the Amu Darya, passing through Shibarghan *en route*.

Rustam Khan, hearing of the unauthorised movement of the tribe through his territory, sent troops to force them to settle within his borders. The Turkmans, however, refused to comply with this demand, whereupon Rustam Khan "choupawed them,"[139] seizing a large number of sheep and cattle in the process. The Turkmans sent a frantic appeal to Nasrullah Khan for protection, thereby providing the Manghit ruler with the excuse he needed to mount a show of force in the Chahar Wilayat. Dunmast Bi was given command of a section of the Bukharan army and sent to Shibarghan.

Rustam Khan, in response, promptly appealed for help from his father-in-law at Maimana. Mizrab Khan, obliged to Rustam Khan for his support in the long-running dispute with Sar-i Pul, sent a detachment of his best levies to Shibarghan's aid, thus forcing the Bukharan general to open negotiations. In order to save face, Dunmast Bi was allowed to seize an equivalent amount of cattle and sheep from Shibarghan as retribution for Rustam's pillaging of the Turkmans. Rustam Khan, in return, was allowed to settle the Turkmans in his territory and they were given grazing rights around Yangi 'Aruq, on the present Shibarghan-Aqcha road.

Having thus settled the affairs of Balkh, Qunduz and the Chahar Wilayat to his satisfaction, Nasrullah Khan struck camp and returned back across the Amu Darya. Not to be outdone by Murad Beg, Nasrullah, too, ordered sections of the town of Balkh destroyed and then forcibly removed several thousand of its people beyond the Amu Darya (*Gazetteer* (1907) ii, 43-4).[140] Balkh, which had fallen into

[138] Conolly, *Bamiyan to Merve*, 1840. The details of the Bukharan attack on Shibarghan are somewhat confused. Unfortunately, Conolly is our only source.

[139] *Ibid.*

[140] 100,000 people according to this source, but this belief is based partly on Burnes, *Herat*, 1838 and his earlier journals (Burnes 1834) which indicate that enforced migration from Balkh

decline since the establishment of the 'Alid shrine at Mazar-i Sharif in the seventeenth century, was thus dealt a further body-blow to its economic and agricultural importance.[141]

The troubles of the unfortunate Turkmans of Panjdeh, however, continued. Disappointed by the Bukharan 'help', they had been obliged to settle in Shibarghan on terms highly favourable to Rustam Khan. Following the death of Zu'l-Faqar Sher Khan in 1839, their herds were attacked by marauding bands from Sar-i Pul and they left for Maimana where Mizrab Khan relieved them of "many fine horses" after accusing them of causing disturbances.[142] Eventually the Turkmans returned to their old grazing grounds, preferring the devil they knew to the one they did not. The oppression of the Sunni Hazaras and other Aimaq chiefs, however, was as bad as it had ever been and it was only after they had appealed to the Khan Hazrat of Khiva for protection that these Turkman tribesmen finally found some freedom from the exactions of their landlords.[143]

The Persian threat to Balkh faded during the spring of 1838 as the siege of Herat ground ineffectually on until, in September of that same year, Muhammad Shah finally abandoned the attempt to regain control of the area. In Turkistan, during the same period, Murad Beg turned away from his attacks on Balkh and began to raid the border

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had been going on for several years. The claim that the Bukharan army evicted 100,000 people from Balkh to Bukhara is highly unlikely, but such a high figure may refer to the numbers of people who had either fled, been captured or removed by Murad Beg's prolonged campaign as well as by Nasrullah's actions in 1838.

It is interesting to note how the forcible removal, or acquisition, of population was a frequent occurrence during invasions of one state by another, which suggests that the populations of villages and regions were considered to be as much a part of the booty of an expedition as cattle, sheep and other portable property. The reasons for this are complex, but since all the states on both sides of the Amu Darya were engaged in the slave trade, the capture of several thousand individuals during a campaign would realise a considerable revenue for the conqueror, both in terms of sale of these individuals in the slave market, and in ransom money. Frequent epidemics, a series of bloody wars, high child mortality and low life-expectancy, combined with inefficient management of the resources (natural as well as human) available to these states, meant that areas which had been prosperous and well-populated two centuries before, were now barren or lying fallow. The influx of new families, whether by forcible removal or by encouraging migration and refugees, would thus mean additional revenues for the state, accrued by direct taxation and, indirectly, through their economic activities. Extra families also meant more men available to serve in the army, etc. For the chronic economic condition of Afghanistan at this period, see Gregorian, chapter 3.

[141] Mazar-i Sharif seems to have been unaffected by the Bukharan devastations, probably because of its sanctity. However, it may well have suffered economically as a result of Murad Beg's depopulation of the Hazhda Nahr system.

[142] *Ibid.*

[143] *Ibid.* Conolly says that following Maimana's peace treaty with the Asaf al-Daula, the Khan Hazrat of Khiva actually occupied Panjdeh for a while.

areas north of Bamiyan. This brought him into direct confrontation with Dost Muhammad Khan of Kabul (Harlan 1939, 36). In the winter of 1838, the Afghan Amir sent his son, Muhammad Akram Khan, with an army of over three and a half thousand men, northwards from Bamiyan to attack and punish the Qataghanid ruler for his insolence. In this, Dost Muhammad was aided significantly by the Mir Wali of Khulm, who had broken free from Qunduz and re-established the long-standing alliance with the rulers of Kabul (Harlan 1939, 92-5, 101). In a short campaign, Murad Beg was soundly defeated and the two strategic fortresses of Saighan and Kahmard were incorporated into Dost Muhammad Khan's realms. The Afghan Amir thus secured a foothold north of Bamiyan, a position from which he could control the north-south trade route (Harlan 1939, 36; Yapp 1962).

Meanwhile, Murad Beg's defeat precipitated a series of internal challenges to his authority with the consequence that the power of Qunduz went into a swift and terminal decline. Into the power vacuum stepped the Mir Wali of Khulm, who reasserted his family's dominance of the western marches of the appanage (Harlan 1939, 39; Yapp 1962).

Although in this, his first campaign against an amir beyond the Hindu Kush, Dost Muhammad had succeeded in establishing friendly relations with the ruler who controlled the northern gateway to Kabul, to the south his position as Amir of Kabul was threatened by the advance of a joint British-Sikh force into Afghanistan. Despite the Persian abandonment of the siege of Herat in September 1838, which removed one of the main reasons for the British invasion of Afghanistan (Kaye (1874) i, 384-5), Calcutta's decision to march on Kabul was not rescinded. In October 1838, the Simla Declaration "bluntly spelled out [Britain's] intentions; the invasion of Afghan territory and the restoration of the Sadozai exiled King, Shuja ul-Mulk" (Dupree 1978, 367). By the end of April 1839 the 'Army of the Indus', as the invading force was called, had occupied Qandahar and by August Kabul itself had fallen. Dost Muhammad Khan, deserted by his followers, fled to his ally, Mir Wali and, from the sanctuary of Khulm, sent messages to the rulers of the surrounding amirs calling for a *jihad* against the infidel (Yapp 1962).

*Dr Lord's Forward Policy in Turkistan, 1839-1840*

Almost as soon as the British had established their headquarters in Kabul, one of the most pressing tasks facing them was to monitor the activities of Dost Muhammad in Turkistan. It soon became apparent that very little was known about the geography or politics of the amirid states beyond the Hindu Kush. British intelligence-gathering operations had, to this point, been mainly concentrated on the Afghan-controlled city-states of Herat, Qandahar and Kabul. What little information there was about the Uzbek states of Balkh and Turkistan was either outdated, inaccurate or misleading (Yapp 1980, 352). Nor could they rely on Shah Shuja' al-Mulk, for he had been in exile in India for decades and was more out of touch with political developments in Afghanistan than the British or Sikhs. Indeed, when Shah Shuja' had been Amir, Balkh had been a foreign country which attracted little interest south of the Hindu Kush.

This paucity of information about the Uzbek principalities, contributed further to the growing British misconceptions about the appanage. Initially, British officials were forced to rely heavily on the very limited knowledge of Alexander Burnes and Dr Lord, who were the only two European member of the Army of the Indus who had ever travelled in the region. This ignorance of the country beyond the Hindu Kush was quite astonishing, considering the situation. Sir William Macnaughten, the British Envoy at the Court of Shah Shuja', actually believed that Balkh was part of the Kingdom of Kabul and does not seem to have realised that at the time the region was ruled by a man appointed by Bukhara (Yapp 1980, 354). When he was informed of the true situation, Macnaughten merely dismissed the whole matter saying that "the conduct of the King of Bukhara," who by this time was holding the British officer, Colonel Stoddard, in one of his prisons, did not "merit any consideration."[144]

Calcutta, more concerned at this *lacuna* in its intelligence operation than the political officers in Kabul, urged Macnaughten to acquire "the fullest and most accurate information of the political condition of the countries lying near the Oxus," in order to assess "the practicability of maintaining the power of Shah Shooja and the influence of the British nation in that quarter of Asia."[145] However, before

[144] *Macnaughten to Maddock*, 30 Oct. 1839; *Nazir Khan Ollah at Bokhara to Macnaughten*, 24 Sept. (15 Rajab) 1839, ESL:144, encl. 11 (Secret & Confidential), no. 2.
[145] *Maddock to Macnaughten*, 2 Sept. 1839, ESL:144, encl. 37 [red], no. 7.

this request reached Kabul, Macnaughten had appointed Dr. Lord, who had already spent time in Qunduz, as a Political Assistant and sent him to Khulm[146] with orders to, "get friends of Shah Shooja ... at Koodooz and Khoolum and eject Dost Mahomed, using even public money for that purpose."[147] The reason for this move was the fear that Dost Muhammad would make his base in the unknown and inaccessible Chahar Wilayat, from where he could threaten both Herat and Kabul with impunity, possibly with Persian support.[148] Lord's brief was to try and prevent any such hypothetical alliance.

Lord, like many of the young political and military officers who must bear much of the blame for the fiasco of the first Anglo-Afghan War, had much more ambitious plans. Almost as soon as he had left for the north, he wrote to Macnaughten recommending the annexation of the whole of the region between the Hindu Kush and the Amu Darya to the realm of Shah Shuja'. Although this suggestion was rejected out of hand, Lord continued to advocate this aggressive policy of annexation using every means at his disposal. One of the most effective ways he promoted his views was by filing alarmist reports about the situation in Balkh which, at best, were based on bazaar gossip and, at the worst, probably fabrication. When Lord reported that Dost Muhammad Khan and the Mir Wali had entered into an anti-British alliance with their old enemy, Murad Beg of Qunduz, Macnaughten promised to send a brigade of Company troops beyond the Hindu Kush the following spring. Later, the British Envoy was told that the amirs who ruled the country between Bamiyan and Balkh were willing to submit to Shah Shuja'. On another occasion Lord claimed that Dost Muhammad and the Mir Wali planned to attack Kahmard, a fort to the north of Bamiyan. Dost Muhammad Khan was planning to go to Persia to enlist Qajar support, whilst, on another occasion, the Amir was said to have been invited to Bukhara by Nasrullah Khan, who had promised him one of his daughters in marriage, "with the province of Balk as a dowry" and an army of twelve thousand men for the conquest of Bamiyan (Stocqueler 72; Yapp 1980, 353-4).

Lord even found an excuse not to go to Khulm and to make his base at Bamiyan (Yapp 1980, 353). From this strategic outpost, and

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[146] Dr P. B. Lord (1808-1840) was a medical doctor. For a more detailed discussion of Lord's aggressive frontier policy towards Khulm, see Yapp 1962 & 1980, 351-61.

[147] *Macnaughten to Lord*, 20 Aug. 1839, ESL:144, encl. 37 [red], no. 36.

[148] *Ibid.*

despite the onset of the Afghan winter, Lord lost no time in spreading the fear of a British invasion throughout Qataghan. The strategic district of Saighan, which lay on the north-south trade routes to the Amu Darya, was in turmoil. After its return to Afghan control, following Dost Muhammad Khan's campaign against Murad Beg, the area had become "torn by internal dissensions" due to a bitter internal dispute over the matter of the succession (Stocqueler, 66). One of the pretenders, Qilij Beg, sought the help of the Mir Wali of Khulm, who sent several hundred Uzbek troops, under his son, Ghulam Beg, and laid siege to Sar-i Sang fort. Muhammad 'Ali Beg, Qilij Beg's main rival, applied to Dr. Lord to support his claim. Using the excuse that, "a confidential follower of the ex-Ameer was in the camp of the besiegers and ... in the event of the capture of the place, this man was to have been nominated Governor in the name of Dost Mahomed Khan" (Stocqueler, 66), Lord sent Qilij Beg an ultimatum to lift the siege. When this expired without reply, he sent a force to relieve Muhammad 'Ali Beg which surprised the besiegers and forced Ghulam Beg to retreat (Yapp 1980, 354; Stocqueler, 68ff.). Having succeeded in repelling the attack by the Mir Wali and his allies, Lord promptly had the Afghan flag raised and claimed Saighan for Shah Shuja' (Yapp 1980, 354-5).

Next Lord turned his attention to the Chahar Wilayat. In November 1839 he used some of the public money at his disposal to send a "trusty man" to Sar-i Pul, Maimana, Shibarghan and Andkhui, "for the purpose of ascertaining how they are affected towards the Shah." This agent carried "secret credentials empowering him to induce these chiefs to intercept Dost Mohummud's flight towards Meshed should he attempt going in that direction."[149] By this time Lord's activities on this most sensitive of frontiers, was beginning to cause alarm both in Kabul and Calcutta. Macnaughten's reply to Lord's latest initiative sought to control the impetuosity of his political officer who was acting almost independently:

> I am ... doubtful as to the propriety of your mission to the chiefs of Sireepool, Shibbergaun, Andkoee and Meimuna. Those chiefs now owe allegiance to Bokhara and by sounding them as to how they are affected towards the Shah they may be induced to suppose that it is His Majesty's desire to extend his influence over those countries.... The circulation of such rumours, especially if it reached the Shah of Bokhara, might be extremely prejudicial to the interests of

[149] *Lord to Macnaughten*, 27 Nov. 1839, ESL:145, encl. 6 [black], no. 12. No report of this agent survives in the India Office Records.

> Shah Shooja.... I trust that you will observe the greatest caution in your communications with the chiefs in your neighbourhood so as to avoid compromising His Majesty's government....[150]

Macnaughten's fears about Bukharan intervention had little effect on Lord. In March 1840 he submitted detailed plans to the British Envoy for an invasion of Balkh in the following year. The force was to consist of "three regiments of the line, one of cavalry, the Gurkha corps, Horse Artillery, mortar battery, and 3,000 good Afghan cavalry."[151] Pressure was maintained on the amirs of Balkh province to bring them under Shah Shuja''s authority and, apparently in complete disregard of his superior's warning to tread carefully, Lord began to chip away at the fringes of Khulm's territory, moving the Afghan border imperceptibly northwards. Exploiting Macnaughten's ignorance of the geography of the area, Lord informed the British Envoy that the Kahmard valley, some thirty miles beyond Saighan, was the 'natural' defensive border of Afghan domains. Trusting his agent's opinion, Macnaughten consented to the area's annexation and, without further ado Bajgah, a village located at a particularly narrow part of the Kahmard valley, was occupied (Yapp 1980, 355). This new acquisition put Lord in a strong position to bully the Mir Wali. Letters, which contained both threats and promises, were sent to the amir. To make the point even more strongly, a group of surveyors was sent towards Aibak to report on the state of the road (Burslem 1846; Yapp 1980, 356ff.).

The Mir Wali, unaware that Lord had no official sanction for his Balkh policy, sought to exploit the British presence to his own advantage, realising that by claiming to act in the interests of Shah Shuja' and, by implication, his foreign sponsors, he could expand his influence into the Chahar Wilayat, where the native rulers were almost completely ignorant of the true state of affairs to the south. In the spring of 1840 the aged Zu'l-Faqar Sher Khan of Sar-i Pul finally passed away. Before his death, this indomitable ruler had divided his territory between his two sons. The eldest,[152] Mahmud Khan, [*c.*1840-1851],[153] was given charge of Sar-i Pul proper with twelve

[150] *Macnaughten to Lord*, 30 Dec. 1839, ESL:145, encl. 6 [black], no. 3.

[151] *Lord to Macnaughten*, 25 March 1840, ESL:150, encl. 64, no. 2.

[152] Harlan 1939, 29 says they were Zu'l-Faqar's brothers, but this is very unlikely given the age of Zu'l-Faqar Sher when he died and the age of the eldest, Mahmud.

[153] Pottinger says both the eldest and youngest sons of Zu'l-Faqar Sher Khan were called Muhammad. Lord in his letters to Macnaughten calls the ruler of Sar-i Pul, Muhammad, *Lord to Macnaughten*, 5 June 1840, ESL:150, encl. 85, no. 5. Neither Lord nor Pottinger actually met

hundred men at his command. Mahmud's half-brother, Qilij Khan, assisted by his younger full brother, Muhammad, ruled over the frontier district of Qurchi in the upper Shirin Tagab valley, where he had some seven hundred troops.[154] Even before their father died, there had been trouble between Mahmud and Qilij (Harlan 1939, 29). Once their father had passed on, open warfare broke out as the two brothers disputed the succession. Qilij Khan in Qurchi, supported by Muhammad Khan, joined forces with their father's old enemies, Mizrab Khan of Maimana and Rustam Khan of Shibarghan. Supported by troops from Maimana, Qilij Khan marched across the Mirza Wulang pass, whilst Rustam Khan sent an army southwards in a joint attack on Mahmud, who was holed up in the capital. The two columns converged at the fort of "Sagharah" (Sayad?) some six miles or so southwest of Sar-i Pul.[155] Even though he had a reputation for bravery and daring (Ferrier 1857, 225), Mahmud Khan was no match for the forces ranged against him and retreated into the citadel, appealing to the Mir Wali of Khulm, to come to his rescue (Ferrier 1857, 225).[156]

The Mir Wali seized his opportunity and marched to the relief of his beleaguered son-in-law, but first made sure that he was not going to be attacked by the Bukharan governor in Balkh by forcing 'Abd al-Jabbar Bi out of the Hazhda Nahr and installing the eldest son of Ishan Naqib, Ishan Saiyid Uraq. He, in turn, appointed his younger brother, Ishan Sudur, to the sub-governorship of Aqcha, which guarded the main road to Bukhara and the Amu Darya (*Gazetteer* (1907) ii, 43; Peacocke, 324; Talboys Wheeler, 36; Yapp 1962,

the eldest son of Zu'l-Faqar Sher Khan, though Lord corresponded with him and clerks frequently mistook the word 'Muhammad' for 'Mahmud'. Ferrier 1857, 203 who was in Sar-i Pul in 1845, had several audiences with the ruler of Sar-i Pul, whom he calls Mahmud. That Ferrier's Mahmud is the same individual who ruled Sar-i Pul when Pottinger and Lord were in Lesser Turkistan is reasonably certain, since his relationship as the son-in-law of the Mir Wali of Khulm is referred to by both sources. Following the Afghan invasion of Balkh in 1849, the ruler of Sar-i Pul is sometimes referred to as 'Mahmud' and on other occasions as 'Muhammad' in the English versions of agent's reports filed in the India Office Records. This makes it very difficult to decide whether, from 1849 onwards, the youngest son of Zu'l-Faqar Sher had succeeded his older brother, or whether Mahmud was still alive. However, the evidence suggests that Mahmud lived until *c.* 1860, when his brother, Qilij, succeeded him, though by this time they were both fugitives from the Afghans, living in Maimana. Qilij ruled from *c.* 1851-1861 and only then did the third son, Muhammad, succeed to his father's title. It would be unusual for Muhammad to have succeeded immediately after Mahmud's presumed death. Mahmud was born *c.* 1805; Ferrier 1857, 225 "about forty;" Pottinger, *Memoir*, 1839 "about 35."

[154] Pottinger, *Memoir*, 1839. Ferrier 1857, 225, mentions a fourth brother, Husain Khan, who governed Shibarghan for a brief period in 1846.

[155] *Lord to Macnaughten*, 5 June 1840; *Walee of Khooloom to Lord*, 26 May 1840, ESL:151, encl. 85, no. 5.

[156] *Walee of Khooloom to Lord*, 28 May, 5 June 1840.

513).[157] In the middle of May 1840 the Mir Wali arrived at Behsud,[158] a few miles north of Sar-i Pul, where he discovered, to his alarm, that the enemy forces were far greater than he had anticipated. In an attempt to extract himself from the situation without loss of dignity, the Mir Wali sent ambassadors to Mizrab Khan's camp demanding, in the name of Shah Shuja', that the siege of Sar-i Pul be lifted. In another letter, he informed Lord of his actions and appealed to the British agent and Nawab Akram Khan, who was still in Khulm, to come to his aid.[159]

When the Mir Wali's letter reached Mizrab Khan the Mingid ruler was concerned, for he had no wish to give any further excuse for the British to interfere in his affairs. Maimana was already under pressure from Major Todd, the British agent in Herat (see below). Lord's agents had already been active in the Chahar Wilayat and it was clear that the foreigners were endeavouring to force the region to accept the authority of Shah Shuja'. Believing that the Mir Wali was acting on behalf of the British-backed Amir of Kabul, Mizrab Khan and Rustam Khan lifted the siege and sent ambassadors to the Mir Wali's camp to settle the dispute, which was done, "without receiving anything for themselves." As part of the agreed terms, both Maimana and Shibarghan acknowledged Shah Shuja''s suzerainty and marched their armies back to their own countries.[160]

The Mir Wali was elated with his success. In a campaign lasting a matter of weeks, Khulm had again become one of the most important power brokers in Lesser Turkistan. Balkh was ruled by a governor who was indebted to him for his position, whilst he had succeeded in overawing Shibarghan and Maimana by a brazen bluff and ingratiated himself, in the process, with the new ruler of Sar-i Pul. All he had to do was to find suitable justification for his aggression so that he could divert any British criticism of his actions.

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[157] The exact date of the Mir Wali's action at Balkh is hard to place as the sources give conflicting evidence. Yapp 1962, 513 places it in the following year, that is after the attack on Sar-i Pul, citing Macnaughten's repudiation of the Mir Wali's action as his source, a letter which was written in May 1841. However, this letter was a reaction subsequent to an event that had already taken place some while earlier and I have placed the Mir Wali's ousting of the Bukharan governor in 1840 rather than 1841.

[158] Not to be confused with the Hazara settlement located in Wardak province.

[159] *Lord to Macnaughten*, 25 May, 5 June 1840. According to Lord, Akram Khan had 2,000 Afghan troops in Khulm, *Lord to Macnaughten*, 22 June 1840, ESL:151, encl. 88, no. 3.

[160] *Walee of Khooloom to Lord*, 28 May 1840; *Macnaughten to Lord*, 8 June 1840, ESL:151, encl. 85, no. 5.

In a triumphant letter to Lord, he informed the British Agent that, in the name of Shah Shuja' and the British, he had "caused all the country from Maimana to the river Murghab, Shiberghan as far as the limits of Badalphshan (*sic*) to acknowledge the authority of the great government."[161] The Mir Wali, however, had seriously misunderstood the situation and the character of the British. Lord's policy towards Qataghan led the ruler of Khulm to conclude that the English were planning to incorporate the whole of the Balkh appanage into a greater Afghanistan and he thought that they could be fooled into believing that he was doing their dirty work whilst, in reality, he was merely extending his own power under a flag of convenience. After all, this is exactly what had happened when his father had been an ally of the Amirs of Kabul. Unfortunately for the Mir Wali, Macnaughten saw through the deception and far from congratulating him, the Envoy was extremely angry. Lord was informed that Khulm's intervention in the affairs of the Chahar Wilayat was not acceptable and could not be condoned. Indeed, it was extremely counter-productive to British policy in Afghanistan:

> The whole tenor of the ... chief's conduct towards us has been such as to warrant our adopting towards him that course which is most consistent with our own convenience. He has exercised a forcible interference in the affairs of Sar-i Pul which principality is, nominally at least, subject to Bokhara, and it may suit his present purpose to tender his allegiance to His Majesty, Shah Shoojah ool Moolk with a view to avert the danger by which he may be threatened in consequence of such interference.... He himself is acting the part of an enemy towards us in allowing the family of Dost Mahomed Khan an asylum in Kholoom and authorising them to collect the transit duties of that place which by his own admission belong to His Majesty.[162]

Macnaughten's refusal to endorse Khulm's aggression must have meant a considerable loss of face for the Mir Wali, who appears to have believed that his action in Balkh and Sar-i Pul would have ingratiated him with the British and staved off any military intervention from Bamiyan. When his ploy back-fired, the Mir Wali's position became completely untenable. He was forced to abandon his support for Mahmud Khan and relinquish his influence over Balkh, though Ishan Uraq and his brother continued to govern the area. However, in order to stay in power, Uraq had to agree to strike coins and read the *khutba*

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[161] *Walee of Khooloom to Lord*, 28 May 1840.

[162] *Macnaughten to Lord*, 8 June 1840; cf. *Macnaughten to Lord*, 22 June 1840; Yapp 1980, 510.

in the name of Nasrullah Khan of Bukhara (Talboys Wheeler, 36; Yapp 1962, 510).[163]

In June, a few weeks after his *tour de force* through the Chahar Wilayat, in a bid to prevent an anticipated invasion, envoys from the Mir Wali and Qunduz arrived in Kabul offering to submit formally to Shah Shuja'. Macnaughten, though angry at his agent's proceedings in Bamiyan, astutely played on Khulm's fears and deliberately avoided any suggestion that Lord's 'Forward Policy' was not sanctioned by his superior officers (Yapp 1962, 510ff.; Yapp 1980, 356).[164] Futhermore, Macnaughten sought to exploit the rivalry which existed between Khulm and Qunduz by trying to persuade the envoy from Qunduz to agree to Murad Beg's overthrow of the Mir Wali, though nothing came of this scheme (Yapp 1980, 509). Eventually, the Mir Wali's ambassador, believing that his country was about to be forcibly annexed to Afghan territory, had little option but to agree to pay Shah Shuja' an annual tribute and to allow an Afghan garrison to reside in Khulm (Yapp 1962, 510). Lord's "confidence trick" (Yapp 1980, 336) thus succeeded, at least temporarily, in bringing about the submission of two important Uzbek amirs and for a while Macnaughten and his officials convinced themselves that the pacification of 'Afghanistan' was almost achieved. But they were living in a fool's paradise. Even as the envoys were signing the terms of submission, Khulm was secretly intriguing with Ishan Shuja' al-Din of Mazar-i Sharif and the rulers of Qunduz and Sar-i Pul to declare a *jihad* against the British (Yapp 1980, 510).[165]

### *Dost Muhuammad Khan in Bukhara and Balkh, 1840*

Meanwhile, Dost Muhammad Khan, uncertain of Khulm's intentions and in defiance of a highly unfavourable augury (n. 1 above), fled to Bukhara with a large entourage. Dost Muhammad, like the son of Shah Kamran earlier, was not well received and given no state allowance. Soon the Afghan refugees were in such financial straights that

[163] The contemporary accounts do not mention the name of the ruler of Balkh after the Mir Wali relinquished his rights there. Talboys Wheeler says Balkh was returned to the Governor of Aqcha, i.e. Ishan Uraq (cf. *Gazetteer* (1907) ii, 43-4; Peacocke, 324). In 1845, Ferrier 1857, 202 records that Ishan Uraq was governor of Aqcha and Ishan Sudur, Wali of Balkh, though it was certainly the other way around.

[164] Ironically, in May 1840, Lord Auckland actually sanctioned a limited advance to the Amu Darya under certain strict conditions, but the dispatch authorising this arrived too late to be of any use (Yapp 1980, 357).

[165] *Lord to Macnaughten*, 22 June 1840.

they were forced to sell their weapons and armour. Although the sardar was eventually granted permission to leave, Dost Muhammad discovered, just in time, that Nasrullah Khan had given orders that the boat which was to take him across the Amu Darya should conveniently sink as soon as they had left the shore. When the Bukharan Khan realised that Dost Muhammad was aware of the assassination attempt, the armed guard who had accompanied the Afghan ruler forced him to return to Bukhara. A short while later, a number of senior members of the Amir's party tried to escape, but were caught and all the refugees were imprisoned, though subsequently Nasrullah Khan released a number of Dost Muhammad's party so they could arrange for the Amir's family to be sent to Kabul (Katib i, 151-3).

As matters went from bad to worse, members of Dost Muhammad's family advised him not to worry about their fate but to seek his own safety in flight. The Amir secretly purchased a horse and, disguised as a dervish, made good his escape to Shahr-i Sabz. In response, Nasrullah Khan promptly threw Sardar Akbar Khan, the heir apparent to the Kabul throne, into the *Siya Chah*, or Black Well. A large party of cavalry was sent out in pursuit of Dost Muhammad Khan, but it was too late. The *Amir-i Kabir* was given sanctuary by a Kabuli family in Shahr-i Sabz but, when the governor of Shahr-i Sabz, who was at odds with Bukhara, heard that such a distinguished personage was in the city, he put the government guest house at Dost Muhammad's disposal. Aided by a guard of seven hundred cavalry provided by the governor, Dost Muhammad Khan recrossed the Amu Darya without further trouble and made his way to Qunduz. However, the Amir was never to forget the treatment he had received at the hands of the Manghit ruler and he vowed to avenge the insult, a personal vendetta which was to have an important influence on the subsequent course of Central Asian history (Katib i, 157).

Dost Muhammad reached Qataghan around August 1840, just over a month after Khulm and Qunduz had signed the treaty in Kabul. He was warmly welcomed and, accompanied by five thousand cavalry from the region, travelled onwards to Aibak where the Mir Wali, still recovering from the humiliation of the Sar-i Pul fiasco and the treaty with Shah Shuja', raised the flag of *jihad*. Amidst rumours that Dost Muhammad Khan would make concessions to the Uzbeks, including appointing the Mir Wali as his wazir if Kabul were recaptured from the invaders, hundreds of Uzbeks flocked to the Amir's standard (Katib i, 157-8; Yapp 1962, 511-2). Thus, within a matter of weeks,

the treaty between Qataghan and Kabul was not worth the paper it had been written on.

After assembling at Aibak, the force, consisting mainly of Uzbeks, Tajiks and Turkmans, marched south and attacked the British outpost at Bajgah in such strength that Dr. Lord had to retreat to Bamiyan (Stocqueler, 91ff.; Yapp 1962, 511-3 & 1980, 358). However, shortly after this success, the Mir Wali became extremely suspicious about Dost Muhammad's intentions, particularly in respect of Balkh. Both he and Murad Beg, therefore, withdrew support for him and set out to mend their bridges with the British and Shah Shuja' al-Mulk. On 28 September a second treaty between the rulers of Qataghan and the Kabul government was signed, which contained far more favourable terms for the Mir Wali, as it provided for the return of Kahmard and, eventually, Saighan (Yapp 1962, 512-3).

This agreement signalled the end of Khulm and Turkistan's direct involvement in the First Anglo-Afghan War. Not only so, but it was to be the final nail in the coffin of Lord's 'Forward Policy', although his frontier philosophy continued to permeate British attitudes to Balkh for the next century. By the winter of 1840, Bamiyan had been abandoned and Charikar, in the Koh Daman valley, was the most forward British position in 'Northern Afghanistan' (Macrory, 115; Yapp 1980, 359).

The withdrawal of support by the Uzbek amirs of Qataghan left Dost Muhammad Khan in limbo. Qandahar, Jalalabad and Kabul were occupied by British troops and he was cut off from his natural supporters, the Afghan tribes. Behind him, the Uzbeks of Qataghan and Lesser Turkistan had realised that there was nothing to be gained by helping the Amir to regain power, for a weak, central government was very much in their interests. Nor could Dost Muhammad expect any help from Shah Kamran, the Sadozai ruler of Herat, for he was in receipt of an extremely generous British subsidy and was not eager to slay the goose which continued to lay so many golden eggs. Caught between the upper and nether millstones, the Amir-i Kabir had to make a difficult decision.

In the end, Dost Muhammad Khan probably reckoned that it was too risky to try and make a dash for the Qandahar region, yet he could scarcely hope to seize Kabul without a sizeable army whose racial and tribal loyalties were predominantly the same as his own. With only a few followers left and the icy, mountain winter approaching, Dost Muhammad tried, unsuccessfully, to win over the Hazaras, and

merely succeeded in alienating the Mir Wali even further (Katib i, 157-8; Yapp 1962, 512-3).[166]

Next he tried his luck with the Afghan amirs of Kohistan, who had shown signs of discontent with the regime of Shah Shuja'. Unrest in Koh Daman had led to a British force being sent to the area where, as a consequence of the activities of the ubiquitous Alexander Burnes, a series of confrontations ensued between the invaders and local amirs. Encouraged by reports and letters which hinted that, if the Amir came to the area, the whole district would rise in his favour, Dost Muhammad Khan headed for Charikar. On 2 November 1840, at Parwan Darra, there was an indecisive encounter with a British force, during which Dr. Lord, and a number of other officers, were cut to pieces when Shah Shuja''s native cavalry refused to charge the enemy's ranks (Yapp 1960, 516-9). The following day Dost Muhammad Khan, in what was probably one of the most extraordinary decisions in an extraordinary war, rode into Kabul, virtually unaccompanied, and voluntarily signified his submission to British authority by placing his forehead against the stirrup of the astonished British envoy, Sir William Macnaughten, who was out for his evening ride (Katib i, 158-9; Macrory, 116; Stocqueler, 138).

*The 'Surrender' of Dost Muhammad Khan*

The significance of the Amir-i Kabir's action, and the reason for his most puzzling decision to abandon the armed struggle, has excited little comment from scholars, who either record the bare details of Dost Muhammad Khan's arrival in Kabul and his subsequent exile to India before passing on to other matters (e.g. Stocqueler, 138-9; Yapp 1980, 359), or offer a variety of explanations, some quite bizarre, for the Amir's unexpected action (e.g. Dupree 1978, 382; Fraser-Tytler, 115).

Not unexpectedly, British historians of the last century, and the more populist writers who follow uncritically in their wake, use this occasion to indulge in jingoistic propaganda. According to this school of thought, the Amir, "deeply impressed" by the bravery (*sic*) of the British officers at Parwan Darra, and despairing that he and, by implication, the Afghan nation as a whole, could withstand the rising

[166] The Amir's representative, Mirza Sunni Khan, remained in Khulm throughout the period of Dost Muhammad Khan's exile, during which time he "acquired considerable influence over the Uzbeks and Turkmans," *Memorandum on the Northern Boundaries of Affghanistan*, 1869.

star of the British with their superior technology and organisation, decided to accept the inevitable and surrender, a belief which, it is argued, was reinforced by his subsequent exile in India (e.g. Edwardes, 60; Norris, 4-5; Macrory, 115, *et al.*). Yet the recent military operations in the Koh Daman had starkly exposed the vulnerability of Shah Shuja''s native troops and demonstrated that, if the British wished to keep him in power, it could only be achieved by committing a large number of their own, regular troops to Afghanistan, and that for the foreseeable future. Subsequently, a number of letters of support for Dost Muhammad Khan from Afghan tribal leaders fell into the hands of the British, further indication that the Amir was far from beaten or defeated (Yapp 1960, 517-9).

Others explain the Amir's action by claiming that Dost Muhammad Khan was worried about his family, who had been surrendered to the British by the Mir Wali earlier in the year (Yapp 1980, 359), even though the Amir had previously declared that, when it came to resisting the invaders, it was as if he had no family. Fraser-Tytler, on the other hand, merely dismisses the whole matter by asserting that the Afghan leader had "shot his bolt" (Fraser-Tytler, 115)

Dupree, though admitting that Dost Muhammad Khan's action continues to puzzle both western and Afghan historians, advances the theory that his surrender was rooted in "the tribalism of Afghan cultural patterns" (Dupree 1978, 382). It does not require a great deal of knowledge of Pushtun tribal tradition to realise how hollow this explanation sounds, though one must give Dupree credit for recognising that something of profound significance in the history of Afghanistan had taken place. Even a passing acquaintance with Pushtu *landai* poetry, the verse of Khushhal Khan Khattak or, more recently, the Afghan tribes' almost suicidal resistance to the Soviet occupation of their country, shows that no self-respecting Pushtun gives up the fight just because he is outnumbered, or his enemy is better armed and organised. Custom, religion, tribal law and his own honour demand that the enemy, especially if he is an infidel, must be expelled, even if this means the loss of all material possessions or even martyrdom.

All the evidence from Dost Muhammad Khan's life suggests that he was of the same persuasion. Only a matter of months prior to his 'surrender' he declared, in his famous phrase, that he was like a wooden spoon which, though tossed hither or thither, remained unharmed by the experience. Such a statement indicated an unflinching resolve to continue the struggle whatever the odds. Nor is there the

slightest suggestion, either by western or Afghan historians, that the Amir's submission was an act of capitulation or betrayal. Yet we cannot dismiss the Amir's grasping of the stirrup as some oriental eccentricity, even if Macnaughten or British colonial historians tended to regard it as such.

If we are to seek an explanation for Dost Muhammad Khan's decision in the context of the indigenous culture, as Dupree rightly suggests, then we must find it not in some untenable notion that the Amir felt honour had been satisfied, but in the attitude that, in any apparent compromise with the enemy, the goal must remain the same. It is just that different, and perhaps more subtle, means are being employed. As far as the end that Dost Muhammad Khan had in mind, we know that his lifelong ambition had always been to strengthen the emerging Afghan monarchical system and unite the country under a single leader. His dealings with Macnaughten, therefore, have to be seen as the use of somewhat different means to this end.

No historian, apparently, has yet commented on the significance of the actual action of Dost Muhammad Khan grasping Macnaughten's stirrup. Yet the key to understanding the reason for Dost Muhammad's decision to go to Kabul, lies in this act. In the context of Central Asian culture, this custom is never associated with the unconditional surrender of a defeated foe. Depending on the relationship of the conquered to the conqueror, the extent of the defeat suffered, the terms demanded by the conquering power, and so forth, various protocols were observed. At the very extreme, rebellious feudatories, when finally brought to heel, would often present themselves before the Imperial Presence clothes in a shroud and with a sword or noose hanging from their necks, to symbolise that they recognised they were worthy of death (e.g. Juzjani i, 36-7). On such occasions the petitioner, more than likely heavily guarded and manacled, would fling himself at the feet of the conqueror and sue for mercy. In the case of lesser offences, the petitioner would still not dare to approach the throne until granted permission, or might offer to kiss the victor's shadow or feet.

*Rikab g(e)riftan,* within the Central Asian system of protocol, symbolises a quite different sort of master-servant relationship and has nothing to do with the capitulation, defeat or surrender of an enemy. Persian has several phrases (*rasmi rikabi, rikabi homayun*, etc.) which juxtaposes the Persian word for 'stirrup' with the supreme authority and position of the Emperor, Sultan or Shah. These phrases all refer

to the political relationship which pertains between the superior, sovereign, or imperial power and authorities of a subordinate, or subordinated, kind.

In the Turco-Mongolian world a similar pattern can be detected. The nobles at the court of Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni were said to be "in attendance at his [i.e. the Sultan's] stirrup" (Juzjani i, 118). In the seventeenth century, whenever Nazr Muhammad Khan, the great Tuqay-Timurid wali of Balkh, was visited by, or visited, his elder brother, Imam Quli Khan, Nazr Muhammad dismounted and walked at the side of the Khan's horse, whilst, at the same time, holding his brother's stirrup in his hand (Burton, 26-7; see also Juzjani ii, 1052). In so doing, Nazr Muhammad Khan symbolised his acceptance of Imam Quli's superiority as the Supreme Khan. Even though Nazr Muhammad had the right of life and death within the Balkh appanage, he sought to reassure his elder brother that, when it came to ultimate sovereign authority within the Chingizid realms, Balkh was the inferior power. Nazr Muhammad thus indicated publicly that he had no wish to challenge his brother's position and that he continued to uphold the Chingizid order. In such instances there is no suggestion of the stirrup-holder being under threat of punishment for rebellion; on the contrary, it indicated that the individual held an important position within the empire. Dost Muhammad Khan's action can be only interpreted in the light of these ancient and widely-held rules of oriental protocol. After all, before the Afghans became independent they had been subjects of both the Safawids and Mughals and were familiar with the etiquette which obtained at both Imperial courts.

It would seem reasonable, therefore, to suggest, that Dost Muhammad Khan neither capitulated nor surrendered to Macnaughten, nor was his action an admission of defeat (see Katib i, 158-9). Had this been so, we could have expected the Amir to have lost all public sympathy and credibility amongst the Afghans. It is interesting, in this context, to note that, unlike Shah Shuja' al-Mulk and, to a lesser degree, subsequent Amirs of Afghanistan, Dost Muhammad's reputation, in respect of his dealings with the British, has emerged untarnished despite this act which the British and colonial historians generally interpreted as unconditional surrender.

Dost Muhammad Khan's grasping of Macnaughten's stirrup was his means of signifying his acceptance of the fact that the mantle of supreme sovereignty over India and Central Asia had fallen on the British and, like the Mughal Emperors whom they had surplanted, the

East India Company now held the right to appoint the ruler of his country. As a monarch in his own right, Dost Muhammad Khan also indicated to Macnaughten, the supreme representative of British *civil* power in Afghanistan, that he was prepared to co-operate with the 'new world order', rather than to resist it. However, in doing so, he made it plain that he would do so only as a ruler in his own right, and not like the quisling, Shah Shuja', who required the presence of a foreign, infidel, army to keep him on the throne (see Katib i, 159).

It is significant that Atkinson, in his famous and romanticised drawing of Dost Muhammad Khan's submission (Macrory, facing page 192), depicts the Amir adopting not a cowed, feudal posture, before Macnaughten, but as a highly dignified sovereign shaking the British Envoy by the hand. Although the *Siraj al-Tawarikh* records that, following an exchange of greetings and the formal submission, it was Macnaughten who offered Dost Muhammad Khan his hand (Katib i, 159), a casual viewer, unaware of the historical context of the picture, could be forgiven for thinking that Atkinson's sketch was actually depicting the amicable conclusion of a treaty of friendship between an oriental potentate and a British envoy. The symbolism of the handshake is thus as significant, in terms of European iconography, as is the grasping of the stirrup to Central Asian protocol.

Even before the occupation of southern Afghanistan, Dost Muhammad Khan had demonstrated to Burnes his willingness to sign a treaty with the British, doubtless realising even then that in order to unite the Afghan tribes he needed to live in peace with his powerful southern neighbour. The stumbling block was, that there was no honour in signing an agreement which was all to the advantage of the other side, and the Burnes negotiations were broke off. The Amir's flight to Khulm, following the British occupation, meant he was a refugee in what was still, for an Afghan, a foreign country. The region was governed by amirs whose linguistic, tribal, historical and political affinities were totally different from his own. He represented the new, Durrani, order; the Uzbeks were the inheritors of the half millennium of Chingizid supremacy, a supremacy which the Afghans had long chafed and suffered under when subjects of the Mughals. Thus, the coolness of Dost Muhammad's reception in Bukhara cannot come as a surprise, for Nasrullah Khan was the most powerful, living representative of the rival Chingizid order. Neither the amirs of Balkh, nor the Manghits, had the remotest interest in helping re-establish a strong, centralising Afghan ruler in Kabul, for this would pose a

serious threat to their own interests in Balkh and, possibly, in Transoxiana as well. Dost Muhammad Khan's forefathers had all interfered, to one degree or another, in the affairs of Balkh and only a matter of months previously, Dost Muhammad Khan had sent his army across the Hindu Kush and dealt a mortal blow to the power of Murad Beg of Qunduz. Not only so, but he had even threatened Bukhara's control over Balkh. The antipathy between Nasrullah Khan and Dost Muhammad Khan, therefore, can be traced much further back and ran far deeper than the treatment meted out to the Amir and his relatives during his short period of exile. Underlying the bad blood was a power struggle for the possession of one of the most productive regions of Central Asia, the province of Balkh and the Hazdha Nahr.

After his return across the Amu Darya, the extent of the Uzbek amirs' assistance to the Afghan's cause was limited to the recapture of Kahmard and Saighan, both places which, historically, had been part of the Tuqay-Timurid dominions, but which had recently been unilaterally annexed to Afghanistan by Dr Lord. Once these ancient possessions were retaken, the amirs left Dost Muhammad to fend for himself. Consequently, the Amir-i Kabir, bereft of support and cut off from the Pushtun heartlands south of the Hindu Kush, was unable to raise an army of sufficient size to march on Kabul. To stay at large in the Hazarajat or Balkh was to run the risk of betrayal, capture or assassination. The only alternative for any long-term future, was to place himself in the hands of the British, knowing they would treat him well, and bide his time until the foreigners were forced to withdraw or abandon their support for the unpopular and aged Shah Shuja', at which time Britain would have to face the issue of the Afghan succession. Provided he showed that his desire for friendship with the British had been unaffected by the invasion and that he was prepared to forget, if not forgive, there was a distinct possibility that the Indian authorities would allow him to return to Afghanistan and fill the power vacuum.

Such an idea may also have been in the minds of the British when Dost Muhammad surrendered. Shah Shuja' had, not unexpectedly, asked for the Amir-i Kabir to be handed over to him for execution (Macrory, 114). Instead, Macnaughten treated Dost Muhammad not so much as a government prisoner but as a state guest. When it came to sending him to India, the British envoy almost apologised to the Amir and requested the administration that he be treated with "all liberality" (Dupree 1978, 382). Indeed, Macnaughten tacitly admitted

that he had a greater respect for Dost Muhammad Khan than Shah Shuja'. When the Amir arrived in India, his treatment was no less regal. Later, Dost Muhammad Khan admitted that this period of exile taught him much about the British and this first-hand exposure to what was happening in India appears to have reinforced his belief that the best way forward was for the Afghans to co-operate with the British rather than live at perpetual war with them (Gregorian, 81; Macrory, 116-7; Stocqueler, 140). Finally, in support of this argument, we must take into account how, following the failure of the expedition in Afghanistan, the British, who had villified Dost Muhammad Khan prior to the invasion, remarkably allowed him to return to Afghanistan and resume the reins of power without, apparently, any formal agreement or treaty. To do so was either an act of supreme folly, or a recognition by the British that their and the Afghan Amir's interests in Central Asia were, essentially, the same.

*Britian, Herat and the Chahar Wilayat, 1839-1842*

Lord was not alone in his ambition to extend British power to the banks of the Amu Darya. Pottinger and, after him, D'Arcy Todd, the British agents in Herat, also espoused the same cause. After the Persians abandoned the siege in September 1838, Eldred Pottinger stayed on as Political Officer, becoming more and more embroiled in the internal politics of Herat and Badghis. His advocacy of an enlarged Afghanistan was justified on the grounds of moral, economic and political imperatives. Like many of his contemporaries he was appalled at the "abominable traffic"[167] of the slave trade which was conducted by the Uzbek, Turkman and Aimaq states on both sides of the Amu Darya but in which Herat, too, was deeply implicated.[168] The suppression of this trade was, in Pottinger's view, sufficient justification for intervention, but there was also the need to prevent an Uzbek coalition forming against Shah Shuja'. Pottinger too, like Burnes, saw considerable commercial advantages in opening the Amu Darya as an avenue for British goods from India.[169]

During the winter of 1838/9 Yar Muhammad and Pottinger had a series of meetings in which the status of the Chahar Wilayat was

[167] *Pottinger to Macnaughten*, 25 May 1839, ESL:141, encl. 33, no. 3.
[168] According to Conolly, Herat was the main supplier of slaves to the Central Asian markets during 1838-40, Conolly, *Bamiyan to Merve*, 1840.
[169] *Pottinger to Macnaughten*, 25 May 1839.

discussed at some length. It would not have required much intelligence for Yar Muhammad Khan to realise that Pottinger had little time for the independent status of the countries north of the Hindu Kush. In this respect Pottinger and Yar Muhammad had much in common.

The wazir, seeing an opportunity to extend Herat's frontiers, became "very pressing" and urged Pottinger to seek permission from his superiors for the annexation of Maimana and Andkhui.[170] Trusting to British ignorance of the pre-Afghan history of Balkh, Yar Muhammad justified Herat's claim to sovereignty on the basis of the mutual defence treaty which Maimana and other states of the Chahar Wilayat had signed in *c.* 1833. Pottinger, who needed little convincing, wrote to Macnaughten claiming that these territories were "only appendages of the Dourany crown ... ready to drop into the hands of the first army that invades them" and recommending that they should be occupied "immediately." However, he scrupled about Herat acting as proxy for British policy because of the "barbarous troops" and the "ravages" that Yar Muhammad "would be unable to prevent his men making."[171] Instead, Pottinger urged that Britain should pre-empt Yar Muhammad Khan by occupying these states in the name of Shah Shuja'.[172]

Pottinger's plea, coming as it did even before Kabul had fallen to the British army, was ignored and it was only after Shah Shuja' had been established in the Afghan capital that Macnaughten responded to his recommendations. Pottinger was informed that permission for such a radical course of action would require "special instructions from Government" though Macnaughten stated that he had "no hesitation in approving your discussion of the attack meditated upon them [i.e. the Chahar Wilayat] by Yar Mahomed Khan," and accepted unquestioningly the right of Herat to annex the area. Pottinger was ordered to procrastinate further, "without causing serious offence,"[173] pending further orders from India.

The issue of the Chahar Wilayat was but one cause of tension between Pottinger and the rulers of Herat during the spring and summer of 1839. Pottinger had attempted to persuade Yar Muhammad to reform some of the excesses, which had brought distress and anguish to the ordinary citizens of Herat, but had signally failed (Yapp 1980,

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[170] *Ibid.*
[171] *Ibid.*
[172] *Ibid.*
[173] *Macnaughten to Pottinger*, 11 Aug. 1839, ESL:144, encl. 37 [red], no. 3.

362). Instead, Yar Muhammad unwilling to, or incapable of, such a reformation became increasingly irritated by the officer's interference. Inevitably, an unpleasant confrontation ensued during which Pottinger, always more a man of action than a diplomat, forcibly expelled a brother of the wazir from his house. This was the last straw as far as his superiors were concerned and, although they were grateful to Pottinger for saving Herat from the Persians, Calcutta was increasingly concerned about his subsequent conduct. Pottinger had effectively taken over the administration of the state and, when relations between himself and the authorities in Herat began to deteriorate, recommended the overthrow of Shah Kamran and Herat's incorporation in Shah Shuja''s realms. Since such actions were contrary to British policy, someone with a great deal more diplomatic experience was sent to replace Pottinger. Major D'Arcy Todd,[174] who had served in Persia under Sir John McNeill, was appointed in Pottinger's place (Yapp 1980, 362-3).[175]

Pottinger returned to Kabul, travelling via Badghis, Maimana, Qurchi, Sar-i Pul and Bamiyan across the Tir Band-i Turkistan. In so doing, he became the first European to traverse this mountain range via the Andarab and Balkh Ab valleys. Unfortunately his private journal of this journey has not survived, though a copy of his annotated map is in the India Office collection.[176] He reached Maimana in the early winter of 1839, probably a short while after Lord's agent, and found Mizrab Khan trying to deal with many conflicting demands that were being made on Maimana. The Persian ambassador, who had been placed in Maimana as a result of the treaty with the Asaf al-Daula, had only just been dismissed,[177] but despite the presence of this

[174] Yapp 1980, 364 calls Todd "inexperienced" but this is not so. For Todd's life, see Kaye 1904, ii, 293-386.

[175] Burnes had originally been offered the job, but he insisted as a condition of acceptance that he be allowed to implement Pottinger's recommendations for Herat's rulers to be overthrown. This pre-condition went against the current policy of supporting the Sadozai monarch. A few weeks after Pottinger had been replaced, Lord Auckland wrote to Macnaughten refusing to endorse Pottinger's strategy for extending Afghanistan to the Amu Darya, *Maddock to Macnaughten*, 2 Sept. 1839.

[176] For his official report, see Pottinger, *Memoir*, 1839. His route map is located at L.XVI.13 [X/3049/2/1-4]. Enlarged copies from the original maps, fifteen in all, are catalogued at X.3049/1/1-15 and include charts of the Herat, Maimana and Sar-i Pul regions.

From Sar-i Pul Pottinger travelled southwards up the Andarab valley, crossed into the upper Balkh Ab river and on to Bamiyan via Dahan-i Kashan ("Zarung"), Sulich ("Zewalup"), Sokhtagi ("Sokhlugy"), Sabz Darra ("Dara Subz"), Deh-i Surkh ("Deh Soorkh/Hoorkh"), and Yakolang ("Yukoolunj"). See also, Kaye 1904, ii, 292ff. This was a different route from Arthur Conolly's the following year.

[177] *Ibid.* In November 1839.

envoy, the wali had continued to correspond with other rulers around him[178] and had recently been approached by the Khan Hazrat of Khiva to provide military help against the Russians (Yapp 1980, 391-2).[179]

Pottinger was the first official representative of British power to visit Maimana and his main concern was to wean Mizrab Khan and his allies from supporting the refugee Afghan Amir, whilst the wali's sole wish was not to "draw the enmity of the powerful"[180] upon himself. Too close an alliance with Shah Shuja', only a few months after he had been put on the Afghan throne by the British, could have meant disaster for Maimana were Dost Muhammad to succeed in throwing out the *farangis* and regaining his throne. The sensibilities of Nasrullah Khan in Bukhara and possible adverse reactions from Yar Muhammad or Khiva had also to be taken into account. On the other hand, Mizrab Khan could not afford to alienate the British lest they use this as an excuse to overthrow him.

The wali's predicament led him to treat Pottinger with distant respect. Discussions between him and Pottinger were conducted through a third party, the officially-appointed *mehmandar*,[181] to avoid any accusation by surrounding rulers that Maimana had made a secret deal with the foreigners. Mizrab Khan distanced himself from Dost Muhammad Khan, informing Pottinger that he had refused the Amir of Kabul permission to travel through his country to the Court of Muhammad Shah of Persia. He publicly disparaged the Afghan ruler and showed Pottinger copies of letters from Dost Muhammad Khan and Murad Beg of Qunduz, the contents of which were hostile to the British. However, Pottinger did not see any of the wali's replies, probably because they revealed much more sympathy for the Amir's cause than Mizrab Khan wished his British guest to know about.

Mizrab's fears about British intentions in respect of the Cis Oxus province were well founded, for Pottinger, unaware that his opinions had been rejected by Calcutta,[182] exploited his journey to reinforce his views on the annexation of Balkh to Afghanistan. In his official report, Pottinger graphically described a country which, he alleged, was

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[178] *Ibid. Pottinger to Macnaughten*, 4 Feb. 1839, ESL:139, encl. 18, no. 1122.

[179] Pottinger, *Memoir*, 1839.

[180] *Ibid.*

[181] *Ibid.* The *mehmandar*, or 'host,' was an individual either appointed by the local ruler, or sometimes chosen by the guest/official himself, who was responsible for the entertainment and housing of official and important personages. He was usually a man of considerable influence and wealth.

[182] *Maddock to Macnaughten*, 2 Sept. 1839.

in the grip of anarchy, presided over by debauched, sadistic and corrupt rulers. Mizrab Khan, he recorded, was "dull and inactive, cowardly and time serving;" Shah Pasand Khan Firozkohi was "the most tyrannical of any" of the Aimaq amirs whose subjects had been "alienated by his barbarities;" Ibrahim Khan Firozkohi, another Aimaq amir, he condemned as "an ignorant, tyrannical chief" with "a brutal lust for his own sex," and so on.

Having thus roundly damned these petty rulers as vice-ridden despots, Pottinger extended his condemnation to every ruler on both banks of the Amu Darya:

> They are ignorant, tyrannical and cowardly oppressors, who use their power but to plunder and enslave the weak; while they fear to check the insubordinate, or assert the rights of justice.... The political condition of these countries may thus be briefly summed up. The weak, cruel tyrannies of Bokhara and Khiva, no longer held together by frugal and resolute hands, but governed by weak and debauched princes, inimical to, and afraid of, each other, are tottering, and await but a blow to overset them. The leaders of tribes are in rebellion to their Kings; the Chiefs of Clans are disaffected to them; and the heads of families insubordinate to all; no combination, no unanimity, except in disorder, is visible, while jealousy and suspicion of all around, appears in every action...[183]

It is hardly unexpected, therefore, to read that Pottinger recommended the annexation of these states was a moral obligation which, incidentally, would also prove highly advantageous, commercially and strategically, to Britain.

> The occupation of these countries, under every view, is an absolute necessity, if there be danger of an attack on the British possessions from west or northwest. In a financial point of view, the country is fertile, rich in metals and minerals; is the grand mercantile route to Central Asia from India and Persia, while its inhabitants are rich and industrious, and inclined to commerce; and it promises to aid the Affghan (*sic*) treasury most materially. In a military point, it connects the flanks of our position, if I may so call the extremities of our north-west frontier, Balkh and Herat, by a slight concave line of 400 miles (speaking in round numbers) while our present line of defence extends from Bameean via Cabool and Candahar, to Herat above 700 miles.... Besides, the occupation of them will give us an opportunity of totally suppressing the Slave Trade in these countries. I am the last person to advocate aggression even in that cause, but where the country is so necessary for our defence and the Dooraunee Crown has so undoubted a right, the calls of humanity, if not of justice, demand consideration.[184]

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[183] Pottinger, *Memoir*, 1839.
[184] *Ibid.*

Whilst Pottinger journeyed onwards to Kabul, Yar Muhammad Khan set to work on his successor, Major Todd, manipulating him into endorsing his plan to conquer the Chahar Wilayat. His hand was strengthened when Todd, shortly after arriving in Herat, concluded an agreement with Kamran, which extended diplomatic recognition to the Sadozai ruler and an annual subsidy of £30,000. Todd, however, quickly realised this policy had serious flaws, for there was little prospect that Herat would be self-supporting within the foreseeable future. This conclusion presented the distinctly undesirable prospect that Britain would be obliged to prop up a bankrupt Herat with ever-increasing and neverending handouts of Company rupees (Yapp 1980, 361ff.).

The reasons for Herat's poverty were partly to do with the long-term mismanagement of affairs by Shah Kamran and Yar Muhammad, whose brutality had forced many thousands of Heratis to flee to neighbouring states. Furthermore, the recent war with Persia had badly disrupted trade and the area was in the grip of famine, the result not of any climatic deviation, but humanity's obsession with beating ploughshares into swords. On the approach of Muhammad Shah's army, Yar Muhammad had adopted a policy of scorched earth in an attempt to cut off the Persians' supplies and all the villages within a twelve mile radius of the city had been destroyed and their crops burnt.[185] The Persian army's prolonged siege had further exacerbated the situation. Foragers, sent to search for food to feed the army, had scavenged far and wide. Fields for miles around had been stripped bare of crops, trees were cut down for fuel and the network of underground canals (*karez* or *qanats*) had either been filled in, destroyed or collapsed through neglect.

Todd set about making a survey of the economic situation in Herat and reported that a mere eight thousand people, or less than a fifth of the city's estimated population in 1830, were still living within the walls. The defences had been badly damaged by the Persian artillery and, when the population of the city had finally begun to return after the besiegers had departed, they found their houses had been destroyed in the bombardment.[186] To try and relieve some of the immediate effects of the famine, Todd established a famine relief

[185] *McNeill to Palmerston*, 30 Oct. 1837, in *Correspondence Related to Persia and Afghanistan 1834-39*, encl. 7, fols. 13-14, SPDL:A7/1.

[186] Todd, *State of Herat*, 2 Oct. 1839. This report contains details about the Sunni Hazara and other Aimaq tribes of Badghis.

programme, which earned him wide-spread respect from the local populace.

On the political front, however, Todd was forced to conclude that the state of Herat could not survive as an economical entity. For a while, during the winter of 1840, he espoused the policy of Pottinger and advocated the incorporation of Herat into an enlarged Afghanistan. The Governor-General, though, remained adamantly opposed to any such action. Instead, the policy of subsidising Herat was continued and expanded (Yapp 1980, 366). Todd handed over increasingly large sums of money to Yar Muhammad who, realising the strategic importance accorded to Herat by his foreign allies, exploited the situation to the full by demanding frequent cash payments for various projects and hinting that, if he did not find satisfaction from the British, he would turn to Persia (Yapp 1980, 366).[187] Hence, when Yar Muhammad again raised the matter of British assistance in the annexation of the Chahar Wilayat and Sistan, Todd enthusiastically supported the plan as a means of making the state less dependent on subsidies.

Since part of Todd's brief was to resolve outstanding boundary disputes, in February 1840 he forwarded to Macnaughten a detailed report, with map, on the frontier issue which strongly supported Herat's claim to sovereignty over the Chahar Wilayat and Sistan. Sistan, he wrote, had belonged to Herat "from the time of Ahmad Shah," whilst, in the north, Herat's rights to the territory betwen itself and the Oxus, including Badghis, Maimana and Andkhui, were also justified. Not only so, but the state should be allowed to exert some form of authority over the whole Chahar Wilayat, Aqcha and Balkh; "the whole being under the government of Herat in the time of Timur Shah" but which had "been annexed to the Kingdom of Bukhara."[188]

Todd, like his predecessor, took Herat's claims at face value and seemed quite ignorant of the history and geography of the region. Nor did Yar Muhammad's inconsistency in quoting two different historical precedents (the reign of Ahmad Shah Durrani in the case of Sistan

[187] Amongst the surrounding tribes, the subsidy to the ruler of Herat was interpreted in quite a different way from that which the British intended. In 1840, the Hazara amir of Yakolang remarked to Conolly: "They say, God knows with what truth, that he [Yar Muhammad] keeps a feringee at Heraut from whom he draws a lakh of rupees every month." Conolly's bland explanation of Britain's uncomfortable relationship with this ruler has more than a touch of irony about it: "I briefly explained why a British agent was resident at Heraut, and the money, from time to time disbursed through him, was given for the defence and restoration of a place we had engaged to hold at every sacrifice," Conolly, *Bamiyan to Merve*, 1840.

[188] *Todd to Macnaughten*, 26 Feb. 1840.

and Timur Shah in respect of the Chahar Wilayat) as justification for his claims seem to worry either him or his superiors. The issue, however, was not primarily a matter of historical precedent, nor of geographical accuracy, but of political and economic expediency. It was sufficient that Herat had advanced claims which served British interests in the area and which would make the state less reliant on British cash for survival. Whereas Pottinger had moral scruples about allowing Yar Muhammad free rein in the Chahar Wilayat, Todd was not encumbered by such ethical considerations. Macnaughten was simply urged to lend his support to the annexation of the western marches of Balkh, since Herat's revenues were "insufficient in its present borders"[189] and the acquisition of the rich agricultural lands to the north, coupled with being able to control the trade route, would considerably improve Herat's financial situation. Furthermore, Herat, as an ally of Britain, would be in a position to control the affairs of these frontier states and act as policeman in the Chahar Wilayat.

Macnaughten did not reply at once to Todd's recommendations, despite his request for a quick reply since it was "of great importance to urge the claim at the present moment before the season for operations becomes more advanced."[190] After waiting in vain for an immediate response, Todd acted on his own initiative. In April 1840, he wrote a second letter which presented the British Envoy with a *fait accomplis*. Referring Macnaughten to his previous, unanswered, letter and "having no doubt in my own mind of the justice of this claim" he informed his superior that he "found it impossible to refuse compliance with the Minister's urgent request to lend my countenance to [the Chahar Wilayat's] recovery."[191]

Yar Muhammad, Todd claimed, had demanded that Britain allow him to make a show of force in order to counteract accusations that he was a puppet of the *farangi* and "a dying man into whose mouth the English are pouring a few drops of water to defer his dissolution to a convenient moment."[192] Todd had permitted Yar Muhammad to send the Grand *Mufti* of Herat to Maimana with a demand that Mizrab Khan submit, surrender his heir apparent, Hukumat Khan, as a hostage for future good conduct and return some ten thousand Aimaq families who had fled from Herat to Maimana over the last few years.

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[189] *Ibid.*
[190] *Ibid.*
[191] *Todd to Macnaughten*, 4 April 1840, ESL:150, encl. 65 no. 3.
[192] *Ibid.*

Todd reinforced these demands by writing his own letter to Mizrab Khan, urging Maimana's submission and even gave the mufti a "loan" of Company rupees for travel expenses. Yar Muhammad, meanwhile, began to mobilise the Sunni Hazaras of Qal'a-yi Nau in preparation for attacking the Chahar Wilayat.[193]

When Todd's second letter reached Kabul, it was far from welcome and once more Macnaughten was obliged to reprimand one of his officers for exceeding instructions and acting contrary to the official policy. Todd was informed that, not only had he gone too far in his support of Herat's territorial ambitions, he had acted in direct opposition to the policy being pursued by Dr Lord in Bamiyan, namely the submission (or preferably annexation) of these territories to the realm of Shah Shuja'. Macnaughten, always a kindly man, agreed that a "moderate degree of support" for Yar Muhammad's ambitions was acceptable, but went on to remark:

> Any such involvement [in the Chahar Wilayat] is opposed to the views of the Secret Committee and it seems especially objectionable at the present on many accounts.... The chiefs of Mimuna, Sirpul, of Andkhoo and of Shiburghan have recently tendered their allegiance to H. M. Shah Shooja ool Moolk. I have advised His Majesty if he sends any reply at all to state that his attention is absorbed in restoring the prosperity of his domains which object would be in a great measure defeated by the extension of its limits. The countries in question are nominally subject to the King of Bukhara whose aid they will probably invoke against any threatened invasion, and in this case, as the Russian force is undoubtedly by this time assured at Khiva, their advance will probably be solicited by the Bukharan ruler to expel the invaders, whilst the uncertain state of our relations with the Persian Court and the great strength which that Court is said to have recently derived from the French by the arrival of a large party of French officers with no less than 30,000 muskets tends to render it excessively desirable that the strength of the Herat Government should not be wasted in attempts to extend the limits of its powers.[194]

Todd, however, was already committed and was unable to recall the Herati ambassador, since he had already arrived in Maimana. Instead Todd seems to have let matters run their course, neither encouraging nor discouraging further action by Yar Muhammad Khan.

The arrival of Herat's Grand Mufti in Maimana with what was in effect an ultimatum, apparently endorsed by the British, added to the confusion about Britain's intentions towards Maimana.[195] Rumours

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[193] *Ibid.*

[194] *Macnaughten to Todd*, n.d. (April?) 1840, ESL:150, encl. 65, no. 3.

[195] Conolly, *Bamiyan to Merve*, 1840.

were already rife throughout the province that a British advance into Balkh was imminent and the arrival of Herat's ambassador demanding Mizrab's submission must have been interpreted as the first step in that direction.

Only a month or so earlier, Mizrab Khan had tried to reassure Pottinger that Maimana wished to remain neutral in the conflict between Dost Muhammad and Shah Shuja', yet now the new British agent at Herat was endorsing Herat's claims to his country. Meanwhile, Dr. Lord had been exerting equal, howbeit contrary, pressure on the wali to submit directly to Kabul. Indeed, Mizrab Khan had only recently sent a congratulatory letter to Shah Shuja' in which he had acknowledged the new Amir's overlordship.[196] The intervention of the Mir Wali of Khulm in the affairs of Sar-i Pul, shortly after the mufti arrived, muddied the water even further and one can understand the perplexity of the wali who was trying to make sense of the contradictory signals issuing from Bamiyan and Herat. For the Mir Wali, as we have already seen above, claimed he was acting in the name of Shah Shuja' and, by implication, the British. Yet at the same time a British officer was demanding that Maimana submit to Herat! If this was not enough for Mizrab Khan, Persia, Bukhara and Khiva were also making similar demands. It is no wonder that the wali could not make head or tail of the matter and was at a loss which way to turn.

Arthur Conolly, who, later in the year, went a long way to clearing up this confusion, gives us a graphic account of the anxiety which beset Mizrab Khan during this period:

> The Walee ... began to talk about his political situation which he described with some sorrow, begging to know if we [i.e. the British] could give hope of any arrangement that would enable him to rest under one master. No doubt (he observed) you know the saying that it is difficult for a man to stand with his legs in two boats, but how can a man escape drowning who is obliged to shift them between five, at the word 'changes'.[197] My ancestors were content to serve the King of Cabul, and when members of that house fell into misfortune, they found hospitality here. Shah Shooja is again upon his throne at Cabul but now another Suddozye King [i.e. Kamran Shah] calls upon me to submit only to Heraut and your English Agent advises me to send my son there; on the other hand, the Commander of the Faithful claims my allegiance for Bokhara; the Khan Huzrut [of Khiva] desires me to put myself under him, and you know how I was forced to act when the Persian Ausafoodowleh crossed the Moorghaub.[198]

[196] *Macnaughten to Todd*, April 1840.
[197] A reference to a nineteenth century parlour game.
[198] Conolly, *Bamiyan to Merve*, 1840.

Mizrab Khan's immediate reaction to the mufti's demands was to procrastinate as long as possible. In the end, it was June before the wali finally sent one of his brothers, Abu'l-Nazr Khan, to Herat to "settle the terms of vassalage."[199] Nothing definite, however, was decided at this meeting, except that the eldest son of the wali should reside in Herat. Having been given "handsome presents,"[200] Abu'l-Nazr Khan returned to Maimana to arrange for the departure of Hukumat Khan. This resulted in a further, substantial delay whilst Mizrab Khan consulted with the other rulers of the Chahar Wilayat.

At the beginning of September 1840, Hukumat Khan finally arrived in Herat along with representatives from Andkhui, Shibarghan, Sar-i Pul and Khulm.[201] Hukumat Khan brought with him two hundred and fifty families who had fled to Maimana during the Persian invasion. These refugees arrived in a state of "utter destitution" and Todd advanced them five thousand rupees to assist their resettlement.[202]

The arrival of envoys from all four of the states of the Chahar Wilayat put Todd in a dilemma which was of his own making. His policy of forcing Maimana and Andkhui to submit to Herat had succeeded without going to war, but the immediate claims of Kamran extended only to Maimana and Andkhui. The presence of ambassadors from Shibarghan and Sar-i Pul was, therefore, something of an embarrassment, especially when they informed Todd that, despite frequent internal disagreements, they considered themselves dependent on Maimana in matters of foreign policy. A further difficulty was that Khulm had sent a representative[203] since it had never been Todd's intention to encourage Yar Muhammad to advance claims to the territory of the Mir Wali. Anyway, Khulm lay outside of Todd's sphere of influence, it being the responsibility of Dr. Lord. Having been severely rebuked for encouraging the mission of the Grand Mufti, Todd was as confused as the rulers of the Chahar Wilayat about British policy towards the province and wrote to ask Macnaughten for instructions, admitting that he was "somewhat perplexed ... about the arrangements Shah Shooja would make regarding the Char Wilayat."[204]

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[199] *Todd to Macnaughten*, 4 Sept. 1840, ESL:153, encl. 124, no. 47.
[200] *Ibid.*
[201] *Ibid.* Todd confuses the ruler of Sar-i Pul with the ruler of Andkhui, Shah Wali Khan.
[202] *Todd to Macnaughten*, 24 Sept. 1840, ESL:153, encl. 124, no. 47.
[203] *Todd to Macnaughten*, 4 Sept. 1840.
[204] *Ibid.*

Whilst Todd waited for instructions from Kabul, other problems arose. Some time after Hukumat Khan arrived in Herat the heir to the Maimana throne fell seriously ill,[205] which caused some anxiety amongst the ambassadors from the Chahar Wilayat. Their discontent was compounded by Todd, who deliberately drew out the negotiations on the pretext that he was awaiting orders from Macnaughten. The real reason for the delaying tactics, however, was that Todd had heard that Dost Muhammad Khan had re-crossed the Amu Darya and was trying to recruit an army from Balkh for an attack on Kabul. By dragging out the negotiations as long as he dared, Todd hoped that the ambassadors' presence in Herat would make their leaders think twice about joining Dost Muhammad's crusade. In effect, the envoys were held hostage for the good conduct of their rulers, a fact that was not lost on the ambassadors themselves.[206]

Macnaughten's reply reached Herat towards the end of September. Todd was informed that though "the annexation of the Chahar Wilayat to the Heraut ruler would be desirable ... it ... would be better to avoid interference in any arrangement which may be made between them."[207] Having been told to take a back seat in the negotiations, it was another month before an agreement was finally signed between Herat and the envoys from the Chahar Wilayat. In it, Hukumat Khan declared:

> I Whereas my ancestors were formerly servants to the Herat Government, I hereby pledge myself to be in the same manner the trustworthy and faithful servant and friend of that Government, and to perform, at the risk of my life, and with my utmost endeavour, whatever service may be required from me by it.
>
> II Whenever a contingent of horse may be required from us by the Herat Govt. it shall be furnished without delay and at any place appointed.
>
> III With regard to the families of the Jamsheedees and Ferozkhoees who are now in Turkistan, they shall be permitted and assisted to return to the lands they formerly occupied, south of the Moorghab river, whenever they wish
>
> IV Should the Hazarehs and Jamsheedees leave their own country and cross the Moorghab river, they shall not be detained or countenanced by us, we will, in the above-mentioned event, send them back.[208]

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[205] *Todd to Macnaughten*, 3 Nov. 1840, ESL:155, encl. 4, no. 10.
[206] *Ibid.*
[207] *Macnaughten to Todd*, 18 Sept. 1840, ESL:153, encl. 124, no. 47.
[208] *Paper given by Hukoomat Khan to Yar Mahomed Khan*, 30 Oct. 1840, ESL:155, encl. 4, no. 10.

Though the other members of the Chahar Wilayat did not sign this document, they informed Todd that they considered themselves "bound to follow the example of Mymunna."[209]

This bland declaration marked a considerable climb down by Todd when compared to the ambitious plan of conquest that he had urged on Macnaughten earlier in the year. For Yar Muhammad, too, this document effectively signalled the end of his plan to obtain British endorsement and funding for the annexation of the Chahar Wilayat. The vagueness of the first, and main, clause fooled no-one. It did not even state categorically that Maimana recognised Herat's present claims to sovereignty, but merely referred to an undefined and vague historical precedent. There was no acknowledgement of Kamran's rights to *khutba* or coinage, nor any undertaking to pay an annual tribute. Finally, a further victory for Mizrab Khan was that Hukumat Khan returned to Maimana with the other ambassadors and was not obliged to reside in Herat as a hostage for his father's good conduct.

The only comfort Todd was able to draw from this document was that it, "may be of use in the event of a claim to the Chahar Vilayuts being urged, hereafter, by Bukhara on grounds of former nominal allegiance rendered by them."[210] This comment is indicative of the cynicism which pervaded Todd's whole approach to the amirs of western Turkistan, which was based merely on colonial expediency rather than constitutional legality.

As the combined attack by Dost Muhammad Khan and the Mir Wali of Khulm in September 1840 signalled the wrapping-up of Lord's 'Forward Policy' in respect of Balkh, so the signing of this document by Hukumat Khan of Maimana marked the demise of Todd's hopes of dominating the same province through Herat. It was not long before Todd, like Lord, was forced to abandon his position and retreat to safer climes.

Whilst Hukumat Khan was still occupied in Herat, Arthur Conolly arrived in Maimana and was finally able to sort out the confusion that the conflicting policies of Todd and Lord had created. Conolly[211] had

[209] *Ibid.*

[210] *Todd to Macnaughten*, 3 Nov. 1840.

[211] For Arthur Conolly's life (1807-1842) and the background to his mission to Khiva, see Yapp 1980, 402-13; Howorth, 795-801; Kaye (1904) ii, 93-203. Yapp calls Conolly's career "futile," and his journey to Khiva and Bukhara "meaningless ... a sad story of continual disillusionment." This is a quite unjustified and prejudiced criticism of an individual who, by Yapp's own admission, had made a profound impression on many influential individuals both in Britain and Central Asia, even though they had little time for Conolly's religious or moral views. Pottinger, writing in 1837 about the impact Arthur Conolly had made during his stay in Herat

been sent to Khiva to report on the intentions of Russian forces that were threatening to march on the Khan Hazrat in retaliation for his enslavement of Russian subjects. The idea for a mission to Turkistan had originated in January 1839, whilst he was still in England, and after his arrival in Kabul he persuaded Macnaughten that such a journey would provide useful information about the state of affairs in Central Asia. After much hesitation by the British Envoy, and several changes of plan, Conolly finally left for Khiva.

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several years earlier, stated that, "the conduct of that gentleman has left an incredible impression ... on everyone who knew him. Here no-one speaks of him but in terms of the highest admiration," *Pottinger to McNeill*, 28 Sept. 1837, SLEP:104, fols. 289-90.

Conolly, like many other British officers who played a leading role in Afghanistan during the First Anglo-Afghan War, was a man of deep religious conviction, being a long-standing member of the anti-slavery campaign, and a close friend of Wilberforce and the Evangelical movement. As we have seen, Conolly had already made an important contribution to European exploration of Central Asia (Conolly 1834) and had had an influential role in the development of British policy towards Afghanistan in the early 1830s (see above). Conolly had volunteered to undertake the journey to Khiva and Bukhara, partly to sue for Stoddard's release from a Bukharan gaol and partly to find out what the Russians were doing. He was well aware that, in doing so, he was risking his own life, a danger recognised by Macnaughten who wrote: "the spirited offer of Cpt. Conolly to proceed in person to Bukhara will no doubt be appreciated by His Lordship in Council ... [but] ... the fate of our second envoy might be similar to that of the first, unless his mission were backed up by the actual presence of an adequate force," *Macnaughten to Torrens*, 14 June 1840, ESL:151, encl. 85, no. 37; see also *Maddock to Macnaughten*, 4 May 1840, ESL:149, encl. 46, no. 4; *Deposition of Raja Beg Herautee*, 10 June, 1840, ESL:151, encl. 85, no. 38. Conolly, however, felt that some effort should be made to save Stoddard and the only way possible, short of an invasion, was a personal appeal to Nasrullah Khan by an officer who was familiar with the court protocol and who could command a certain amount of respect from the Khan and his officials. Despite Burnes' previous visit to Bukhara, there was no doubt that Conolly was by far the most suitable person for such a delicate, diplomatic mission.

Just because Conolly's journey to Khiva and Bukhara ended in his own, and Stoddard's, execution, his visit cannot be dismissed as "meaningless." Amongst other things, he was the first European to travel the extremely difficult route from Bamiyan to Maimana via the upper Murghab watershed and the (apparent) loss of his personal journal can only be regretted. Once in Maimana he managed to calm some of Mizrab Khan's worries about British intentions, after the conflicting messages the wali had received from Todd and Lord. Conolly's detailed account of the Khanate of Maimana is the first European account of the Mingid dynasty and became the foundation stone on which all subsequent accounts of the region was based. Conolly was probably also responsible, at least in part, for the settlement of a war between Khiva and Kokand, as Yapp himself admits (Yapp 1980, 409). Finally, Conolly's prison diary, written in his prayer book [IOLR, MSS Eur:B.29], shows no sign that he viewed his journey, or his life, as "a sad story of continual disillusionment." Indeed, the last few pages of his journal, written in the last days before his execution, give an overwhelming impression of a man facing the abrupt termination of his life with resignation and a faith reinforced by affliction. "Nothing," he records, "but the spirit of Christianity can heal the wickedness and misery of these countries. May God soon diffuse it over all the world ... I stand in this faith. It is the only thing that can make a man bear against the trials of this life and lead him to the noblest state of existence in the next" (BL. MSS. Add. 38727, 31, 50). These are hardly the sentiments of a sad, or disillusioned, man.

Conolly chose to travel to Transoxiana via a difficult and uncharted mountain route.[212] After a stay in Bamiyan he travelled westwards through Naiyak, Panjau to Chakhcharan, where he struck north from the Hari Rud into the upper reaches of the Murghab river, via the Darra-yi Khargosh. From the Murghab he crossed the Turkistan mountains to Maimana through Hastomin and possibly Sar-i Haus. It was both an arduous and dangerous journey, involving at least one skirmish with hill tribes near Chakhcharan. Conolly and his party eventually reached Maimana on 13 October 1840. Mizrab Khan, however, was out on his annual hunt and since Hukumat Khan, his eldest son, was in Herat negotiating with Yar Muhammad, they were entertained by Abu'l-Muhammad Khan, a brother of the wali, who gave them "excellent lodgings" and treated the party with much greater respect and warmth than Pottinger had experienced the previous autumn.[213]

When Mizrab Khan finally returned to Maimana, four days after Conolly's arrival, formal visits were exchanged and Conolly presented the wali with a double-barrelled percussion gun which "won his heart."[214] Discussion soon turned to British policy towards the Chahar Wilayat. Mizrab, having explained the dilemma that Maimana had been placed in by the proceedings of the various British agents, stated that his own preference was to submit to Shah Shuja' directly without involving Yar Muhammad Khan and Kamran Shah in Herat. Conolly, however, informed him that:

> Major Todd had given him the best advice for the existing circumstances, namely to submit himself in a complimentary degree to Heraut as he had specially been connected with that province when it formed part of the United Afghan kingdom (*sic*).[215]

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[212] Conolly's private journal does not appear to have survived, although he wrote to Macnaughten in April 1841 that he had "dispatched Aukhoon Zadeh Saleh Mohummad ... via Merve and Mymunnah with a packet containing my journal up to that date, copies of former letters which I had reason to suppose intercepted and some minuter geographical memoranda than those precedingly sent for the protraction of our route from Bameean to Merve," *Conolly to Macnaughten*, 11 May 1841, ESL:161, encl. 79, no. 4. In his prison diary of 1841-42 (fols. 22-3, 34 of IOLR transcript), Conolly records that all his papers, except books, were burnt by the Bukharan authorities in 1841, but implies that before this happened, two copies of his journal, one in Greek and one in English, had been sent to India. So far no trace of this journal and the "geographical memoranda" he said he included, has been found. All that survives of details of his journey through the Hazarajat to Maimana is the official report extracted from his private diary, see Conolly, *Bamiyan to Merve*, 1840.

[213] Conolly, *Bamiyan to Merve*, 1840.

[214] *Ibid.*

[215] *Ibid.*

Though this was not to the liking of Mizrab Khan, doubtless the wali drew some comfort from the looseness of the relationship Britain advocated between Maimana and Herat. There was no hint of imminent annexation of the Chahar Wilayat, though when it came to dicussing Britain's long-term plans for the area, Conolly was more ambiguous. The question of the "Dooraunee borders," he told Mizrab Khan, was still being discussed and the matter would "be settled as soon as Shah Shoojah could get leisure from his pressing internal affairs, and Shah Kamran freedom from his Persian claimants." In the meantime, Maimana, "might remain on terms of general amity with all parties concerned in this complete arrangement until it was decided what his situation was to be." In fact, Conolly, like Pottinger and Todd before him, recommended annexation of the area to Afghanistan in his official report.[216]

Mizrab Khan had little choice but to show a willingness to co-operate with the British and told Conolly that his advice "was pretty nearly his own view of the matter and bade us send assurances to Cabul that if in the interim he could in any safe way do service to Shah Shoojah he would cheerfully perform it."[217] Conolly's recommendation was then probably relayed to Hukumat Khan at Herat, who was ordered by his father to settle matters with Yar Muhammad as best he could, lest either Herat or Britain should find any further excuse for interfering in Maimana's affairs. Mizrab Khan also took the opportunity of Conolly's visit to reaffirm Maimana's neutrality in the war with Dost Muhammad. At the time, neither Conolly nor Mizrab Khan would have known that the Amir had made his peace with the British.

> I gave a plain answer both to the Dost and to his supporters.... I told them I had seen enough of petty leagues against the armies of Kings and would not compromise myself for anyone. I had nothing to say to Dost Muhammad Khan when he was in power, why should I take up his cause against one whom God has restored to his former throne?[218]

After leaving Maimana, Conolly journeyed on to Khiva, via Bala Murghab and Panjdeh. Then, after completing his official work, he made the most of his chance and travelled to Bukhara where he sued, unsuccessfully, for the release of Colonel Stoddard who, having

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[216] *Ibid.*
[217] *Ibid.*
[218] *Ibid.*

violated Bukharan protocol whilst on an official visit to the Khan, had been thrown into prison for his pains.[219] After a period in the Bukharan dungeons, Conolly and Stoddard were finally put to death by an executioner's sword in September 1842. When news of their deaths broke in England, there was a public outcry which resulted in the bizarre mission of Joseph Wolfe, a converted Jew (Wolfe 1852).

In terms of Britain's Central Asian policy, the unavenged executions of Conolly and Stoddard was to be as important in determining British policy towards the state of Bukhara and Uzbek rulers in general, as the surrender of Dost Muhammad Khan some two years earlier was to prove for the course of Anglo-Afghan relations. The deaths of Moorcroft, Trebeck and Guthrie were already imputed in the British mind to the treachery of the Bukharan governor of Balkh and Shuja' al-Din Mazari. Moorcroft and his party had also been very badly treated by Murad Beg of Qunduz, another Uzbek. Burnes, in his published journals, added to the growing myth of Uzbek decadence whilst the reports of Pottinger, Todd, Lord and Conolly, to name but a few, further damned Uzbek rule in Bukhara and Balkh yet again, often in the strongest possible terms. The executions of two officers thus seemed to merely confirm to the British the barbarous and decadent nature of Uzbek rulers in general and the Manghit dynasty of Bukhara in particular. Fed on such an unrelenting diet of vituperation, British officials were convinced that Central Asia would be a better place without Chingizid rule and therefore endorsed and supported successive Afghan Amirs in their bid to break Uzbek and Turkman power on both sides of the Amu Darya. Indeed, in 1868, Britain secretly connived at the Russian subjugation of Bukhara, even though publicly the government claimed to be opposed to any further expansion of the Tsar's empire in Central Asia.

Meanwhile Yar Muhammad, discontented that Hukumat Khan and the other envoys from the Chahar Wilayat had not been forced to make more than token concessions, persisted in his demands for British support, "to recover complete possession of the Char Vilayut, Ghorian, Seestaun and the Tymunee country" and for "Heraut troops to be subsidised in the field so long as they are engaged in these operations."[220] Todd, in obedience to his instructions, not only refused, but

[219] Charles Stoddard (1806-42) was Military Secretary to McNeill in Persia. He had travelled with the Persian army when it attacked Herat in 1838 and had then gone to Bukhara to negotiate with the Amir about the release of Russian hostages. For details of Stoddard's arrogant conduct in Bukhara, see Edwardes, 70ff.; Howorth, 795-8; Yapp 1980, 409ff.

[220] *Todd to Macnaughten*, 22 Feb. 1841, in, Forrest, 85-9.

remonstrated with the wazir about his continued and blatant misuse of the funds that had already been more than liberally disbursed. Relations between the two went into a steep decline. Finally, Yar Muhammad demanded that Todd pay for his son, Saiyid Muhammad Khan, to undertake a mission to the Sunni Hazaras and Jamshidis. Todd objected to the expense and Yar Muhammad offered to send his "Master of Ceremonies," Faiz Muhammad Khan, in his place. However, instead of going to Qal'a-yi Nau, Faiz Muhammad made his way secretly to Mashhad where he opened negotiations with the Persians which, in March 1841, led to a clandestine agreement between the two states (Yapp 1980, 372ff.).[221]

When Todd was informed of the deception which Yar Muhammad Khan had perpetrated, he lost all patience with the wazir. He demanded that Herat immediately break off all negotiations with Persia and permit a British garrison to be stationed in the city. Yar Muhammad refused and, after many threats against himself and others who had helped him, Todd abandoned Herat without consulting Kabul. This unauthorised action was completely against the grain of British policy towards Herat and Afghanistan (Yapp 1980, 372ff.) and eventually led to Todd's disgrace and removal from the political service. He returned to his regiment, eventually being killed by a cannonball during the First Sikh War (Yapp 1980, 361ff.).

The loss of the British subsidy was a serious set-back to Yar Muhammad Khan's territorial ambitions and his plans had to be shelved for several years until he was able to consolidate his own hold over Herat itself. In August 1841 the struggle between the nominal ruler of Herat, Kamran Shah and his wazir, finally broke out into open conflict. Kamran, for so long dominated and intimidated by his ruthless Deputy, had managed to prevent Yar Muhammad Khan deposing him, mainly because his wazir feared the power of the Sunni Hazara leader, Sher Muhammad Khan. But by 1842, Sher Muhammad was dead and his tribe had been weakened by internal division. In a final, futile, attempt to reclaim his authority, Kamran Shah locked himself in the citadel and expelled all of Yar Muhammad's followers.[222] In retaliation, Yar Muhammad laid siege to the *arg* and eventually forced Kamran to surrender, after swearing on the Qur'an not to plunder the treasury or harm the Sadozai ruler. Once the citadel's gates had been

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[221] *Todd to Macnaughten*, 29 Jan. 1841, in Forrest, 79-83.

[222] *Hoozoor Khan to McNeill*, 9 Dec. 1841; *Iskandar Mirza to McNeill*, 24 Dec. 1841, SLEP:121, fols. 13, 21ff.

opened, however, Yar Muhammad confiscated Kamran's treasure and put his patron to death (Champagne, 233).[223]

*Balkh and the Afghan Domains, 1841-1844*

During the winter of 1841/2 the disaster that had always threatened the British forces in Kabul finally overtook them. The surrender of Dost Muhammad Khan, along with other events during the previous months, such as the neutralising of the Mir Wali, had given a fillip to British morale. Encouraged by a series of transient military and diplomatic successes, Macnaughten became unjustifiably optimistic about the situation in Afghanistan, reporting that "the country is perfectly quiet from Dan to Beersheba" (Kaye 1874, ii, 130). Yet within the British camp there were deep divisions over policy and clashes of personality which were to prove their undoing. The military establishment, bitterly divided between Company and Queen's officers and led by the sixty year old, gout and bed-ridden Major-General Elphinstone, "bickered" and "dickered" amongst themselves (Dupree 1978, 386) and ignored warnings of the pending storm (Yapp 1980, 327ff.).

First Burnes, then Macnaughten, died horribly at the hands of Afghans and, after further humiliations, the British agreed to abandon Kabul and, by implication, Shah Shuja'. As they attempted to force their way through to Jalalabad, thousands perished in the gorges of the Khurd Kabul at the hands of tribesmen and the fierce winter weather (Kaye 1874; Macrory, 197ff.; *et al.*).[224] It is remarkable, given the extent of this disaster, that Shah Shuja', despite being regarded universally by his people as a quisling, managed to hold out in the Bala Hisar in Kabul, along with a tiny force under John Conolly,[225] the brother of Arthur Conolly, until April of 1842.

[223] *McNeill to Earl of Aberdeen*, 9 March 1842(a), SLEP:121, fols. 157-64.

[224] One of the greatest myths of European historical writings on the first Anglo-Afghan War is the belief that only one person survived the massacre in the Khurd Kabul. This is quite untrue. In addition to the famed Dr. Brydon, several British officers, ordinary soldiers and their wives and children, survived as hostages of the Afghans, eventually being rescued by a force sent to Bamiyan by the 'Army of Retribution' in 1842. Some sepoys and camp followers drifted into the British-held Jalalabad fortress after Dr. Brydon, whilst others were later found begging on the streets of Kabul. There was also the garrison in the Bala Hisar under John Conolly which held out until the relief force reached Kabul. The most bizarre, and probably fictitous, survival story to emerge from this 'Signal Catastrophe' was that of John Campbell (Campbell 1862).

[225] The Afghan War was hard on many families, but perhaps the Conolly family suffered the most, losing three members either directly, or indirectly as a result of the invasion. Arthur Conolly was executed in Bukhara in September 1842, Edward was killed in action in Kohistan in September 1840 and John succumbed to fever three days before the British relief force reached

Eventually, though, the unfortunate Shah Shuja' was lured out of the fort under an offer of safe conduct, and assassinated (Dupree 1978, 394; Macrory, 240).

In the aftermath of the *débâcle*, Dost Muhammad Khan was allowed to return to Kabul from his Indian exile, and in 1843 once again resumed the reins of power (Yapp 1980, 438; Hall, 14). Occupied as the British were with the Punjab and Sind, attention in India was turned away from affairs of Afghanistan and the period 1841-45 is a barren one as far as intelligence reports in the India Office archives are concerned.

In the early months of 1842 Yar Muhammad, now undisputed ruler of Herat, once more turned his attention to the tribes of Badghis. Muhammad Zaman Jamshidi, a staunch ally of Yar Muhammad, had alienated himself from his tribe, and been assassinated by Ahmad Beg and Mehdi Quli Khan, Khan Agha, the sons of 'Abd al-Jabbar Khan (Maitland 1891, 62-3). Little love was lost between these new amirs and the ruler of Herat, so Yar Muhammad, in violation of an agreement with Persia not to interfere with the Aimaq tribes (Yapp 1980, 373),[226] invaded their country, placed his own nominee over the tribe and punished the assassins. The Jamshidi capital of Kushk quickly fell, Ahmad Beg and another of his brothers, 'Abdullah Beg, were taken prisoner and some five thousand Jamshidi tribesmen were forcibly relocated in the Herat valley. Allah Yar Beg, son of Muhammad Zaman, fled with six hundred families and took up permanent residence near Mashhad. However, the vast bulk of the Jamshidi clan, numbering some ten thousand households under the leadership of Ahmad Beg, migrated to Panjdeh, from where they succesfully entreated the protection of the Khan Hazrat of Khiva. During the Jamshidis exile from Badghis, which lasted until *c.* 1859, they performed many stirling services for the ruler of Khiva. Ahmad Beg himself was killed whilst fighting the Yomut Turkman on behalf of the Khan Hazrat, whilst his younger brother, Mehdi Quli, was honoured with the title *Khan Agha* for similar services—a name by which he was generally known for the remainder of his life (Maitland 1891, 63).[227]

The same year (1843) Shah Wali Khan, the Afshar ruler of Andkhui, died and was succeeded by his son, Ghazanfar Khan (C. E. Yate

Kabul in September 1842. A fourth Conolly brother was later murdered by Moplahs (Yapp 1980, 546; Macrory, 271).

[226] *Todd to Macnaughten*, 29 Jan. 1841; *McNeill to Earl of Aberdeen*, 9 March 1841(a), fol. 165.

[227] *McNeill to Earl of Aberdeen*, 9 March 1841(b), SLEP:121, fol. 165; Appendix V.i.

1888, 347). In January of the following year, Yar Muhammad Khan broke with Persia and entered into a treaty with Bukhara. The intention behind the agreement seems to have been the partition of Afghanistan and Balkh between Yar Muhammad Khan and Nasrullah Khan. According to the sources, Bukhara would try and oust Dost Muhammad Khan from Kabul and Yar Muhammad Khan would formally recognise Bukharan sovereignty over Balkh, Khulm and Kabul. In return, Nasrullah Khan would allow Yar Muhammad Khan a free hand in Maimana and the Chahar Wilayat.[228] During the summer of this year reports suggested that a Bukharan force actually crossed the Amu Darya, forcing Dost Muhammad Khan to send out agents to Qandahar, Ghazni and even Herat to try and recruit troops to counter the threat.[229]

The treaty between Bukhara and Herat alarmed the Mir Wali, who hastened to Kabul to discuss the defence of Khulm with Dost Muhammad Khan.[230] Later, when the ruler of Khulm had himself become a refugee from the very Afghan ruler whom he had once protected from the English, the Mir Wali complained bitterly to the Amir about the way he was received during this time in Kabul. After receiving "repeated, flattering letters" from Dost Muhammad Khan, who even appears to have gone as far as to suggest that the Mir Wali seize Balkh in order to "make it over to me [i.e. Dost Muhammad] as a refuge against the day of adversity,"[231] the ruler of Khulm came to Kabul. However, after discussing the terms of a possible alliance, the Mir Wali requested permission to return to Lesser Turkistan in order to consult with the other leaders. Dost Muhammad in turn made it clear that he wanted the Mir Wali to take an Afghan envoy with him, something which was quite unacceptable, for it would have suggested he was a puppet of the Afghans. When the request was refused, the Amir's demeanour towards the ruler of Khulm changed. Instead of flattering and complimenting him, Dost Muhammad "insulted [the Mir Wali] in every way" and it was only with great difficulty that he finally managed to obtain permission to leave the Afghan capital and return to his own homeland. The result was a complete breach in

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[228] *Letter from one of the Herat Princes*, 15 Feb. 1843; *Meerza Aghasee to Yar Mohamed*, March(?) 1843, SLEP:123, fols. 159-60, 219-25.

[229] *PI*, 1-3 July, 15-17 Aug. 1844, ESL:178, encl. 57, no. 16; encl. 63, no. 25

[230] *Ibid. Richmond to Carrie*, 7 Feb. 1844, ESL:177, fols. 165-8; *PI*, 1-3 July 1844.

[231] The adversity being Dost Muhammad's continued fears of a second British invasion of Kabul.

relations between Khulm and Kabul and the two leaders "ceased to hold further intercourse" for a space of some five years.[232]

Meanwhile, in Herat, Yar Muhammad quickly turned the Bukharan concession of sovereignty over the Chahar Wilayat to his own advantage. In the winter of 1843/4 he turned on his former allies, the Sunni Hazaras of Qal'a-yi Nau, and invaded their territory, for their leader, Karimdad Beg, brother of Sher Muhammad Khan, had petitioned the Persian Governor of Khurasan for permission to emigrate to Turbat-i Shaikh Jam.[233] After defeating Karimdad Beg, the wazir attacked Ibrahim Beg, amir of the Taimani Aimaqs,[234] in revenge for the support the Aimaqs had given to Shah Kamran. Despite being outnumbered nearly two to one and the difficulty of the terrain, Yar Muhammad penetrated deep into Ghor, forced the Taimani amir to flee, and set Mustafa Khan, a cousin of Ibrahim's, over the tribe (Maitland 1891, 197-8).[235]

Yar Muhammad Khan's successful operations against the Chahar Aimaq pushed the border of Herat up to the Murghab, thereby securing a firm base for the next phase of conquest, the invasion of Maimana. In this ambition, he was frustrated for a time by the presence of the Persian Governor of Khurasan, the Asaf al-Daula, who opposed further expansion of Herat's power. It was not long, however, before Balkh was plunged into a series of bloody conflicts, which were to change the political and economic map of the region beyond recognition.

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[232] *Mahomed Ameer Walee to Edwardes*, 3 May 1854, ESL:220, encl. 33, no. 4.

[233] *Herat Princes*, 16 Feb. 1844, SLEP:125, fols. 206-7. Maitland 1891, 95-6 says the reason for Yar Muhammad's invasion was that Karimdad Khan, lacking the prudence and wisdom of his forefathers, had commenced raiding in Badghis, and Persia had threatened to invade the area if Herat could not keep him in order.

[234] The Taimani Aimaqs are the fourth tribe of the Chahar Aimaqs. They are related to the Kakar Pushtun tribe by virtue of being descendants of Taiman, one of the twelve sons of Sanzar who, in turn, was the fifth in descent from Kak (d. *c.* AD 1200 and buried in Herat near the Juma' mosque), the ancestor of the Kakar Pushtun tribe. Following the internecine strife, Taiman fled to Ghor and established himself in the Darra-yi Khargosh, between Chakhcharan and the upper Murghab river. For the history of the tribe, genealogical charts and a survey of their region, see Maitland 1891, 161-270; Appendix V, iv.

[235] *Sheil to Earl of Aberdeen*, 23 Oct., 14 Dec. 1844, SLEP:126, fols. 501, 714.

CHAPTER SIX

# HUKUMAT KHAN, 1845-1862

> As a question of humanity we can never feel much pity for the flesh-dealing Toorkistan, let it fall to whom it may. As a question of politics, the more the Afghans take, the less there will be for either Russia or Persia.[1]

## *The Death of Mizrab Khan and Ferrier's Travels, 1845*

The reign of Mizrab Khan came to an abrupt and violent end in the early months of 1845 when he was poisoned by one of his wives (Ferrier 1857, 197). He left behind him at least five sons but it was the two eldest, Hukumat Khan and Sher Muhammad Khan, who disputed the succession between themselves. According to Ferrier, Hukumat Khan "preferred wine to business" (Ferrier 1857, 198) and considered resigning in favour of his younger brother, Sher Muhammad Khan. However, a powerful faction within the city, opposed to Sher Muhammad Khan, persuaded Hukumat Khan to assert his rights and much distress ensued as the two rivals fought for control of the principality (Ferrier 1857, 198).

The troubles in Maimana following the death of Mizrab Khan weakened the ability of the Khanate to stand up to outside interference and Yar Muhammad quickly seized the opportunity afforded by the fraternal quarrel to send a certain Karimdad Khan to act as a mediator. Hukumat Khan was persuaded to cede control over the citadel and the army to his younger brother and content himself with supervising Maimana's agricultural and mercantile affairs. This arrangement placed Sher Muhammad Khan in effective control of Maimana with Hukumat Khan acting almost as his diwanbegi. A few months later, Yar Muhammad sent another agent, Faiz Muhammad Khan, with orders to raise two battalions of Tajiks, a policy that was designed to create a body of troops whose ethnic loyalties would be more likely to lie with Persian-speaking Herat (Ferrier 1857, 198).

In June of the same year the French adventurer, Ferrier, travelled in disguise from Herat through Maimana and the Chahar Wilayat,[2] in

[1] *Edwardes to Temple*, 6 Sept. 1855, ESL:225, encl. 59, no. 11.

an attempt to reach the Punjab and find service with the Sikh army. He claimed that he travelled to Maimana in the same caravan as Faiz Muhammad, to whom Ferrier took a decided dislike (Ferrier 1857, 198). Ferrier's description of Maimana reveals that the borders of this principality had receded from the banks of the Murghab, with the frontier post now being located at Qal'a-yi Wali. This border area was still badly affected by Turkman raids, as well as by local internecine wars which had decimated the Qipchaq and other tribes (Ferrier 1857, 196-7). The city of Maimana was enclosed within a wall with towers. Access to the town was through four gates, one in each wall. There was no defensive ditch outside the wall, though in 1858 Major Taylor reported that the city did have a wet ditch surrounding it (Ferrier 1857, 197).[3] The population of the Khanate he estimated at between fifteen and eighteen thousand families, though later sources give an even higher number: between forty and fifty thousand households (Ferrier 1857, 198).[4] The army consisted of fifteen hundred horse and a thousand foot, but these numbers could be augmented at short notice to anything between eight and twelve thousand horse (Ferrier 1857, 198, 455).[5]

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discovered a bas-relief and visited a pagan village in the Turkistan mountains (cf. Bivar 1974; Caspani & Cagnacci 1951; Lee 1982). The extraordinary nature of these claims has raised questions about whether Ferrier actually made this journey. Contemporary records in the India Office raise further doubts about Ferrier's journals and there is some evidence to suggest that he never travelled through Lesser Turkistan at all. In 1860, Lt. Lewis Pelly was in Herat and interviewed various individuals who had known Ferrier. One well-informed native source, who had met the Frenchman when he was passing through Mashhad en route to Herat, told Pelly, "M. Ferrier had never travelled the Meimunah and Siripul road," claiming that he went directly from Herat to Girishk, where he was imprisoned, and then returned to Herat, "disappointed in the object of his travels." Pelly's mirza, who had been at Herat with Ferrier, supported this accusation, stating that, far from visiting the Chahar Wilayat, the Frenchman had spent the time in Herat under house arrest; Pelly, *Journey from Persia to India*, 1860, MSS Eur. F.126, 31.

If Ferrier did not travel further north than Herat, it would explain the imaginative nature of his journal from Sar-i Pul to Daulatyar, for he would have had little, or no, contact with natives of the Upper Murghab or the remoter districts of the Turkistan mountains. However, his description of Maimana and the Chahar Wilayat is not necessarily discredited since caravans regularly plied the route between Herat and the Chahar Wilayat and, like Major Taylor and Pelly who followed him, Ferrier would have been able to interview merchants and travellers from the area during his stay in Herat.

After his failure to reach India, Ferrier found employment training the Persian army, but his brutality towards the native soldiers caused something of a scandal.

[3] Taylor, *Meimeneh*, 1858.

[4] *Ibid.* Fatteh Mahomed, *Narrative of a Journey through Toorkistan*, 1855, ESL:225, encl. 59, no. 11.

[5] Taylor, *Meimeneh*, 1858 says 12,000 horse, armed with swords and spears, as well as an unspecified number of infantry.

Andkhui's population had risen to "fifteen thousand," presumably families rather than individuals, with a standing force of eighteen hundred horse and six hundred foot: a figure which could be trebled in the space of twenty-four hours (Ferrier 1857, 204). Ferrier, though, was most impressed with Shibarghan, which he records was "one of the finest towns in Turkistan on this side of the Oxus, enjoying, besides its other advantages, an excellent climate" (Ferrier 1857, 202). Ruled by Rustam Khan, the area was "richly cultivated" and the capital was surrounded by many gardens and other forms of cultivation. Its army was composed of two thousand cavalry and five hundred foot, but as many as six thousand armed men could be mustered in an emergency (Ferrier 1857, 202).

From Shibarghan, Ferrier travelled to Aqcha, which he erroneously claims was governed by Ishan Uraq rather than his younger brother, Ishan Sudur. The town was "one immense garden ... a most animated and picturesque scene" and contained seven or eight thousand "souls." It had only a tiny standing army of two hundred horsemen, the reason for such a small force being that:

> ... the Khans never pay a larger force than is sufficient for the purpose of carrying on the government, well knowing that, in case of an attack, volunteers of every description, agricultural or commercial, would be immediately forthcoming, mounted and armed at their own expense, to defend their property against their neighbours (Ferrier 1857, 205).

After a brief stay at the strategic fortress of Minglik, Ferrier skirted around Balkh fearing that, were the *ishan* to discover his true identity, he would send him a captive to Bukhara. This anxiety was rooted in the now well-established prejudice against Bukharan rulers which the deaths of Moorcroft, Trebeck, Conolly and Stoddard had created in the minds of European explorers. Ferrier remarks that Balkh was in the process of being rebuilt around a citadel "an hour further north than the ancient one" (Ferrier 1857, 207), no doubt an anachronistic reference to Muhammad Afzal Khan's subsequent use of material from Balkh to build the cantonment of Takhtapul.[6]

Hindered in his attempt to reach Kabul via Khulm, due to the hostilities which had broken out between Dost Muhammad Khan and the Mir Wali, Ferrier decided to try and reach the Punjab by crossing the Tir Band-i Turkistan and returned through the northern foothills to Sar-i Pul, "an agglomeration of houses utterly devoid of regularity

[6] Faiz Bakhsh, *Badakhshan*, 3.

and built on the slope of an eminence crowned by a fortress in which the Governor resides" (Ferrier 1857, 225). Ferrier, having heard much about Mahmud Khan's character, decided to be completely open with him and revealed his true identity to the beglarbegi. In response, Mahmud sent his na'ib to conduct Ferrier to the *arg* where he was given a "rough, but warm and frank" welcome and quizzed both about the object of his journey and the techniques of European warfare. Ferrier describes Mahmud Khan as about forty years of age, of middle height, powerfully made, and more Persian in his features than Uzbek. Mahmud, Ferrier claimed, went out of his way to offer him protection through the dangerous mountain country that lay between Sar-i Pul and Daulatyar, gave him letters of recommendation to the tribal leaders of the region and made provision for new horses during his journey. As an expression of gratitude, Ferrier presented Mahmud Khan with a brace of pistols which he "admired and caressed .... as if they had been alive" (Ferrier 1857, 227-8). Mahmud, however, had one request: that Ferrier, whom he assumed was English, would speak well of him when he reached India and arrange an alliance between him and the "Feringhee," in return for which his guest could keep half of any subsidy that ensued as a reward (Ferrier 1857, 226-7).

Ferrier travelled through Turkistan during a troubled time. Apart from the argument between Hukumat Khan and Sher Muhammad Khan in Maimana and the disagreement which had sprung up between Dost Muhammad Khan and the Mir Wali of Khulm, a plague of cholera was sweeping the region which killed many hundreds throughout the Chahar Wilayat. The population of Minglik had suffered the worst and its inhabitants had been "decimated" (Ferrier 1857, 205). A short time later, a plague of locusts destroyed most of the crops which led to severe famine conditions on both sides of the Amu Darya. By 1848, families in Bukhara, desperate to stay alive, were selling their children for a tila each to buy food, and grain was being sold at one rupee a seer.[7]

### *Yar Muhammad Khan's Invasion of the Chahar Wilayat, 1846-1850*

In 1846 the rivalry amongst the rulers of the Chahar Wilayat broke into open warfare, during which Rustam Khan of Shibarghan was briefly deposed. It seems that a short while before Mizrab Khan of

[7] *PPD*, 28 May-3 June, 4-10 June, 9-15 July 1848, ESL:197, encl. 65, nos. 17, 29, encl. 69, no. 10.

Maimana met his untimely end, he and the ruler of Shibarghan decided to mount a joint attack against Andkhui's new ruler, Ghazanfar Khan, who had succeeded his father, Shah Wali Khan, in 1844 (C. E. Yate 1888, 347).[8] Relations between Maimana and Andkhui had not been good since the days of 'Ali Yar Khan and doubtless Rustam Khan, as an ally and son-in-law of Mizrab Khan, felt that he was strong enough to impose his own candidate as ruler of Andkhui. Ghazanfar was quickly defeated and the invading army plundered the region. An uncle[9] of the ousted Afshar ruler, Sufi Khan, was then placed in control of affairs by the Hakim of Shibarghan. Ghazanfar Khan fled to Bukhara, where he offered to pay an annual tribute and acknowledge Nasrullah Khan's overlordship if he helped him recover his kingdom. Since the breakdown of relations between Khulm and Kabul had recently led to the Mir Wali placing himself under Bukharan protection (see below) and because Nasrullah Khan was already occupied with a rebellion in Kokand which had been precipitated by the assassination of its ruler, Sher 'Ali Beg,[10] Ghazanfar Khan was sent to Khulm.

The Mir Wali was only too pleased to interfere in the affairs of the Chahar Wilayat and avenge himself, in some measure, for the loss of face he had suffered at the hands of Rustam Khan and Mizrab Khan some years earlier. Joining forces with ishans Uraq and Sudur aided by Shuja' al-Din of Mazar, he marched into the Chahar Wilayat. When Mahmud Khan of Sar-i Pul heard of Khulm's advance, he diverted the stream which was the lifeblood of Shibarghan's agriculture and sent his army up the Shibarghan road to open up a second front against Rustam Khan. Surrounded by his enemies, with the harvest withering in the fields and his population dying of thirst (Ferrier

[8] Shah Wali was alive in 1843 and probably fell victim to the cholera epidemic, *Todd to Macnaughten*, 4 Sept. 1840. C. E. Yate 1888, 347 gives 1843 as the date of his death but the year after is the more likely date of his demise.

[9] Ferrier 1857, 202 says Sufi Khan was a nephew of Ghazanfar. Taylor, *Meimeneh*, 1858 claims he was Ghazanfar's uncle. Neither Taylor nor Ferrier visited Andkhui in person, but I have given Taylor's account more credibility, especially given the doubts Pelly, and others, cast on the authenticity of Ferrier's journals.

[10] Kokand, in the Ferghana valley, had been conquered by Bukhara in 1841 and the ruler, Muhammad 'Ali, who claimed descent from Zahir al-Din Babur, was put to death. However, the excesses of the Bukharan governor, Ibrahim Parwanchi, led to a revolt and the expulsion of this official later that same year. Sher 'Ali, a cousin of Muhammad 'Ali, took over in his stead and reigned for some three years. In 1844, he was murdered by another relative, Sultan Murad Beg, who survived a mere seventeen days before he too was assassinated by Qipchaq and Kirghiz amirs. Khudayar Khan, the second son of Sher 'Ali, was then placed on the throne [1844-1859], 'Pundit Munphool' (Faiz Bakhsh), *Khokand, Russia and Bukhara*, 1867, ESL:260, fol. 507.

1857, 202), Rustam Khan appealed to Maimana for assistance. Mizrab Khan, however, who had proved a faithful ally for so many years, was dead, and his heirs supported the Bukharan-sponsored attack and sent a large contingent of cavalry to join forces with Ishan Uraq and the Mir Wali. Completely isolated by all the other states of the Chahar Wilayat, and with the armies of Balkh and Khulm at his gates, Rustam Khan capitulated and was sent as a prisoner to Bukhara. Shibarghan was incorporated into Sar-i Pul and a "brother" of Mahmud Khan, Husain Khan, was made governor. At the same time a force, commanded by Ghazanfar Khan, marched against Andkhui where, with the help of loyalists within its walls, regained control of the town, captured his rival, Sufi Khan, and sent him to Nasrullah Khan (Ferrier 1857, 202-3, 213-4).

Almost as soon as Ghazanfar Khan was reinstated in Andkhui, he reneged on the promise to cede the rights of *khutba* and coinage to Bukhara. Instead, he acknowledged the Mir Wali's sovereignty over Andkhui. Not unnaturally, this action deeply angered the Bukharan ruler and a few months later Nasrullah Khan released Rustam Khan from prison, placed him at the head of a body of picked troops and sent him south to force Ghazanfar Khan to submit. Rustam Khan quickly retook Shibarghan and successfully forced Andkhui's new ruler to submit to Bukhara (Ferrier 1857, 202-3, 213-4). However, a short time later, Rustam Khan deposed Ghazanfar Khan in favour of his own nominee, Sufi Khan.[11] The Mir Wali, out of favour with Bukhara and Ishan Uraq, and threatened with an Afghan invasion, was unable to do anything about this second *putsch*.[12]

At about the same time that Rustam Khan retook Shibarghan, the fragile truce between Hukumat Khan and Sher Muhammad Khan finally broke down. The renewal of the civil war in Maimana provided Yar Muhammad Khan with the opportunity he had long sought to intervene in the affairs of the Chahar Wilayat. In the early months of 1847 forces from Herat were sent to break up the dwindling power of the Sunni Hazaras. Their capital, Qal'a-yi Nau, quickly fell and the some twelve thousand families were forcibly relocated in the plains of Herat (Ferrier 1858, 485ff.; MacGregor ii, 92, 143, 593; Maitland 1891, 95).[13] News of the disgrace of Asaf al-Daula, the Persian

[11] Taylor, *Meimeneh*, 1858.

[12] *PPD*, 25 April-1 May 1847, PCG (LPD), IV, 1846-49, encl. 14, p. 345, which records a rather garbled account of hostilities between the Mir Wali, "Zulfikar (*sic*) Khan" and Shuja' al-Din of Mazar.

[13] *Sheil to Palmerston*, 26 Feb., 25 Sept., 23 Nov. 1847, SLEP:134, fols. 281, 107-8, 392-3;

governor of Khurasan, whose power had forced Yar Muhammad to rein in his ambitions, was a further fillip to Herat's plans for conquest for, following the downfall of the Asaf al-Daula, Khurasan quickly plunged once more into anarchy and chaos.[14]

The formal invitation to Yar Muhammad to intervene in Maimana's civil war came sometime in the summer of 1847[15] when Hukumat Khan, finding himself in difficulties with his younger brother, appealed to Herat for assistance.[16] In the autumn Yar Muhammad Khan marched across the Murghab at the head of ten thousand regular troops, supported by a further ten thousand irregulars consisting of (Sunni?) Hazaras, other Aimaq tribes and Turkman, all of whom had attached themselves to the army in the hope of plunder (Ferrier 1857, 203).[17]

Their first objective was the border town of Chichaktu, which swiftly fell into Herat's hands and was given over to looting and pillage. The town was stripped bare of all portable property and its unfortunate population subjected to terrible tortures and mutilations to force them to reveal the whereabouts of their treasure. When news of the rape of this frontier town reached Hukumat Khan, he hurried to Yar Muhammad's camp and remonstrated with his erstwhile ally about the conduct of his soldiers. He brought gifts of horses and a hundred camel-loads of supplies, pledging to provide the army with food and fodder as long as they were in the Chahar Wilayat. In this way, Hukumat Khan succeeded in preventing further excesses. In an attempt to redress the wali's grievances, Yar Muhammad ordered the amputation of the hands, noses and ears of certain individuals who were caught looting, though there is little doubt that it was the ruler of Herat himself who had sanctioned the pillaging of this settlement.[18]

After settling the affairs of Chichaktu, the combined forces of Yar Muhammad Khan and Hukumat Khan marched against Sher

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*Farrant to Palmerston*, 25 Jan. 1848, SLEP:135, fols. 97-8. Karimdad Khan fled to Khurasan where he intrigued with deported Sunni Hazara chiefs at Herat, who were hoping to flee with the remains of their decimated tribe to Persian territory.

[14] *Sheil to Palmerston*, 23 Nov. 1847. Yar Muhammad had previously sent letters to the Shah reaffirming his "obedience and submission" to Persia, *Sheil to Palmerston*, 25 Sept. 1847.

[15] Taylor, *Meimeneh*, 1858 says this invasion took place "ten years" after the death of Mizrab Khan, i.e. 1855, but this is not possible, since Yar Muhammad died in 1851. Other references, e.g. to the illumination of Herat in February 1848 to celebrate the fall of Andkhui and other places, date the invasion in the winter of 1847/8. Taylor's "ten" years is probably a clerical error and should read "two."

[16] *Ibid.*

[17] *Ibid.*

[18] *Ibid.*

Muhammad Khan's stronghold of Khairabad, some thirty miles north of the town of Maimana on the border with Andkhui. Faced with such an overwhelming force, Sher Muhammad Khan fled and Hukumat Khan ordered the fort to be destroyed. Exactly what happened to Sher Muhammad Khan is uncertain, but we do know that he was eventually reconciled with his younger brother, since in 1854 he commanded a contingent of Maimana cavalry at the siege of Shibarghan.[19] He does not appear, however, to have regained the power that he had following the death of Mizrab Khan and, from the winter of 1847, Hukumat Khan became the sole ruler of Maimana.

Whilst Yar Muhammad and Hukumat Khan were in Khairabad, Ghazanfar Khan of Andkhui, who had been ousted by Sufi Khan for the second time, came to the wazir's camp and offered to pay an annual tribute of thirty thousand tilas and four hundred camels in exchange for Yar Muhammad's assistance in regaining control of his country. Such an opportunity could not be passed over and an ultimatum was sent to Sufi Khan, who had very little option other than to surrender. A few days later Sufi Khan arrived at Yar Muhammad Khan's camp, bringing the symbolic gifts of nine horses, nine camels, nine sheep skin coats (*postins*) and nine matchlocks as well as "a great gun" (the *jahangir*?), sugar, tea and other supplies. For three days and nights he enjoyed the sacred rights of hospitality, but on the fourth evening the unfortunate Sufi Khan was seized and his property confiscated. More than likely he was handed over to his inveterate enemy, Ghazanfar Khan, who had him put to death, for nothing more is heard of him in the records.[20]

The sequence of events following Sufi Khan's downfall is somewhat confused. The day after his arrival at Khairabad, Ghazanfar Khan was given a robe of investiture (*khalat*) by Yar Muhammad and sent, with an escort of a hundred men, to take possession of Andkhui, which he did without, apparently, encountering any opposition. A few days later,[21] Yar Muhammad Khan and Hukumat Khan entered the town and demanded payment of the promised tribute. Ghazanfar Khan, who had only been in charge a few days, may well have been unable to collect the sizeable sum of thirty thousand tilas, though it is

[19] *Farrant to Palmerston*, 24 Feb. 1848, SLEP:135, fol. 246; *Afzul Khan to Dost Mahomed Khan*, 28 Nov. 1854, ESL:222, encl. 13, no. 10.

[20] *Ibid.*

[21] Vambery 1864, 239 and those who follow him, such as Malleson, 160 claim that the town was besieged for four months before it fell, but Taylor, *Meimeneh*, 1858 places the pillage of Andkhui a matter of a few days after the surrender of Sufi Khan.

possible that he tried to renege on his agreement. On the other hand, the irregulars attached to the Herat army could have got out of hand. Whatever the reason, Yar Muhammad Khan's men went on an orgy of looting and pillage. All the year's newly-gathered store of corn and straw was seized and every horse, camel and domestic animal was confiscated. The troops went from house-to-house, stripping everything from the dwellings, even pulling carpets out from underneath the terrified occupants. Many of the unfortunate citizens of Andkhui, who had not managed to flee, perished at the hands of the pillagers. After a stay of forty-five days, Yar Muhammad had reduced Andkhui from a flourishing centre of agriculture and commerce to "a heap of ruins" (Vambery 1864, 239-41) from which it never recovered. An important, long-term effect of the pillage of Andkhui was that it was unable to defend itself properly and when, a few years later, Dost Muhammad's army marched into the area, Andkhui was quickly subdued (Vambery 1864, 239-41).

Even though winter had arrived, Yar Muhammad was determined to continue his advance and to attack Aqcha and Balkh. It would seem that he managed to defeat Ishan Sudur, who fled to his brother at Balkh, whilst Yar Muhammad briefly occupied Aqcha. Ferrier claims that, following the fall of Aqcha, the ruler of Herat had even sent messages to Merv and Bukhara ordering them to release all Herati slaves and threatening to attack anyone who refused to comply with his ultimatum (Ferrier 1858, 485-8; C. E. Yate 1888, 337).[22] Couriers were dispatched to Herat with the news of Yar Muhammad Khan's successes, which, according to the wazir, included the subjugation not only of Sar-i Pul and Andkhui, but Khulm too. In celebration of these 'victories', Herat was illuminated for four days and nights.[23]

Despite this succession of swift victories, Yar Muhammad was in deep trouble. His army had behaved in the most appalling manner and had alienated even Hukumat Khan of Maimana by its ravages and its locust-like appetite, having eaten the whole of that year's harvest. Unable to push on to Balkh and overtaken by the arrival of the cold season, Yar Muhammad sought winter quarters where there would be sufficient supplies of food, fodder and fuel, to sustain his huge army. But now he was to reap the whirlwind which he had sown. Andkhui lay a desolate ruin and the country for miles around was a wilderness. As supplies ran low and the frost began to take its toll on his men,

[22] *Farrant to Palmerston*, 24 Feb. 1848.
[23] *Ibid.*

Yar Muhammad ordered Shibarghan to open its gates. But Rustam Khan, seeing how Yar Muhammad had dealt with his ally, Ghazanfar Khan, curtly informed Yar Muhammad Khan that he preferred to stand and fight.[24]

Unable to mount a siege of Shibarghan and with unrest in Farah demanding his urgent attention (Ferrier 1857, 485-8; MacGregor ii, 143), Yar Muhammad was forced to fall back on Maimana, hoping that Hukumat Khan would provide suitable winter quarters and provisions. However, when news of the return of the Herat army reached the area, there was panic and even though the wali was accompanying the ruler of Herat, the population of Maimana began to strengthen the city's fortifications and closed the gates against the advancing horde. After much persuasion, Hukumat Khan finally induced Yar Muhammad to return to Bala Murghab, promising that Maimana would continue to supply his army with food and fodder. As a guarantee of good faith, Hukumat Khan surrendered his son as a hostage and offered to pay Herat thirty thousand tilas in cash. Probably as relieved as the rest of his people to see the back of the Heratis, the wali guided Yar Muhammad's men through his country by a route which skirted around his capital.

The march was a disaster. Most of the regular Herat soldiers and four-fifths of their pack animals perished from exposure or hunger as they forced their way back through the snow-bound passes to the Murghab. Yar Muhammad Khan, accompanied by a few followers, finally managed to reach the border post, but was snow-bound there for a further month. Meanwhile, behind him, news of the break up of the invasion army spread rapidly throughout the province, whereupon the local population rose up as a man and put the Herat garrisons to the sword (Ferrier 1858, 487-8; MacGregor ii, 143-4). Ghazanfar Khan, though, remained in control of Andkhui.[25]

Yar Muhammad returned to Herat in late February or March 1848, but despite the failure of his invasion he refused to abandon his ambition to conquer the Chahar Wilayat. It was two Hijra years,[26] however, before he recovered sufficiently from the disasters of his first campaign. In about November 1849, Yar Muhammad Khan sent Dilawar Khan back to his father to demand payment of the thirty thousand

[24] Taylor, *Meimeneh*, 1858.

[25] *Ibid.*

[26] *Ibid.* He returned to Herat in 1264. The second invasion took place in Muharram 1266, which commenced on 17 November 1849.

tilas tribute but the wali was in no mood to comply, especially now that his son was no longer being held as a hostage. Hukumat Khan reminded Yar Muhammad of the devastation caused by the recent invasion and informed him that, as a consequence, he did not have sufficient revenue to meet these demands. Two or three more ambassadors were sent from Herat, but Hukumat Khan remained unmoved. Angered by Maimana's obstinacy, Yar Muhammad sent a force of six thousand men, under Mir Hashim 'Alikozai, to bring Hukumat Khan to heel.[27] In addition to payment of the thirty thousand tilas,[28] the Afghan general demanded the surrender of Dilawar Khan and that one of Hukumat Khan's daughters be given in marriage to Yar Muhammad, as well as a further, unspecified, tribute of textiles and horses.[29] Hukumat Khan refused to concede to such extravagant demands, closed the gates of his capital against the advancing army and prepared to resist. The Herat army, having learnt the lessons of their previous disaster, had arrived before Maimana at harvest-time and seized the newly-harvested crops of wheat, preserved fruits, grapes and garden produce. Even so, they were unable to take Maimana by assault and were forced to lay siege to the city. For eleven months Maimana withstood the hardships of the blockade and an artillery bombardment which killed many of the inhabitants and demolished part of the citadel.[30]

Maimana's stuuborn resistance plunged the ruler of Herat into deep depression,[31] for increasingly Herat's survival as an independent state required Yar Muhammad Khan to dominate the affairs of the Chahar Wilayat. For, even as the Herati army was laying seige to Maimana, Muhammad Akram Khan, son of Dost Muhammad, had marched against Turkistan. By the end of 1849 the Mir Wali of Khulm had been overthrown and in the spring of 1850, Balkh, Minglik and Aqcha had all fallen whilst Shibarghan, Sar-i Pul and Andkhui were forced to acknowledge the suzerainty of Kabul. It seemed but a matter of time before the whole of Lesser Turkisttan would be under Barakzai control, posing a serious threat to Herat's independence. If Akram Khan subdued the Chahar Wilayat, Herat would be open to a pincer attack from Maimana and Qandahar.[32] Indeed, although Yar

[27] *Ibid.*
[28] *Ibid.*
[29] *LAM*, rcvd. Tehran, Nov. 1850, SLEP:141, fols. 483-7.
[30] *Ibid.*
[31] *Ibid. LH*, 5 Aug. 1850.
[32] According to one report, Yar Muhammad had tried to persuade Dost Muhammad to divide

Muhammad probably did not realise it at the time, the siege of Maimana materially assisted Akram Khan, for it tied down Hukumat Khan's powerful army which would otherwise have certainly been sent to defend Balkh and Aqcha against the invaders. Had the Wali of Maimana been able to assist ishans Uraq and Sudur during the winter of 1849/50, Dost Muhammad Khan would probably have found it even harder, if not impossible, to extend the boundaries of his territory much further than Khulm.

In the autumn of 1850, deeply worried by Akram Khan's successes, and with Bukharan troops reportedly massing across the Amu Darya threatening to attack both the Herat army at Maimana and Akram Khan in Aqcha,[33] Yar Muhammad sent an envoy to Tehran with instructions to make secret approaches to the British ambassador to secure help for the conquest of Maimana, Sistan, Lash and Jawand. Britain, however, was unmoved, for her interests and those of Dost Muhammad Khan were, by now, intertwined. Yar Muhammad's envoy was curtly informed that such a request was "out of the question" and Herat should "avoid all aggression on adjacent countries."[34] News of the secret contacts were soon leaked to the Shah, doing nothing to enhance Herat's relations with Persia, which had deteriorated dramatically following the recapture of Mashhad.[35]

Despite having been reduced to extremities, Maimana continued to hold out. The attitude of Mir Hashim 'Alikozai, the Herat general, towards the siege, did nothing to help Yar Muhammad Khan out of his predicament. In the autumn of 1850, a brother of Hukumat Khan[36] had offered to pay ten thousand tilas "and anything else [Yar Muhammad] might demand" if the siege was lifted. Mir Hashim, in reply, informed the Uzbek prince that even if Maimana complied with all of the original demands he would "not for the whole world leave him alone."[37]

The General's inflexibility and military incompetence led to his recall. He was replaced by Sultan Akhunzada who was given substantial reinforcements and additional siege guns, the latter the gift of the

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the province of Balkh between Kabul and Herat, *PPD*, 25 June-1 July 1848, PGR (LPD), IV, 1846-49, no. 26, p. 510.

[33] *Sheil to Palmerston*, 21 Dec. 1850, SLEP:141, fols. 673-4.

[34] *Sheil to Palmerston*, 19 Dec. 1850, SLEP:141, fols. 653-7.

[35] *Ibid.* Yar Muhammad had asked the Shah to make significant territorial concessions as a reward for Herat's support during the recent campaign in Khurasan; something which Persia rejected out of hand. The Shah accused Yar Muhammad of "presumptuous and arrogant behaviour" in Khurasan and Maimana, *LAM*, Nov. 1850.

[36] Sher Muhammad Khan?

[37] *LAM*, Nov. 1850.

Shah of Persia in gratitude for Herat's help in the conquest of the rebellious city of Mashhad some months earlier (Katib ii, 207-8).[38] Sultan Akhunzada was ordered to settle matters at Maimana as quickly as possible, whether that were by an all-out assault or by coming to terms with the wali. When he arrived before Maimana, Sultan Akhunzada realised that it was "impracticable" to take the city by storm and opened negotiations with Hukumat Khan. A face-saving agreement was soon reached. Herat reduced its demand from thirty thousand to twelve thousand tilas,[39] with additional presents of camels, horses, carpets and other goods. Hukumat Khan's son was surrendered and returned, along with Sultan Akhunzada, to Herat where he remained for a year or two before being allowed back home.[40]

The lifting of the siege of Maimana around the middle of September 1850[41] marked the end of Yar Muhammad's attempt to annex the Chahar Wilayat and to extend Herat's borders to Balkh and the Amu Darya, an objective which the wazir had pursued ever since the lifting of the Persian siege in 1838. After twelve years of campaigning, however, he had little or nothing to show for the expenditure of men and money. All the campaigns had done was to weaken the military power of the Chahar Wilayat to such an extent that, when Dost Muhammad sent his armies into Balkh, the 'Turkistanis' were less able to defend themselves against the better-equipped forces of Akram Khan. Yar Muhammad, though, did not live long enough to see the consequences of his folly, for he died on 29 June 1851 (29 Sha'ban, 1267) whilst returning to Herat after a campaign against the Qandahar sardars (Katib ii, 210-11).[42] He was succeeded by his son, Saiyid Muhammad Khan.

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[38] *LH*, 5 Aug. 1850, SLEP:151, fols. 191-2 says 5,000 troops were sent to Maimana; *ICI*, 22 June 1850, ESL:203, encl. 16, no. 12 has 4,000. The timing of this news indicates that these forces were more than likely additional troops, rather than the original invasion force.

[39] Taylor, *Meimeneh*, 1858. *Sheil to Palmerston*, 21 Dec. 1850 has 30,000 tomans.

[40] Taylor, *Meimeneh*, 1858 says Dilawar stayed in Herat until the siege of Herat by the Persians in 1856, but a son of Hukumat Khan was sent to tender his father's submission to Afzal Khan in the spring of 1853, following the collapse of the rebellion of Mahmud Khan of Sar-i Pul. Though the name of the son is not given, it would be more than likely to have been Dilawar Khan and he must have been released earlier and allowed to return home.

[41] In late September Akram Khan had written to Dost Muhammad telling him that the Wali of Maimana was coming to assist Ishan Uraq, which implies that Yar Muhammad had abandoned the siege by this time, *ICI*, 5 Oct. 1850, ESL:205, encl. 34, no. 17.

[42] *Agha Yeyn ool Abadeen*, Tehran, n.d. 1851, SLEP:143, fols. 575-6; *ICI*, 30 June 1851; *CI*, 24 July 1851, ESL:207, encl. 35, no. 11, encl. 41, no. 3. He was buried beside Maulawi 'Abd al-Rahman Jami, the famous Timurid poet.

*Dost Muhammad Khan and the Conquest of Balkh, 1848-1850*

Whilst Yar Muhammad was vainly trying to subdue Maimana, events that were to alter the course of Central Asian history were taking shape in the east. Dost Muhammad Khan, as we have seen, had a lifelong ambition of reuniting the Afghans under one leader and extending his power up to the Amu Darya. For several years after his return to Kabul, any idea of attacking Balkh had to be shelved whilst he consolidated his power south of the Hindu Kush. By the end of the 1840s, however, the Amir felt sufficiently secure to contemplate the conquest of the Uzbek amirates to the north.

We have already seen that following the Amir-i Kabir's return to Afghanistan relations between Khulm and Kabul had gone from bad to worse. In response, the Mir Wali had abandoned his family's traditional alliance with the Afghan ruler of Kabul and turned to Bukhara in the shape of Ishan Uraq, governor of Balkh. In 1843, Dost Muhammad Khan sent his eldest son, Muhammad Afzal Khan, into the Hazarajat to take control of Bamiyan. That this was a prelude to a full scale invasion of Balkh, is implied by the *Siraj al-Tawarikh* (Katib ii, 198, 200). As early as the summer of 1848 reports reaching India suggested that Dost Muhammad Khan was preparing a two-pronged attack on Khulm and Balkh.[43] In July 1848, another of the Amir's sons, Muhammad Akram Khan, at the head of a considerable force, left Kabul for Bamiyan. In the same month, ambassadors from Khulm, Saighan, Qunduz and Mazar-i Sharif arrived in Kabul with presents for the Amir in an attempt to stall the impending invasion.[44] The attack, however, was postponed due to the outbreak of the Second Sikh War (1848-49) which occupied Dost Muhammad's attention for over a year.

In the hope of securing the Amir's support for his cause, the Sikh leader, Chattar Singh, offered to return Peshawar to Dost Muhammad Khan, though subsequently the Sikh leader reneged on this promise and handed the city over to Sultan Muhammad Khan and Pir Muhammad Khan, two Barakzai Sardars who were *protégés* of the Sikhs. Dost Muhammad, however, sent five thousand men under Sardar Muhammad Akram Khan to fight alongside the Sikhs and subsequently

[43] *PPD*, 4-10 June, 25 June-1 July 1848. According to these reports, Ghulam Haidar Khan planned to march north through Charikar and on to Khulm and Qunduz, whilst Muhammad Akram Khan was to go to Balkh and Mazar-i Sharif via Bamiyan.

[44] *PPD*, 23-29 July 1848, PGR (LPD), IV, 1846-49, no. 30, p. 525 & ESL:197, encl. 74, no. 5.

visited Peshawar in person to lay claim to Kashmir, another lost province of the Durrani crown. The Amir even urged the Qandahar sardars to attack Sind (Katib ii, 205-6; Yapp 1980, 565-6). The resurgence of Afghan power in Peshawar was not to the liking of Dalhousie, the newly-appointed Governor-General of India, who raised the ghost of *jihad* and refused to consider any compromise with the Afghans on the issue as a matter of "national self-preservation" (quoted Yapp 1980, 566-7). Following the British victory at Gujerat, which virtually ended the Second Sikh War, Dalhousie declared the annexation of the Punjab, "for the glory of my country, the honour of my sovereign, the security of her present subjects and the future good of those whom I have brought under her rule" (quoted Yapp 1980, 568). As British forces advanced on Peshawar, the Afghans abandoned the city and returned beyond the Khyber Pass and the former winter capital of the Durranis became the new frontier of British India (Katib ii, 205-6).

The occupation of Peshawar created panic in Kabul as it was expected that, in retaliation for Afghan support of the Sikh cause, British forces would once again march through the Khyber. Dost Muhammad Khan, therefore, sought to secure a safe haven beyond the Hindu Kush and an ambassador was sent to the Mir Wali.[45] But the days of Dost Muhammad's friendship with Khulm had passed. The Amir had clearly signalled, on a number of occasions that, given the opportunity, he would try to invade and annex Balkh and when the Afghan envoy arrived at Khulm, the Mir Wali sent him on to Nasrullah Khan. Not unexpectedly, the Bukharan ruler had little time for the Amir's request, for their rivalry in Central Asia ran deep. The Afghan ambassador was curtly informed that were Dost Muhammad Khan to seek refuge in Khulm, or anywhere else within Nasrullah Khan's territory, he would be "confined."[46]

The feared British invasion, however, did not materialise and Dost Muhammad Khan was able to turn his mind to the subjugation of Balkh. In the spring of 1849, Sardar Akram Khan was sent to Bamiyan with a large army and specific instructions to conquer "Lesser Turkistan" (Katib ii, 206). This brought an immediate reaction from the Mir Wali, who attacked an Afghan outpost south of Aibak and expelled the garrison, killing or wounding some fifty *jezailchis* in the process.[47] Meanwhile, Khwaja Shuja' al-Din of Mazar-i Sharif, the

[45] *IIC*, 5 June 1849, ESL:201, encl. 42, no. 13.
[46] *Ibid.*
[47] *IIC*, 25 July 1849, ESL:201, encl. 52, no. 30 says it was Aibak itself, but it would seem

Mir Ataliq, Sultan Murad Beg b. Murad Beg, who had succeeded in Qunduz after his father had passed away,[48] Mahmud Khan, Beglarbegi of Sar-i Pul, and other rulers of Lesser Turkistan marched their forces to the assistance of the Mir Wali (Katib ii, 206).[49] In late August, Dost Muhammad Khan sent letters to the Mir Wali, informing him that Muhammad Akram Khan proposed to "visit" Khulm. This letter was actually tantamount to an ultimatum to admit an Afghan garrison and an Afghan *wakil* to oversee the Mir Wali's affairs.[50] To reinforce these demands, Sardar Muhammad Akram Khan marched on Khulm at the head of three thousand men, six guns and a string of fifty-five camel loads of stores,[51] such provisions being vital since the province of Balkh was still in the grip of famine. Finally, at the end of September 1849, the Mir Wali formally rejected Dost Muhammad's request. Sardar Akram Khan's proposed 'visit' was not "convenient" and must be postponed. However, though Khulm's reply was said to have "much disgusted" Dost Muhammad Khan,[52] the Mir Wali's refusal provided the Amir with the necessary justification for invasion.

Muhammad Akram Khan's campaign was beset by problems from the outset. Some influential members of the Barakzai clan were opposed to the invasion *per se*, and refused outright to send their

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more likely to have been Saighan, Kahmard or Ajar.

[48] *Lahore Diary*, 10-17 Aug. 1846, ESL:188, encl. 36, no. 20.

[49] *CNP*, 27 Aug. 1849, ESL:202, encl. 63, no. 9. Other reports say the reason for the Afghan invasion was because the Mir Wali had attacked Aqcha. According to this version of events, ishans Uraq and Sudur had appealed to the Afghans to come to their aid, but when Akram Khan arrived in Lesser Turkistan he sided with the Mir Wali instead (*Gazetteer* (1895) ii, 39; Peacocke, 324). Ferrier 1857, 213-4 is even more outlandish in his claims, stating that Dost Muhammad had declared war on Bukhara and ordered the Mir Wali to allow his army to pass through his territory. When this request was rejected, Akram Khan was ordered to attack Khulm (cf. Howorth, 865-6). The idea that Ishan Uraq would appeal to the Afghans for help against Khulm is so incredible that we can discount this report. Ishans Sudur and Uraq both violently opposed the Afghan invasion from its inception, as did the Mir Wali. However, the belief that the Afghans were 'invited' to intervene in Balkh's affairs was a convenient myth for both the Afghans and the British. Ironically, the Soviet government justified their invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 on the same basis. The *Siraj al-Tawarikh* gives no reason for the invasion, but makes it clear that the amirs of Lesser Turkistan, including ishans Uraq and Sudur, opposed Akram Khan's advance. The only near-contemporary report to support the claims of the *Gazetteer* and Peacocke is the one filed by Mir Saif al-Din in 1850, but this report is very garbled and confused, *News-letter from Meer Seifooddeen, Resident of Cabool*, 19 June 1850, ESL:204, encl. 25, no. 6. The Afghan declaration of war on Bukhara is equally implausible.

[50] *TCN*, 17 Sept. 1849, ESL:202, encl. 66, no. 17. The *wakil* is named as Sultan, son of Dilawar. Another Afghan ambassador, Muhammad A'zam, the confidential servant of Muhammad Akbar Khan, had been sent to Badakhshan, presumably with similar demands.

[51] *IIC*, 20 Sept. 1849, ESL:202, encl. 66, no. 18. But *IIC*, 9 Sept. 1849, ESL:202, encl. 66, no. 9 says 2,000 horse and as many foot.

[52] *IIC*, 9, 20 Sept. 1849; *TCN*, 24 Sept. 1849, ESL:202, encl. 72, no. 3.

regiments against Balkh. The morale of the Afghan soldiers, reluctant to leave for what was, in effect, a foreign country, was also very low and their pay many months in arrears.[53] When Akram Khan finally persuaded his men to march out of Bamiyan, he was soon into trouble. In order to finance the campaign, the sardar sent his troops to collect revenue and seize supplies from the semi-independent Hazara tribes around Saighan and Kahmard.[54] The rich and fertile Ajar valley was a prime target, but Akram Khan's tax collectors were so oppressive that the population put a number of them to death and rebellion soon spread throughout the whole valley.[55] The people of Saighan, hearing how Akram Khan's troops had behaved towards the Ajaris, fled to the hills to avoid suffering the same fate.[56] It took Akram Khan some two or three weeks of hard campaigning to bring the area back under his control, during which time the Afghans appear to have been put to flight on at least one occasion, with the loss of some eighty men.[57]

The Ajar rebellion gave Ishan Uraq and the Mir Wali sufficient time to gather their forces and prepare proper defences. Despite the death of Shuja' al-Din, the *mutawalli* of Mazar-i Sharif, sometime in the autumn of that year,[58] all the states of Lesser Turkistan remained united in their opposition to Akram Khan. An army of twelve thousand men with twelve guns, under the command of Ishan Uraq and the Mir Wali, was sent south into the mountains to block the Afghan advance and when, at the end of November, Akram Khan resumed his march north, he found a sizeable force well entrenched across his line

[53] *IIC*, 20 Sept. 1849; *ACI*, 5 Dec. 1849, ESL:202, encl. 76, no. 9.

[54] *TCN*, 24 Sept. 1849 which says he was told to "open the road to Herat," but his route was northwards, not westwards.

[55] *TPLRC*, 1 Dec. 1849; *IIC*, 11 Dec. 1849; *THL*, 20 Dec. 1849, ESL:203, encl. 1, nos. 7, 8, encl. 7, no. 39.

[56] *THL*, 20 Dec. 1849. The account of the Ajar rebellion is taken from numerous contemporary India Office intelligence reports. The *Siraj al-Tawarikh* claims that the main battle of the campaign against the Mir Wali took place at Saighan and, not unexpectedly, is silent about the Ajar rebellion. Katib describes, somewhat briefly, the Balkh campaign as an unrivalled series of successes in which the Amir's army swept aside the insignificant forces of Ishan Uraq and the Mir Wali.

[57] *Ibid. ACI*, 5 Dec. 1849; *Taj Mahomed Khan to Lawrence*, rcvd. Peshawar, 27 Dec. 1849, ESL:203, encl. 3, no. 13.

Muhammad Khan, alias 'Colonel' Campbell, a British officer formerly in the service of Shah Shuja' and an adviser to Akram Khan during the Balkh campaign, was dangerously wounded during this campaign and had his leg broken (Gregorian, 75). He died of a fever at Balkh in 1858, where he had been in charge of Afzal Khan's troops, Lumsden, *Report on the Mission to Candahar*, 1 July 1859, ESL:253, fols. 204-34.

[58] *IIC*, 9 Sept. 1849. *TNC*, 12 Sept. 1849, ESL:202, encl. 66, no. 15.

of advance. For nineteen days, Akram was held up "in a pass"[59] unable to make any impression on the Turkistan force. Winter, which comes early to the Hindu Kush, had set in and Akram was undecided as to the best course of action. He could try to fight his way through to the Samangan plains, or stay put and risk becoming snow-bound in the no-man's land between Khulm and Kahmard. His only other option was to return to Bamiyan and winter there, but he would risk being attacked by the Uzbeks and even a further Hazara rebellion. In the end, Akram Khan decided that the best course was to negotiate a face-saving treaty and retire to the south, hoping that the reinforcements he had requested from Kabul would arrive in time to resume the campaign the following spring. An agreement was reached under the terms of which Akram Khan acknowledged the Mir Wali's right to Khulm and eight of the Hazhda Nahr of Balkh. The Afghan prince also recognised the independent rights of the governors of Aqcha, Balkh, Mazar-i Sharif and Sar-i Pul.[60]

When Dost Muhammad Khan was informed of the Ajar rebellion and the terms of his son's treaty with the amirs of Qataghan and Balkh, he was "enraged." He condemned Akram Khan for failing to retire to Bamiyan immediately after the suppression of the Hazaras, and for ceding official recognition to the Mir Wali and Bukharan sovereignty over Balkh. The Amir's temper was not improved when Sardar Jabbar Khan and other senior members of the Barakzai clan refused to march to Akram's relief. In a fit of despair and frustration, Dost Muhammad Khan refused to ratify the treaty and ordered his son to gamble everything on the conquest of Balkh, remarking that "as he was sinking at Cabool, he might as well sink there."[61]

It is remarkable that, in spite of the snow and frost, within a matter of weeks of receiving the Amir's orders to advance, Akram Khan had managed to seize Khulm. This unexpected success was probably mainly due to the fact that Ishan Uraq and the Mir Wali had disbanded their army for the winter following the conclusion of the peace treaty with Akram Khan and were taken by surprise when the Afghan army went onto the offensive. According to the *Siraj*

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[59] *TCN*, 29 Jan. 1850, ESL:203, encl. 7, no. 41 though the report says they were in the Yusufzai country!

[60] *Ibid. ACI, 5 Dec. 1849; IIC, 31 Dec. 1849, ESL:203, encl. 7, no. 40; Memorandum on the Northern Boundaries of Affghanistan*, 1869. Katib ii, 206 makes no mention of Akram Khan's embarrassing treaty with the amirs of Lesser Turkistan and merely describes briefly the battle between the Afghans and the Uzbeks.

[61] *ACI*, 5 Dec. 1849; *TCN*, 29 Jan. 1850.

*al-Tawarikh*, the sardar ordered troops, with a number of cannon, to scale the ridges overlooking the Turkistani force. When this arduous and difficult manoeuvre had finally been accomplished, they opened up on the enemy who, unable to withstand the hail of bullets and shot which descended on them from a great height, lost all will to fight and fled (Katib ii, 206). Unfortunately, very little else is recorded in contemporary sources, or records, about the fall of Khulm, the flight of the Mir Wali and the conquest of Balkh itself. All we can be sure of is, that by early January 1850, Sardar Akram Khan had taken Balkh and an Afghan garrison was installed. Following this victory, a number of local rulers paid their respects to the Afghan prince. Despite claims to the contrary by the *Siraj al-Tawarikh* (Katib ii, 206), Ishan Uraq and his brother, along with many other prominent amirs of the region, continued to offer resistance to the Afghan advance, though Mazar-i Sharif, by this time governed by the sons of Shuja' al-Din, was forced to acknowledge Dost Muhammad Khan's overlordship. Not everything, however, went the Afghan's way. Under orders from Nasrullah Khan of Bukhara, the population of Qataghan and Hazhda Nahr abandoned their homes *en masse* and fled across the Amu Darya taking with them all the supplies they could carry.[62]

The Afghan conquest of Balkh was one of the most significant victories of Dost Muhammad's reign and must be regarded as equal in importance to the subsequent capture of Qandahar and Herat. Balkh was no longer governed by Bukharans, Uzbeks or other representatives of the Chingizid heritage. A strong, permanent military presence had been established in the eastern marches of Lesser Turkistan, something which no Amir had succeeded in doing since the days of Timur Shah. As such, Akram Khan's campaign in the winter of 1849/50 marked the beginning of the end of Bukharan and Uzbek sovereignty over the country south of the Amu Darya. Later, British sources were to describe this campaign of Akram Khan's as a "reconquest" (*Gazetteer* (1895) ii, 39), but there was very little similarity between the Afghan government in Balkh after 1849 and the relationship which existed between Afghans and Uzbeks under Ahmad Shah Durrani or Timur Shah, and even Katib admits that this was the "first conquest" of Turkistan (Katib ii, 206).

We have already remarked on how Dost Muhammad's government was modelled on the monarchical system prevalent at the time in

[62] *Memorandum on the Northern Boundaries of Affghanistan*, 1869; *IIC*, 31 Dec. 1849. *ICI*, 18 Jan., 3, 4 Feb. 1850, ESL:203, encl. 7, nos. 41-43.

British India, which the Amir had observed during his exile, and the *padshahi* mode of government of Persia. That the British model was very much in the mind of Dost Muhammad Khan and his successors when dealing with areas outside of the Pushtun heartlands, can be evidenced by the way in which the Amirs adopted very similar tactics when it came to expanding their borders. As with English government in India, local rulers like the Mir Wali were first ordered to admit a Resident (*wakil*). If this was refused, the rejection was used as the *casus belli* and, when the principality fell to the Amir's armies, the area was garrisoned by soldiers drawn from Qandahar or Kabul. In some cases, such as in the strategic fortress towns of Khulm, Balkh, Minglik and Aqcha, the native rulers were deposed, exiled or executed and one of the Amir's sons made governor in their place. All the most senior positions in the civil and military administration were filled by Afghans, with the local Uzbek, Tajik or Turkman amirs taking a diminishing role in the running of their own country. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that an almost constant state of war existed between the Afghans and the native rulers of Lesser Turkistan throughout the remainder of the century.

Dost Muhammad Khan had every reason to be happy about the course of events in Balkh. Not only had his desperate gamble paid off but, during the winter of 1849/50, the threat of a British invasion had dissipated, leaving him free to continue his plans for internal unification and expansion. Yet the first winter the Afghan army spent north of the Hindu Kush was extremely hard. Apart from the cold, local scarcity and being cut off from supply routes to the south, what was left of the population of Balkh refused to sell either food or fodder to their new overlords. In an attempt to undermine the morale of his opponents, the Afghans spread false rumours that the Mir Wali had been captured and sent as a prisoner to Kabul.[63] The Mir Wali, in fact, had escaped to Bukhara, where he spent the winter preparing for an offensive, with the backing of a Bukharan army. Akram Khan, realising the battle for Balkh had only just began, spent the remaining weeks of the bitter northern winter repairing forts on the Amu Darya and pleading with his father to send more reinforcements, though at the same time informing the Amir that he would "rather die" than have any of his brothers sent to Balkh to supersede him.[64]

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[63] *Meer Seifooddeen*, 19 June 1850; *ICI*, 4 Feb. 1849; *TCI*, 16 March 1850, ESL:204, encl. 6, no. 23.

[64] *ICI*, 1 April 1850, ESL:204, encl. 6, no. 28.

When spring finally came, however, Sardar Akram Khan was in no position to scruple about who commanded any Afghan reinforcements, for a Bukharan army, rumoured to be one hundred thousand strong, was reported to have arrived at Qarqi preparatory to crossing the Amu Darya.[65] Ishan Uraq, who had taken refuge with his brother in Aqcha, had been strengthening the defences of Minglik, the strategic fortress between Balkh and Aqcha which now marked the effective frontier between Afghanistan and Bukhara. In March 1850, Rustam Khan, Hakim of Shibarghan, placed two Afghan ambassadors in irons, reckoning that the Afghans were in no position to avenge this insult.[66] Dost Muhammad, "annoyed" and "vexed" by Shibarghan's action, ordered Haidar Khan to march "forthwith" to Balkh with reinforcements to prevent Akram Khan becoming "hemmed in" by the threatened uprising.[67] However, rivalry between Dost Muhammad's sons and the reluctance of the Afghan soldiery to march north, delayed their departure for several weeks.[68] Haidar Khan made matters worse by making it a precondition that he be given overall command of the Afghan army in Balkh, something that Dost Muhammad would not concede.[69] Finally, in July 1850, Dost Muhammad Khan persuaded another of his sons, Muhammad Amir Khan, to march to Akram's relief. A few weeks later a further force of three thousand *sowar*s and two thousand foot, under prince Amin Khan, also grudgingly left for Balkh (Katib ii, 208-9).[70]

### *The Fall of Minglik and Aqcha, 1850-1851*

Muhammad Akram Khan, in want of food, money and men, tried to delay hostilities with Nasrullah Khan by negotiation. The sardar reminded the Manghit ruler that "their predecessors had fixed the river Amoo as the boundary, and that the death of any Mussalman would lie at his door."[71] Fortunately for Akram Khan, the Manghit ruler was

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[65] *Ibid. ICI*, 9 Feb. 1850, ESL:203, encl. 7, no. 44; *ATNC*, 18 April 1850, ESL:204, encl. 6, no. 28.

[66] *ATNC*, 18 April 1850.

[67] *ICI*, 9 Feb. 1850; *ATNC*, 3 April 1850, ESL:204, encl. 6, no. 25.

[68] *ICI*, 5 Oct. 1850. The soldiers complained that the climate of Balkh was so bad and the hardships so great, that they would never return, *TCI*, 22 Oct. 1850, ESL:250, encl. 38 [red], no. 12.

[69] *ICI*, 1 April 1850; *ATNC*, 3, 18 April 1850.

[70] *Meer Seifooddeen*, 19 June 1850. *ICI*, 12 June 1850; *TCI*, 18 July 1850; *Taylor to Ross*, 25 July 1850, ESL:204, encl. 13, no. 16, encl. 25, nos. 3, 5.

[71] *ICI*, 21 April-12 May 1850; *Gholam Hussun Khan Ulleyzuyee*, 24 July 1850, ESL:204,

more interested in dealing with the rebellious province of Shahr-i Sabz, rather than the Afghan presence in Balkh and this timely reminder of Bukhara's treaty with Timur Shah provided a convenient face-saving excuse not to go to the rescue of Ishan Uraq, risking thereby a protracted and difficult war with the Afghans. Despite a personal plea by Ishan Uraq to the Manghit ruler, no Bukharan troops arrived to help the amirs of the Chahar Wilayat and they were forced to defend themselves as best they could with the resources they had to hand. There is some evidence too, that Akram Khan tried to reach some sort of compromise with Ishan Uraq and his allies, under which the amirid states would retain their autonomy in exchange for recognition of Afghan sovereignty and an annual tribute of nine lakh of rupees. These terms, however, were rejected by Ishan Uraq, who had already seen one treaty with the Afghans torn up.[72]

Following the break-down of negotiations, Ishan Uraq went onto the offensive against Afghan outposts between Minglik and Balkh, killing a number of Akram's men in the process.[73] At the end of September 1850, Hukumat Khan Ming, no longer under threat from the besieging Heratis, marched to the aid of the ishan with several thousand men and twelve guns.[74] Ghulam Haidar Khan and his reinforcement had been delayed by the rebellion in Khulm and Aibak (Katib ii, 209-10) and Muhammad Akram Khan appears to have been worsted in at least one battle with Uraq's forces in the open field. However, once the reinforcements reached Balkh, the sardar marched against Minglik. After suffering further severe losses, he succeeded in capturing this important fortress[75] and the Afghan army advanced to the outskirts of Aqcha, the headquarters of Ishan Uraq.

Ghulam Haidar Khan's march to Balkh had been hindered by a revolt precipitated by the return of the Mir Wali and his son, Mir Ganj 'Ali Beg. Aided by local amirs from Qunduz and Badakhshan, the ousted ruler of Khulm managed to seize control of Aibak and Ghaznigak and closed the road between Kabul and Balkh. Fortunately for

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encl. 10, no. 15, encl. 25, no. 6.

[72] *Lumsden to Burn*, 12 Nov. 1850, ESL:205, encl. 39, no. 9. Attached to this report is a hand-drawn colour map illustrating the progress of Sardar Akram Khan's campaign.

[73] *Taylor to Ross*, 25 July 1850.

[74] *ICI*, 5 Oct. 1850.

[75] It is virtually impossible to make any sense of the various accounts of the fall of Minglik. The intelligence reports differ widely in detail and are mostly based on rumours circulating in the bazaars of Kabul, cf. *Meer Seifooddeen*, 19 June 1850; *Gholam Husun*, 24 July 1850; *TCI*, 18 July 1850; *ICI*, 22 June, 5 Oct. 1850; *Lumsden to Burn*, 12 Nov. 1850; *ICI*, 19 Nov. 1850, ESL:205, encl. 43, no. 6.

Dost Muhammad and Akram Khan, Ghulam Haidar Khan and Amin Khan, who were already marching to the region from Bamiyan, succeeded in retaking Aibak and nipping the rebellion in the bud (Katib ii, 208-9). The Mir Wali fled once more across the Amu Darya,[76] from where he wrote to Major Abbot, whom he had known during the First Anglo-Afghan War, informing him of his plight and asking for Britain to put pressure on the Afghans to withdraw from Balkh. However, apart from an expression of "sympathy for the misfortunes of the ex-Wali," Abbot informed the Mir Wali, somewhat disingenuously, that Britain had "no views in regard to Central Asia" and Dost Muhammad was allowed to continue his annexation of Balkh unhindered.[77]

By the winter of 1850, the Afghans, despite the subjugation of Minglik and Aqcha, were materially little better off than they had been during their first cold season in Balkh. Akram Khan had managed to gather together some supplies, but the number of troops had been more than doubled by the arrival of reinforcements, who had placed an almost unbearable strain on an already overstretched commissariat. The shortage of provisions led to an acrimonious argument between the princes over who had the rights to the supplies and the cash which had accrued from Akram's conquests. The matter was only resolved after Dost Muhammad Khan ordered Akram Khan and Haidar Khan to divide the spoils equally and apportioned the revenues of Balkh and Minglik to Akram Khan, whilst Ghulam Haidar was awarded the income from Khulm and Mazar-i Sharif.[78]

As a consequence of this squabble, it was November 1850 before the Afghan army finally laid siege to Aqcha and it took until mid-January 1851 to prepare the assault. Despite losing some five hundred men in the final attack, which was fiercely resisted by the defenders, the Afghans carried the day (MacGregor, 147-9).[79] The garrison had

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[76] Details of the disturbances in Khulm and Qunduz are very confused. Some sources claim that the Mir Wali, having been imprisoned, escaped. Others say that he had been given territory on the Bukharan side of the Amu Darya. But the fact that Ghulam Haidar was forced to repossess Aibak and Khulm implies that a major revolt had taken place, cf. *Meer Seifooddeen*, 19 June 1850; *ICI*, 5, 19 Nov. 1850; *Lumsden to Burn*, 12 Nov. 1850; *NC*, 26 Oct. 1850, ESL:205, encl. 39, no. 10; *ICI*, 7 Dec. 1850; *ATNC*, 3 Feb. 1851, ESL:206, encl. 7, no. 8, encl. 16, no. 12.

[77] *Abbot to Melville*, 22 Sept., 2 Dec. 1851; *Melville to Abbot*, 27 Nov. 1851, ESL:205, encl. 4, no. 5 (all items).

[78] *ICI*, 27 Dec. 1850, ESL:206, encl. 7, no. 8. Katib ii, 209 suggests that relations between the two brothers were very strained.

[79] *ATNC*, 3 Feb. 1851. The *Siraj al-Tawarikh* does not give any details of the siege of Aqcha, presumably because the pillage of the city did not reflect well on the reputation of the Amir-i Kabir and his family. Katib ii, 20 merely records the defeat of Ishan Uraq and his allies and their deportation.

refused to surrender and Akram Khan let his troops plunder and loot the town for three days to compensate for the deprivations they had suffered during the campaign, and because "the people were all bad characters."[80] Ishans Uraq and Sudur, along with Beglarbegi Mahmud Khan of Sar-i Pul, were captured, but remarkably their lives were spared. However, the two ishans, a son of the Mir Wali (probably Ganj 'Ali Beg) and several other leading families of Turkistan were forced to suffer the indignity of being exiled to Kabul, an action which created further bitterness against the Afghan government of Turkistan, for Ishan Uraq and his brother were not citizens of Afghanistan, but of Bukhara (Katib ii, 209).[81] After some debate and disagreement between Ghulam Haidar Khan and Muhammad Akram Khan, Mahmud Khan of Sar-i Pul was incarcerated in Balkh and not exiled, Akram Khan arguing that, even though the beglarbegi was guilty of acts of enmity and hostility, his abilities and experience could be useful to the new government of the province (Katib ii, 209). Rustam Khan of Shibarghan, whose death was reported during the latter part of 1851, may also have perished in this battle. He was succeeded by his son-in-law, Hakim Khan, whilst Mahmud Khan's younger half-brother, Qilij Khan, took control of Sar-i Pul. Both new leaders, however, were obliged to tender their submission to Akram Khan following the dreadful slaughter at Aqcha.[82]

The fall of Aqcha and the arrest, death or execution of many important amirs of Balkh, broke the back of Uzbek resistance at least for a while. Following this success, Ghulam Haidar Khan and some of the regiments who had been campaigning in the north for nearly two years, returned to Kabul, taking with them the defeated amirs and ishans.[83] The human cost of the conquest of Balkh and Aqcha to the Afghans had been high. Some fifteen hundred men had been killed in action, or died as a result of disease and exposure. Many others had simply deserted.[84]

The return of Ghulam Haidar Khan to Kabul, the exile of Ishan Uraq and other amirs, the harsh revenue valuation which Akram Khan had imposed on the province, combined with exaggerated reports

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[80] *Ibid.*

[81] *ICI*, 30 June 1851; *Meer Seifooddeen*, 19 Sept. 1851, ESL:207, encl. 56, no. 8; *ACI*, 28 July-13 Aug. 1852, ESL:212, encl. 56, no. 6. Faiz Bakhsh, *Badakhshan*, 57-8 says Mahmud Khan of Sar-i Pul was put to death.

[82] *Meer Seifooddeen*, 19 Sept. 1851.

[83] *ATCN*, 6 Aug. 1851, ESL:207, encl. 46, no. 4; *ICI*, 13 July 1851, ESL:207, encl. 41, no. 2.

[84] *ATCN*, 30 March-25 April 1851, ESL:207, encl. 25, no. 10.

about the severity of an illness which Dost Muhammad Khan suffered during the autumn of 1851, leading to rumours circulating in Balkh that the Amir had died,[85] were some of the reasons why further unrest broke out in Qataghan. This discontent was fuelled by the intrigues of the Mir Wali and the Mir Ataliq of Qunduz which led to an Afghan defeat in a "great battle."[86] Hearing of continued fighting in Balkh, Dost Muhammad Khan was forced to issue orders for troops to prepare to reinforce the garrisons in Balkh. Once again senior members of the royal family refused to comply with the Amir's request. Nawab Jabbar Khan, who had opposed the invasion from its inception, informed the Amir, in no uncertain terms, that he had predicted "no good would come of sending troops to Toorkistan,"[87] but his advice had been ignored. He would only agree to go north if Dost Muhammad Khan ordered his sons and their forces to withdraw from the region and came to an arrangement with the local amirs to hand back their lands in return for a fixed annual tribute.[88] Such advice was not well received and Jabbar Khan remained in Kabul. In the end, his services were not required, for despite the initial setback, the Qataghan revolt was put down.

### *The Fall of Shibarghan, 1852-1854*

The winter campaign against Qataghan, however, claimed an important victim. Muhammad Akram Khan was already suffering from tuberculosis and during the course of the campaign he contracted pneumonia. This quickly turned to pleurisy from which he never recovered. Following his unexpected death, his twelve-year old son took over as temporary governor of Balkh,[89] until the Amir appointed his eldest, surviving son, Muhammad Afzal Khan, the father of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, in Akram Khan's stead (Katib ii, 209).[90] Not unexpectedly, this appointment was not well received by Dost Muhammad's other sons, who continued to intrigue against each other, much to the exasperation and annoyance of their father.[91]

[85] *James to Melville*, 31 Oct., 11 Nov. 1851, ESL:208, encl. 62, nos. 2, 5; *AIJ*, 26 March-9 April 1852, ESL:210, encl. 19, no. 24.
[86] *ICN*, 1-15 May 1851; *ICI*, 30 June 1851.
[87] *ICN*, 1-15 May 1851.
[88] *Ibid*; *ICI*, 30 June 1851.
[89] *AIJ*, 26 March-9 April 1852; *IC*, 8 April 1852, ESL:211, encl. 22, no. 6.
[90] *ANC*, 20 March-4 April 1852, ESL:210, encl. 19, no. 24.
[91] *Memorandum on the Northern Boundaries of Affghanistan*, 1869. MacGregor, 19 reports that Afzal revolted when he reached Balkh, but this is a complete fabrication.

Afzal Khan's first months as governor passed relatively peacefully, though a number of chiefs from Balkh engaged in clandestine contacts and intrigues to secure outside help against the Afghans. A number of Aimaq amirs from Badghis and Maimana made a secret journey to Tehran where they solicited the help of the Shah of Persia.[92] In the east, Qataghan remained disturbed and the Mir Ataliq opened a correspondence with the governor of the rebellious Bukharan province of Shahr-i Sabz, with the apparent aim of joint action on Afghan-held areas near the Amu Darya.[93] At about the same time, Muhammad Zaman Khan, another of the Amir's many sons, and governor of Khulm, plundered some Kochi nomads, precipitating, thereby, a rebellion amongst these Pushtun tribesmen.[94]

The first major challenge to Afzal Khan's authority, however, came from Mahmud Khan, the former Beglarbegi of Sar-i Pul. In the summer of 1852, following disturbances in Mazar-i Sharif in which the heirs of Shuja' al-Din Mazari seem to have played a leading part, Afzal Khan marched his forces into the holy city and forced the dead shaikhs' sons to accept Afghan overlordship, possibly even garrisoning the *waqf* city-state (McChesney 1991, 265-7).[95] However, the presence of Afghan soldiers in the sacred precincts was a catalyst for the growing resentment of Afghan occupation, for after all, the shrine of the 'King of Men' (*Shah-i Mardan*) was deemed the Karbala' of Lesser Turkistan.

Mahmud Khan, who appears to have been released sometime in 1851 and given the governorship of Aqcha, hearing of Afzal Khan's actions at Mazar-i Sharif, immediately rebelled (Katib ii, 210; McChesney 1991, 265-6). Afzal Khan acted quickly. A regiment of foot and five hundred *sowars* were sent against Aqcha, where the sardar was joined by Hakim Khan of Shibarghan and Ghazanfar Khan of Andkhui who both had long-standing feuds with the beglarbegi. After a number of fierce encounters, Afzal Khan retook the strategic frontier town (Katib ii, 210) and executed the leaders of the uprising. Mahmud Khan, however, made good his escape and continued to oppose the Amir's authority. According to one report, by this time the whole of Afghan Turkistan was "in a state of rebellion."[96]

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[92] *Sheil to Lord Granville*, 5 March 1852, SLEP:146, fols. 461-2.

[93] *ACI*, 21 June-5 July 1852, ESL:211, encl. 40, no. 69.

[94] *TCN*, 6-13 July 1852, ESL:211, encl. 40, no. 69.

[95] *ACI*, 28 July-13 Aug. 1852; *James to Melville*, 31 Oct. 1852; *ACI*, 14-22 Aug. 1852, ESL:212, encl. 59, no. 23.

[96] Id. Quoted in, *ACI*, 14-27 July 1852, ESL:211, encl. 44, no. 6.

In an attempt to quell the uprising, Dost Muhammad instructed Afzal Khan to placate the insurgents with soft words until the Tokhi rebellion, which was raging in the south, had been suppressed. The Amir released ishans Sudur and Uraq from confinement and, in a private audience, persuaded them to assist in the capture of Mahmud Khan Saripuli in exchange for Ishan Sudur being reappointed as governor of Aqcha under Afghan tutelage.[97] Whilst Ishan Uraq was kept as surety in Ghazni, his younger brother left for Afghan Turkistan, though exactly what happened when he reached Balkh is difficult to ascertain from the meagre information that we have at our disposal in the India Office. Nor is the *Siraj al-Tawarikh* any more helpful for, as usual, Katib avoids all suggestion that the Amir-i Kabir resorted to such Machiavellian subterfuge. However, it seems fairly certain that Mahmud Khan held Aqcha at least for a while[98] and it was only after much bitter fighting that Afzal Khan, possibly aided by Ishan Sudur, retook the town. Mahmud Khan was captured and, after a brief period of confinement in the fortress of Sherabad, was put to death (Katib ii, 210).[99]

The seriousness of Mahmud Khan's rebellion, which the occupation of Mazar-i Sharif had precipitated, is demonstrated by the fact that Dost Muhammad Khan considered going to Balkh personally to supervise operations against the rebels.[100] Though the Amir did not leave Kabul, he did accede to Afzal Khan's request to send Sardar Wali Muhammad Khan and Muhammad Zaman Khan to Turkistan. They were put in charge of Aqcha and Minglik respectively (Katib ii, 210).

The suppression of Mahmud Khan's revolt was followed by the inevitable reprisals. A fine of five thousand tomans was imposed on Aqcha and its fortifications were levelled to deter further rebellion.[101] Mir Qilij Khan, Mahmud Khan's half-brother and ruler of Sar-i Pul, was implicated in the rebellion, and forced to accept Afghan overlordship. Threatening messages were also sent to Hukumat Khan in Maimana, who sent his son, Dilawar Khan, to Afzal Khan with a gift of horses. Maimana's peace offering, however, was rejected, and the wali was informed that, unless he came in person to tender his

[97] *ACI*, 28 July-13 Aug. 1852.
[98] Faiz Bakhsh, *Badakhshan*, 57-8.
[99] *Ibid. James to Melville*, 31 Oct. 1852. *ELAM*, 1 Feb. 1853; *Thomson to Russell*, 15 March 1853, SLEP:149, fols. 552, 558-9.
[100] *Makeson to Melville*, 1 Dec. 1852, ESL:213, encl. 1, no. 18.
[101] *ELAM*, 1 Feb. 1853; *Thomson to Russell*, 15 March 1853.

submission, he would be attacked.[102] Nothing came of this and Hukumat Khan Ming continued to seek allies against the Afghans, even sending an envoy to the governor of Khurasan to solicit Persian help, though to little avail.[103] As for Ishan Sudur, it is highly doubtful whether he was ever reinstated as governor of Aqcha, that post being given instead to Sardar Wali Muhammad Khan. When the ishan's name is next mentioned in the intelligence reports, in March 1856, he is living once more in Kabul under house arrest.[104] Hakim Khan of Shibarghan, meanwhile, was rewarded for his support of the Amir, with the title of *Nizam al-Mulk* and a robe of honour which conferred official recognition on his right to govern under Afghan tutelage. Ghazanfar Khan, too, received similar letters patent from Dost Muhammad Khan, the title of *'Amin al-Daula*, and an inscribed signet ring which commemorated his appointment (Katib ii, 210).[105]

In late September 1853 there was a serious mutiny amongst the Kabul troops in Afghan Turkistan who, after serving in the north for three years without relief, unilaterally declared their intention of returning to their homes. A body of these malcontents marched to Mazar-i Sharif, possibly to seek sanctuary at the shrine of 'Ali, whilst Afzal Khan wrote frantic letters to his father requiring urgent relief forces to be sent, otherwise "Toorkistan would be left unprotected."[106] The mutiny came at a difficult time for the Amir, for most of his troops were committed to operations against Ghazni and Qandahar. Dost Muhammad again advised his son to bluff his way out of trouble by telling the mutineers that a relief force would reach Balkh within the month, and to make sure that the main routes south were well guarded, so that any mutineers who tried to flee back to Kabul could be intercepted.[107] Dost Muhammad Khan also began to show great favour to one of the sons of Murad Beg of Qunduz who was at odds with his elder brother, the Mir Ataliq. This individual had taken service with the Amir after escaping from Turkistan, presumably because he had tried to overthrow his brother. Faced with continued

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[102] *Thomson to Russell*, 15 March 1853. *ELH*, rcvd. Tehran, 15 April 1853; *AM*, 15 April 1853, SLEP:150, fols. 97, 304.

[103] *AM*, 15 April 1853. Later in the year Afzal sent a lakh of Bukharan tilas, valued at from five to seven Kabuli rupees each, to the Amir, presumably part of the tribute money and taxes from Afghan Turkistan, *Toorkistan Intelligence*, 24 June-8 July 1853, ESL:217, encl. 67, no. 7.

[104] *ECN*, 25 March-23 April 1855, ESL:227, fols. 806-11.

[105] The inscription read: از لطف امین داد کستر امین الدوله شد میر غضنفر

[106] *ACN*, rcvd. Peshawar, 30 Nov. 1853; *ECN*, 5 Oct.-2 Nov. 1853, ESL:217, encl. 84, nos. 10, 9.

[107] Id.

opposition from the amirs of Shibarghan and Qunduz, as well as a mutiny amongst his own troops, Dost Muhammad sought to win over such dissident elements with promises of Afghan assistance to overthrow their rivals in return for submission to Kabul.[108]

The continued reluctance of senior members of the Barakzai family to campaign in Balkh delayed the dispatch of reinforcements and it was not until the late spring of 1854 that the Kabul regiments were finally relieved by Wali Muhammad Khan.[109] By the time he reached Balkh, the revolt had again flared up throughout the region. In the spring the Mir Wali had gone to Bukhara and pleaded with Nasrullah Khan to aid his kinsmen across the Amu Darya because, "the Afghans had deprived them of their country and left them homeless."[110] In response to this emotional appeal, Nasrullah placed a sizeable army at the Mir Wali's disposal. However, the Manghit ruler heard that a Persian army was on the move in Khwarazm and that a Russian force was rumoured to be marching on Urganj. As a consequence, Nasrullah Khan ordered his commanders not to cross the Amu Darya, in case their troops were required to repel a joint Persian-Russian invasion.[111] Even when it was apparent that Persian and Russian troop movements posed no threat to Bukhara's security, Nasrullah decided that a section of the Mir Wali's force should be sent to help in the now annual attack on Shahr-i Sabz.[112] For about two months, during the summer heat of 1854, the Mir Wali kicked his heels beyond the Amu Darya[113] and, although he used the time to try and rally support for the invasion from the rulers of the Chahar Wilayat, by the time Nasrullah Khan allowed him to cross the river, the element of surprise had gone.

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[108] *ACN*, 30 Nov. 1853; *CN*, n.d., rcvd. Peshawar, Oct.(?) 1853, ESL:217, encl. 77, no. 8.

[109] *Ibid.* Cf. *ECN*, 5 June 1854, ESL:220, encl. 32, no. 4 where Afzal Khan complains that his troops were still unrelieved.

[110] *TCN*, 6 May 1854, ESL:220, encl. 30, no. 4.

[111] *Ibid. Syed Hissamooddeen of Koonar to Ayahooddeen of Peshawar*, 5 July 1854, ESL:220, encl. 34, no. 3 reports that at about the same time the Shah of Persia intervened in the affairs of Maimana, marching to the assistance of the son of "a certain Moolah" who had claimed Persian protection. Earlier, the same correspondent reported that the "Khan" of Merv had attacked the tribes of Maimana and forced them to submit, but had remitted a year's revenue, *Hissamooddeen*, 25 June 1854, ESL:220, encl. 32, no. 7. Neither report can be believed.

[112] *ECN*, 2 Sept. 1854, ESL:221, encl. 50, no. 3. This news-letter contains two reports, one from, *Hissamooddeen*, 2 Sept. 1854, the other entitled, *Ex-Wazeer's Correspondence*, 6 Sept. 1854. The reports are written in parallel columns in the L/P&S/5 volume. See also, *Abdool Gyas*, n.d. 1854, ESL:222, encl. 6, no. 3(i).

[113] *Ibid.*

During this period of enforced idleness, the Mir Wali again tried to persuade Britain to force the Afghans to withdraw from Balkh. In a letter addressed to Major Edwardes at Peshawar, the former ruler of Khulm reiterated his complaints against Dost Muhammad Khan and claimed that the Mir Ataliq of Qunduz, the Mir of Badakhshan and other amirs of Lesser Turkistan had "sworn to an alliance with me to drive the Afghans from our country."[114] The Mir Wali, cut off from direct contact with the British and living as a refugee beyond the Amu Darya, was out of touch with the state of Anglo-Afghan relations and was unaware that Britain was quite happy to see the Amir sweep Chingizid power aside, though his correspondence with Dr Lord in 1840 should have made it fairly clear which way the wind was blowing.

Nor was Edwardes the most sympathetic person for the Mir Wali to appeal to. Like Todd, Lord, and others before him, he had little time for the rulers of "flesh-dealing Toorkistan." He was a fervent supporter of the Afghan conquest of Balkh, and summed up his government's policy in the area succinctly as: "the more the Affghans take the less there will be for either Russia or Persia."[115] Not surprisingly, therefore, the Mir Wali's plea fell on deaf ears.

Finally, the Mir Wali was allowed to proceed with operations across the Amu Darya. At the head of some twenty thousand men he crossed the river and divided his forces into two columns; one contingent, numbering eight thousand strong, marched directly to Shibarghan whilst the other was sent against Aqcha.[116] The belated arrival of a Bukharan army in support of their cause, provided the catalyst which the people of the province sought. The rebellion spread like wildfire throughout the region, especially in the Chahar Wilayat. Afzal Khan, who had spent the first part of 1854 complaining to his father about the continued intrigues of his brothers, Muhammad Sharif Khan and 'Amin Khan, was, at the time of the uprising, under orders to return to Kabul. Fortunately for the Afghan cause, Afzal Khan had not left Balkh, though he seems to have been caught completely off guard by the size of the invading army.[117] Consequently, the Mir

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[114] *Mahomed Ameer Wali to Edwardes*, 3 May 1854, ESL:220, encl. 33, no. 4.

[115] *Edwardes to Temple*, 6 Sept. 1855.

[116] *Ex-Wazeer's Correspondence*, 5 Sept. 1854; *Hissamooddeen*, 2 Sept. 1854; *Abdool Gyas*, n.d. 1854.

[117] *ECN*, 5 June 1854. Sardar Muhammad Sharif, however, was aware of the extent of the Bukharan threat and had taken the precaution of sending his family to Kabul, *Hissamooddeen*, 5 Aug. 1854, ESL:220, encl. 45, no. 3.

Wali marched unopposed to Shibarghan where Mir Hakim Khan threw open the gates of the city to him. Very soon contingents from Maimana and the surrounding provinces were gathering in substantial numbers in Shibarghan,[118] new wet ditches were dug around the citadel and the defences strengthened in preparation for the forthcoming battle.[119] Meanwhile, the second column of the Bukharan army laid siege to Wali Muhammad in Aqcha, cut off all supplies to the Afghan garrisons to the east, and forced Sardar Muhammad Zaman Khan to abandon the strategic fortress of Minglik and retire to Balkh.[120]

Afzal Khan, in desperate straights at Balkh, found only one ray of light in the gloom. Despite the Mir Wali's boast to Edwardes, the Mir Ataliq of Qunduz had remained loyal to the Amir. The son of this chief was sent post-haste to Kabul with an urgent message that the Bukharan army was expected before Balkh within ten or fifteen days and if reinforcements were not sent immediately Turkistan would be lost.[121] Within days of hearing this news, fresh troops had been dispatched to Balkh, accompanied by four hundred camel loads of wheat, fifty camel loads of ammunition and other supplies.[122]

Despite their overwhelming numbers, and the support of the Chahar Wilayat, the Bukharan army made little progress with the siege of Aqcha. Possibly because of this lack of success, the Mir Wali and the Bukharan commander at Shibarghan quarrelled violently and in a fit of *pique*, Nasrullah's general marched his troops back across the Amu Darya, leaving only a token force of one thousand soldiers to protect the Bukharan ambassador, who had accompanied the army. A few weeks later, even Nasrullah's envoy appears to have abandoned the Mir Wali and Hakim Khan to their fate.[123] When Dost Muhammad

[118] *Afzul Khan to Dost Mahomed Khan*, 28 Nov. 1854; *News of the month of Rubee-ool-Uwwul* (Nov.-Dec.) 1854, ESL:222, encl. 13, no. 10; encl. 17, no. 3.

[119] *ECN*, 2 Sept. 1854; *ACN*, 6-25 Oct. 1954, ESL:222, encl. 3, no. 7.

[120] Id. *Afzul Khan to Dost Mahomed Khan*, 28 Nov. 1854. I have discounted the report by 'Fatteh Mahomed' that Hakim Khan deceived the Mir Wali into coming to Shibarghan so that he could be handed over to Afzal Khan. Afzal's own report on the subjugation of Shibarghan makes no mention of this. He regarded Hakim Khan as being as much of a rebel as the Mir Wali, see Futteh Mahomed, *Narrative*, 1855.

The *Siraj al-Tawarikh* makes no mention of the Bukharan campaign, though Katib does briefly mention the suppression of a rebellion by Hakim Khan and the dispatch of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, son of Afzal Khan, to Balkh. As far as Katib is concerned, the only thing of significance to happen in Lesser Turkistan between 1852 and 1857 was the education, in Tashqurghan, of his patron's father, Sardar 'Abd al-Rahman Khan.

[121] *Hissamooddeen*, 2 Sept. 1854. The son of the Mir Ataliq was given a pension of 10,000 rupees by the Amir to secure his loyalty.

[122] *ECN*, 2 Sept. 1854; *Hissamooddeen*, rcvd. Peshawar, 9 Oct. 1854, ESL:221, encl. 53, no. 3.

[123] *ECN*, 6-25 Oct. 1854. *ONC*, 17 Sept. 1854; *EOCN*, 8 Nov.-11 Dec. 1854, ESL:222, encl. 6,

heard that the Bukharans had left Shibarghan, he ordered his forces onto the offensive, despite Afzal Khan's own pessimism about mounting a successful assault on the city, and gave strict instructions that his son take "care that the Meer Walee does not escape from your hands."[124]

In November 1854 Afzal Khan marched against the Bukharan army before Aqcha and, without the Mir Wali offering any serious opposition, relieved Sardar Wali Muhammad. From Aqcha, the combined Afghan army advanced on Shibarghan. Leaving his artillery train between Aq Robat and Yangi 'Aruq, Afzal Khan sent an advanced column towards the latter place to discover whether Hakim Khan's cavalry were still defending this forward position. On the approach of his advance party, however, the Shibarghanis abandoned the position which the Afghan vanguard immediately occupied. The following morning, Afzal Khan arrived at Yangi 'Aruq and rode out to view the defences of Shibarghan, ordering his troops to prepare to march against the city and attack it as soon as they reached its defences. At dawn on Tuesday, 27 November 1854, the Afghan army arrived before the city and immediately divided into four columns. Sardar Muhammad 'Amin with half his regiment and sowars, supported by Sardar Wali Muhammad, was to attack from the south. The other half of 'Amin Khan's regiment, under the command of its commander, took the eastern sector. Muhammad Zaman Khan, with more Afghan troops and some Barakzai *sowar*s, was given responsibility for operations against the northern defences, whilst Afzal Khan himself, along with his brother, Shuja' al-Daula Khan, organised the attack from the west.

Once Afzal Khan was satisfied that his forces were in position, he ordered a simultaneous assault from all four sides. Throughout the day and most of the following night the battle raged, but the Afghan artillery managed to breach Shibarghan's walls and Hakim Khan, despairing of Bukharan aid and realising at dawn the Afghans would storm through the breaches, requested an interview with Afzal Khan in an attempt to spare his city being put to fire and sword. Afzal Khan rode to within a hundred yards of the fort accompanied by other sardars and Hakim Khan came out to meet him, Qur'an in hand.[125]

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no. 3(v); encl. 15, no. 3.

[124] Id. *Mahomed Kasim*, 6 Dec. 1854, ESL:222, encl. 15, no. 6. The Amir had initially ordered his son to hold out against the Bukharans until Nauroz.

[125] *Afzul Khan to Dost Mahomed Khan*, 28 Nov. 1854; *News of the month Rubee-ool-Uwwul*, 1854. 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, then a child of nine, was present at this siege (Sultan Muhammad

The terms of surrender were, in the circumstances, very reasonable. Hakim Khan was ordered to hand over his most powerful artillery pieces, pay a tribute of five thousand tilas[126] and enter Dost Muhammad's name in the *khutba* instead of Nasrullah Khan's. Hakim Khan, however, was allowed to continue to govern Shibarghan. Sher Muhammad Khan Ming, who had been in charge of the contingent of Maimana troops, paid his respects to Afzal Khan, offering his brother's services to the Amir and was given a robe of honour for Hukumat Khan. Ghazanfar Khan of Andkhui, who had also participated in the rebellion, sent an envoy and tendered his submission.[127] The Mir Wali, however, was handed over to Afzal Khan and, although Hakim Khan and the other rebellious amirs of the Chahar Wilayat had been treated with a measure of leniency, the Mir Wali could expect little mercy. His life hanging by a thread, the former ruler of Khulm wrote a letter of submission to the Amir, in which he appealed, through the medium of poetry, for clemency, and was granted a reprieve:

> *The deserter has come to the door,*
> *He has, through his sins, lost his character,*
> *There is no occasion to say more.*
> *I do not say accept my prayers,*
> *But draw the pen of forgiveness over my crimes.*[128]

The Mir Wali was assigned a small *jagir* on one of the Hazhda Nahr where he and his family lived under strict surveillance. He did not long survive this defeat. In the spring of the following year he was taken violently ill with dysentery and died on 9 May. His sons maintained, with some justification, that their father had been secretly poisoned by Afzal Khan, who wished to have this important Uzbek leader out of the way.[129] The death of the Mir Wali ended the struggle for Khulm's independence from Afghanistan and his successors took little further part in the ensuing resistence to Afghan annexation.

The fall of Shibarghan was a victory of great importance for Dost Muhammad Khan, since not only had he succeeded in beating off the first serious Bukharan challenge to the conquest of Balkh, but the

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Khan i, 1).

[126] Id. Campbell, 246 says the indemnity was £ 40,000, but no reliance can be placed on his information, which is mainly fictitious.

[127] *ECN*, 16-22 Jan. 1855, ESL:223, encl. 26, no. 3.

[128] *Meer Mahomed Ameen Khan to Afzul Khan, c.* 28 Nov. 1854, ESL:222, encl. 13, no. 10.

[129] *ECN*, 16-22 Jan. 1855; *ECN*, 20 April-16 June 1855, ESL:224, encl. 47, no. 13; Futteh Mahomed, *Narrative*, 1855.

capture and subsequent death of the Mir Wali removed yet another of Turkistan's most senior leaders. Shibarghan had become a vassal of Afghanistan and the Amir's suzerainty over the Chahar Wilayat had been reinforced. Yet despite Shibarghan's strategic position, Afzal Khan did not, apparently, place any sizeable garrison in the city—an oversight which he was to rue a few months later.

*Bukhara, Afghanistan and Britain, 1855-1856*

The extraordinary behaviour of Nasrullah of Bukhara continued to perplex both Afghan and Uzbek alike. In the early months of 1855 another Bukharan army, between five thousand and fifteen thousand strong, was reported to have arrived at Qarqi[130] where it was joined by nomadic Turkman tribes living between Andkhui and Shibarghan.[131] Afzal Khan, fearing a further invasion, wrote to Hakim Khan of Shibarghan asking for an explanation. The Hakim of Shibarghan informed Afzal Khan that he could do nothing about containing the Turkman tribes, for they were "far more powerful" than the combined power of his state and Andkhui. As for the Bukharans, they were merely reinforcing their frontier lest the Afghans should be tempted to follow up their successes against Shibarghan and invade across the Amu Darya.[132] Although the Bukharans made no move to cross the river, Dost Muhammad, not prepared to take any chances, ordered Afzal Khan to go to Shibarghan with a thousand horse and twelve guns. Hakim Khan was told to prepare to admit an Afghan garrison,[133] howbeit temporarily, whilst a further force was sent to Andkhui and the borderlands of the Amu Darya to monitor Bukharan movements.[134] The Bukharan army, however, was not assembled to invade Balkh, but in preparation for Nasrullah Khan's annual campaign against Shahr-i Sabz. For the next twelve months, Bukhara was occupied with the campaign against Iskandar Khan and the siege of Shahr-i Sabz. Although the city finally capitulated in the early summer of 1855 (Howorth, 847),[135] the protracted investment of this city allowed

[130] *ECN*, 11-19 Feb., 20 April-16 June 1855; *Afzul Khan to Dost Mahomed Khan*, April 1855, ESL:223, encl. 34, no. 8.

[131] *ECN*, 20 April-16 June 1855; *EJN*, 24 May-23 June 1855, ESL:224, encl. 49, no. 12.

[132] Id. Later Hakim Khan reported the death of the Khan of Urganj in a battle with the Persians at Sarrakhs, a campaign in which Hukumat Khan's son, Dilawar Khan, had taken part, *Hukeem Khan, Meer of Shibberghan, to Afzul Khan*, April 1855, ESL:224, encl. 5, no. 4(i).

[133] Id. The garrison was two hundred horse, five hundred foot and six guns.

[134] Id.

[135] *ICAN*, 5 June 1856, ESL:228, fol. 26.

Muhammad Afzal Khan and Dost Muhammad Khan to extend Afghanistan's frontier even further into the Chahar Wilayat, knowing that Nasrullah Khan was occupied elsewhere.

Sardar Afzal Khan made the most of the Bukharan threat, claiming that Nasrullah Khan and Iskandar were planning a joint attack "on the Afghans."[136] This, and other exaggerated claims about Nasrullah Khan's intentions, was part of a much wider campaign of disinformation that was being waged by the Amir during the years 1855 and 1856. During 1855 and 1856, sources close to the Afghan throne set out to play up as much as possible the presumed threat of either a Bukharan or Persian invasion, in a deliberate attempt to influence the course of negotiations which took place during these years between Dost Muhammad Khan and Britain (Champagne, 360). More than a decade after resuming control of the affairs of Afghanistan, Dost Muhammad Khan made tentative approaches to the British to see whether it was possible to put their relations on a formal footing. The Amir's approaches came at a fortunate time, for Britain was on the verge of war with Russia in the Crimean Peninsula. The Governor-General, Lord Dalhousie, realised that it was in Britain's interests to put relations with Afghanistan on a more formal footing to guard against the possibility, however remote, of a Russian attack on India from the north (Fraser-Tytler, 122). In February 1855 Haidar Khan, the heir apparent, arrived in Peshawar where he signed a treaty of friendship with the British. Under its terms, Dost Muhammad Khan undertook to be "the friend of the friends and enemy of the enemies of the Honourable East India Company" and in return, "the Honourable East India Company engages to respect those territories of Afghanistan now in His Highness' possession and never to interfere therein" (Aitchinson XIII, 237; Fraser-Tytler, 122-3).

One of the most important subjects discussed during the treaty negotiations was the issue of Afghanistan's borders. Dost Muhammad Khan had not given up his claim to sovereignty over Peshawar and Sardar Haidar Khan had been instructed to raise this thorny issue with his British counterpart. However, it was soon obvious to the sardar that Britain had no intention of handing back the region to the Afghans and the subject was diplomatically shelved. Instead, the issue of the northern frontier of Afghanistan was raised, for when it came to the Amir's annexation of Balkh, their interests were almost identical, even though they had different reasons for wanting to see Uzbek

[136] *Afzul Khan to Dost Mahomed Khan*, April 1855.

power swept away. In order to secure British support for his campaign against the amirs of Balkh, Dost Muhammad Khan played on fears of joint Russian-Bukharan action against Afghanistan, exaggerating the threat that Nasrullah Khan posed to Turkistan. Haidar Khan, somewhat disingenuously, claimed that all the country from Badakhshan to Maimana and Herat was in his father's possession. Indeed, the heir apparent went as far as to propose that Britain provide military assistance to his father so he could extend the borders of Afghanistan to the gates of Bukhara.[137] Compared to the Afghans, Ghulam Haidar declared, the Bukharans were "like a thousand sheep before one wolf."[138]

> Not only did the Afghans not fear Bukhara, but they owed a vindictive debt to its Shah, which they were desirous of paying. The Shah had slain Stoddard Saheb and Conolly Saheb, he had also killed many Afghans ... and nothing would be more agreeable to him and his countrymen than to march and chastise the Shah.[139]

More than ten years after the death of the two British officers in Bukhara, their unavenged deaths still rankled and Ghulam Haidar cleverly sought to exploit Calcutta's frustration for his own ends. As for Dost Muhammad Khan, he too had yet to exact retribution for the treatment meted out to him by Bukhara in 1840.[140]

Edwardes, the British Political Officer in Peshawar who conducted the negotiations on behalf of the Governor-General, was not deceived by this proposal, realising that Dost Muhammad Khan had ulterior motives for the invasion of Transoxiana. Notwithstanding, he informed his superiors that there was "no reason to doubt that Maimunna and Ankho have given in their allegiance to the Ameer's son at Bulkh which, I apprehend, unites the frontiers of the Orgunj and Cabul kingdoms"[141] and recommended that the administration should recognise that Afghanistan included all the states lying between the Murghab and Badakhshan. Later the same year Edwardes,

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[137] *Extract of a Memorandum given to Chief Commissioner of Peshawar by Sirdar Hyder Khan*, 24 March 1855, ESL:223, encl. 23, no. 8.

[138] *Edwardes to Temple*, 4 May 1855, ESL:224, encl. 5, no. 4(i). Fath Muhammad had quite a different opinion: "an Afghan rolls about in his saddle, an Oozbeg is part of his horse, and he takes an Afghan out of the saddle with his spear as you would take up meat with a spoon. I have seen the battle of both of them and I know that my countrymen cannot stand before an Oozbeg horse," Futteh Mahomed, *Narrative*, 1855.

[139] *Temple to Beadon*, 25 March 1855, ESL:223, encl. 23, no. 6.

[140] *Edwardes to Temple*, 14 May 1855, ESL:223, encl. 34, no. 8.

[141] *Edwardes to Temple*, 1 March 1855, ESL:223, encl. 26, no. 3.

commenting on the report of the secret agent, Fath Muhammad Khan,[142] who had spent fourteen months travelling through Bukhara, Badakhshan and Turkistan, went even further, arguing that the Afghan subjugation of the province of Balkh was part of the overall strategy for the defence of India:

> The narrative leaves a lively picture on the mind of the imminent dissolution of Toorkistan, its weak Oosbeg chiefs too jealous to continue and three formidable foreign powers, the Russians, the Persians and the Afghans, scrambling for its defenceless provinces.... The Oosbegs seem to enjoy great liberty under the light rule of their own chiefs and the rule of the Afghans in Bulkh and Khooloom is comparatively oppressive, still it is light to that of the Persian which adds the bitterness of Sectarian persecution. As a question of humanity we can never feel much pity for the flesh-dealing Toorkistan, let it fall to whom it may. As a question of politics, the more the Afghans take the less there will be for either Russia or Persia.[143]

This deliberate down-playing of the level of discontent at Afghan rule in Balkh[144] was to be repeated again and again over the next fifty years by British officials who, like Edwardes, turned a blind eye to what was going on north of the Hindu Kush. In fact the rulers of the Chahar Wilayat had complained bitterly to Fath Muhammad that "the Cabul ... yoke is awfully heavy on their brothers of Khooloom and Bulkh." Indeed, he had been told that the local amirs would prefer the English, or even the Hindus, to Afghan rule.[145]

In the final treaty, signed on 30 March 1855, official recognition of Dost Muhammad Khan's conquest of Balkh was tacitly conceded. Not only were the Amir's enemies to be Britain's enemies, and *vice versa*, but the East India Company further undertook to "respect those territories of Afghanistan now in His Highness' possession" (Aichinson XIII, 237). This statement gave a measure of *de jure* recognition to a Greater Afghanistan that incorporated the states south of

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[142] Futteh Mahomed, *Narrative*, 1855. Fath Muhammad Jawanshir was a Qizilbash from Kabul who had brought the Mir Wali's letter to Peshawar in 1854 (see above). Edwardes asked him to "make a tour through Toorkistan" and visit Khiva to report on the position of the Russian forces. His itinerary was: Badakhshan, Qunduz, Kaudiyan, Bukhara, Balkh, Khulm, Merv, Sarrakhs, Mashhad, Herat, Maimana, Khulm and Kabul, see *Edwardes to Temple*, 6 Sept. 1855.

[143] *Edwardes to Temple*, 6 Sept. 1855.

[144] Edwardes ignored Fath Muhammad's report which stated that Maimana had "always been a dependency of Herat" since this went against what he had reported to government earlier in the year. Fath Muhammad, of course, was wrong, but so was Edwardes to skirt around the uncomfortable issue of the way in which the Afghans were acting in Lesser Turkistan.

[145] Futteh Mahomed, *Narrative*, 1855. Cf. Ney Elias' report in the 1880s which sought to play down local resentment to Afghan domination which even he was forced to admit was regarded by the population as "a sort of national insult" (Elias, 297-80).

the Amu Darya from Badakhshan to Maimana. Britain thus compensated the Amir for the loss of Peshawar, allowing him a free hand beyond the Hindu Kush.

Dost Muhammad, realising the propaganda value of this treaty in his battle with the Uzbeks, proclaimed the news far and wide. "He was now the servant of the British" he declared. "Whatever country he conquered would, in future, be for the Sirkar Company," and gave out that the conquest of Balkh had been "on behalf of the English."[146] Though Britain would have publicly disassociated itself from such wild claims, Dost Muhammad knew that, by exaggerating the extent of his relationship with the British, he could demoralise his opponents. It is not surprising, therefore, that the news of this treaty was greeted with anger and dismay in Bukhara and Turkistan generally.

*Herat and the Anglo-Afghan Alliance, 1855-1856*

In the autumn of 1855, the ruler of Herat, Saiyid Muhammad Khan, son of Yar Muhammad, was overthrown after an internal revolution. An exiled Sadozai prince, Shahzada Muhammad Yusuf, the grandson of Zaman Shah, hearing that the throne of Herat was empty, left Khurasan secretly and, evading Persian search parties, managed to reach Herat (Champagne, 327-30), where Saiyid Muhammad Khan, "with his sword in one hand and the Koran in the other ... took his coffin on his shoulder and threw himself at the feet of the Shahzadah."[147] A few months after this *coup d'état*, Muhammad Yusuf had Saiyid Muhammad executed. His body was thrown over the citadel walls into a ditch, where it remained for four nights being eaten by dogs, until a local dervish took pity on his mangled remains and buried them secretly.[148] Muhammad Yusuf's seizure of Herat presented the Persian government with something of a dilemma, since Saiyid Muhammad Khan had been virtually a puppet of the Shah. However, Persia decided rather than risk a costly military intervention, it was better to recognise the new ruler and try and exert pressure on him to continue the policy of his predecessor (Champagne, 330).

At around the same time that this revolution was taking place in Herat, Kohandil Khan, the independent ruler of Qandahar and half-brother of Dost Muhammad Khan, died (Champagne, 354). Dost

[146] *Ibid.*
[147] *News-letter from Ghulam Haydar*, 27 Sept. 1855, ESL:226, fols. 813-4.
[148] *Edwardes to Temple*, 9 Jan. 1856, ESL:226, fols. 813-4.

Muhammad, eager to help himself to the original capital of the Durranis, began to circulate false reports of a Persian invasion of Herat as part of his propaganda war to exact concessions from the British. Haidar Khan and other members of the Amir's immediate family deliberately circulated rumours that Shahzada Yusuf had taken Herat with the help of a large Persian army which had then marched to Maimana, overthrown Hukumat Khan and instead set up "Mirza Mahomed Beg who formerly ruled it."[149] Though these reports were later refuted by Charles Murray, the British Envoy in Tehran (Champagne, 360), this concerted attempt to exploit British anxiety about Persian expansionism provided the justification the Amir sought for the invasion of Qandahar, which fell to him on 15 November 1855.[150]

The fall of Qandahar was the first, and most important, territorial gain that Dost Muhammad realised from his alliance with Britain and as soon as he was securely in possession of the city, he wrote to the Governor-General asking for the word 'Qandahar' to be inserted into the treaty. Lord Dalhousie, though unable to grant him this (for any retrospective alteration of the treaty would have affected its legal standing under British law), was prepared to interpret the appropriate clauses in an open-ended manner.

> In order to remove all doubts which His Highness may have of the full validity of the Treaty, the Government of India can offer the Ameer its formal assurance that the Treaty signed at Peshawar in 1855 will be recognised as having full force and effect *whatever may be the territories in the Ameer's possession* as long as His Highness shall observe its stipulations [my emphasis][151]

Though Dalhousie went on to argue that his interpretation of the treaty did not give Dost Muhammad Khan *carte blanche* to conquer any territory he saw fit (no doubt with the fate of Herat in the back of his mind), the fact that the Governor-General not only did not object to the Amir's conquest of Qandahar, but was prepared to give the

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[149] *EOCN*, 19 Sept.-3 Oct. 1855, ESL:225, encl. 62, no. 7. No such person ever ruled Maimana either before, or after, 1855. The reports of the mythical Persian attack on Herat and Maimana fill the Kabul news-letters during the second half of 1855, cf. the following *ECN*s: 17 June-14 July 1855; 15 Aug.-17 Sept. 1855; 19 Sept.-3 Oct. 1855, ESL:225, encl. 62, no. 7; 4-17 Oct. 1855, ESL:226, fols. 862-3; 18 Oct.-15 Nov. 1855, ESL:226, fol. 526; 28 Jan.-25 Feb. 1856, ESL:230, encl. 18, no. 11. See also, *Edwardes to Temple*, 26 May 1855, ESL:224, encl. 40, no. 7. In fact all that had happened was that some outlying areas of Maimana had been attacked by the Turkmans; *Guzunfur Khan, Ruler of Unkoh, to Afzul Khan*, 6 July 1855, ESL:225, encl. 55, no. 3.

[150] *Dost Mahomed Khan to Edwardes*, 28 Nov. 1855, ESL:226, fol. 638.

[151] *Minute by Lord Dalhousie*, 14 Jan. 1856, ESL:226, fol. 625.

broadest of broad interpretations to the treaty's clauses, gave even more encouragement for the Amir to pursue further conquests.

*The Dispute over the Governorship of Balkh, 1855-1856*

As far as the province of Balkh was concerned, the Amir's next target for annexation was the state of Qunduz. In the summer of 1855, Dost Muhammad Khan recalled Afzal Khan from the north to discuss, in secret, the plans for the annexation of Qataghan, Badakhshan and Maimana and to hear at first-hand about Russian and Bukharan movements beyond the Amu Darya.[152] Leaving Wali Muhammad in charge of the region, Afzal Khan reached Kabul on 27 June, accompanied by tribal leaders from Shibarghan, and bringing expensive presents from Balkh, valued at over sixty thousand rupees.[153]

Afzal Khan informed his father that he had assessed the annual revenues of the province at twenty-seven lakh of rupees, though a lakh was required from this for the proposed conquest of Qunduz the following year. When news of the value of this fief reached the ears of Dost Muhammad's other sons, it excited their envy and jealousy and Ghulam Haidar Khan, as heir apparent, set himself to outbid his brother in an auction for this lucrative governorship.[154] Within a very short space of time, the two brothers were at each other's throats and plotting each other's downfall and disgrace.

The clamour about the governorship of Balkh, however, was only part of the reason for this feud. Ghulam Haidar Khan was younger than Muhammad Afzal and his appointment as the heir apparent had not been well received by his elder brother, who believed that it was his right to succeed his father. As for Ghulam Haidar Khan, he argued that since he was the future Amir of Afghanistan, Balkh, which was by far the largest and richest province of Afghanistan, should be given to him. When Haidar Khan eventually succeeded in outbidding his rival and securing the appointment, Afzal Khan sarcastically told his father:

> I have no money to bid so much, and neither want a province nor power. I won't go. You are master, give the country to anyone you like and I will retire into private life on the savings of the last four years. Let Haidar Khan get any

[152] Futteh Muhammad, *Narrative*, 1855; *ECN*, 20 April-16 June, 17 June-14 July 1855.
[153] *ECN*, 17 July-14 Aug. 1855.
[154] *Ibid.*

> further profits ... for he seems to be your son, and all the rest of us seem not to be so.[155]

So acrimonious did the quarrel become, that rumours circulated throughout the Afghan capital that Afzal Khan planned to assassinate his brother.[156] The matter was only finally settled when Sardar Wali Muhammad reported that serious disturbances had occurred in Balkh. In response to this emergency, the Amir reappointed Afzal Khan and, in the middle of August, he returned to the north with orders to annex Qunduz at the first convenient opportunity.[157] However, the Mir Ataliq of Qunduz, hearing *via* his brother, who had gone to Kabul with Afzal Khan, that the Afghans intended to overthrow him, came in person to Khulm where he tendered his submission to the sardar and signed a treaty which, according to Afzal Khan, was very advantageous to the Amir.[158]

*The Rebellion of Hakim Khan of Shibarghan, 1855-1856*

Whilst Afzal Khan was in Kabul, a report circulated in the Afghan capital that Hakim Khan of Shibarghan had gone to Persia to seek the Shah's aid against the Afghans. Afzal Khan immediately issued orders for Wali Muhammad to occupy the citadel and a further contingent of Afghan soldiers was sent to reinforce Aqcha.[159] These reports, issuing from the same source which reported the Persian invasion of Herat earlier in the year, cannot be trusted and it is more likely that the rumours of Shibarghan's intrigues with Persia provided the excuse Afzal Khan needed to annex the territory.

Taking advantage of Hakim Khan's temporary absence in Maimana, Afghan troops were sent to seize the Shibarghan citadel. Hakim Khan's anger at this action would seem to confirm the belief that he had merely been on a visit to Hukumat Khan rather than to Tehran, for when he heard what had happened, he went in person to the governor of Balkh and complained that he had been supplanted by Wali Muhammad. Afzal blandly informed the hakim that Sardar Wali Muhammad had "no commission to interfere with the authority of the Khan but was sent merely to suppress any hostile movement in that

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[155] *Ibid.*
[156] *Ibid.*
[157] *Ibid. ECN*, 15 Aug.-17 Sept. 1855; *ECN*, 18 Nov.-25 Dec. 1855, ESL:226, fol. 827.
[158] *ECN*, 18 Nov.-15 Dec. 1855.
[159] *Ibid. ECN*, 26 Dec. 1855.-19 Jan. 1856, ESL:226, fols. 125-6.

quarter, such as that made by the Bukharan troops who crossed the Oxus and committed depredations on this side."[160] Hakim Khan, however, received no assurances that he would be permitted to retain control of his fief, or that Afghan troops would be withdrawn.

The garrisoning of Shibarghan sparked off another rebellion in the Chahar Wilayat. Following Afzal Khan's refusal to recall Wali Muhammad's troops from Shibarghan, Hakim Khan fled to Maimana where, within a matter of a few weeks, he raised an army of four to five thousand horse. Turkman raiders were sent into Shibarghan to attack outlying settlements and some Afghan tax-collectors were taken prisoner. However, when these irregular cavalry tried to attack Shibarghan proper, they were beaten back.[161] In late January 1856, Hakim Khan moved to Andkhui, which had joined the rebellion, and marched on Shibarghan at the head of seven or eight thousand men. Wali Muhammad, meanwhile, had been reinforced by the youthful 'Abd al-Rahman Khan and felt strong enough to face the rebel army in the open field. His forces marched up the Andkhui road and, on 2 February 1856, the two armies met in battle "six coss" from Shibarghan. A bloody battle ensued in which three hundred Afghan soldiers were killed and a number of senior Barakzai sardars were wounded.[162] In the end, though casualties were much lighter on the Uzbek side, Hakim Khan's men were routed and fled back to Andkhui, leaving a hundred of their number dead on the field.[163]

The Afghan victory forced Ghazanfar Khan of Andkhui to send ambassadors to discuss a peaceful resolution of the conflict, for his country now lay exposed to Afghan occupation. Despite his weak position, Ghazanfar Khan tried to persuade Afzal Khan to allow Hakim Khan to rule Shibarghan and to only leave a small Afghan garrison of three to four hundred men resident in the citadel. Afzal Khan seemed to have responded favourably to these suggestions for the restoration of peace,[164] but Hakim Khan, having returned to Maimana,[165] set about recruiting another army to carry on the fight and

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[160] *ECN*, 26 Dec. 1855-19 Jan. 1856.

[161] *ECN*, 20 Jan.-13 Feb., 18-23 March 1856, ESL:227, fols. 299-305, 603-4.

[162] Nasrullah Khan, nephew of the late Nawab Muhammad Zaman, was killed. A grandson of Dost Muhammad Khan, Ghulam Haidar Khan, and Jahandad Khan, were wounded, *ECN*, 18 Feb.-23 March 1855.

[163] *ECN*, 18 Feb.-23 March 1856.

[164] *Ibid.*

[165] Reports circulated in Lesser Turkistan that Hakim Khan had died at Maimana, but this may have been an attempt to undermine his rebellion by spreading false rumours, *ECN*, 25 March-23 April 1856, ESL:227, fols. 805-11.

sent his son, accompanied by Hukumat Khan Ming, to ask Herat for aid, though without success.[166] For a while it seemed as if Hakim Khan's rebellion was doomed. However, quite unexpectedly one of the most charismatic figures of the nationalist cause arrived in Maimana and breathed new life into the uprising.

Since the fall of Aqcha in 1851, Ishan Uraq and his brother, Sudur, had been living as exiles in Kabul and Ghazni. In 1855 Uraq had accompanied the Amir during the campaign against Qandahar, but in the middle of March 1856, possibly secretly informed about Hakim Khan's rebellion, the ishan "absconded" from his guards. When Dost Muhammad Khan was told of his escape he ordered all the passes to the north to be watched and the residence of Ishan Sudur, who was still under house arrest in Kabul, to be closely guarded.[167] Despite these precautions, Ishan Uraq managed to make his way to Maimana. The arrival of the ishan, "had an extraordinary effect" (MacGregor, 155). Within a matter of days, the fire of revolt had spread as far east as Mazar-i Sharif and Qunduz. Even the amir of Kulab, on the other side of the Amu Darya, became involved.[168]

By the end of March 1856, ten thousand men had flocked to Ishan Uraq's banner and the rejuvenated army set out once more to attack Wali Muhammad.[169] The sardar, in a repetition of the tactics which had proved so successful against Hakim Khan, marched out of Shibarghan to confront the Turkistanian army in the open field and forced the ishan's forces to fall back on Andkhui. Ishan Uraq, however, was not easily discouraged. Not only did he manage to rally his scattered force, but managed to recruit even more men to his banner.

A few weeks later the ishan renewed his attack on Shibarghan, this time with an army of over twelve thousand men. On this occasion, though, Ishan Uraq decided to divide his forces. Eight thousand men, probably under the leadership of Hakim Khan, were sent against Shibarghan, whilst Ishan Uraq set out for Aqcha with the remaining four thousand troops and laid siege to Muhammad Zaman Khan.[170] This change of tactics caused problems for Wali Muhammad, who was unable to call up reinforcements from Aqcha, and after three days of fighting he was forced to retreat into Shibarghan's citadel. Although his artillery managed to keep the besiegers away from the walls of the

[166] *ECN*, 18 Feb.-23 March, 25 March-23 April 1856.
[167] Id.
[168] Id.
[169] Id. A subsequent report says 10,000, *ECN*, 23 April-4 May 1856, ESL:227, fols. 819-20.
[170] *ECN*, 23 April-4 May 1856; ECN, 6 May-3 June 1856, ESL:228, fol. 62.

*arg*, the Afghan garrison was hard pressed and Afzal Khan ordered his son, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, to march to his relief. However, following at least one encounter with Hakim Khan's forces, the sardar was unable to break the siege.[171]

Faced with the possible loss of Aqcha and Shibarghan and unable to defeat the insurgents in the open field, Afzal Khan resorted to a policy of divide and rule. Sometime after the arrival of Ishan Uraq at Maimana, one of the sons of Shuja' al-Din of Mazar-i Sharif had tried to join the rebellion, but had been arrested, imprisoned and his property confiscated.[172] Afzal Khan brought this individual out of prison and promised to return his property and other incentives if he would sow dissension amongst the rebels, to which he agreed. He was released and sent to Shibarghan, where he gave out that he had managed to escape from prison. Within a short time this individual had managed to undermine the unity of Ishan Uraq's army to such an extent that it began to disintegrate.[173] When Afzal heard that the rebels were squabbling amongst themselves, he ordered 'Abd al-Rahman Khan back onto the offensive. As the sardar advanced on Shibarghan, Wali Muhammad Khan marched out of the citadel and, in a joint attack, routed Hakim Khan. Having relieved Shibarghan, the two Barakzai princes marched north to relieve Muhammad Zaman Khan, who was still besieged by Ishan Uraq in Aqcha. Despite being heavily outnumbered, Uraq stood his ground but was defeated and large numbers of his followers were killed. [174]Ishan Uraq was captured, along with other members of his family, but once again he escaped execution. Instead, he was returned to exile in Kabul, where he remained until after the death of Dost Muhammad Khan. Meanwhile, Afzal Khan liberally rewarded the son of Shuja' al-Din Mazari for his treachery.[175]

The capture of Ishan Uraq, around the middle of April 1856, ended the second phase of indigenous resistance to the Afghan annexation of Shibarghan. But just when it seemed that the rebellion had been finally suppressed, Afghan control over the region faced another threat, this time from the other side of the Amu Darya. After a siege lasting

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[171] *ECN*, 23 April-4 May 1856.

[172] *ECN*, 25 March-23 April 1856. *ECN*, 23 April-4 May 1856 says he was a nephew of the deceased ruler of Mazar, but all the other sources refer to him as a son. He is not named, but may have been Sufi Khan, the younger of the two brothers.

[173] *Ibid.*

[174] *Ibid. ECN*, 6 May-3 June 1856. Uzbek casualties are given as 1,000 killed, 118 captured.

[175] *ECN*, 23 April-4 May 1856.

nearly a year, the ruler of Shahr-i Sabz had been finally starved into submission (Howorth, 847).[176] As soon as the town had fallen, Nasrullah Khan's son, who had commanded the operations at Shahr-i Sabz, moved his forces to Qarshi, where he was joined by additional forces from Bukhara. At the beginning of May 1856, the Bukharan sultan informed Afzal Khan that he planned to visit Mazar-i Sharif to celebrate the festival of 'Id al-Fitr at the shrine of 'Ali and to give thanks for his recent victory.[177] Since the Manghit prince was to be accompanied by several thousand battle-hardened troops, and his letter demanded that Afzal Khan pay Bukhara twelve thousand tilas, the governor of Balkh rightly concluded that Bukhara was merely seeking an occasion to attack him.[178]

The threat of a Bukharan invasion resuscitated hopes of liberation amongst the population of the Chahar Wilayat, particularly Maimana and Andkhui (Champagne, 363-8). It was reported in Kabul that Maimana and Andkhui had both sent troops to support the Bukharans and an attempt by Afzal Khan to negotiate with Maimana appears to have met with little or no success.[179] Yet again, with Bukhara poised to invade Balkh, Nasrullah Khan drew back from the brink, anxious about Persian designs on Herat and particularly fearing the Anglo-Afghan alliance which made Dost Muhammad Khan an even more formidable opponent.[180]

### *Persia, Herat and the Chahar Wilayat, 1856-1858*

Persia, as we have seen, had decided, somewhat grudgingly, to recognise Shahzada Yusuf as the ruler of Herat following his overthrow of Saiyid Muhammad Khan in 1855, but the sardar did not prove as pliant as the Shah had hoped and relations between the two countries became increasingly strained (Champagne, 362). In the late autumn of

[176] *ECN*, 4 July-2 Aug. 1856; *ICAN*, 5 June 1856.

[177] *ECN*, 4 July-2 Aug. 1856; *ECN*, 3 Aug.-1 Sept. 1856, ESL:229, fols. 249-54. The 'Id festival commenced on 13 May 1856 (1 Shawwal, 1375).

[178] Id.

[179] *ECN*, 4 July-2 Aug. 1856. Jahandad Khan and the son of the Khan of Mazar, possibly the same individual who had so recently employed his skills to undermine Uzbek solidarity, had been sent to Maimana by Afzal Khan, though the reason is not stated. Jahandad returned, but the son of the Khan of Mazar "lingered on" in Maimana and seems to have made his peace with the rulers of the area.

[180] *Ibid.* This report claims that Bukharan troops had actually entered Shibarghan, but it is not collaborated by any other source and would seem unlikely, given the negotiations which started at about this time.

1855, following Dost Muhammad's conquest of Qandahar, Muhammad Yusuf, fearing that the Amir planned to march against Herat, appealed to Persia for aid. The Shah, only too happy to interfere in Herat's affairs, sent an army eastwards and in February 1856 Sam Khan Ilkhan entered the city at the head of several hundred troops. Muhammad Yusuf, who had not expected such a large Persian force, had second thoughts and forced Sam Khan and his men to leave, unaware that the Persian commander was but the harbinger of an army numbering over twenty thousand men.

In revenge for his expulsion, Sam Khan seized the border fort of Ghuriyan, where he was joined by the rest of the Persian force and set out for Herat to punish the sardar for his insolence (Champagne, 356-63). In late April 1856, about the time that Ishan Uraq was being defeated near Aqcha, 'Isa Khan, the Wazir of Herat, having entered into a secret pact with the Persian besiegers, overthrew his master. Muhammad Yusuf was handed over to Sultan Muhammad Mirza, the overall commander of the Persian army, who sent the Afghan prince to Tehran, where he was put to death (Champagne, 375-6, 390). However, instead of the Persian army withdrawing in accordance with the agreement with the wazir, Sultan Muhammad Mirza ordered Herat to open its gates to his men. When this demand was refused, the Persian army laid siege to the city in earnest. Herat finally fell on 26 October 1856. Wazir 'Isa Khan was captured and subsequently executed. In his place, Sultan Ahmad Khan, a nephew of Dost Muhammad Khan, was appointed as the new quisling (Champagne, 390-1).

Some weeks before Herat finally fell, Britain, which had tried by peaceful means to stop the eastward movement by the Shah's army, finally lost patience and sent its forces to attack the Persian possessions in the Arabian Gulf. This was followed, on 1 November, by a formal declaration of war (Champagne, 375-6). There was little that the weak Persian monarchy could do against British military might and within a matter of weeks the Shah had given in to British demands. Under the terms of the Treaty of Paris, signed on 26 March 1857, Persia was forced to make a humiliating and unconditional withdrawal from Herat.

We have very little information about the reaction of the rulers of the Chahar Wilayat to the Persian siege of Herat, though according to Major Taylor, who was in the city the following year, Hukumat Khan promised to assist 'Isa Khan against the invaders and even marched an army to the Herat frontier. These forces, however, seem to have

been sent to guard the border against any Persian move across the Murghab and did not become directly involved in the battle for Herat,[181] for Maimana and its allies had enough on their hands trying to contain the Afghan advance in the east. After the fall of Herat, it was reported in Kabul that the Persian commander had written to Hukumat Khan saying that, "as the people of Maimanna had always been faithful adherents of the Persian Government, they might send a few of their chiefs to Herat to concert measures about the capture of Oozbekia and Kudghun in Toorkistan."[182] At the end of 1856, possibly in response to this hint of Persian support for the Turkistan cause, the Kabul diaries reported that Hukumat Khan, the Mir Ataliq of Qunduz, and one of the sons of the Mir Wali all sent ambassadors to Herat.[183] Unfortunately there is no record of these negotiations. If they indeed took place, they were undoubtedly aimed at undermining Afghan power in Balkh. The Uzbek-Persian intrigue, however, was doomed, for by the spring of 1857 it was clear to all and sundry that Persia was in no position to help herself, let alone the Uzbeks.

A few weeks after the meeting with the Persians in Herat, there was an attempt on the life of Afzal Khan which nearly succeeded. On 15 January 1857 the governor of Balkh, along with a number of other sardars, sat down for the mid-day meal. As soon as they had finished eating they began to "vomit and purge." Four of the diners died and Afzal Khan, though he eventually made a full recovery, was ill for some time afterwards. Enquiries revealed that one of the cooks had been subverted by a son of Hakim Khan of Shibarghan, who was presumably living as a hostage in Balkh. The unfortunate servant was duly blown from a gun, but Hakim Khan's son had already made good his escape to Maimana.[184]

In the summer, Afzal Khan, having recovered from the assassination attempt, set out to avenge himself and marched an army against Maimana. Hukumat Khan was informed that unless Maimana paid a large, though unspecified, sum of money, surrendered his son and his

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[181] Taylor, *Meimeneh*, 1858. Campbell, 265 says 4,000 levies were sent to Herat, but no reliance can be placed on this report.

[182] *ECN*, 14 Dec. 1856-4 Jan. 1857, ESL:230, encl. 14, no. 8; *ECN*, 5-27 Jan. 1857, ESL:250, fol. 701; *ECN*, 28 March-26 April 1857, ESL:232, fols. 631-2.

[183] *ECN*, 5-27 Jan. 1857; *THN*, 29 June 1857, ESL:250, fols. 649-50.

[184] *ECN*, 5-27 Jan. 1857; *ECN*, 28 Jan.-28 Feb. 1857, ESL:230, encl. 18, no. 11. The first report states it was a son of Hakim Khan, the second that it was a son of Mahmud Khan of Sar-i Pul. I have followed MacGregor, 156-7 who favours the first. Some slight evidence to support this preference is the fact that a son of Hakim Khan is mentioned in connection with Maimana some while later.

mother as hostages, and handed over the famous jahangir gun, he would be attacked.[185] Hukumat Khan, however, rejected these terms, but in a subsequent engagement the Maimana army was defeated by the Afghans who marched to within sixteen miles of the wali's capital.[186] Hukumat Khan, unable to turn to Persia for help and with Bukhara apparently prepared to abandon the Balkh cause in favour of an anti-European alliance with the Afghans (see below),[187] appealed to Britain through her representative in Herat.

Fortunately for Hukumat Khan, at the very time that the Afghan army was camped before Maimana, Major Taylor, the British Commissioner, arrived in Herat to supervise the Persian withdrawal under the terms of the Treaty of Paris.[188] Shortly after Taylor reached the city, envoys from Hukumat Khan arrived in the city, informed Taylor of Afzal Khan's invasion and offered to place Maimana under the protection of Herat.[189] Taylor, a strong advocate of Herat's continued independence, opposed the action of Afzal Khan as "unjust and preposterous."[190] Like Pottinger and Todd before him, Taylor had been told by Sultan Ahmad Khan that Maimana had "always been subordinate" to Herat and informed his superiors that the invasion of the Mingid state was "an act of aggression" against Herat itself since, were Maimana to fall, there would be nothing to prevent Dost Muhammad marching to the Iranian border.[191] This, in turn, would

[185] *Taylor to Edmonstone*, 1 Feb., 18 Dec. 1857, ESL:253, fols. 865-6, 838; Taylor, *Meimeneh*, 1858; *DQM*, 12-18 March 1858, ESL:250, fols. 583-4.

[186] *Taylor to Murray*, 26 Sept. 1857, ESL:242, fols. 34-5 & SLEP:158, fol. 1151. According to the reports, the Afghan army camped at "Hirek" or "Kirek," which I cannot identify on any modern map. It was presumably north, or east, of Maimana and not the Hirek on the Qaisar road.

[187] *ECN*, 26 April-24 May 1857, ESL:250, fol. 95.

[188] He reached Herat in October 1857. One of the problems Taylor faced was the Persian persecution of the Jews of Herat. A number of families from Mashhad, who had been forcibly converted to Islam, had managed to flee to Herat. When the Persians took the city these Jews, along with many others, natives of Herat, were forcibly moved to Mashhad where they were tried and condemned as apostates by an ecclesiastical court. However, they were allowed to ransom themselves by the payment of blood money, originally set at 100,000 tomans, but later reduced to 25,000 tomans. Persia refused to accept that the Herat Jews in Mashhad were covered by the terms of the Treaty of Paris, which required all prisoners to be returned to their homelands, but Taylor insisted that since these Jews had been forcibly removed they were also prisoners of war. The condition of the Herati Jewish community was so pitiful that Taylor was forced to organise distribution of bread to prevent them starving. Further details can be found in; *Murray to Earl Clarendon*, 6 July 1857; *Taylor to Murray*, 16 Aug. 1857, SLEP:158, fols. 912-3, 1011-13; *Taylor to Murray*, 24 Sept., 26 Oct. 1857, ESL:242, fols. 30-3, vol. 253, fols. 818-20.

[189] *Taylor to Edmonstone*, 6 Nov. 1857, ESL:253, fol. 811.

[190] Taylor, *Memorandum on Herat*, 1 Jan. 1858, ESL:253, fols. 845-56.

[191] *Taylor to Edmonstone*, 18 Dec. 1857.

precipitate further Persian action to prevent the Afghan annexation of Herat and thus undo all the benefits of the Treaty of Paris.[192] Taylor urged Calcutta to put pressure on Dost Muhammad Khan to withdraw his forces from Maimana.[193] This was done and Afzal was obliged to abandon his campaign against Hukumat Khan. Some form of treaty, however, was agreed between Maimana and the governor of Balkh, under the terms of which Hukumat Khan was to send an annual *nazarana* of flocks and herds to the value of four thousand tilas in exchange for the right to run his own affairs.[194] The great jahangir gun, was also surrendered to the Afghans.[195]

In early 1858, Persia assembled a large army at Sarrakhs in a further attempt to suppress the Turkman slave-trading raids and an ultimatum was sent to Merv and Maimana to submit or face invasion. Once more Major Taylor's presence in Herat meant that Maimana was able to defy these threats[196] and when, in March, the Persians advanced to the Murghab, some fifteen thousand Turkmans, supported by cavalry from Maimana, Andkhui and even Bukhara, defeated the invaders with great slaughter.[197]

Despite his support of Maimana's independence, Taylor never visited the area and his *Memorandum on Meimeneh* was compiled from information provided by the Maimana envoys and well-placed sources in Herat.[198] His unpublished report is an important source for the history of Maimana and the Chahar Wilayat. In particular, it provides us with the only systematic account of Yar Muhammad Khan's

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[192] Taylor, *Meimeneh*, 1858; *Memorandum on Herat*, 1 Jan. 1858.

[193] Id. *Taylor to Edmonstone*, 1 Feb. 1858.

[194] *CD*, 8-12 May 1868, ESL:261, fol. 331.

[195] *EOCN*, 5 May-3 June 1859, ESL:254, fol. 803.

[196] *ECN*, 17 Jan.-11 Feb. 1858; *EOCN*, 16 Feb. 1858; *ECN*, 16 April-12 May 1858, ESL:250, fols. 695, 713-5, 726-30. *EOCN*, 15 Feb. 1858 reports 3,000 Persian troops had gone to attack Maimana and that Hukumat Khan asked Afzal Khan for urgent military aid, which was promised, but on condition that Maimana admit an Afghan garrison. Subsequent reports claim that a Persian ambassador was in Maimana. As the writer of these news-letters is the same source who reported the mythical Persian invasion of Maimana a few years earlier, these reports have been discounted. The Kabul diaries make no mention of these event: cf. *EOCN*, 11 Aug.-9 Sept. 1858; *ECN*, 9 Oct.-7 Nov., 8 Nov.-7 Dec. 1858, ESL:253, fols. 648-55, 26, 700-6.

[197] *ECN*, 16 April-12 May 1858. *EDCV*, 5-11 Nov. 1860, P:IFPC/204/31, no. 526 of Dec., fols. 1057-8; *CVD*, 12 June 1858; *Futteh Mahomed to Mahomed Khan*, 3 June 1858; *CVD*, 18 July 1858, ESL:252, fols. 49-50, 50-1, 68-9. In the aftermath of this victory, Turkman raiders plundered Herat territory, *Futteh Mahomed to Dost Mahomed Khan*, 3 June 1858 who claims that they ordered Sultan Ahmad Khan to remove the Shah's name from the *khutba* and coinage.

[198] In 1858 Mirza Ahmad 'Ali, the British news-writer at Herat, travelled through Lesser Turkistan on his way to Kabul, but Taylor dismissed his report as full of "inconsistencies, exaggerations and falsehoods," *Taylor to Edmonstone*, 22 Jan. 1859, ESL:253, fol. 783; *Deposition to Mirza Ahmad Alee*, 28 Oct. 1858, ESL:253, fols. 744-68.

invasion of the Chahar Wilayat. Unfortunately, Taylor is less informative about the demographic and economic state of the country. He estimated the population of Maimana at forty thousand families with an army of twelve thousand horse. The city's defences included a wet ditch around the perimeter,[199] a feature which Ferrier claims did not exist in 1845. This significant addition to the fortifications was probably a direct result of the twelve years of war with the Afghans.

The Persian siege of Herat in 1856 was another landmark in the evolution of modern Afghanistan for it indirectly helped to consolidate Dost Muhammad's power even further, inasmuch as the Persian aggression led to a strengthening of Anglo-Afghan relations with Britain. In August 1856 the Governor-General, worried that if the Persian army succeeded in siezing Herat it would then advance against Qandahar and Kabul, sent the Amir a gift of four thousand flintlock rifles and five lakhs of rupees to firm up Afghan resistance.[200] During the winter of 1855/6, further negotiations took place between Dost Muhammad Khan and Calcutta, which led to the signing of a second, and more substantial, treaty at the end of January 1857. This agreement was specifically designed, "to aid Ameer Dost Mohummad Khan to defend and maintain his present possessions in Balkh, Cabool and Candahar against Persia" (Aitchinson XIII, 238-9). Britain thus went a stage further in officially recognising the Amir's sovereignty over Qandahar and Balkh, in accordance with his request some months earlier. This was something neither Bukhara nor Persia had conceded and official letters to Dost Muhammad Khan from these powers were still addressed to the "Ameer of Cabool."[201] The British, however, gave Dost Muhammad Khan further proof of their support by agreeing to pay a subsidy of one lakh rupees a month, to last for the duration of the war with Persia, and a further gift of four thousand muskets. Thus the Amir was able not only to pay his army, but to equip some eight thousand troops with superior weaponry. Once the Persian threat had subsided, these muskets were to be turned against the population of Balkh (Aitchinson XIII, 238-9).

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[199] Taylor, *Meimeneh*, 1858.

[200] *Governor-General to Dost Mahomed Khan*, 18 Aug. 1856, ESL:228, fols. 315-8.

[201] See for example, *King of Bokhara to Ameer of Cabool*, n.d, 1857, ESL:250, fols. 46-7; *ECN*, 28 Jan.-25 Feb. 1857.

*Nasrullah Khan and the Sunni Alliance, 1856-1858*

News of the first Anglo-Afghan treaty and the Persian siege of Herat, had forced Nasrullah Khan of Bukhara to hold back his planned reprisal raid against Afghan Turkistan following the defeat of Ishan Uraq's rebellion. Bukharan anger and dismay were further exacerbated when intelligence reports spoke of the signing of a second agreement under which Britain gave tacit recognition to Afghan sovereignty over the appanage of Balkh and the subsidy of Company rupees and gifts of guns. Nasrullah Khan, concerned about how the balance of power in the region was swinging in the Afghans' favour, condemned the agreement as being in contravention of the *shari'a*. By 1857 it was not easy for Bukhara to find any way to counterbalance or counteract Afghan power, especially as Britain had committed herself, financially and militarily, to the creation of a greater Afghanistan. The only answer was for Bukhara to ally itself with an adjacent power, but the opportunities for such relationships were few and far between. Relations with Persia, never particularly good, had recently gone from bad to worse, following Nasrullah Khan's snubbing of the Shah's ambassador in 1855[202] and the recent Persian campaign against Herat and the Turkmans. The only other option was to seek the aid of Russia.

In 1856 the governments of Bukhara and Khiva sent envoys to the coronation of the new Tsar, Alexander II, bearing letters inviting the Russian government to send a representative to visit their countries. The result of this diplomatic initiative was the visit of N. P. Ignat'ev in 1858 (Ignat'ev, 12-13), but by the time the envoy arrived in Bukhara, Nasrullah Khan had had second thoughts about the suitability of an alliance with Russia. Instead, he had decided to try and heal the rift between Bukhara and Kabul and to forge a united Sunni front against the two European, and non-Muslim, superpowers. It would appear that sometime during the first half of 1856 Nasrullah finally woke up to the fact that both Uzbek and Afghan states were in grave danger of being swallowed by European expansion in Central Asia and the bitter war over Balkh merely played into the hands of these 'Christian' powers. In the wake of Ishan Uraq's defeat and the Anglo-Afghan alliance, Nasrullah sent an ambassador to Balkh with letters for Dost Muhammad Khan in which he urged the Afghan ruler "as a Mussulman" to "make common cause against the encroachment of

[202] *ECN*, 17 June-14 July 1855; *ECN*, 15-17 Sept. 1855, ESL:225, encl. 62, no. 7.

the infidels" and pledging that his armies would not cross the Amu Darya whilst negotiations were in progress.[203]

Afzal Khan, after several months of hard campaigning against Hakim Khan and Ishan Uraq, was doubtless glad to have any excuse for a cessation of hostilities and he sent Mir 'Abd al-Rahim b. Mir Muhammad 'Ali of Deh Afghanan to Qarshi, from whence he was forwarded to Nasrullah Khan in Bukhara.[204] When he arrived, the Afghan envoy was shown "great honour,"[205] but in the discussions which followed there was a heated debate about how best to resolve the two most important issues which stood between Bukhara and Kabul, the annexation of Balkh and the Anglo-Afghan treaty.

In April 1857, a few weeks after Dost Muhammad Khan had sealed the second treaty with Britain, a Bukharan ambassador arrived in Kabul, bringing with him, as a goodwill gesture, a number of Afghans who had been released from slavery.[206] In a letter to Dost Muhammad Khan,[207] Nasrullah Khan once more urged that the two states unite in the defence of Sunni Islam and that Dost Muhammad tear up his treaties with Britain which, he claimed, had been made purely for the sake of money and arms. In return, Nasrullah promised to "give up his claims to Toorkistan which originally belonged to the King of Bhokara (*sic*),"[208] whilst, at the same time, warning the Afghan ruler that Bukhara was prepared go to war over the issue of Lesser Turkistan were Kabul to persist in developing close ties with Britain.[209]

Nasrullah's offer could not have come at a more critical time in the history of British India, for in March 1857 the Indian Mutiny had burst out in all its unexpected fury.[210] As things went from bad to

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[203] *ECN*, 3 Aug.-1 Sept. 1856; *TQN*, 13 Aug. 1856, ESL:229, fol. 51; *King of Bokhara to Ameer of Cabool*, n.d. 1857.

[204] *ECN*, 3 Aug.-1 Sept. 1856.

[205] *ECN*, 2-29 Sept. 1856, ESL:229, fol. 685.

[206] *Edwardes to Parke*, 4 Dec. 1857, ESL:250, fol. 338. The ambassador's name was Khwaja Ma'mum al-Din Khan.

[207] *King of Bokhara to Ameer of Cabool*, 1857.

[208] *ECN*, 26 April-24 May 1857.

[209] *ECN*, 28 March-26 April 1857; *Dost Mahomed Khan to Lawrence*, 12 April 1857, ESL:232, fols. 631-2, 625; *Edwardes to James*, 16 May 1857, ESL:250, fol. 25.

[210] The Mutiny seriously disrupted the flow of regular intelligence from Kabul and many of the news-letters for 1857 are not in the L/P&S/5 series for that year. Instead, they are scattered, randomly, in the volumes from 1858-1863. In February 1856 a native agent, Nawab Faujar Khan, arrived in Kabul, though his reports (*TEDCV & CVD*) did not begin to filter through until after the Mutiny. The presence of this wakil, agreed under the Treaty of 1855, complemented the very *ad hoc* intelligence-gathering system which had been employed since the end of the Anglo-Afghan War (see discussion of sources in the preface). For a list of the wakils and native agents in Kabul see Hall, 16, 56.

worse, Britain was forced to withdraw many Company troops from Peshawar and the North West Frontier to try and stem the tide of rebellion in Bengal. Both the *'ulama* and the tribal leaders of Afghanistan urged the Amir to seize this opportunity with both hands, to declare *jihad* against the infidels and re-occupy Peshawar (Fraser-Tytler, 125; Gregorian, 83-4). The chance to settle the dispute with Bukhara and to join together with the Uzbeks to strike a decisive blow against British power to the south, was therefore very tempting, for Dost Muhammad Khan would have been able to kill several birds with one stone. Not only would the threat of a further invasion of Balkh and the Chahar Wilayat be removed, but Bukhara would finally cede sovereignty over the former Chingizid appanage to Afghanistan. This, in turn, would allow Dost Muhammad Khan to withdraw substantial forces from Balkh for the assault on Peshawar. The *jihad*, furthermore, would unite the Afghan tribes under his banner and earn the Amir the coveted title of *ghazi*, or 'crusader', as well as deflecting the growing discontent of the religious establishment away from his style of government onto the infidel. Finally, there was every likelihood that he would be able to reoccupy the former winter capital of the Durranis.

The Amir considered the Bukharan offer sufficiently serious to summon a private meeting of senior members of his family to discuss the whole issue at length. After several hours of debate, a majority of the most senior sardars came out in favour of maintaining the treaty with Britain, though according to one account Muhammad A'zam Khan and Sultan Muhammad dissented and advocated scrapping the alliance with Britain maintaining that it was a disgrace not to join their fellow Muslims who were fighting against those of another faith.[211] Unwilling to risk the wrath of Nasrullah Khan, especially when Britain was caught up in a life and death struggle for India and unable to send arms or money to his aid, Dost Muhammad played for time and did not inform the Bukharan ambassador of the council's decision. Instead, the official reply was composed in such as way that it "might neither be taken for a direct consent, nor refusal and the verbal messages should be such as both parties might expect mutual assistance in future from each other."[212] On 7 May 1857, however, when

[211] *ECN*, 26 April-24 May 1857. However, Gregorian, 84 quoting a letter from Lumsden to the Governor-General, dated 23 April 1857, claims that A'zam Khan did not support the breaking of the Anglo-Afghan alliance.

[212] *Ibid.*

the Bukharan envoy was called to an audience with the Amir, Dost Muhammad was much more outspoken. He reminded the ambassador of the treatment he and members of his family had received at the hands of Nasrullah when he was a fugitive which, he said, was "much worse than he would have been treated by infidels."[213] Contrasting Bukharan 'hospitality' in 1840 with the kindness and consideration shown to him during his time as an exile in India, the Amir plainly laid out his reasons for his alliance with Britain:

> How can I ... believe the word of the King of Bokhara and break so good a union as the one which I have made with the British. If I had known the King of Bokhara to be true, I would never have joined the British, and I well know that my own kingdom, and that of Bokhara, will one day be annexed to the British territories. I have therefore entered into an alliance ... with a view to keeping my country as long as possible.[214]

Despite these forthright words, Dost Muhammad continued to hold out sufficient hope that some amicable settlement could be reached and encouraged Bukhara to continue diplomatic contact. Consequently, it was some time before Nasrullah Khan realised that the Afghan government had already decided not to pursue the proposed Sunni alliance. In this way Dost Muhammad Khan managed to buy for himself valuable time and further consolidated his hold over Balkh.

By the beginning of 1858, Nasrullah Khan was showing signs of losing patience with the Afghans and reaffirmed Bukhara's claim to Aqcha and Minglik.[215] In the spring of that year, Afzal Khan married one of Nasrullah's daughters,[216] a relationship which the sardar was to be very thankful for after the death of Dost Muhammad Khan. A few weeks later another Afghan envoy was sent to Bukhara with gifts.[217] However, what little hope there was of healing the breach between the two states was destroyed by the invasion of Qunduz and the overthrow of the Mir Ataliq later in the same year. The fall of Qunduz was not only the death-knell for Nasrullah Khan's dream of an anti-European, Sunni alliance in Central Asia, it virtually sealed the fate of Uzbek power on both sides of the Amu Darya.

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[213] *Ibid.*

[214] *Ibid.*

[215] *Taylor to Edmonstone*, 3 Feb. 1858, ESL:253, fol. 886; *DQM*, 12-18 March 1858.

[216] Originally Dost Muhammad Khan had suggested that the two rulers should marry each other's daughters, but this offer was declined by Nasrullah who informed the Amir that he had "no female relatives," which, as subsequent events prove, was not true.

[217] *CVD*, 12 June 1858; *Edwardes to Temple*, 19 May 1858, ESL:253, fols. 49, 199; *Edwardes to Temple*, 31 March 1858, ESL:250, fols. 380-81.

*The Fall of Qunduz, 1858-1860*

The rebellion of Hakim Khan and Ishan Uraq in 1855/6, the diplomatic contacts with Bukhara and the uncertainty about the future of British rule in India, had held in check further Afghan impingements on the rights of the indigenous rulers of the province of Balkh. Hence, though Afzal Khan had been ordered by his father to annex Qunduz during his visit to Kabul in 1855, it was not until the summer of 1858 that he was in a strong enough position to go onto the offensive against the Mir Ataliq. By this date, the Indian Mutiny was all over bar the reprisals and British rule was even more firmly established in India. Nasrullah Khan had become enmeshed in a protracted dispute with the Khanate of Kokand (Ignat'ev, 20, 104) and was not in a position to split his forces or risk marching to the relief of the Mir Ataliq. It was therefore an ideal time for Dost Muhammad to act in pursuit of a policy which one British officer graphically described as, "to take all he can .... keep it, and look out for more."[218]

In the spring of 1858 Afzal Khan sent an envoy to Sultan Murad Beg of Qunduz "inviting" him to read the *khutba* in the Amir's name and to admit government taxation officers into his country to assess its revenues. Such a request, demanding as it did the surrender of the Mir Ataliq's ancient sovereignty over Qataghan, was completely unacceptable and Murad Beg sent his brother to Takhtapul with an "impertinent" message rejecting the demands (Katib ii, 227). It seems likely that this brother of the Mir Ataliq was the same individual who had served under Dost Muhammad Khan in 1853[219] and, realising that with Afghan help he could overthrow Sultan Murad, he took Afzal Khan's part (Katib ii, 227). When the Mir Ataliq's brother returned to Qunduz, Sultan Murad was furious to discover that his envoy was now an ardent advocate of accepting Afghan sovereignty and for a while considered throwing his brother into prison. Eventually, however, the Mir Ataliq allowed his brother to return to Takhtapul. Once he had set out on the lonely desert road, the Qunduz cavalry was sent in pursuit. They overtook him in the desolate region of the Dasht-i Abdan and he was put to death on the spot (Katib ii, 227).[220] Another

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[218] *Lumsden to Chief Commission, Punjab*, 1 July 1858, ESL:253, fols. 204-34. This volume of the L/P&S/5 series contains three important reports from the Qandahar Mission: *Traders and Trades of Western Affghanistan*; *An account of Forts and Fortifications in Kandahar* and *Report on Kaffiristan*.

[219] *ACN*, 30 Nov. 1853.

[220] *CVD*, 19 June 1858; *Extract from Diary of Khan Bahadoor Gholam Hassain Khan*, 10 July

brother of the Mir Ataliq, who had been implicated in the plot, was subsequently imprisoned in a fort on the other side of the Amu Darya.[221]

The Mir Ataliq followed up this action by circulating confidential letters to the leaders of Aqcha, Maimana, Andkhui and Shibarghan, encouraging them to "raise the standard of revolt."[222] Unfortunately for the Mir Ataliq, these communications were intercepted by Afzal Khan's spies and the governor of Balkh, deciding that the time was ripe to settle the affairs of Qunduz, wrote to his father for additional forces from Kabul so that the Mir Ataliq could be "at once crushed" (Katib ii, 227).[223] Sardars Muhammad A'zam Khan, Muhammad Aslam Khan, Shams al-Din Khan and Muhammad Sharif Khan were sent north to reinforce the Afghan army and to ensure there were sufficient men to defeat the might of Qunduz (Katib ii, 227-8).[224] The Amir exhorted Afzal Khan to do his utmost to appease a number of disgruntled officers in the army and to ensure that the troops' pay was up-to-date.[225]

News of the military build-up caused great alarm in Qataghan. On 11 August another brother[226] of the Mir Ataliq arrived in Kabul bringing "letters of loyalty" to Dost Muhammad Khan. Sultan Murad reminded the Amir that, under the terms of the treaty agreed between the two states in 1855, Afghanistan had recognised Qunduz's autonomy[227] and, by demanding the rights of coinage and *khutba*, Dost Muhammad Khan had breached this agreement. The envoy also bluntly informed the Amir that, were the invasion to proceed, his master, not wishing to suffer the same fate as "Eashan Ourak and Sudour," would resist and seek support from across the Amu Darya.[228] Dost Muhammad Khan, however, used all his considerable powers of diplomacy

1859, ESL:255, fols. 48-52. The body was recovered by soldiers of Afzal Khan and taken to Tashqurghan for burial (Katib ii, 227).

[221] *Diary of Hassain Khan*, 1859.

[222] *CVD*, 19 June 1858; *ECN*, 9 Oct.-7 Nov., 8 Nov.-7 Dec. 1858.

[223] Id. *EOCN*, 11 Aug.-9 Sept. 1858.

[224] *ECN*, 9 Oct.-7 Nov. 1858.

[225] The Amir had received letters from disaffected commanders in Afghan Turkistan who claimed that Afzal Khan had alienated both the army and local Uzbeks. When his father rebuked him for this, Afzal Khan denied the accusations. The dispute between Afzal Khan and his brothers over who should be in charge of Balkh also rumbled on, *EOCN*, 11 Aug.-9 Sept. 1858; *ECN*, 9 Sept.-8 Nov. 1858, ESL:253, fols. 678-88.

[226] *ECN*, 8 Nov.-7 Dec. 1858 says he was his son.

[227] *EOCN*, 11 Aug.-9 Sept. 1858; *ECN*, 9 Oct.-7 Nov. 1858. One report claimed the envoy from Qunduz had offered to surrender his country to Afzal Khan on his return to Balkh, provided the Amir promised not to invade.

[228] *EOCN*, 11 Aug.-9 Sept. 1858.

and persuasion and managed to convince the Mir Ataliq's ambassador that he had no plans to attack Qunduz, thus gaining a few more vital weeks to prepare properly for the campaign.[229]

The Afghan preparations were overshadowed by the deterioration of Afghan-Bukharan relations and the Mir Ataliq sought to exploit the Afghan phobia of Bukharan intervention to the full by hinting that he would seek help from countries the other side of the Amu Darya. The presence of a Bukharan ambassador in Kabul at the same time as the Mir Ataliq's envoy further reinforced this anxiety. He had been instructed to ascertain Afghan intentions in Balkh, for the Amir's military successes in the area were also a matter of deep concern for Nasrullah. After three years of intermittent negotiations, Bukhara had failed to persuade Dost Muhammad Khan to break off relations with Britain and form an anti-European alliance. Despite the obvious lack of enthusiasm for Nasrullah's plan in Kabul, the Khan had persisted, but now his patience was wearing thin. The military build-up in Balkh and Tashqurghan was also extremely worrying. The Bukharan ambassador was therefore under orders to demand an unequivocal statement from the Afghan ruler as to whether he was prepared to break his treaty with Britain and to inform the Amir-i Kabir that if he persisted in his friendship with the 'Christian' power, Bukhara would intervene once more in the affairs of the appanage.[230]

Dost Muhammad Khan seems to have come under much stronger pressure to break with Calcutta than in 1857, for a number of powerful voices within the royal family spoke up for the Afghan-Uzbek alliance. It was foolish, they argued, to incur the wrath of Bukhara at a time when the invasion of Qunduz was imminent, since a breach in relations could well lead to cross-border intervention which, in turn, might precipitate a rebellion in the Chahar Wilayat. Dost Muhammad, however, continued to stand firm and refused to abandon his treaty with Britain. The official reply to Bukharan demands, though, was again deliberately vague and double-edged. The Amir would be more than happy to ally himself with Bukhara, the envoy was told, provided the Manghit ruler was prepared to double the amount of subsidy that the Kabul government was receiving from its British backers:

> The Ameer should be very glad to conclude a treaty with the King of Bokhara and the Shah of Persia, and break the treaty with the British Government but ... he required a subsidy of two lak rupees a month from the King of Bokhara and

[229] *ECN*, 9 Oct.-7 Nov. 1858.
[230] *ECN*, 9 Sept.-8 Nov. 1858; *CVD*, 10 Oct. 1858, ESL:253, fol. 670.

> the Shah of Persia, without which he could not enter into any arrangement with them.[231]

Dost Muhammad's commitment to the Anglo-Afghan treaty was further demonstrated, in a more public way, when he "decisively" turned down the request of a Russian ambassador at Herat to proceed to Kabul, informing him that, "he had chosen his line between the two European powers and meant to abide by it."[232]

Shortly after the Bukharan ambassador left Kabul news reached the Afghan capital that the Mir Ataliq, hearing of the arrival of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan and the reinforcement in Tashqurghan, had sent his own envoys, accompanied by one of the sons of Ishan Khwaja Shuja' al-Din of Mazar-i Sharif, to plead his cause before Afzal Khan. Encouraged by the reception these intermediaries received, the ruler of Qunduz went in person to Balkh and reaffirmed his loyalty to the Amir and, for the moment at least, Afzal Khan was content to accept Qunduz's submission. When Dost Muhammad Khan heard of the Mir Ataliq's action, the Qataghan envoy was allowed to return to Turkistan.[233]

Despite such diplomatic niceties both sides spent the winter of 1858/9 preparing themselves for the inevitable military confrontation. The Mir Ataliq continued to search for support from other rulers in the region, whilst Dost Muhammad Khan's close advisers spread false reports of a large Persian force marching on Maimana and accused Qunduz of having sent an envoy to request their help against Afzal Khan.[234] Meanwhile, Nasrullah Khan, hearing of the unsuccessful outcome of the Kabul mission, sent secret funds to Hukumat Khan and other rulers of the Chahar Wilayat in the hope of raising a revolt in the west whilst Afzal's forces were occupied with the affairs of Qunduz.[235] In early February 1859, Afghan troop movements in Tashqurghan worried the Mir Ataliq to such an extent, that he went in person to Bukhara to appeal for help against the now-imminent

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[231] *ECN*, 8 Nov.-7 Dec. 1858.

[232] *Edwardes to Temple*, 3 Dec. 1858, ESL:253, fol. 716.

[233] *ECN*, 8 Nov.-7 Dec. 1858.

[234] *Ibid. EOCN*, 5 Feb.-7 March 1859, ESL:254, fols. 415-6 reported that 20,000 Persian troops had arrived at Merv whilst a further 1,000 infantry and 1,000 cavalry had been sent to Maimana to "negotiate" with Hukumat Khan and reinforce the alleged Persian force already in the city. In June 1859 the same source reported that a "Tripartite" treaty between Bukhara, Russia and Persia had been signed, allowing Russians or Persians free passage through Bukharan territory, *EOCN*, 8-14 Aug. 1859, ESL:255, fol. 36. MacGregor, 156-7 repeats all these reports about the Persian occupation of Maimana uncritically.

[235] Faiz Bakhsh, *Badakhshan*, 58; *CVD*, 23-29 April 1859, ESL:254, fols. 466.

invasion.[236] Nasrullah Khan, even at this late date still apparently held on to the belief that Dost Muhammad Khan could be persuaded to pursue rapprochement with his Sunni neighbour and refused to grant the Mir Ataliq an audience.[237] This diplomatic snub was a devastating blow to Sultan Murad, for by going to Bukhara he had, in effect, declared himself in a state of rebellion. It is not surprising, therefore, that the Qataghan amir is reported to have returned to his capital "greatly dispirited."[238]

The Mir Ataliq arrived back in Qunduz to face the wrath of Afzal Khan. The sardar, informed of the actions of the ruler of Qunduz, sent an ultimatum: either cede the districts of Dahan-i Ghuri, Baghlan and Ishkamish, that is virtually the whole southern part of Qataghan, or face outright annexation.[239] Even in his straightened circumstances, Sultan Murad was not willing to cede the most fertile and populous districts of his territory without a fight and Afzal Khan's demand was rejected.[240]

What little hope the Mir Ataliq might have had of inciting other rulers in the region to rebel, or come to his assistance, were dashed shortly after his return from Bukhara. Hakim Khan, the ex-ruler of Shibarghan, who seems to have been living in Maimana since the failure of his rebellion in 1856, finally made his peace with Afzal Khan and, although the sources do not mention any negotiations, some sort of agreement must have been reached which allowed him to return to his native town. On 26 April 1859, Hakim Khan arrived at Takhtapul, the newly-built military capital of Afghan Turkistan,[241] tendered his submission to Afzal Khan and presented the governor with horses, gold and silver trappings, camels and carpets. Hakim Khan was presented with a robe of honour, a symbol of his reinstatement as the governor of Shibarghan under Afghan tutelage. Ten days later, Ghazanfar

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[236] *CVD*, 3-9 March 1859; *ECMD*, 4-10 June 1859, ESL:254, fols. 779-80.

[237] *CVD*, 3-9 March 1859. Another Bukharan ambassador had been sent to Kabul at the beginning of 1859.

[238] *Ibid.*

[239] *CVD*, 23-29 April 1859 which says "Ghor" and "Kamish." Dahan-i Ghuri is south of Baghlan and Pul-i Khumri. In 1859, of course, the main trade route lay much further to the west than the present highway, which today runs through Pul-i Khumri.

[240] *Ibid.*

[241] *EOCN*, 5 May-3 June 1858. Takhtapul was a military cantonment built by Afzal Khan after his appointment as governor of Balkh and quickly became the effective capital of Afghan Turkistan, replacing the mouldering and unhealthy city of Balkh, which was stripped of bricks and other building materials in order to erect the new settlement. Afzal Khan also wanted his capital to be near the shrine of 'Ali at Mazar-i Sharif to make the Friday pilgrimage to the shrine that much easier. Building began in 1852/1269 (Katib ii, 214); Faiz Bakhsh, *Badakhshan*, 3, 12.

Khan of Andkhui arrived and, on 6 May, he too tendered his submission and was re-confirmed in his governorship.[242]

The submission of Hakim Khan and Ghazanfar Khan could not have come at a better time for Afzal Khan, for he was able to withdraw Afghan forces from the Chahar Wilayat to reinforce the army being gathered for the invasion of Qataghan. The Mir Ataliq, his hopes of Bukharan assistance and a general uprising in Afghan Turkistan dashed, sent an ambassador to Takhtapul and, in an attempt to buy a little more time, asked Afzal Khan for twenty days' grace to decide whether to agree to the terms of submission. The sardar gave the Mir Ataliq a month to make up his mind and continued to apply pressure on Qunduz by stepping up military preparations. By this time, some twenty thousand troops and forty guns were gathered on the Qataghan border (Katib ii, 228).[243] The Mir Ataliq failed to send any reply by the time the deadline expired and the Afghan army, under the command of A'zam Khan and supported by 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, marched across the frontier.

The Afghans had laid their plans well and skillfully exploited ethnic divisions within Qunduz. During their reigns, Murad Beg and his son had treated the Tajik minority very badly, dispossessing them from the fertile lands to the south and forcibly settling them in the unhealthy marshlands of the Amu Darya, where they had died by the thousands from disease and starvation.[244] Instead of marching eastwards from Balkh, which was the shortest route to the Qataghan capital, Afzal Khan concentrated his forces at Tashqurghan and marched into the predominantly Tajik areas of southern Qunduz. As A'zam Khan's huge army crossed the border, the local Tajik militia refused to fight, and within a matter of days the Afghans had laid siege to the strategic fortress of Dahan-i Ghuri, south-west of Baghlan (Katib ii, 228-9).[245]

When news of A'zam Khan's advance reached the Mir Ataliq, he appealed once more to Bukhara. This time he was more successful, for Nasrullah Khan now had very little reason to doubt that the Afghans had been playing a very subtle double game with him over the

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[242] *EOCN*, 5 May-3 June 1858. Ghazanfar presented gifts of 40 horses, 4 gold trappings, carpets, cloth and 10 male and 3 female slaves.

[243] *Ibid. EDMGD*, 4-10 June 1859, ESL:254, fols. 778-9.

[244] James, *Memorandum on Kunduz*, 1859.

[245] *Ibid.* James claims that only Taliqan, Hazrat Imam and Qunduz remained in the Mir Ataliq's possession by 1859. His information however, is contradicted by the *Siraj al-Tawarikh*, which is the only detailed account we have of the conquest of Qunduz (Katib ii, 227-30).

matter of the proposed Uzbek-Afghan alliance. Having failed in his latest bid to subjugate Kokand, Nasrullah was freer to commit forces across the Amu Darya[246] and a decree was promulgated which proclaimed Qunduz to be part of Bukharan territory.[247] A large army was sent post-haste to Qarshi with orders to attack Aqcha and force the Afghans to send forces to the east.[248] The Bukharan help, however, was already too late.

'Abd al-Rahman Khan's troops had quickly invested Dahan-i Ghuri and set about mining the walls of the fortress. Sultan Murad, hearing that Afghan forces had entered his country, marched south at the head of forty thousand men hoping to relieve the garrison and overawe the Afghan princes. He had, however, not reckoned on the military genius of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan who, fearing that the Mir Ataliq's mobile cavalry might swoop on his siege camp, selected two thousand of his best cavalry and four battalions of infantry and set out, by a secret route, to attack the unsuspecting Uzbeks in the rear. The gamble paid off, for Sultan Murad's men were looking the other way, preparing to attack the main Afghan army and, when the sardar's guns opened up on them from behind, the Mir Ataliq's force was thrown into confusion. Unaware that 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's force was very small, the Mir Ataliq ordered a retreat to Karez, leaving the garrison at Ghuri to its fate (Katib ii, 228-9).

At sunrise, the morning after Sultan Murad's retreat, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, sent another two thousand men to patrol the region around the besieged fortress in case the Mir Ataliq's men should return. They discovered that some eight thousand Uzbek cavalry had gathered at Chashma-yi Shir, under orders to try and plunder the Afghan's supplies and steal their livestock. 'Abd al-Rahman Khan sent an additional four thousand men to the area, who quickly dispersed this latest threat by killing, wounding or capturing some two hundred Uzbeks, and pursued the enemy to the very gates of Baghlan. Following these reverses, Sultan Murad returned to his capital (Katib ii, 228-9).

The same day, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan sent an ultimatum to the defenders of Dahan-i Ghuri, offering them quarter if they handed the citadel over. No reply was received to these terms and orders were

[246] 'Pundit Munphool' (Faiz Bakhsh), *Khokand*, 6-7. A peace treaty between Bukhara and Kokand was signed the following year.

[247] *ECMD*, 4-10 June 1859; *Diary of Hassain Khan*, 1859.

[248] *CVD*, 23-29 April 1859; *DCV*, 18-24 June 1858, ESL;254, fols. 792-3. *EDMGD*, 4-10 June 1859, claims the army was 50,000 strong.

issued to the Afghan artillery to open fire on the citadel. From evening until the following morning, the fort was mercilessly pounded to keep the defenders sleepless and shell-shocked so they would be less prepared for the assault. At dawn, the Afghan troops raised the war cries of '*Ya, Chahar Yar*' and '*Allahu Akbar*' from all sides, which led the demoralised defenders to believe they were to be attacked from all directions. Instead, a column of troops was sent against one breach and very soon the Uzbeks were forced to withdraw into the inner citadel. In their haste, the defenders failed to properly destroy the wooden bridge which spanned the *arg*'s moat, merely sinking it a few feet below the water line. The Afghans soldiers, discovering the bridge, raised it from the moat and used it to cross what otherwise would have been a very considerable obstacle. With the Afghan artillery systematically demolishing the citadel walls and troops opening up on the defenders through the cracks, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan again offered quarter if the garrison surrendered, terms which were swiftly accepted, for their cause was now hopeless (Katib ii, 229-30).

Following the fall of Dahan-i Ghuri, all resistance to the Afghan invasion melted away. By the middle of June, Dost Muhammad Khan's forces were in possession of Baghlan and Khanabad and were within striking distance of the Mir Ataliq's capital (Katib ii, 230, 232-4). At this point, Sultan Murad's brother, who had been imprisoned on an island in the Amu Darya, managed to escape, took control of Hazrat Imam and invited A'zam Khan to send troops to take possession of the place. A'zam Khan immediately ordered a number of his soldiers to march to the sultan's aid and open a second front in the west.[249] It was probably this column which intercepted the great gun, jahangir, which the Mir Ataliq had presented to Nasrullah as part of the tribute agreed at their recent meeting, though it is unclear how it fell into Qunduz's hands in the first place.[250] If this was not enough, news reached the Mir Ataliq that Nasrullah Khan, after gathering his forces on the Amu Darya, had sent his troops to put down a rebellion in Hisar rather than attack Afghan Turkistan. When the Mir of Kulab was informed of Bukhara's action, he too recalled the troops he had sent to Qunduz to support the Mir Ataliq.[251]

Bereft of outside help, other than that provided by the Mir of Badakhshan, and with A'zam Khan's forces approaching his capital on

[249] *Diary of Hassain Khan*, 1859.
[250] *EOCN*, 5 May-3 June 1859; *EDCV*, 3-9 Oct. 1859, ESL:255, fols. 237-8.
[251] *Diary of Hassain Khan*, 1859; *ECMD*, 25 June-1 July 1859, ESL:254, fols. 789-97.

two fronts, the Mir Ataliq gave up the unequal struggle, handed over power to his brother-in-law and fled to Rustaq of Badakhshan. Later he moved to the mountain stronghold of Taliqan but, when Muhammad Zaman Khan was sent against him with a strong force, Sultan Murad, realising that all was lost, fled across the Amu Darya.[252] His brother-in-law, meanwhile, sent a message to the Afghan camp at Khanabad asking for the Amir's terms of surrender and an Uzbek amir in the Afghan army, Mir Qilij Khan, was sent to bring the elders of Qataghan into the sardar's camp.[253] When the envoys arrived, they tried to secure the withdrawal of Afghan forces in return for an oath of loyalty from the Mir Ataliq, citing the recent precedent of Hakim Khan and Ghazanfar Khan. Afzal Khan, however, was in too strong a position to allow Qunduz to retain the status it had prior to the invasion. The Qataghan chiefs were informed that Hakim Khan and Ghazanfar Khan "had remained loyal and true ... from the first"[254] whilst the Mir Ataliq had deliberately broken faith by placing Qunduz under Bukhara. By doing so, the Mir Ataliq had disqualified himself, and the elders would have to elect another leader from amongst the ruling clan. In addition, the fortresses of Nahrin and Khanabad were to be garrisoned by Afghan troops, though Taliqan and Hazrat Imam would be spared this indignity. Qunduz had no choice but to agree to these terms and at the end of June 1859, the treaty was formalised by each party swearing to uphold the agreement on the Qur'an. Six hundred Uzbek horsemen loyal to the Afghans were sent to secure Qunduz and a short while later Afzal Khan arrived in person in the Qataghan capital with an escort of Afghan horse and *jezailchis*.[255] A short while later, the Mir of Badakhshan arrived, submitted to Dost Muhammad Khan and agreed to become a tributary of Afghanistan.[256]

The subjugation of Qunduz and Badakhshan had been achieved at very little cost to the Afghans, who had profited from the chronic inability of Bukhara to act in concert with the local rulers south of the

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[252] Id. *EDCV*, 1-7 Oct. 1859, ESL:255, fol. 96.

[253] *Diary of Hassain Khan*, 1859; *ECMD*, 25 June-1 July 1859.

[254] *Diary of Hassain Khan*, 1859. The rebellion of Hakim Khan and Ghazanfar Khan in 1855/6 seems to have been conveniently forgotten.

[255] *Ibid. ECMD*, 25 June-1 July 1859; *EDCV*, 2-8 July 1859, ESL:255, fol. 63. The fortress of Taliqan, however, was destroyed by Sardar Muhammad Zaman Khan (Katib ii, 231).

In 1886 Ney Elias reported that a grandson of the famous Murad Beg of Qataghan, called Muhammad Murad (or Sultan Murad Beg) still lived in Taliqan which he held in *jagir* from the Afghan government. "His subjection to the Afghans" he wrote, "is complete, for he has no political power" (Elias, 292-3).

[256] *Ibid. EDCV*, 27 Sept.-2 Oct. 1859; *EDCV*, 14-20 Nov. 185°, ESL:256, fol. 216.

Amu Darya. Not everything, however, had gone quite to plan. Despite the submission of Hakim Khan and Ghazanfar Khan, Hukumat Khan of Maimana remained loyal to Bukhara and continued to try and incite both Shibarghan and Andkhui to take advantage of the weakness of Afghan defences in the Chahar Wilayat. Fortunately for Afzal Khan, neither Hakim Khan nor Ghazanfar Khan were prepared to risk joining another rebellion and, despite Hukumat Khan ordering a raid against both principalities which caused considerable damage, they remained steadfast to their recent undertakings throughout the Qataghan campaign.[257]

A few weeks after the affairs of Qunduz had been settled to his satisfaction, Afzal Khan was presented with an opportunity to exact revenge for Maimana's attacks in the Chahar Wilayat. News reached him that a large mercantile caravan from Bukhara was en route to Maimana and orders were given that it should be seized in compensation for the destruction wrought by the Maimana cavalry in other parts of the Chahar Wilayat. Hukumat Khan, hearing of the Afghan plans, sent cavalry to protect the caravan but they were "signally defeated" with heavy losses and the major part of the caravan fell into the hands of Afzal Khan.[258] When Afzal Khan informed his father of Maimana's behaviour during the Qunduz campaign, Dost Muhammad Khan instructed his son to put the affairs of Qataghan and Badakhshan in order as soon as possible and, once further reinforcements had reached Balkh, to deal with Hukumat Khan in the same way as he had done with the Mir Ataliq.[259] Hukumat Khan, for his part, realising that his was probably the next state to be singled out for annexation to Greater Afghanistan, sent two envoys to Khurasan to seek Persian aid in the anticipated confrontation with the Amir.[260]

### *Failure of the Sunni Alliance and the Fall of Sar-i Pul, 1859-1860*

Somewhat surprisingly, a Bukharan ambassador had remained in Kabul throughout the Qunduz campaign. Despite Nasrullah Khan's

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[257] *DCV*, 18-24 June 1859.

[258] *EDCV*, 11-17 July 1859, ESL:255, fols. 42-3; *Rawlinson to Wood*, 2 Jan. 1860, SLEP:160, n. pag., no numbering.

[259] *ECMD*, 25 June-1 July 1859.

[260] *EDCV*, 8-14 Aug. 1859; *James to Davies*, 24 Aug. 1859, ESL:255, fols. 101-2 which implies that Hukumat Khan may have gone in person to see the Persian commander at Sarrakhs. *EDCV*, 1-7 Oct. 1859 says Hukumat Khan was forced "by his own people" to leave the country from fear of an Afghan invasion, but this is rather far-fetched.

belated support for the Mir Ataliq and the Afghan annexation of Qataghan, the envoy continued to hold out hope that "if the Afghans refrained from interfering with the Toorkoumans north of the Oxus, the Bokharan authorities would raise no claim regarding Badakhshan, Mymunna and other states south of that river."[261] Following the fall of Qunduz, however, the Amir had no further need to dissemble. The final breach between Dost Muhammad Khan and Nasrullah Khan was precipitated by a petty squabble over the Afghan capture of the great jahangir gun, which A'zam Khan had seized as part of the booty from the Qunduz campaign. Nasrullah Khan demanded that the Afghans hand the cannon over since it was being sent to Bukhara as a gift from the Mir Ataliq when it was captured.[262] The Amir not only refused to return this artillery piece, but took the opportunity afforded by this trivial tiff to dispel any lingering doubts in Nasrullah's mind about his government's views on the Sunni alliance. On 9 September 1859, the Bukharan envoy in Kabul was granted permission to return home[263] and during his final audience the Amir bluntly informed him:

> I have not the slightest concern about the friendship or enmity of any foreign state, feeling assured of the British.... What is it to me if Russia, Persia and Bokhara are my enemies on account of my friendship with England?[264]

When, at the end of 1859, the Manghit ruler was informed of his counterpart's words, he was furious,[265] nor was his temper improved when Afzal Khan demanded, in his father's name, that Bukhara cede all the territory up to, and including, the strategic border town of Charjui.[266] Nasrullah Khan immediately severed diplomatic relations with Kabul and assembled his troops across the border for a showdown with the Afghans. Attempts were made to repair relations with the Tsar following the failure of Ignat'ev's mission in 1858 and "unusual kindness"[267] and "extreme courtesy"[268] were shown to a Russian ambassador who was visiting Bukhara at the time.[269] Nasrullah

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[261] *EDCV*, 3-9 Oct. 1859.
[262] *Ibid.*
[263] *EDCV*, 6-12 Sept. 1859, ESL:255, fols. 226-7.
[264] *EDCV*, 3-9 Oct., 14-20 Nov. 1859.
[265] Id.
[266] *Report from the Agent sent to Khiva*, 27 Dec. 1859, PRO:FO 65.867.
[267] *EDCV*, 16-22 Jan. 1860, ESL:256, fols. 240-1
[268] *EDCV*, 19 March-2 April 1860, ESL:256, fols. 499-501.
[269] *Ibid. Afzul Khan to Dost Mahomed Khan*, March(?) 1860, ESL:256, fols. 516-7; see also, *TLCV*, 15 Feb. 1860, P:IFPC/204/16, no. 329 of 30 March & ESL:256, fol. 487. Some copies of *EDCV*, *CVD* & *ECVD* are missing from the L/P&S/5 series from 1860 onwards. Duplicates can

briefed his European guest about how the Afghans, with British help, had encroached on territory formerly subject to Bukhara, hoping in this way to enlist Russian support for an attack across the Amu Darya to combat the rise of British influence in Afghanistan.[270]

Afzal Khan managed to prevent an immediate declaration of war by detaining the Bukharan ambassador in Tashqurghan as a hostage.[271] This gave Sardar Muhammad Sharif Khan the breathing space he required to put down the rebellion of 'Abd al-'Aziz of Andarab (Katib ii, 231-2).[272] In early January 1860, the Mir Ataliq, who had been given some ten thousand men by the Mir of Kulab, and supported by amirs from Badakhshan and Qataghan, crossed the Amu Darya and began to harass Muhammad Zaman Khan's garrison in Taliqan (Katib ii, 232).[273]

The hit-and-run tactics of Sultan Murad exasperated Muhammad Zaman Khan, who wrote to A'zam Khan for help. Dissatisfied with the reply, Muhammad Zaman Khan left his post and went to Khanabad to lay his case before A'zam Khan personally. As a consequence of this action, Zaman Khan lost his command and was replaced by 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, who was ordered to subdue Badakhshan and throw the Mir Ataliq out of the area. After several months of hard campaigning, he succeeded in both these objectives (Katib ii, 232-5) and once more Sultan Murad fled across the river, where he made a "formal abandonment of worldly affairs."[274]

After the Bukharan ambassador had left Kabul, Dost Muhammad Khan, realising that war with Nasrullah Khan was imminent, ordered his son, Sher 'Ali Khan, to march with ten thousand men to Balkh, declaring that "as long as a man remains alive in Afghanistan ... he would not allow Toorkistan to be taken out of his hands" and, in the event of a Bukharan invasion, he would take the field in person against his old enemy.[275] However, exceptionally heavy winter snows, both north and south of the Hindu Kush, and the continued refusal of

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be found in Proceedings:India, Foreign (Political) Consultations, henceforth P:IFPC.

[270] *EDCV*, 19 March-2 April 1860. The Russians were also nibbling away at Kokand's territory and Nasrullah was interested in a joint Bukharan-Russian invasion of the principality, see 'Pundit Munphool' (Faiz Bakhsh), *Khokand*, 1867.

[271] *Ibid.*

[272] *EDCV*, 6-12 Sept., 27 Sept.-2 Oct., 3-9 Oct. 1859. *EDCV*, 17-23 Oct. 1859; 6-12 Feb. 1860, ESL:256, fols. 195, 481-2.

[273] *EDVC*, 23-19 Jan. 1860, ESL:256, fol. 232.

[274] *Ibid.*

[275] *EDVC*, 6-12 Feb. 1860; TLCV, 15 Feb. 1860; *James to Davies*, 9 March 1860, P:IFPC/204/16, no. 329 of March.

Afghan commanders to campaign in Balkh, stalled the departure of the newly-designated heir apparent until the spring[276] and Afzal Khan was obliged to fend for himself as best he could.

In early February 1860, a large Bukharan force arrived at Qarqi and threatened to join with the Chahar Wilayat in an attack on Aqcha (Katib ii, 230).[277] Afzal Khan, ordered A'zam Khan to recall 'Abd al-Rahman Khan from Badakhshan and took up defensive positions around Takhtapul, anticipating the arrival of the Bukharan army within a matter of days (Katib ii, 236).[278] Had Bukhara attacked Aqcha immediately, Afzal Khan would have been hard pressed to hold out until Sher 'Ali's army reached him,[279] for Hukumat Khan Ming had finally prevailed on Andkhui and Shibarghan to join a secret alliance with the Manghit Khan.[280] Just as it seemed that Bukharan forces were poised to march across the river, Nasrullah Khan, having spent only four days at Qarqi, ordered his men to withdraw to Qarshi, "without committing any act of hostility."[281] The Bukharans and the rulers of the Chahar Wilayat, apparently, had fallen out over who was to be the first to attack Afghan positions. Nasrullah wanted the amirs of Afghan Turkistan to rebel and so provide the justification he required to march to their aid, but the amirs were reluctant to initiate hostilities for fear that Bukhara would let them down and leave them at the mercy of Afzal Khan.[282] When Afzal Khan heard of Bukhara's unexpected withdrawal, he sent spies to the area to ascertain the truth of the reports, whilst Dost Muhammad ordered Sher 'Ali Khan to postpone his march north until such time as accurate information about

[276] *ECVD*, 16-22 Jan., 6-12 Feb. 1860; *TLCV*, 15 Feb. 1860; *EDCV*, 27 May 1860, ESL:256, fols. 512-5. Ghulam Haidar Khan died on 2 May 1858, *Edwardes to Temple*, 9 July 1858, ESL:252, fols. 56-7.

[277] *TLCV*, 15 Feb. 1860; *Afzul Khan to Dost Mahomed Khan*, [Feb.] 1860; *James to Davies*, 9 March 1860; *EDMCC*, 21 Feb.-4 March 1860, ESL:256, fols. 488-91; *Rawlinson to Russell*, 26 April 1860, SLEP:161, no. 63, n. pag.

[278] *Afzul Khan to Dost Mahomed Khan*, [Feb.] 1860; *EDMCC*, 21 Feb.-4 March 1860. According to the *Siraj al-Tawarikh*, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan was reluctant to abandon Badakhshan and risk losing all the gains he had made over the past year. However, he obeyed, but ensured that his men were well fed and supplied by forcibly appropriating a great deal of property, including 15,000 sheep (Katib ii, 235).

[279] See comment in *EDCV*, 27 May 1860.

[280] *James to Davies*, 9 March 1860; *EDMCC*, 21 Feb.-4 March 1860; *Rawlinson to Russell*, 26 April 1860. *EDCV*, 13-20 Feb., 23-29 April 1860, ESL:256, fols. 489-91, 505-6. The *Siraj al-Tawarikh* claims that there was a skirmish on the border between a number of Bukharan scouts and Ghulam 'Ali Khan, a *peshkhidmat* of Afzal Khan's, which forced the Bukharans to withdraw (Katib ii,. 236).

[281] *EDCV*, 13-20 Feb. 1860; *EDMCC*, 21 Feb.-4 March 1860; *James to Davies*, 9 March 1860.

[282] Id. *James to Davies*, 9 March 1860 blames the withdrawal on Nasrullah's "violent and flighty temper."

Bukharan intentions was received.[283] According to the *Siraj al-Tawarikh*, the Afghans looted the abandoned camp on the left bank of the Oxus. Amongst the booty was Nasrullah Khan's own pavilion (Katib ii, 236).

Meanwhile, the unpredictable behaviour of Nasrullah produced a "great state of trepidation" amongst the leaders of the Chahar Wilayat, who sent urgent letters to the Manghit ruler, begging him to return and offering to start hostilities immediately. Nasrullah Khan, though, hearing of further disturbances in Shahr-i Sabz again preferred to settle matters on his side of the river first and returned to Samarkand to pursue his intermittent war with the Khan of Kokand, leaving the rulers of the Chahar Wilayat to fend for themselves.[284]

Afzal Khan wisely decided to deal leniently with the rebellious provinces and, as a result, a measure of tranquillity returned to Turkistan, at least for a short while.[285] The sardar was further encouraged when, following the return of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan to Taliqan, the fugitive Mir Ataliq wrote to him from the safety of Kulab, expressing regret for his rebellion and stating his willingness to submit to the Amir on condition that he was not forced to surrender his heir as a hostage. A few weeks later Yusuf 'Ali Beg, the Mir of Badakhshan, was persuaded to re-acknowledge Afghan overlordship and cede to Afghanistan exclusive rights over the famous ruby and lapis lazuli mines (Katib ii, 239).[286]

The amirs of the Chahar Wilayat, however, continued to secretly plot with Bukhara and in April, about the same time that Afzal Khan was negotiating the submission of the Mir Ataliq and Yusuf 'Ali Khan, all four of the states simultaneously declared independence from Afghanistan and began raiding Afghan outposts. The reinforcements from Kabul had still not arrived and Afzal Khan was reluctant to remove any more troops from Qataghan lest it too should rebel.[287] As a consequence, the situation west of Balkh deteriorated rapidly. A force of some six thousand strong, led by Mir Qilij Khan, beglarbegi of Sar-i Pul, captured an unnamed fort from the Afghans, which was worth one and a half lakh rupees in state revenue.[288] If the rulers of the

[283] *EDCV*, 13-20 Feb. 1860.
[284] *EDCV*, 18 March 1860, ESL:256, fol. 497; 'Pundit Munphool' (Faiz Bakhsh), *Khokand*, 1867, 7-8.
[285] *EDMCC*, 21 Feb.-4 March 1860.
[286] *EDCV*, 19 March-2 April, 23-29 April 1860.
[287] *EDCV*, 27 May 1860.
[288] *Ibid. EDCV*, 25 June-1 July 1860, P:IFPC/204/59, no. 310 of March, fols. 406-8.

Chahar Wilayat hoped these attacks would encourage Nasrullah Khan to fulfil his part of the bargain and march to their aid, they were sorely disappointed. Yet again, the Bukharan army remained firmly on the other side of the river.

Fortunately for the amirs, Dost Muhammad Khan was still trying to persuade Sher 'Ali's Qandahar troops to leave for Balkh, and precious time was wasted whilst the Amir confiscated the property of the rebellious chiefs and expelled them and their families from Afghanistan under armed guard.[289] The reinforcements did not leave the Afghan capital until 9 June 1860,[290] by which time the rebellion in the Chahar Wilayat was out of control and Afzal Khan, risking an uprising in Qunduz, had called up cavalry from Qataghan to deal with the situation in the west.[291]

The Afghan army reached Aqcha without encountering much opposition and both Hakim Khan of Shibarghan and Ghazanfar Khan of Andkhui were forced to bow again to Afzal Khan's authority,[292] though both rulers managed to hold onto their fiefs. From Shibarghan, the sardar marched his forces southwards to deal with Qilij Khan of Sar-i Pul. The beglarbegi, strengthened by the arrival of cavalry and irregulars from Maimana and the Jamshidi Aimaq, put up a stiff resistance.[293] Afzal Khan sent two and a half thousand men against one fort which Sar-i Pul had recently seized and, after a brief encounter, Qilij's forces were routed leaving seventy of their number dead in the field.[294] Qilij Khan responded by sending a column of three thousand cavalry up the Shibarghan road to bar the Afghan advance. A fierce, nine-hour battle ensued in which the Sar-i Pul force was all but wiped out.[295] As the Afghan army advanced on his capital, Qilij Khan decided to make his last stand in the Sar-i Pul citadel. Following a "vigorous assault," the Sar-i Pul *arg* finally fell and the beglarbegi fled to Maimana along three thousand Arab families.[296] The Afghan army,

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[289] *DCV*, 27 May 1860; *EDCV*, 28 May-10 June 1860, ESL:256, fol. 251; *Ahmad Khan to Sultan Khan*, 23 Aug.(b) 1860, SLEP:161, no. 30(ii), n. pag.

[290] *EDCV*, 27 May, 28 May-10 June 1860.

[291] *EDCV*, 25 June-1 July 1860; *EDCV*, 23-29 July 1860, P:IFPC/204/23, fols. 313-4; *EDCV*, 16-22 July 1860, P:IFPC/204/59, no. 312 of March, fols. 410-11; *EDCV*, 30 July-5 Aug. 1860, ESL:256, fol. 545; *Ahmad Khan to Sultan Khan*, 23 Aug.(a) 1860, SLEP:161, no. 30(i), n. pag.

[292] *Ahmad Khan to Sultan Khan*, 23 Aug.(a) 1860.

[293] *Ibid.*

[294] *Ruler of Herat to Sirdar Mahomed Ameer Khan of Candahar*, n.d. 1860(?), P:IFPC/204/39, fols. 653-6; *EDCV*, 25 June-1 July 1860. Afghan losses were 25 dead.

[295] *Ahmad Khan to Sultan Khan*, 23 Aug.(a) 1860; *EDCV*, 25 June-1 July 1860. The losses were 2,100 dead on the Uzbek side, 52 dead on the Afghan. Afzal Khan took 168 prisoners.

[296] *EDCV*, 12-18 Nov. 1860, P:IFPC/204/31, fols. 1059-60.

meanwhile, celebrated their victory with an orgy of looting and pillage in which many hundreds of ordinary citizens of Sar-i Pul perished.[297]

*Maimana, Herat and the Jamshidi Revolt, 1860-1862*

The fall of Sar-i Pul in July 1860 was another mortal blow to the native governments of Balkh and left Maimana as the only principality in the region which had not been forced to surrender its sovereignty at the point of a gun. Over the previous decade, Hukumat Khan had seen the power and rights of his fellow amirs whittled away and he could have had no doubt that the Amir and his heirs planned the same fate for Maimana. The sack of Sar-i Pul left him surrounded on all sides by territory ruled, either directly or indirectly, by Afghans. It is no wonder, therefore, that Hukumat Khan decided to open negotiations with Afzal Khan.

A few weeks after the conquest of Sar-i Pul, envoys from Maimana arrived in the Afghan camp to discuss terms.[298] In August Afzal Khan sent his own man to Maimana, followed later by Hakim Khan of Shibarghan, who was commissioned to negotiate the repatriation of the Arab tribesmen from Sar-i Pul.[299] When the Afghan ambassador arrived in Maimana, it was reported that he found a Persian officer already in the city, for Maimana had appealed for help to the Iranian commander who was at that time campaigning against the Tekke Turkmans. Hukumat Khan, apparently having received promises of Persian support in the event of an Afghan attack, felt he was in a strong enough position to dismiss Afzal Khan's ambassador empty-handed.[300] Hakim Khan of Shibarghan, meanwhile, took advantage of his official visit to Maimana to seek asylum with Hukumat Khan and refused to return to Afghan territory.[301]

Afzal Khan, incensed by the behaviour of Hukumat Khan and Hakim Khan, asked the Amir for permission to attack Hukumat Khan. Dost Muhammad, however, pointed out to his son that government

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[297] *Ahmad Khan to Sultan Khan*, 23 Aug. (a) 1860.

[298] *Ibid.* Pelly, *Journal*, 1860, fol. 18.

[299] *EDCV*, 12-18 Nov. 1860. The report implies that Qilij Khan had been imprisoned by Hukumat Khan, but this certainly was not the case, since the ex-ruler of Sar-i Pul and Hukumat Khan both sent representatives to Ahmad Khan of Herat later in the year. It is probably a garbled report about the defection of Hakim Khan of Shibarghan.

[300] *EDCV*, 20-26 Aug. 1860, ESL:256, fols. 855-6.

[301] *Ruler of Herat to Ameer Khan*, n.d. 1860(?), P:IFPC/204/39, fols. 653-6.

forces in Balkh were already over-extended and urged him to concentrate on consolidating his hold over Sar-i Pul before risking a campaign against Maimana. Afzal Khan ignored his father's orders and sent two columns of troops from Sar-i Pul and Shibarghan to attack Hukumat Khan.[302] In early October 1860, Maimana's hope of Persian help was dashed when the Qajar army was completely routed by the Turkmans near Merv.[303] A short time later Nasrullah Khan of Bukhara died.[304] Although he was succeeded by his son, Muzaffar al-Din Khan, the new Manghit Khan was far too occupied with rebellions in Shahr-i Sabz, Kokand and other parts of Transoxiana to be able to help Hukumat Khan or any other amir south of the Amu Darya (Howorth, 848-9).

Afzal Khan's army marched to within six farsangs of the city of Maimana. Hukumat Khan, now with no hope of help from either Persia or Bukhara, sent Dilawar Khan, his eldest son, to Herat accompanied by forty chief men of the area and the "brothers" of Qilij Khan of Sar-i Pul, to offer Maimana's submission to Sultan Ahmad Khan and the payment of an annual tribute of several thousand tilas in return for immediate and substantial military aid against Afzal Khan.[305]

Ahmad Khan, convinced that the attack on Maimana was the prelude to Dost Muhammad's invasion of Herat, agreed to the alliance, though Hukumat Khan managed to avoid payment of tribute immediately, pleading the lack of security on the road between Maimana and Herat as a result of a rebellion of the Jamshidi tribes around Bala Murghab.[306] Shah Nawaz Khan, son of Ahmad Shah, was sent to Maimana with two thousand men and three guns,[307] but his advance was opposed by the Jamshidis whose chief, 'Abdullah Beg, a grandson of Yalangtush Khan Jamshidi, supported a rival, Sadozai, pretender to the Herat throne.[308] Although 'Abdullah Khan Jamshidi had died earlier in the year,[309] his brothers, Iskandar Ahmad and Muhammad

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[302] *EDCV*, 3-9 Sept. 1860, ESL:256, fols. 560-1; Pelly, *Journal*, 1860, fols. 18, 73.

[303] *Pelly to Alison*, 11 Oct. 1860, SLEP:161, no. 5, n. pag.; *EDCV*, 5-11 Nov. 1860, P:IFPC/204/31, fols. 1057-8; Pelly, *Memorandum on the Defeat of Persian Forces*, 14 Oct. 1860, P:IFPC/204/61, no. 72 of June, fols. 79-83.

[304] On 20 Oct. 1860, *EDCV*, 12-18 Nov. 1860.

[305] *Pelly to Alison*, 18 Oct. 1860, SLEP:161, no. 15, n. pag.; Pelly, *Journal*, 1860, fols. 18, 73; Pelly, *Memorandum*, 16 Oct. 1860. This was the second time in a year that Dilawar Khan had been to Herat on behalf of his father, see *EDCV*, 23-29 April 1860.

[306] Pelly, *Journal*, 1860; *Ruler of Herat to Ameer Khan*, 1860.

[307] Id. *Rawlinson to Russell*, 26 April 1860; Pelly, *Memorandum*, 16 Oct. 1860.

[308] Pelly, *Journal*, 1860; Pelly, *Memorandum*, 16 Oct. 1860; *Rawlinson to Russell*, 26 April 1860.

[309] *Rawlinson to Russell*, 26 April 1860.

'Omar, who succeeded him, were on very good terms with Dost Muhammad Khan, who assiduously cultivated the friendship of the Jamshidis in order to embarrass Ahmad Khan. Indeed, when these Aimaq tribesmen heard that Afzal Khan was marching against Maimana, they offered to launch a diversionary attack on Hukumat Khan from the south (Vambery 1865, 259).[310] The arrival of Shah Nawaz Khan's troops prevented such a move and the Jamshidis, joined by the Firozkohis and some Ghilzai settlers, attacked Shah Nawaz Khan. After some initial success, the Herat force regained the initiative and marched against the fortress of Bala Murghab itself. As they advanced, the Ghilzais and Firozkohis changed sides and the Jamshidis were obliged to send urgent messages to Afzal Khan, asking him to come to their aid.

Afzal Khan's campaign against Maimana, however, was again frustrated. Lewis Pelly, a British officer who was in Herat in the late autumn of 1860, had reported to Tehran on the growing crisis in Balkh and Badghis and persuaded his superiors that Afzal Khan had to be prevented from subjugating Maimana which, he argued, was the gateway to Herat. In late October, Dost Muhammad, under pressure from Britain, ordered his son "forcibly" to desist from any further aggression against Hukumat Khan and to abandon any idea he had of sending help to the Jamshidis, for either course of action could lead to a military confrontation with Herat and drag Persia into a war with Afghanistan.[311] Afzal Khan had no choice and he withdrew his forces from Maimana.[312] After fierce hand-to-hand fighting, Shah Nawaz Khan took Bala Murghab and enriched himself by plundering a great many cattle and other property. The brothers of 'Abdullah Khan, who had led the rebellion, fled to Maimana, but several thousand less fortunate Jamshidi families were temporarily forced to live nearer Herat.[313]

The fall of Bala Murghab and the arrival of Shah Nawaz before Maimana, was no longer quite as welcome to Hukumat Khan, for he was no longer threatened by Afzal Khan. Instead, the wali became

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[310] *Pelly to Alison*, 11 Oct. 1860; *Commissioner, Peshawar, to Secr. to Govt., Punjab*, 19 Jan. 1861, P:IFPC/204/39, fols. 650-52.

[311] *EDCV*, 5-11 Nov. 1860; *Commissioner, Peshawar*, 19 Jan. 1861.

[312] *Ruler of Herat to Ameer Khan*, 1860.

[313] *Pelly to Alison*, 11 Oct. 1860; *EDCV*, 5-11 Nov. 1860. *MA*, 19 Oct., 6, 21 Nov. 1861, SLEP:162, nos. 125, 131, 140, n. pag.; *EDCV*, 29 Oct.-4 Nov. 1860, P:IFPC/204/31, fols. 1049-50. They were allowed to return to their homeland the following winter, *Alison to Russell*, 3 Feb. 1862, SLEP:163, no. 12, n. pag.

increasingly worried about Shah Nawaz Khan's intentions. Maimana's alliance was, after all, merely a marriage of convenience, entered into as a last resort, and Hukumat Khan had no wish to exchange subjugation to Dost Muhammad Khan for servitude to Ahmad Khan. Hence, when the brothers of 'Abdullah Khan Jamshidi, fled to Maimana following their defeat by Shah Nawaz, Hukumat Khan granted them sanctuary.[314] Ambassadors from Maimana were sent to Shah Nawaz with three thousand tilas as a sop to the sardar's pride, along with a letter from Hukumat Khan which suggested that, as Afzal Khan had returned to Takhtapul, the Herat army should return home. In addition, the wali requested that certain territories on the north bank of the Murghab, which Shah Nawaz had unilaterally declared to belong to his father's realms, ought to be returned to Maimana.[315]

Shah Nawaz, not unexpectedly, was not amused by Hukumat Khan's message. Accusing the wali of "falsehood and treachery,"[316] he had the Maimana envoys arrested and ordered his troops to advance on Maimana. A few days later Shah Nawaz was within a day's march of Hukumat Khan's capital.[317] Hukumat Khan, perhaps surprised by Shah Nawaz's arrival, sought a compromise and persuaded the two fugitive Jamshidi chiefs to give themselves up, and sent his son, Dilawar Khan, to accompany them.[318] Shah Nawaz pardoned the brothers and even presented them with robes of honour, but his anger at Hukumat Khan was not abated. Dilawar Khan was imprisoned and the wali ordered to come in person to tender his submission. When Hukumat Khan heard of the treatment that his son had received at Shah Nawaz Khan's hands, he broke off all negotiations and categorically refused to hand over any further money. Shah Nawaz's response was to order his cavalry to attack and, in broad daylight, the Herat troops tried to force their way into the town. Hukumat Khan, possibly suspecting treachery, was ready for them. The feared Maimana cavalry rode out of the city to confront the on-coming enemy. "A great battle" ensued outside of the city in which some two hundred of Shah

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[314] *MA*, 19 Oct. 1860, which claims they fled to Afzal Khan at Shibarghan.

[315] *Ruler of Herat to Ameer Khan*, 1860; *Afzul Khan to Dost Mahomed Khan*, n.d. 1861, P:IFPC/204/39, fol. 653.

[316] *Ruler of Herat to Ameer Khan*, 1860.

[317] The sources differ as to when and where Dilawar Khan presented himself to Shah Nawaz. *Afzul Khan to Dost Mahomed Khan*, 1861 says they camped at Zulmabad one and a half "coss" from Maimana. *MA*, 5 Jan. 1861, SLEP:162, no. 15, encl. 2 says he had been within 2 miles of the city; *ELMA*, 27 Dec. 1861, SLEP:163, no. 6, of 1862 has 20 miles (5 farsangs). Cf. *TLMA*, 22 Dec. 1860, SLEP:162, no. 3 of 1861, n. pag.

[318] *Afzul Khan to Dost Mahomed Khan*, 1860; *ELMA*, 29 Dec. 1861.

Nawaz's men were killed and the brother of Ahmad Khan badly wounded.[319]

After the failure of this abortive attack, Shah Nawaz adopted a more conciliatory tone. Negotiations were resumed and Hukumat Khan eventually agreed to allow Dilawar Khan to live in Herat and pay ten thousand tilas in cash and kind, provided that Shah Nawaz withdraw to Bala Murghab. Reasonably amicable relations having been restored between the two parties, a five point treaty was finally signed and sealed:

1st. That man-selling should cease in Mymunnah and that no captives should henceforth be sold as slaves.
2nd. That the Meer would not interfere with any Oozbek subjects of Sirdar Mahomed Afzul Khan.
3rd. That Hukeem Khan, Meer of Shibarghan, who had fled to Mymunnah from Mahomed Afzul Khan, should be dismissed.
4th. A tribute of 10,000 tilas to be paid down and supplies to be furnished to the force at Bala Moorghab.
5th. That a son of the Meer with a few other chiefs should remain as hostages in Herat.[320]

On the conclusion of this treaty, Hukumat Khan escorted Shah Nawaz into Maimana where he received a formal welcome suitable to his rank and remained for seven days as an official guest of the wali. The Herat prince then returned with his army to the Murghab without causing any further trouble.[321]

After Shah Nawaz Khan had left and the onset of winter prevented any further military action, Hukumat Khan refused to pay the tribute, imprisoned Ayaz Khan of Ghuriyan, who had been left behind to collect the balance of six thousand tilas, and informed Herat that he was holding him hostage until Dilawar Khan was returned to Maimana.[322] Hakim Khan, however, does seem to have quit Maimana and made his peace with Afzal Khan, for some two years later he was sent by the governor of Balkh as an ambassador to the new Wali of Maimana, Husain Khan.[323]

The Herat-Maimana treaty was not well received in Kabul. Dost Muhammad Khan was reported to be greatly "vexed" for, in his view,

[319] *MA*, 5 Jan. 1861 which says the Heratis were forced to retreat to Bala Murghab in disorder. *Afzul Khan to Dost Mahomed*, 1860 claims only 30 were killed from both sides.
[320] *Ibid.*
[321] Id.; *ELMA*, 27 Dec. 1861.
[322] *MA*, 18 Feb. 1861, SLEP:162, no. 25, n. pag.
[323] *EDCV*, 2 March 1862, P:IFPC/204/60, no. 101 of April, fols. 151-2.

Maimana had always been "an integral portion of Balkh" and he declared that he would not rest until the area was under his control, for Hukumat Khan would undoubtedly stir up further trouble in the Chahar Wilayat and Balkh.[324] However, following the breach between Maimana and Herat during the winter of 1860/1, Hukumat Khan sought to repair relations with Afzal Khan and began to negotiate regarding the terms under which Maimana might accept the Amir's overlordship. Probably part of the reason for this change of mind by the wali was Sardar Muhammad Sharif Khan's annexation of Ghor, which was a prelude to a full-scale attack on Herat.[325]

The India Office Records do not yield much information about the situation in Afghan Turkistan during 1861, but it appears that, sometime in late spring, Afzal Khan went in person to Maimana to discuss terms of submission. These talks were obviously successful, for in the summer an agreement was reached under which Maimana was guaranteed Afghan protection in case of an attack by either Persia or Herat. According to one report, Afzal Khan also sent some three thousand cavalry from Takhtapul to reinforce Maimana's defences, though this may merely have been troops being sent from Balkh to the Murghab (MacGregor, 592; Talboys Wheeler, 88),[326] for later in that same year the Jamshidis rebelled and placed themselves under the protection of Dost Muhammad Khan.[327] Ahmad Khan could do very little about the situation either in Maimana or Bala Murghab, apart from sending what troops he could spare to reinforce his north-eastern border,[328] for Dost Muhammad Khan was making significant inroads into Herat territory in Sistan and Ghor. Indeed, to an outside observer, it must have seemed that it was but a matter of months before Maimana and Herat, the last two countries which retained any sort of independence from Kabul, would be absorbed into a Greater Afghanistan and Dost Muhammad's life-long dream would be fulfilled. In the event, Maimana and the whole country under the Amir's sway was plunged into bitter and prolonged civil war, which

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[324] *EDCV*, 7-13 Jan. 1861, P:IFPC/204/39, fols. 651-2.

[325] *Alison to Russell*, 23 June 1861, SLEP:162, encl. 66, no. 1.

[326] *TELMA*, 14 June 1861; *MA*, 26 May 1861; *Alison to Russell*, 23 June 1861; *MA*, 26 June 1861, SLEP:162, encl.. 66, nos. 1-5; *EDCV*, 11 Aug. 1861, P:IFPC/204/59, no. 211 of Jan., fol. 294.

[327] *ELMA*, 6 Nov. 1861, SLEP:62, no. 131, n. pag.

[328] *EDCV*, 15 Dec. 1861, P:IFPC/204/58, no. 109 of Jan. 1862, fols. 418-9 which says Shah Nawaz was within 3 marches of Maimana, but this probably refers to the invasion of 1860.

was to shatter the fragile unity that Dost Muhammad Khan had spent his whole life establishing.

CHAPTER SEVEN

# MUHAMMAD HUSAIN KHAN, 1862-1876

> We believe that the influence of a civilised European power over wild and savage tribes cannot be otherwise than beneficial; and will, if duly exercised, confer many blessings on the populations of Central Asia, and contribute largely to the welfare of the human race.[1]

## *The Death of Hukumat Khan, 1862*

By the beginning of 1862 the rulers of Maimana and Herat were increasingly isolated. Over the previous twelve years, Dost Muhammad Khan's armies had encroached more and more upon the rights of the amirs of Lesser Turkistan, whilst in the south the Amir had consolidated his hold over the Pushtun heartlands, Qandahar and Farah. All attempts by Persia to reclaim its ancient domination of Herat had failed, partly due to the Shah's own weakness, and partly due to British opposition. The suppression of a number of rebellions in Afghan Turkistan, and the inability of Bukhara to offer any real military support, had further strengthened the Amir's hand. Maimana and Herat, though mutually suspicious of each other, had been forced to try and establish some *modus vivendi* as their only possible defence against annexation by Kabul. Even so, by 1862 the writing was on the wall for Herat and, by implication, Maimana too, since the Mingid principality was the last obstacle that prevented Dost Muhammad Khan mounting a two-pronged attack against Sultan Ahmad Khan.

Like his father before him, Hukumat Khan had tried to sail with his feet in two boats yet during his seventeen year reign he had seen first Shibarghan, then Andkhui and finally Sar-i Pul fall to Afghan arms and garrisoned with troops from Kabul and Qandahar. Indeed, but for British intervention, his own fief would doubtless have suffered the same fate. In the last two years of his reign the Khanate had been invaded first by Afzal Khan and then by Shah Nawaz Khan of Herat

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[1] Lord Mayo, Viceroy of India, to Secretary of State for India, 3 June 1870 (no. 30 of, "Memo. on the Northern Boundaries of Affghanistan"), in *Précis of Papers on Central Asia*, 1867-1872.

and it was probably this combination of military failure and uncertain future that gave rise to the "temporary unpopularity" (Vambery 1864, 249) which was his undoing.

The discontent with Hukumat Khan's reign provided a convenient opportunity to settle family feuds. Hukumat Khan's younger half-brother, Muhammad Husain Khan (Merk, 263),[2] had been "carrying on an intrigue" (Merk, 263) with one of the wali's wives, using a slave girl called Nek Qadam as a go-between. Hukumat Khan appears to have been quite oblivious to this affair and, more seriously, the way in which this liaison was being manipulated by his uncle, Mirza Ya'qub. The infatuation of Husain Khan, who was probably in his late teens,[3] was an ideal foil for Mirza Ya'qub's ambitions and he persuaded his young nephew that, if he disposed of the wali, he would be free to marry his paramour.

The plotters won over two hundred of the leading men of Maimana, including the gate-keeper of the citadel where Hukumat Khan had his private quarters and, in the dead of night, a small group of conspirators were secretly let into the *arg* by a ladder or rope of silk[4] let down from the keep by Nek Qadam. By this means, the plotters climbed onto the roof of the citadel and stole into the private apartments of Hukumat Khan, where the wali lay asleep beside a slave girl.

The noise of the assassins on the roof or some sound they made when entering the bedroom, however, woke the wali's concubine, who raised the alarm. Hukumat Khan, aroused from slumber and realising that there was an attempt on his life, tried to reach the apparent safety of the rooftop. But as he rushed out Husain Khan stabbed his half-brother with his sword, wounding, though not killing him.[5] Terrified, bleeding and probably still only half-awake, Hukumat Khan managed to make his way onto the roof, only to discover that his escape route was blocked by the conspirators. In desperation, the wali

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[2] *EDCV*, 2 March 1862; *Alison to Russell*, 2 April 1862, SLEP:163, no. 37, n. pag.; 'Abd al-Ra'uf Nafir, *personal communication*. Vambery 1864, 249 and others who follow him (e.g. MacGregor, 158) say Husain was his son, but this is not so. Hukumat Khan's son and heir was Dilawar Khan.

[3] *EDCV*, 2 March 1862. Vambery in 1863, says he was "a fiery twenty-two year old" but also says that when Husain slew his brother he was too young to rule, which would not have been the case if he had been over twenty. He must have been at least seventeen, as Mizrab Khan, his father, had been assassinated in 1845.

[4] 'Abd al-Ra'uf Nafir, *personal communication*.

[5] MacGregor, 158 rewrites the report of *EDCV*, 2 March 1862 and says it was Mirza Ya'qub who struck down Hukumat Khan in his apartment.

flung himself off the bastion of his citadel—a drop, according to Vambery, of some sixty to one hundred feet (Vambery 1864, 250).[6]

Remarkably, Hukumat Khan was not killed, for his fall was broken by the mud roof of a building. He crashed through the flimsy structure, breaking both his legs and sustaining other severe injuries, but despite his terrible injuries, he somehow or other managed to crawl away and hid as best he could in an adjacent rose garden, where the plotters found him the following day (Merk, 263).[7] The wali's injuries, however, were so severe that it was evident to all that he could not live long and he was taken to the house of Ishan Aiyub, the head of one of the Naqshbandi *tekke*s in Maimana (Vambery 1864, 246-7), where he died six days later.[8]

Following the success of the *coup d'état*, Husain Khan was proclaimed as the new wali, with Mirza Ya'qub as his wazir. A purge of Hukumat's supporters was then undertaken and Sufi Nekbashi "who was at the head of all the affairs of the country" was put to death.[9] However, a measure of clemency was shown by the new ruler of Maimana towards the heirs of the dead Khan. A son of Hukumat Khan, Muzaffar Khan, who had been born to the wife whose affair with Husain Khan had precipitated the revolution, was spared and allowed to remain with his mother in Maimana. Since Husain subsequently married this woman, Muzaffar Khan was obliged to come to terms with the somewhat bizarre fact that his uncle was also his step-father and his own natural father's assassin. Two other half-brothers of Muzaffar were allowed to leave the city alive and joined their brother and

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[6] See Plates I, II, IV. Vambery says Hukumat was "hurled down from the walls of the citadel," but all other contemporary sources say he jumped. Merk says he jumped from a window, but the roof makes more sense, since in any such building there is usually a small, winding staircase up to the roof for access to a latrine and to allow the occupant to sleep outside during the summer heat. This staircase onto the roof was the natural line of escape from assassins, for Hukumat Khan would have undoubtedly had guards at the door of his apartment and would not expect any attack to come from above, given the height of the bastion his private rooms were in. The staircase, too, would have been so narrow that only one person at a time would have been able to ascend or descend it, making it easier for Hukumat to defend himself from the safety of the roof. The success of the plotters was, therefore, that they managed to gain access to the roof and cut off Hukumat's line of retreat without alerting the bodyguards. This suggests that the assassination of the wali was not done on the spur of the moment, but had been planned for some while.

[7] *EDCV*, 2 March 1862. Merk merely says he fell into a garden and was found the following morning amongst the rose bushes. Though perhaps irrelevant to the history of Maimana, I have reconciled the two most detailed accounts we have.

[8] *Ibid.* 'Abd al-Ra'uf Nafir, *personal communication*. Merk, 263 implies he was killed on the spot.

[9] *Ibid.*

Hukumat's heir, Dilawar Khan, in exile in Herat. However, some time later Muzaffar Khan, doubtless fed up with his position, managed to escape from Maimana and join his brothers in exile (Merk, 263).

The principality that Husain Khan inherited from his half-brother had suffered from the combined ambitions of Herat and Kabul and its borders had been much reduced. Maimana's writ no longer ran to the north bank of the Murghab, the regions of Bala Murghab, Marichaq and Panjdeh being controlled by a number of semi-independent Aimaq and Turkman tribes. Since Ferrier's day, the border posts had been withdrawn from Qal'a-yi Wali to Chichaktu following the sack of the former place by Turkmans in *c.* 1860 (Vambery 1864, 255-60). In the north, the strategic border fort of Khairabad was in Afghan hands and occupied by a garrison of troops loyal to Afzal Khan. How far the Afghans had encroached on Maimana territory to the east, following the conquest of Sar-i Pul, is unknown, though it seems that Gurziwan and the regions east of Belcheragh, were now part of Afghan territory (cf. Ferrier, 1875, 200-1; Vambery 1864, 242, 249).[10] Vambery, who visited Maimana in 1863, had little time for Husain Khan's capital, describing it as "filthy and ill-built" with some fifteen hundred mud "huts," three mosques made of *khesht-i kham*, or unbaked bricks and two madrasas constructed with kiln-fired bricks. A report at the end of Husain Khan's first reign, estimated the total population of the state at some twenty thousand households, or from one hundred to one hundred and forty thousand souls.[11] Vambery (1864, 250) noted that the ethnic balance of the city had also changed, with a number of Hazaras, Tajiks and Heratis living in the city.[12] The Hindu and Jewish families, mainly money-lenders, still survived and enjoyed equal rights and privileges. The horse trade continued to prosper with blood stock being traded as far away as Kabul, Herat, Qandahar and India. A considerable trade in dried goods, nuts and other agricultural produce was conducted with Persia, but there had generally been a decline in trade, probably a result of Maimana's increasing isolation from the main centre of political power in Kabul. Despite the treaty with Sultan Ahmad Khan, the slave trade continued and Vambery accuses the wazir, Mirza Ya'qub, of selling his own subjects to Bukhara (Vambery 1864, 249-51).

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[10] *Ibid.*

[11] Capt. G. C. Napier, *Memorandum on the Condition, Resources, etc. of the Perso-Afghan Border, with some Notes on the Herat Territory*, 1875, SLEI:4, part I, fols. 217-53.

[12] *Ibid.*

Vambery, as well as being impressed by the quality of Maimana's horses, was struck by the "imposing" nature of the citadel, which dominated the whole of the capital city. Its earth walls, some twelve feet high and five feet broad, were surrounded by a shallow fosse. The walls were reputed to be able to withstand artillery, though Vambery claimed that if modern guns were brought to bear on them from the surrounding hills, they "could in a few hours reduce it to ashes" (Vambery 1864, 250; Plates I-IV).

*The Fall of Herat and Death of Dost Muhammad Khan, 1862-1863*

According to the Kabul news-letters, once Husain Khan had seized the throne, he, or his uncle, wrote to Afzal Khan in Takhtapul informing the Afghan governor of the recent happenings, condemning Hukumat Khan as a tyrant and stating "that he held himself to be a dependent of the Cabul government."[13] However, at the same time Husain Khan also sent ambassadors to Herat who made similar pledges of Maimana's continued loyalty to Ahmad Khan.[14] Dost Muhammad Khan, anxious to isolate Herat even further and to secure safe passage for his troops for the impending attack on Herat, urged Afzal Khan to cultivate good relations with Husain Khan. As a result, the governor of Balkh sent Hakim Khan of Shibarghan to Maimana, bearing appropriate presents and to inform the wali that if he sincerely wished to be protected by Kabul, he should break off his correspondence with Herat.[15] In early April 1862, with the Amir's forces advancing on Herat from Farah, Husain Khan, realising that his only hope was to come to some accommodation with the governor of Balkh, tendered his submission to the Amir and agreed to permit the Afghan army in Turkistan to pass through his country.[16]

Having opened the road from Balkh to Herat, in June of that year Afzal Khan gathered a large army for an attack on Sultan Ahmad Khan.[17] There appears to have been some feeble attempt by Ahmad Khan to try and force Maimana back into the fold, but the fall of

[13] *EDVC*, 2 March 1862.

[14] *Ibid. EDCV*, 9, 23 March 1862, P:IFPC/204/60, nos. 187, 188 of April, fols. 262-9, 269-71. MacGregor, 158 in complete contradiction to the intelligence reports he claims to base his history on, says that the new wali declared his independence from Kabul.

[15] *Ibid. EDCV*, 20 April 1862, P:IFPC/204/60, no. 149 of May, fols. 218-19; *EDCV*, 12-15 May 1862, P:IFPC/204/61, no. 106 of June, fols. 107-8.

[16] *EDCV*, 20 April, 12-15 May 1862.

[17] *ATNLQ*, June 1862, P:IFPC/204/61 no. 114 of Aug., fols. 114-5.

Farah and Sabzawar in early July persuaded the ruler of Herat to concentrate his forces in his capital. On 27 July 1862, Dost Muhammad Khan, at the head of a large army, arrived before the walls of the city and laid siege to it (Katib ii, 243-6). A few weeks later, the Amir was joined by twelve thousand men from Afghan Turkistan who had marched, unopposed, through Maimana and the Murghab (Champagne, 441-4; Vambery 1864, 245).[18]

By the time Dost Muhammad's army reached Herat, Britain no longer considered the independence of this Afghan principality as particularly strategic, provided the Persian government did not use the Amir's attack on the city to intervene. Like Dost Muhammad Khan, the British, too, had a long-standing grievance with Sultan Ahmad Khan who had "looked on at the murder of Sir. W. Macnaughten if he did not take an active part in it" (Champagne, 448).[19] Persia, however, after having fought and lost numerous battles for Herat in the course of the century, was war-weary and no longer willing to become embroiled in a war with Afghanistan, especially as Dost Muhammad had taken pains to reassure the British that he had no intention of following up his conquest of Herat with an invasion of Khurasan (Champagne, 441-8; Katib ii, 246-7).

As the siege dragged on through the summer and autumn of 1862, Sultan Ahmad Khan's support melted away and the ordinary population found it easy to slip out of the city under cover of darkness. The sardar, however, was saved final humiliation and possible execution, dying on 6 March 1863 before the city fell (Katib ii, 247). Some while before he passed away, he had been afflicted with a disease that caused paralysis of his limbs which led to rumours that he had been poisoned (Champagne, 448; Vambery 1864, 275-6). His son, Shah Nawaz Khan, took over but, although he tried to conceal the fact of his father's death, he was powerless to prevent the city falling into Dost Muhammad Khan's hands. On 27 May 1863 (8 Zu'l-Hijja, 1279), with the help of the Jamshidis from Bala Murghab, a final, sanguinary assault was launched against the city's defences. In the massacre which ensued, not only did many of the city's defenders

[18] *Statement by Afghan Messenger*, Tehran, 8 Sept. 1862, SLEP:164, no. 154, n. pag. See also *EDCV*, 29 May-1 June; 9-11, 12-15 June 1863, P:IFPC/204/67, nos. 119, 120, no. 141 of July, fols. 242-3, 246-7, 278-9; *Governor of Herat to British Agent*, Meshed, n.d., 1862, SLEP:163, no. 46, n. pag. Vambery, as usual, disagrees with all other contemporary sources and says that Husain Khan Ming resisted Afzal Khan's men.

[19] Quoting from a letter from Eastwick, the *Chargé d'affaires* in Tehran.

perish, but hundreds of innocent citizens of Herat were put to the sword (Katib ii, 248-9; Vambery 1864, 280).

Dost Muhammad Khan's capture of Herat was the crowning achievement of the greatest ruler Afghanistan has probably ever known, for he had succeeded in uniting the three great 'Afghan' cities of Kabul, Qandahar and Herat under a single ruler, something that all his predecessors, with the exception of Ahmad Shah Durrani, had failed to do. Not only so, but the fall of Herat marked the end of Persian attempts to regain the former Safawid fief, though Persia's historical link with Herat remains, even today, something of a bone of contention between Afghanistan and Iran. Ironically, Maimana, the only state which could still boast a measure of independence, never having fallen by force of arms to the Afghans, was the very principality which had originally allied itself with Ahmad Shah Durrani and gave the Afghan Amirs their first foothold in the appanage of Balkh.

Dost Muhammad did not live to enjoy the fruits of victory long, dying in Herat on 9 June (21 Zu'l-Hijja, 1279) a matter of two weeks after his army had entered the city (Katib ii, 239). For some months previous to his death, he had been suffering from breathing problems and paralytic fits which had rendered him unconscious for long periods. Even when he had been sensible, he had been unable to move his limbs and had gradually become more and more emaciated (Katib ii, 246).[20] In another irony of history, the Amir's body was buried beside the sepulchre of Khwaja 'Abdullah Ansari (Katib ii, 249), a branch of whose clan had held the *mutawalli*ship of Mazar-i Sharif since the days of Sultan Husain Baiqara and had played an important part in the resistance to the Afghan annexation of Balkh.

The Amir's death plunged the whole of Afghanistan into official mourning, but when news of Dost Muhammad Khan's passing was broken in Bukhara it was a cause of general rejoicing. The messenger who brought the news to Muzaffar Khan was give the vast sum of one thousand tangas and a public holiday was declared to celebrate the end of the man whom the Bukhara *'ulama* had condemned as an infidel for his alliance with Britain and who had constantly out-fought and out-manoeuvred the Uzbek ruler on the other side of the Amu Darya during the last twenty years (Vambery 1864, 432).

[20] See also *EDCV*, 29 May-1 June 1863; *EDCV*, 16-18 June 1863, P:IFPC/204/67, no. 141 of July, fols. 279-80. Cf. the symptoms suffered by 'Abd al-Rahman Khan and other Barakzai and Sadozai sardars.

*Lesser Turkistan and the Afghan Civil War, 1863-1868*

Within a matter of months after the death of Dost Muhammad Khan, Afghanistan had once more plunged into chaos. Sher 'Ali Khan, the heir apparent, took over the reins of power following his father's demise, but sardars A'zam Khan, Aslam Khan and Amin Khan, in particular, refused to accept their brother's right to rule all of Afghanistan and set out to undermine his authority (Khafi i, 50-1). Their prime objective was to sow dissension and disunity between Sher 'Ali Khan and his elder brother, Muhammad Afzal Khan, which was so successful that the governor of Balkh refused to visit the Afghan capital to pay his respects to Sher 'Ali Khan for fear that he would be arrested and put to death (Khafi i, 50-3).

Bukhara, realising that the fragile Afghan state threatened to disintegrate into a number of mutually-hostile principalities, set out to exploit the situation to the full. A short while after the Amir's death, Vambery recorded that Muzaffar Khan sent ten thousand tilas in cash to the new ruler of Maimana, promising the wali that a Bukharan army would soon cross the Amu Darya in a bid to wrest Turkistan from the Afghans (Vambery 1864, 246). Husain Khan, whose submission to Afzal Khan had been dictated by the necessity of avoiding annexation during the recent operations against Herat, declared his support for Sher 'Ali Khan[21] and began to attack Afghan garrisons loyal to Afzal Khan stationed around Khairabad and Daulatabad (Vambery 1864, 246). At about the same time, however, the governor of Balkh, one of whose principal wives was a sister, or half-sister, of Muzaffar Khan, sent ambassadors to Bukhara to discuss possible Bukharan assistance for his cause. In early August 1863, the Manghit ruler sent his own son to Takhtapul to offer official condolences on the death of Afzal's father and to discuss the proposed alliance.[22]

A month or so before the Bukharan prince arrived, Afzal Khan offered to restore a measure of autonomy to the native rulers of Afghan Turkistan, in the hope that this would persuade them to support any move he made on the Afghan capital. For some reason negotiations with the Bukharan envoys were unsatisfactory and Afzal Khan, faced with disturbances amongst the local population from Maimana to Qataghan, the opposition of some Barakzai sardars and an outbreak of rebellion in the garrison at Khanabad, in Qataghan, decided against

[21] *EDCV*, 12-15 June 1863.
[22] *EDCV*, 29-31 Aug. 1863, P:IFPC/204/68, no. 62 of Nov., fol. 78.

any form of devolution for Turkistan (Katib ii, 252-3).[23] Instead, declaring the Uzbeks to be "the hereditary enemies of the Affghans (*sic*)",[24] he forced Ghazanfar Khan of Andkhui to join in the campaign against Husain Khan Ming which, amongst other things, completely disrupted the caravan routes to Bukhara. However, despite several encounters between the two sides on the Andkhui-Maimana border, Afzal Khan could make no headway (Vambery 1864, 246). His cause suffered a further body blow when sardars Muhammad Zaman Khan, commander of the Sar-i Pul garrison, and Faiz Muhammad Khan at Shibarghan, both supporters of Sher 'Ali Khan, used the death of the new Amir's mother to return to Kabul with their regiments (Katib ii, 252, 261).[25]

The defection of two influential Afghan princes left Afzal Khan militarily in a very weak position, for three out of the four provinces of the Chahar Wilayat had been lost. Shortly after the defection of the Sar-i Pul and Shibarghan garrisons, Ghazanfar Khan took advantage of Afzal Khan's problems to expel the Afghan garrison from Andkhui and declared independence. Rather than risk attacking Andkhui, Afzal Khan ordered what troops were left to him in western Turkistan to pull back to Aqcha to defend Balkh against a joint attack by Bukhara and amirs of the Chahar Wilayat.[26]

Afzal Khan's difficulties increased when the exiled Mir Ataliq of Qunduz decided that the time was ripe to foment rebellion in Qataghan (Katib ii, 253-5).[27] He sent his son, also known as Sultan Murad, to stir up sedition in his former territory, forcing Afzal Khan to order Muhammad 'Alam Khan and Ghulam Muhammad Khan to the region to quell the uprising. The Afghan campaign against Qataghan soon ran into trouble. Muhammad 'Alam Khan, who had incautiously gone on ahead of the main army accompanied by only two hundred men, was ambushed by some two thousand Uzbek cavalry near Nahrin of Baghlan and killed. The following day the main force came face-to-

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[23] *Ibid. EDCV,* 21-24 Aug. 1863, P:IFPC/204/68, no. 59 of Nov., fol. 72. The *Siraj al-Tawarikh* says the garrison at Khanabad pelted the door of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's residence with stones and looted property in the town. The Sardar had to call out his troops to suppress the uprising.

[24] *Afzal Khan to Shere Mahomed Khan,* n.d. 1863, P:IFPC/204/71, no. 285 of Jan., fols. 416-7

[25] *Ibid. EDCV,* 2-5, 9-12, 16-19 Oct. 1863, P:IFPC/204/71, nos. 282, 286 of Jan., fols. 403-4, 411-2, 413-4.

[26] *EDCV,* 18-21 Sept. 1863, ESL:257, fols. 554-6 which calls Andkhui "Indewale;" there was also trouble at "Khasb," but I cannot even hazard a guess as to which of the amirid states this mangled transliteration is meant to represent.

[27] *Afzal Khan to Shere Mahomed Khan,* 1863.

face with some forty thousand Qataghanians and, after a bitter battle which lasted into the evening, the Afghan army finally triumphed. During this engagement, Afzal Khan's forces employed, for the first time, the British tactic of the infantry square, thus enabling them to attack the advancing enemy simultaneously from all sides. The result, if we can trust the figures given by the *Siraj al-Tawarikh*, was that ten thousand Uzbeks were left dead or wounded on the field of battle whilst, on the Afghan side, a mere thirty-one were killed and ten injured (Katib ii, 253).

The battle of Nahrin broke the back of the revolt and the *aqsaqal*s and *mingbashi*s of Qataghan were forced to submit to Afzal Khan, who fined the region twelve lakh rupees. A number of individuals from Badakhshan, whom the *Siraj al-Tawarikh* accuses of being highway robbers, but who were probably the leaders of the rebellion, were blown from guns (Katib ii, 255).[28] Following the suppression of the Qataghan revolt, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, who had recently joined his father in Balkh, was sent against Jahandad Khan, Mir of Badakhshan (Katib ii, 255).[29]

The loss of the Chahar Wilayat and the defection of a number of front-line regiments awoke Afzal Khan to the reality that he could only hold onto the province with his brother's help. So, in order to "prove to the Oozbeks that he [was] resolved to retain his hold on Toorkistan,"[30] Afzal Khan, after having received a number of conciliatory letters from Sher 'Ali Khan, ordered his younger brother's name to be inserted in the *khutba* and coins to be struck with the Amir's seal and titles impressed on them. In a belated letter of submission Afzal Khan tendered his resignation and offered to present himself in person to Sher 'Ali Khan (Katib ii, 252, 263; Khafi i, 51-2).[31] The

[28] Katib refers to them as Badakhshani thieves. In fact, they had been harrying the Afghan camp dressed as merchants and had inflicted a number of casualties. As such, they were more guerrillas than highway robbers.

[29] See also, *ADCV*, 23-26 Oct. 1863, P:IFPC/204/71, no. 291 of Jan., fol. 421; *Eastwick to Russell*, 31 Dec. 1863, SLEP:165, no. 13, n. pag.; 'Pundit Munphool' (Faiz Bakhsh), *Khokand*, 1867, 8. Mir Jahandad Khan had apparently tried to persuade Muzaffar Khan to make Badakhshan a Bukharan Protectorate, but had been informed that Badakhshan was not in Bukhara's sphere of influence and he should submit to Kabul.

[30] *Afzul Khan to Sher Mohamed Khan*, 1863.

[31] *EDCV*, 23-28 Sept. 1863; *Afzal Khan to Sher Ali Khan*(b), n.d. 1863, *Appendix* 2, *EDCV*, 9-12 Oct. 1863, ESL:257, fols. 564-5, 596. The *Siraj al-Tawarikh* makes no reference to Afzal Khan's reluctance to submit to Sher 'Ali Khan and seeks to shift all the blame for the civil war onto Sher 'Ali Khan. One must remember that Katib's patron was Amir Habibullah Khan, the grandson of Afzal Khan and his work sets out to portray Muhammad Afzal Khan and his son, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, in the best light possible.

continued intrigues of A'zam Khan and the activities of Afzal Khan's only son, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, though, continued to create a climate of suspicion and mutual distrust despite the open show of submission and reconciliation.[32]

Afzal Khan's public acceptance of his brother's succession brought a measure of calm to the province during the winter of 1863/4, a situation which was further helped by the timely arrival of the fast of Ramazan in February 1864.[33] Rumours, however, continued to circulate in Kabul that Afzal Khan planned to march on Kabul once the 'Id-i Fitr and Nauroz festivals were over.[34] During the winter months, the governor of Balkh, anxious about Bukharan intentions, set out to mend the breach between himself and the Manghit ruler. An opportunity presented itself at the end of February 1864, when Muzaffar Khan, having "settled" the affairs of Hisar, marched against Kulab, put the amir of that place to death and elevated one of his sons to the governorship under Bukharan tutelage. During the course of this campaign, Afzal Khan, seeking revenge for Kulab's earlier raids around Qunduz (Katib ii, 257), supplied the Bukharan army and, once the fortress had fallen, forced refugees who had tried to flee into Afghan Turkistan back across the river.[35] In response to these friendly gestures, Muzaffar Khan informed the governor of Balkh:

> he could attack Kabul without fear of Bukharan intervention across the Oxus ... [since] ... he himself would look after his interests in Turkistan and preserve his country from the attempts of internal and external enemies.[36]

Bukhara even offered money and troops to help in any such attack and though Afzal Khan replied that he did not require such assistance immediately, he informed Muzaffar Khan that that he would "not hesitate" to ask for them if the need arose.[37]

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[32] *EDCV*, 2-5 Oct. 1863.

[33] The fast started on 9 February 1864. The first day of 'Id-i Ramazan fell on 9 March, *ECD*, 4-10 March 1864, P:IFPC/204/72, no. 46 of April, fols. 180-1.

[34] *EDCV*, 9-12 Oct. 1863, ESL:257, fols. 573-4 (this version of *EDCV* contains more details than the one listed at n. 24 above, a situation which applies in a number of cases with the L/P&S/5 and P:IFPC series at this period); *EDCVM*, 18-28 March 1864, P:IFPC/204/73, no. 89 of May, fols. 81-2.

[35] *EDCVM*, 18-28 March 1864. *CVD*, 11-17 March 1864; *ECD*, 12-18 April 1864; *CVD*, 24-27 June, 1864, P:IFPC/204/73, nos. 88, 128 of May, fols. 80, 138-9, no. 29 of July, fol. 40.

[36] *EDCVM*, 18-28 March 1864.

[37] *CVD*, 24-27 June 1864; *ECD*, 29 March-27 June 1864, P:IFPC/204/73, no. 29 of July, fol. 40.

One immediate benefit that accrued to Afzal Khan for his support of the Bukharan conquest of Kulab, was the submission of the fugitive Mir Ataliq of Qunduz, who had been living as a refugee in the principality since the fall of Qunduz. Probably as a result of pressure applied by the Bukharan ruler, the Mir Ataliq sent his son to Khairabad to tender his submission. Afzal Khan, realising that by showing kindness to the exiled amir he could win much sympathy from the people of Afghan Turkistan, pardoned the Mir Ataliq, gave him back his kingdom on condition that he supplied men for the Afghan army, and withdrew 'Abd al-Rahman Khan and his regiments from Qataghan (Katib ii, 265).[38] When the Amir was informed of Afzal Khan's actions in respect of Qunduz and Kulab, which had been conducted without seeking prior approval from Kabul, he was furious, declaring that his brother "had tied such a knot ... as could only be cut by the sword."[39]

The strained relations between the two brothers were finally brought to breaking point by the interception of a correspondence between Muhammad A'zam Khan and Afzal Khan. These letters revealed that Mirza Ahad Khan and Nazir Haidar Khan, the ringleaders of the conspiracy in Kabul, had been subverting the Amir's officials with offers of money, whilst Sardar A'zam Khan had been secretly urging Afzal Khan to seize the Afghan throne (Katib ii, 263-4; Khafi i, 50-3). Having perused this clandestine correspondence, Sher 'Ali Khan, who had been unwell for some weeks,[40] decided that he could hesitate no longer and the plotters were immediately arrested. Amongst their papers there was found a letter from Afzal Khan which stated unequivocally that he intended to march on Kabul on, or around, 24 April.[41] Armed with this intelligence, the Amir had the two conspirators brought before him, gave them an official letter for his brother, in which he warned that civil war would undo everything their father had done, and expelled them to Balkh.[42] However, before they departed, Sher 'Ali Khan won over Mirza Ahad Khan to his party by the disbursement of liberal gifts, and ordered him to try and sabotage Afzal Khan's plans as best he could (Katib ii, 263-4).

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[38] *CVD*, 11-17 March 1864; *EDCVM*, 18-28 March 1864.

[39] *ECD*, 29 March-4 April 1864, P:IFPC/204/73, no. 90 of May, fols. 84-5. *ECD*, 19-28 Feb., 4-10 March 1864, P:IFPC/204/72, no. 291 of March, fols. 530-1, no. 46 of April, fol. 181.

[40] *ECD*, 12-18 April 1864. He had been suffering from depression and insomnia.

[41] *ECD*, 4-10 March, 12-18 April, 1864; *ECD*, 19-28 April 1864, P:IFPC/204/73, no. 128 of May, fols. 138-9.

[42] *ECD*, 4-10 March 1864.

On 20 March 1864, Sher 'Ali Khan and his closest advisers went into extended conference, which lasted until late in the evening, to discuss the best course of action against Afzal Khan and other recalcitrant Afghan princes. The following morning, which was Nauroz, or New Year's Day, the Amir ordered his son, Muhammad 'Ali Khan, to prepare to march north against Bajgah and commanded Ya'qub Khan at Herat to gather the Aimaq tribes on the Murghab to defend the frontier in case Afzal Khan attempted to march on Herat (Khafi i, 53-4).[43] Ishans Uraq and Sudur, who had been living in exile in Kabul since the Afghan conquest of Balkh and Aqcha, were brought before the Amir. Ishan Uraq was offered the governorship of Aqcha on condition he won over the local chiefs of Afghan Turkistan, terms which were eagerly accepted by the shaikh. His younger brother, along with other members of their families, was retained in Kabul as a hostage,[44] whilst Uraq was given letters from Sher 'Ali Khan to all the rulers of Lesser Turkistan and three thousand rupees road expenses. He was ordered to proceed to Maimana via Herat, for Husain Khan Ming had recently pledged support for the Amir.[45] Later developments suggest that, in order to secure the loyalty of the ishans and the amirs of the Chahar Wilayat, Sher 'Ali Khan had promised a greater degree of autonomy to the indigenous rulers of the province.[46]

Muhammad Afzal Khan, hearing that his brother had sent troops to Bamiyan, immediately caused his own name to be inserted into the *khutba* in Mazar-i Sharif and set out at the head of his army to reinforce the outpost at Bajgah (Khafi i, 53-4). Prior to leaving, he made a belated attempt to win back control of the Chahar Wilayat by recognising the rights of Ghazanfar Khan of Andkhui, Hakim Khan of Shibarghan, Muhammad Khan Beglarbegi b. Zu'l-Faqar Khan, who seems to have taken over Sar-i Pul after Muhammad Zaman Khan had abandoned the area the previous year,[47] and a son of Mir Baba Beg who was governing Aibak.[48] Afzal Khan's rebellion, however, was

[43] *ECD*, 12-18, 19-28 April 1864.

[44] *ECD*, 29 April-5 May 1864.

[45] *MA*, 19 June 1864, SLEP:166, no. 58, n. pag. Husain Khan had gone to Ya'qub Khan in Herat to submit to Sher 'Ali Khan and, on his return, had taken back a refugee Mughal prince, Shahzada Firoz Shah, who was wanted by the British for his part in the Indian Mutiny.

[46] *ECD*, 29 April-5 May 1864.

[47] *EDCV*, 24-30 May 1864, P:IFPC/204/73, no. 46 of June, fols. 109-10 has "a son of Mir Mohamed Khan," but a matter of a year or so later Muhammad Khan was in control of Sar-i Pul and it is unlikely that his son would have assumed control whilst he himself was still alive. Muhammad's full brother, Qilij Khan, had fled to Maimana. See below n. 165 for Muhammad Khan's offspring.

[48] *Ibid.*, which says he recognised the son of the Mir Ataliq. However, it is clear from the *Siraj*

flawed from the outset. His reluctant conversion to the cause of devolution deceived no-one. After all, it was Afzal Khan who had been primarily responsible for the erosion and destruction of amirid power during the reign of Dost Muhammad Khan. Moreover, Sher 'Ali Khan, as well as being the lawful heir to the Afghan throne, had already entered into an agreement with Ishan Uraq concerning the rights of the amirs of Afghan Turkistan. Indeed, Afzal Khan's concessions were probably forced on him by the propaganda of Ishan Uraq who, by this time, had reached Maimana and was circulating the Amir's letters throughout the Chahar Wilayat.

Afzal Khan's failure to secure the loyalty and support of the amirs of Turkistan was compounded by the fact that those princes who opposed Sher 'Ali Khan were scattered throughout the country and unable to unite their forces. Consequently, the Amir was able to deal with each of his opponents in a piecemeal fashion. In Kurram, to the south, a large number of A'zam Khan's men defected to the Amir and the area quickly fell to Rafiq Khan. A large amount of ammunition and stores were seized from the rebels and Muhammad A'zam Khan was forced to seek sanctuary with the British in India (Hall, 14; Katib ii, 264).[49]

Muhammad 'Ali Khan's march to Bamiyan was unopposed, though the demands of feeding the army caused considerable hardship amongst the Hazaras.[50] As he advanced, members of the royal family, who had wavered in their allegiance, came over to his side, including Sardar Wali Muhammad the commander of the strategic garrison of Takhtapul who, despite having his letter of submission to the Amir being intercepted by Afzal Khan's spies, managed to evade capture and flee to Shibarghan.[51]

When Muhammad 'Ali Khan reached Saighan, he took up a defensive position in the open ground south of the Bajgah pass within sound of the enemy. His orders were not to engage the enemy but to await the arrival of the Amir with reinforcements from Kabul. However, the Balkh army, confident that they were stronger and more powerful than Muhammad 'Ali Khan, began to attack the fringes of his army. These raids in strength angered the prince's men, who

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*al-Tawarikh* that it was the Mir Ataliq himself who had been restored to the Qataghan throne.

[49] *ECD*, 6-9 May, 17-23 May 1864, P:IFPC/204/73, nos. 41, 43 of June, fols. 104-5, 107-8.

[50] *ECD*, 17-23 May 1864. Many Hazaras were forced to flee to Kabul because of an artificially-created famine in Bamiyan

[51] *Ibid.*

demanded the right to retaliate, to which Muhammad 'Ali Khan reluctantly agreed (Katib ii, 265-6; Khafi i, 55).

On May 17 1864, the first day of the religious festival of 'Id al-Azha (Qurban), Muhammad 'Ali Khan, having secretly secured the heights around the enemy during the night, opened fire with artillery and small arms from above whilst his enemy's head was "still on the pillow" (Katib ii, 266; Khafi i, 56-7). In the confusion and carnage which followed, Na'ib Ghulam Ahmad Khan, who had commanded the Balkh army's advanced guard, fled. Afzal Khan, hearing the sound of battle further up the road, sent men forward to engage the enemy and assist the vanguard of his army. In their haste, however, they failed to scout ahead and rode into a carefully laid trap. Muhammad 'Ali Khan had concealed sections of his army in strategic places along the the line of their advance and, as soon as their flanks lay exposed, opened fire with artillery with devastating effect. In the carnage which followed, very few of the Afghan army returned from running the deadly gauntlet of shot and steel. Realising that the battle was lost, Afzal Khan ordered his men to retreat and they fell back in disarray to Duab, leaving behind most of their artillery and thousands of men dead or dying on the battle field (Katib ii, 266-7; Khafi i, 56-8).[52]

Having made arrangements for the treatment of the wounded and the honourable burial of the dead from both sides (Khafi i, 58-9), Muhammad 'Ali Khan informed his father of his victory and a fifty-one gun salute was fired in the Afghan capital to celebrate the success (Khafi i, 54). Four days later, the Amir, at the head of substantial reinforcements, arrived in Bajgah. After resting for five days, Sher 'Ali Khan ordered his son to attack Rui, where elements of the rebel army were holding out and barring the road north. Afzal Khan's garrison was quickly overwhelmed and those who survived the onslaught fled northwards to Aibak (Khafi i, 62-3). As news of Afzal Khan's defeat spread throughout Lesser Turkistan many amirs and tribal chiefs made their way to Sher 'Ali's camp to pledge their support for his cause. Amongst those who came in was Sultan Murad of Qunduz and Hakim Khan of Shibarghan.[53]

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[52] *ECD*, 7-13 June 1864; *Abdul Rahman Khan to Commissioner*, Peshawar, n.d. 1864, P:IFPC/204/73, no. 25 of July, fol. 37 (both records). MacGregor, 163; Forsyth, *Epitome*, 2 claim the encounter was indecisive.

[53] *EDCV*, 5-14 July 1864, P:IFPC/104/73, no. 40 of Aug., fols. 70-1.

Following these victories, Sher 'Ali sent a message to his brother, written on the margins of the Quran and sealed with his own seal, urging brotherly reconciliation and, as a goodwill gesture, released all the prisoners taken during the recent fighting (Katib ii, 266-7; Khafi i, 64-5).[54] Afzal Khan, putting his trust in the sanctity and sacredness of his brother's oath on the Qur'an, agreed to negotiate and went in person to the Amir's camp where he was accorded a welcome befitting his status as the eldest surviving son of Dost Muhammad Khan (Katib ii, 266-7). Seeing the reception he had been afforded and reassured by Sher 'Ali Khan's own words, Afzal Khan ordered his men back to Takhtapul and allowed the Amir to take up residence in Tashqurghan (Katib ii, 266-7; Khafi i, 65-9).[55]

Politically, however, the two brothers remained far apart. Afzal Khan insisted that he should retain the governorship of Afghan Turkistan, in accordance with Dost Muhammad Khan's will, as well as the right to all the revenues of that province. In addition, he demanded A'zam Khan be restored to his fief of Khurram, that Ghazni be given to another of his relatives, and Sar-i Pul be placed in the care of Sardars Ghulam(?) Ahmad Khan and Muhammad Zaman Khan.[56] To have agreed to such terms would have meant surrendering some of the most strategic regions of Afghanistan to members of the Muhammadzai clan inimical to Sher 'Ali Khan.

When Sher 'Ali Khan arrived in Tashqurghan on the evening of 14 July, the Amir immediately held a full council of his advisers. The *durbar* managed to convince Sher 'Ali Khan that in the light of the demands made by Afzal Khan, his continued presence as governor of Balkh would merely postpone further conflict and that he should be offered the governorship of Khurram, Ghazni and Jalalabad instead. As far as Afghan Turkistan was concerned, the districts of Qunduz and Maimana would be removed from under Balkh's authority, the former being ruled from Kabul, the latter from Herat. Afzal Khan,

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[54] *Ibid.*

[55] *CVD*, 28 June-4 July 1864; *ECD*, 22-24 July 1864, P:IFPC/204/74, nos. 39, 43 of Aug., fols. 73-4. However the *Siraj al-Tawarikh* claims that Sher 'Ali's ministers advised the Amir to deceive (*freb*) his brother by means of the oath on the Qur'an. Since the Amir was not strong enough to overcome Afzal Khan militarily, they argued, it was necessary to lull Afzal Khan into a false sense of security and then seize him once his army had disbanded. I have dismissed this claim as propaganda designed to exonerate Afzal Khan, the grandfather of Katib's patron, Amir Habibullah, and to portray Sher 'Ali Khan as perfidious and treacherous.

[56] *CVD*, 17-20 June 1864, P:IFPC/204/73, no. 27 of July, fol. 38; *CVD*, 28 June-4 July 1864. The actual course of events which led up to Afzal Khan being placed in irons is somewhat uncertain in the sources.

when informed of this decision, was deeply offended and rejected the proposition outright. Sher 'Ali , however, suggested he retire to his tent to "reflect" more on the offer and a strong guard was secretly placed around it to prevent his flight.[57] The Mir Ataliq, too, was upset at the prospect of his country once again coming under direct rule.

Amidst reports that ten thousand Bukharan troops were massing at Qarshi, the negotiations continued for nearly a month.[58] Finally, on 12 August,[59] the two brothers reached an agreement over the division of Afghanistan. Afzal Khan was confirmed as governor of Balkh, but the area under his control was severely reduced. Maimana was given to Ya'qub Khan in Herat, whilst Qataghan and Badakhshan, including Khanabad and Taliqan, were brought under the direct authority of Kabul. Afzal Khan was also required to renounce the income from *jagir* estates in Kabul and received, in return, a promise of central government support in the event of any Bukharan invasion.[60]

In order to make the agreement binding and to publicly demonstrate their reconciliation, Amir Sher 'Ali Khan and Afzal Khan went together to Mazar-i Sharif and, in a solemn ceremony at the shrine of 'Ali, the two brothers bound themselves to uphold the treaty by an oath which was sealed on the Qur'an (Katib ii, 267-8; Khafi i, 72).[61] A few days later, on 18 August, Sher 'Ali Khan presented Husain Khan Ming, Wali of Maimana and other leaders of the Chahar Wilayat and Afghan Turkistan, who appear to have been present during the ceremony, with robes of honour and allowed them to return to their home. The Persian ambassador, who accompanied the Amir during the recent campaign and was rumoured to have been empowered to offer his country's help against Afzal Khan in exchange for the return of Herat, was also dismissed empty-handed.[62]

The occasion of mutual reconciliation, however, was marred by the attitude of Sardar 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, the son of Afzal Khan. According to Khafi (i, 72-3) when 'Abd al-Rahman Khan arrived in

[57] *Ibid. ECD*, 15-21 July 1864, P:IFPC/204/73, no. 41 of Aug., fols. 72-3; ECD, 29 July-4 Aug. 1864, P:IFPC/204/74, no. 2 of Oct. fol. 2; *Commissioner, Peshawar, to Secr., Govt. Punjab*, 1 Aug. 1864, ESL:257, fol. 740.

[58] *ECD*, 22-24 July, 29 July-4 Aug. 1864; *ECD*, 5-11 Aug. 1864, P:IFPC/204/74, no. 3 of Oct., fol. 3.

[59] MacGregor, 106; Wyllie, *Summary*, i, 9 have 9 Aug., but Sher 'Ali's letter was dated 12 Aug. See *ECD*, 15-22 Aug. 1864, P:IFPC/204/74, no. 7 of Oct., fol. 5.

[60] Wyllie, *Summary*, i, 9; *ECD*, 22-24 July 1864; *ECD*, 12-14 Aug. 1864, P:IFPC/204/74, no. 5 of Oct., fol. 4.

[61] *Ibid. Commissioner, Peshawar, to Secr. Govt., Punjab*, 22 Sept. 1864; *ECD*, 2-8 Sept., 9-15 Sept. 1864, ESL:257, fols. 753-6, 759-60, 760-2.

[62] *ECD*, 5-11, 15-22 Aug. 1864; *ECD*, 23 Aug.-1 Sept. 1864, ESL:257, fols. 747-8.

Mazar-i Sharif he barely concealed his intense suspicion and dislike of his uncle. During the three days that Sher 'Ali Khan was in the city, the young prince only visited the Amir twice, remaining the rest of the time in his base at Takhtapul. Sher 'Ali Khan, observing the way Afzal Khan's son behaved and marking him down as a trouble-maker, tried to win 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's confidence by kindness and gentleness, but with a singular lack of success. There is even a suggestion that the sardar offered to have the Amir arrested (Katib ii, 268).[63]

Sher 'Ali Khan, having accomplished all that he set out to do in Mazar-i Sharif, returned to Tashqurghan with his brother, where he began to make preparations to march back to Kabul before the winter arrived. However, the Amir's son, Sardar Muhammad 'Ali Khan, wishing to avail himself of the opportunity to visit the shrine of 'Ali, requested permission to perform *ziyarat* and was granted three days leave of absence. On his arrival in Mazar-i Sharif, Muhammad 'Ali Khan informed 'Abd al-Rahman Khan of his presence in the city, indicating that the young prince should come and pay his respects. For two days, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan refused, insisting instead that Muhammad 'Ali Khan visit him in Takhtapul on his return journey. Since Muhammad 'Ali, as the son of the Amir, was of higher rank than Afzal Khan's son, he took offence, for under the rules of protocol, the lesser was obliged to wait on the greater. After two days 'Abd al-Rahman Khan gave way and went to Mazar-i Sharif. However, a short time after the sardar arrived in the town, Muhammad 'Ali Khan was handed an anonymous letter which informed him that 'Abd al-Rahman Khan had brought with him all the Takhtapul garrison, which were stationed all around Mazar-i Sharif. After confirming the truth of this intelligence from his own spies, Muhammad 'Ali Khan accused 'Abd al-Rahman Khan to his face of a flagrant breach of the recent peace treaty (Katib ii, 267-8; Khafi i, 70-3).[64] The Amir was swiftly informed by confidential messenger of the tense situation which had arisen in Mazar-i Sharif. Sher 'Ali Khan, in turn, informed Afzal Khan, who roundly condemned his son's actions and tried to distance himself from them.

The matter would have rested there had not, a short while later, a number of highly compromising letters addressed to 'Abd al-Rahman

[63] *ECD*, 23 Aug.-1 Sept. 1864.

[64] *Ibid.*, which claims that "all ill-will between the two parties ['Abd al-Rahman Khan and Muhammad 'Ali Khan] was obliterated."

Khan and sealed with Afzal Khan's seal, fallen into Muhammad 'Ali Khan's hands. These revealed that both father and son were secretly plotting a renewal of hostilities against the Amir (Katib ii, 268; Khafi i, 73-6). When Sher 'Ali Khan read their contents, he became extremely angry, a state that was not improved by the fact that he was already suffering from a condition which made him "irritable and violent."[65] Afzal Khan's claim that he had not written the letters and that they were forgeries, merely incensed the Amir further. 'Abd al-Rahman Khan was stripped of the command of the Takhtapul garrison, ordered to proceed immediately to Kabul and "give up all his proud schemes" or face attack. Afzal Khan, "contrary to the customs of the Barakzay family," was placed in irons and all the sardar's property in Balkh was confiscated (Khafi i, 76-8).[66] The treaty between the two brothers, so solemnly sealed in the sanctuary at Mazar-i Sharif, had lasted exactly seven days.[67]

Despite strong evidence of a secret intrigue between Afzal Khan and his son at Takhtapul, popular opinion swung against Sher 'Ali Khan, for the Amir was deemed to have violated his sacred oath. The fragile truce which had existed between the followers of the Amir and his older brother broke down completely. Many of the Amir's Balkh troops deserted and within a matter of days Sher 'Ali Khan found the military forces at his disposal had been reduced by a half. On 28 August, four days after Afzal Khan's imprisonment, and with government forces advancing on Takhtapul, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, along with senior members of his family, fled to the Amu Darya, which they crossed whilst under fire from an Uzbek force from Balkh (Katib ii, 268-71; Khafi i, 79-80).[68] After a short stay in Shirabad, Muzaffar Khan of Bukhara, hearing that the sardar had arrived in his territory, invited 'Abd al-Rahman Khan and his followers to come to Bukhara and reside there (Katib ii, 271-2).

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[65] *ECD*, 2-8 Sept. 1864, P:IFPC/204/74, no. 11 of Oct., fols. 8-9.

[66] *ECD*, 9-15 Sept. 1864; *Commissioner, Peshawar*, 22 Sept. 1864. Afzal Khan's property was estimated to be worth ten crore rupees. The *Siraj al-Tawarikh* says that Afzal Khan's property was not seized.

[67] *ECD*, 9-15 Sept. 1864. *Commissioner, Peshawar*, 22 Sept. 1864 says two days after the oath was sworn at Mazar-i Sharif, but *ECD*, 2-8 Sept. 1864 gives the actual date as 24 Aug.—seven days later.

[68] *Ibid. ECD*, 9-15 Sept. 1864; *Telegram, Deputy Commissioner, Peshawar to Secr., Govt. Punjab*, 19 Sept. 1864, ESL:257, fol. 756; *ECD*, 25-28 July 1864, P:IFPC/204/74, no. 1 of Oct., fol. 1. 'Abd al-Rahman Khan later claimed that he set out to attack Sher Ali but his father ordered him to desist or be disowned (Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 48).

Meanwhile, the inhabitants of Afghan Turkistan and their leaders, having lost all faith in the Amir, showed signs of discontent, and unrest began to spread throughout the region. Ishan Uraq and his nephew, Qara Sultan (or Qara 'Khan'), disappointed by the non-fulfilment of the Amir's pledge to restore Aqcha to their family, fled to Bukhara,[69] where they were joined by Muhammad Khan Beglarbegi of Sar-i Pul (Katib ii, 273). Trouble was reported in Qataghan and Husain Khan Ming of Maimana refused to send his guns to Herat in accordance with his recent agreement with the Amir. Bands of Uzbek marauders started to raid Afghan colonies around Takhtapul[70] followed by Turkman attacks on Maimana. In the process of trying to contain this latter incursion, the wali's soldiers were defeated and the Regent, Mirza Ya'qub Beg, who had led the Maimana cavalry, was killed.[71]

Muzaffar Khan of Bukhara, seeing that there was considerable advantage to be obtained by welcoming the refugee sardars, received 'Abd al-Rahman Khan and his entourage with every sign of respect, even to the extent of waiving the strict rules of court protocol to accommodate Afghan custom (Katib ii, 272).[72] However, when the Khan tried to persuade 'Abd al-Rahman Khan to accept a post and become his *nokar* (literally, 'servant'), he bluntly refused and relations between the Afghan exiles and Muzaffar Khan deteriorated. When next the Afghan prince was invited to the Khan's public audience, he was appointed to a seat well below that of Beglarbegi Muhammad Khan of Sar-i Pul (Katib ii, 272-3). However, despite the *Siraj al-Tawarikh*'s attempt to portray 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's exile in Bukhara as highly uncomfortable, it would appear from subsequent events that some *modus vivendi* was reached between the sardar and the Manghit Khan. Indeed, one report claimed that Muzaffar Khan had bestowed the distinguished title of *farzad,* son, on 'Abd al-Rahman Khan.[73]

Ishan Uraq and his nephew, Qara Khan, who reached Bukhara shortly after the sardar's party, were accorded a state reception as befitting exiles whose family had been at the forefront of the battle

[69] *ECD*, 2-8 Sept. 1864; *ECD*, 3-6 Oct. 1864, P:IFPC/204/75, no. 28 of Nov., fol. 45; *ECD*, 12-15 Dec. 1864, P:IFPC/204/77, no. 8 of Jan., fols. 7-8.

[70] *ECD*, 12-14 Aug. 1864; *ECD*, 18-20 Oct., 1864, P:IFPC/204/75, no. 197 of Nov., fols. 261-2.

[71] *CCD*, 22-26 Dec. 1864, P:IFPC/204/77, no. 108 of Jan., fol. 96.

[72] *ECD*, 2-8 Sept. 1864. A few days prior to the imprisonment of Afzal Khan, a Bukharan ambassador had come to Takhtapul, where he had been welcomed by 'Abd al-Rahman Khan but following the news of Afzal Khan's imprisonment the envoy was recalled (Katib ii, 268).

[73] *CD*, 21-27 April 1868, ESL:261, fols. 315-6.

against the Afghans. In recognition of Uraq's services to the nationalist cause, Muzaffar Khan bestowed the titles of *naqib* and "Meer Asad" (*mir sada*?)[74] upon him and all the notables of Bukhara were ordered to feast and honour the ishan and his nephew.[75] A *jagir* of land in Shahrabad and Qarqi was given to the ishan and the two eldest, unmarried, daughters of Muzaffar Khan were given in marriage to Ishan Uraq and Muhammad Khan Beglarbegi (Vambery 1864, 189).[76] Thus, ironically, the ishan became related, howbeit through marriage, to Muhammad Afzal Khan. When Sher 'Ali Khan heard of the ishan's defection, he stopped all payments to Uraq's family and relatives in Kabul.[77]

Despite the reception accorded to the exiles from Afghanistan, Muzaffar Khan held back from any militarily action across the Amu Darya, even though Ishan Uraq claimed that Balkh would be at his mercy.[78] Instead the ishan was sent to Takhtapul with Bukharan diplomatic status, presumably to try and mediate between the two Afghan factions,[79] for Muzaffar Khan was increasingly concerned about Russian advances to the north. In 1864, Tsarist forces had annexed Auliya' Ata, Talas, Turkistan (that is, Hazrat Sultan) and other places north of Tashkent that were previously under the Khan of Kokand,[80] and

[74] *ECD*, 3-6 Oct. 1864; *CD*, 16-18 Jan. 1865, P:IFPC/204, no. 28 of Nov., fol. 45. I am grateful to Prof. McChesney for pointing out that the title *Mir Asad* ('Lion Commander') is very unusual, and mainly associated with 'Ali b. Abi Talib, cf. *Asad Allah al-ghalib* ('Lion of God, the Victorious'), though in Afghanistan 'Ali is commonly referred to by the Persian titles of *Sher-i Khuda* ('Lion of God'), or *Sher-i Mardan* ('Lion of Men'). Prof. McChesney suggests *Mir Sada* ('Commander of a Hundred') or possibly *Mirzada* as a more likely title.

[75] *ECD*, 3-6 Oct., 12-15 Dec. 1864.

[76] *CD*, 16-18 Jan. 1865, P:IFPC/204/78, no. 105 of Feb., fols. 119-20. The Gauhari family already owned considerable lands around Qarqi and it may be that Muzaffar Khan merely reconfirmed their right to the revenues of these lands; after all, the *ishan* had been absent for over twenty-five years either fighting, or as a prisoner of, the Afghans.

[77] *ECD*, 3-6 Oct. 1864.

[78] *ECD*, 12-18 Dec. 1864. Both the Mashhad and Kabul agents reported that Bukhara had intervened across the river sometime in late autumn, but there does not seem to have been any substance to such claims, MAN, 6 Oct. 1864, SLEP:166, no. 104, n. pag.; *ECD*, 15-17 Nov. 1864, P:IFPC/204/75, no. 136 of Dec., fols. 199-200.

[79] *ECD*, 12-15 Dec. 1864. *ECD*, 30 Dec. 1864-2 Jan. 1865, P:IFPC/204/77, no. 44 of Jan. 1865, fols. 133-4 reports that Ishan Sudur, an ambassador from the Khan of Kokand, was in Kabul, *en route* to Peshawar. This was certainly not Uraq's brother, who was still a prisoner in Kabul.

It was probably at this time that Ishan Uraq was given the titles of *Hakim-i Mustaqel* and *Wazir-i Harbiya* by Muzaffar Khan, 'Abd al-Karim Bahman Toghali & Muhammad Salih Razaq, *interview*, Mazar-i Sharif, 4 April 1993; Saiyid Mohai al-Din Gauhari, *interview*, 5 April 1993.

[80] 'Pundit Munphool' (Faiz Bakhsh), *Khokand*, 1867, 8-9. One report in Kabul suggested that Bukhara was negotiating with the Russians for the partition of Kokand in return for Muzaffar Khan's help against the Khan, *ECD*, 10-13 March 1865, ESL:257, fol. 783.

Bukhara could not risk becoming embroiled in a war on its southern border. Perhaps, too, the Mangit ruler still hoped that Afghan and Uzbek might be able to present a united front against European encroachment that threatened to swallow up both nations.

Following the arrest of Afzal Khan and the flight of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, Sher 'Ali Khan had marched to Takhtapul and appointed his nephew, Sardar Fath Muhammad Khan b. Wazir Muhammad Akram Khan, as the new governor of Afghan Turkistan, whilst Aqcha was given to Faiz Muhammad Khan (Katib ii, 273-4). Muhammad Afzal Khan and other members of his family were sent to Kabul, the Amir himself returning to the Afghan capital two and a half months later (Khafi i, 83-4), in order to deal with a serious rebellion in Qandahar which led to the deaths of two of Sher 'Ali's sons, Muhammad Amin Khan and Muhammad 'Ali Khan—a tragedy which deeply affected the Amir and was to have a demoralising effect on both him and his followers (Katib ii, 276-7; Khafi i, 140-7).[81]

It was a tragedy of another kind, however, which occupied the ordinary people of Afghan Turkistan. On 14 April 1865 a terrible earthquake, followed by a series of severe aftershocks, virtually levelled Shibarghan, Andkhui and Sar-i Pul.[82] Some three thousand people in Shibarghan alone were reported to have perished, whilst another report claimed that only Mir Hakim Khan and three other leading men escaped with their lives from the rubble.[83] In the wake of the devastation, Turkman tribesmen from both sides of the Amu Darya, whose tents had been unaffected by the cataclasis, looted the defenceless towns mercilessly, carrying off cattle and killing many who had survived the natural disaster.[84] A force of between six and seven hundred Turkmans then rode to Aqcha, which had also been affected by the earthquake, but Faiz Muhammad, the sardar in charge of the fortress, marched out of the town and soundly defeated them.[85]

Nothing came of Ishan Uraq's mission to Takhtapul and he was recalled. Further Russian advances in the Ferghana valley, during the

[81] Faiz Bakhsh, *Badakhshan*, 1872, 61; *ECD*, 23 Aug.-1 Sept. 1864; *Ameer to Governor-General*, 25 Nov. 1864, P:IFPC/204/75, no. 175 of Dec., fols. 233-4.

[82] *CD*, 2-4, 23-25, 26-29 May 1865, P:IFPC/204/78, no. 244 of May, fol. 520; nos. 119, 120 of June, fols. 192-3.

[83] *CD*, 2-4 May 1864.

[84] *CD*, 23-24 May 1865; *CD*, 10-13 March 1865, P:IFPC/204/78, no. 29 of May, fols. 47-8. This latter report claims that Muhammad Khan, beglarbegi, had been captured and a certain Abdu'l-Majnun Khan and others were killed. No other report mentions anything about Muhammad Khan being captured by Turkmans.

[85] *CD*, 16-19 June 1865, P:IFPC/204/78, no. 40 of July, fols. 39-40.

spring of 1865, forced Muzaffar Khan's attention away from the situation in Balkh, thus giving Sher 'Ali Khan more time to consolidate his hold on Lesser Turkistan. The Afghan exiles, however, were not idle and, with the help of Ishan Uraq, they commenced to intrigue with dissident elements amongst the Afghan army in Balkh (Talboys Wheeler, v).[86]

In the middle of June, the Mir Ataliq of Qunduz died and was succeeded by his son, Sultan Murad. However, a faction opposed to the new ruler wrote to a nephew of the dead amir, Mirana Beg, who was a refugee in Bukhara, inviting him to come and lay claim to Qataghan.[87] At around the same time, Faiz Muhammad Khan, disillusioned with the corrupt governorship of Fath Muhammad Khan, wrote to 'Abd al-Rahman Khan inviting him to Aqcha (Khafi i, 160-1) and bribed the Sar-i Pul garrison into changing sides. Since these soldiers, along with the rest of the troops in Afghan Turkistan, had not received any pay for many months, the offer of two thousand rupees each secured their defection. The two battalions in Sar-i Pul mutinied, put all their officers to death and marched north to join Faiz Muhammad in Aqcha, seizing the fort of "Yurghulee" (Yangi 'Aruq?) *en route* (Katib ii, 279-80; Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 66-7).[88] News of the Sar-i Pul revolt and the defection of Faiz Muhammad Khan was the signal for further outbreaks of trouble amongst the Afghan garrisons in Afghan Turkistan. 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, informed of the uprisings, was convinced that the time was ripe to return to the region and, in late June, the sardar made a formal request to Muzaffar Khan for permission to leave. The Manghit ruler not only agreed, but appointed Ishan Uraq to the command of the Bukharan escort (Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 67).[89] However, since by this time Russian forces

[86] *Memorandum, Northern Boundaries of Affghanistan*, 1869.

[87] *CD*, 11-13 July 1865, P:IFPC/204/79, no. 24 of Aug., fols. 14-5.

[88] *Ibid. CD*, 21-24 July 1865; *Fyz Mahommed Khan to Sirdar Wullee Mahommed Khan*, 1865, *Appendix* II of *CD*, 25-27 July 1865; *CD*, 8-10 Aug. 1865, P:IFPC/204/79, nos. 93, 94 of Aug., fols. 110-2, no. 15 of Sept., fols. 10-11. However, *CD*, 28-31 July 1865, P:IFPC/204/79, no. 120 of Aug., fols. 141-2 says they were forced to return to Sar-i Pul, but this would seem unlikely given the swiftness with which Afghan Turkistan fell to 'Abd al-Rahman Khan.

[89] *CD*, 26-29 May 1865; *CD*, 22-25 Sept. 1865, ESL:257, fols. 849-50 & P:IFPC/204/79, no. 70 of Oct., fols. 124-6; *Letter from Ghulam Rubbani*, Bukhara, 13 Jan. 1866, ESL:259, fols. 189-9. The *Siraj al-Tawarikh* makes no mention of Ishan Uraq or Bukhara's part in 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's recapture of Afghan Turkistan. Indeed, Katib claims that Muzaffar Khan and his officials made the exiles' life extremely unpleasant and the sardar left Bukhara under a cloud. Sufficient evidence from more impartial intelligence reports in the Political and Secret Department files, such as those received from 'Ghulam Rabbani' (an alias of Faiz Bakhsh, the Indian secret agent who made several clandestine journeys into Central Asia), who was in Bukhara when 'Abd al-Rahman Khan returned to Afghan Turkistan, tell quite a different story and

were besieging Tashkent (23 May-23 June)[90] and a Bukharan force had been sent against the Khan of Kokand, Muzaffar Khan could only offer token support to 'Abd al-Rahman Khan.[91]

'Abd al-Rahman Khan reached the frontier town of Shirabad on 27 June accompanied by just thirty followers. Ishan Uraq, along with two other "confidential officers" of Muzaffar Khan, who had accompanied 'Abd al-Rahman Khan to the frontier, was recalled in order "to detach the King from the enterprise of the Sirdar."[92] Instead, the ishan was sent to Tashkent to inform the Russian General that Khwaja Najm al-Din had been sent to St. Petersburg to demand that the newly-conquered city be handed over to Bukhara.[93] Whilst in Shirabad, the Afghan prince sent letters to the garrison at Balkh and other towns of Afghan Turkistan, informing them of his arrival and instructing those who wished to come over to his side, to desert and try to reach Aqcha. A day or so later a number of men from the Balkh garrison and some two thousand Turkmans, came into his camp (Katib ii, 279). After a stay of some three days, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan crossed the Amu Darya secretly and by morning had reached the village of Chilak Sardaba (Katib ii, 280). Hearing that 'Abd al-Rahman Khan had arrived in Afghan Turkistan, Sardar Faiz Muhammad sent a thousand men to Chilak to escort the Afghan prince into Aqcha (Katib ii, 280; Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 67-72).[94] A short while later the sons of the Mir Ataliq arrived, having been induced to join the rebellion by a promise of a reduction of Qataghan's payments to central government if the revolt was successful.[95]

Fath Muhammad Khan, unprepared for the return of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan and the defection of Faiz Muhammad Khan, was slow to react. Finally, he set out at the head of some ten thousand troops

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their version must be preferred to the *Siraj al-Tawarikh*.

Faiz Bakhsh's reports are: Faiz Bakhsh, *Badakhshan, Balkh and Bokhara*, 1872, ESL:270, fols. 152-90; 'Ghulam Rabbani', *Journey from Cabul to Peshawar*, 1865-66, ESL:260, fols. 849-67; 'Pundit Munphool', *Khokand*, 1867, ESL:260, fols. 507ff.

[90] Russian forces took the city on 14 July.

[91] 'Pundit Munphool' (Faiz Bakhsh), *Khokand*, 1867, 14-5.

[92] *CD*, 22-25 Sept. 1865.

[93] *Ibid.* 'Pundit Munphool' (Faiz Bakhsh), *Khokand*, 1867, 14-5 only refers to the Bukharan ambassador to Tashkent by his titles of "Aishán Khán Khoja, a religious personage" but given Uraq's position as Bukharan ambassador and his close links with the Manghit family, it is very likely that he was the ishan who was sent.

[94] *Meshed Agent to Alison*, 10 Oct. 1865, SLEP:167, no. 105, n. pag.

[95] *Ibid. CD*, 1-4 Sept., 6-8 Oct. 1865, ESL:257, fols. 845-7, 879. The *Siraj al-Tawarikh* says the submission of Sultan Murad took place later in Dahan-i Ghuri and that 'Abd al-Rahman Khan reduced the annual revenues due to the state treasury from three lakh rupees to one (Katib ii, 281).

towards Minglik, but 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, reinforced by the Sar-i Pul and Aqcha garrisons, advanced swiftly on the fortress, sent letters to the garrison, many of whose commanders had served under Afzal Khan, and managed to persuade the majority of them to cross the lines (Katib ii, 280-1). Shibab al-Din Barakzai, the commandant of Minglik, fled in fear of his life to Fath Muhammad Khan, who had only reached Chelghazi, one stage outside Takhtapul. When the news of the fall of Minglik became known, the majority of Balkh and Kabul troops declared for 'Abd al-Rahman Khan and almost succeeded in taking Fath Muhammad prisoner. Somehow or other Fath Muhammad Khan and Shibab al-Din escaped and fled to Takhtapul, only to find that the garrison they had left behind had rebelled and had closed the gates against them. As Fath Muhammad fled eastwards, Mazar-i Sharif, Tashqurghan and Aibak all threw off their allegiance and refused admittance to the Governor. Finally, after great difficulty, he reached Dahan-i Ghuri, but the whole of Lesser Turkistan had fallen into the hands of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan with hardly a struggle. Following the fall of Tashqurghan a few weeks later and the approach of enemy forces against him, Fath Muhammad Khan abandoned any hope of regaining control of Balkh and returned to Kabul with a few faithful followers of Sher 'Ali Khan (Katib ii, 280-1: Khafi i, 165; Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 67-72).[96] Only Maimana, which was technically under the administrative umbrella of Herat, remained loyal to Sher 'Ali Khan and, as a reward for the wali's loyalty, the Amir conferred the title of *farzand* on Muhammad Husain Khan Ming.[97]

'Abd al-Rahman Khan, meanwhile, in fulfilment of his agreement with Bukhara, had the name of Muzaffar Khan inserted in the *khutba* of all mosques in Afghan Turkistan and ordered that coins should also be struck in the Manghit ruler's name,[98] a fact which later, when he was Amir in his own right, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan conveniently ignored in the official histories (cf. Katib ii, 281; Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 66-72). Faiz Muhammad Khan was made governor of Balkh

[96] *CD*, 1-4 Sept. 1865; *CD*, 11-14 Aug. 1865, ESL:257, fols. 837-8.

[97] Forsyth, *Epitome*, 3. I have dismissed as garbled rubbish the report of *Mahmood, son of the late Meshed Agent*, 23 Aug. 1866 SLEP:168, no. 107, n. pag. which claims that a son of Shah Nawaz Khan, the former ruler of Herat, had gone to Maimana and had become governor there, "without fighting and bloodshed."

[98] Faiz Bakhsh, *Badakhshan*, 61; *CD*, 11-14 Aug., 22-25 Sept. 1865. Muzaffar's name was first inserted in the *khutba* in the main mosque in Aqcha. Though the *Siraj al-Tawarikh* not unexpectedly makes no mention of this agreement, two different contemporary intelligence sources confirm that this is what happened.

and, with the country securely under his thumb, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan proceeded to demand in excess of two lakh tangas from the merchants in order to pay his troops' arrears of pay and to fill his empty treasury. Of this sum, forty thousand tangas (over ten thousand Kabuli rupees) was collected immediately—a "contribution" of twelve thousand tangas (four thousand Kabuli rupees) being exacted from the silk merchants alone.[99] Complaints about these extortionate demands reached Muzaffar Khan, who wrote to rebuke 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, urging him to leave the traders alone and promising to advance the necessary funds for the sardar's campaign.[100] Despite this exhortation, the exactions continued unabated. As preparations for an attack on Kabul were put in motion, thousands of camels were requisitioned from Afghan Turkistan and, once Bamiyan had fallen,[101] the unfortunate Hazaras, who had already suffered severely at the hands of Sher 'Ali Khan, were obliged to provide carriage and provisions for the other side as well.[102] Whilst in the Hazarajat, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan was joined by his uncle, Muhammad A'zam Khan, who had managed to make his way from India to Badakhshan (Katib ii, 278, 281-2).

It may well be that the discontent which briefly flared in the Chahar Wilayat in the early spring of 1866 was a direct reaction to 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's exactions. Hakim Khan of Shibarghan, whose capital had been the worst hit by the earthquake the previous year, and Beglarbegi Muhammad Khan of Sar-i Pul, who had returned from Bukhara with 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, both rebelled. Husain Khan of Maimana immediately dispatched a small force to Shibarghan and wrote to ask Ya'qub Khan in Herat for further assistance. Ya'qub Khan, however, had problems of his own, with discontent amongst his own soldiers, and dared not let them out of his sight, and Faiz Muhammad Khan was able to nip the uprising in the bud. A large force was sent against Hakim Khan and, after a bloody battle in which some two thousand perished, Shibarghan was forced to submit.[103]

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[99] *CD*, 15-17 Aug. 1865, P:IFPC/204/79, no. 17 of Sept., fols. 12-3; *CD*, 1-4, 22-25 Sept. 1864; *CD*, 7-9 Nov. 1865, ESL:257, fol. 915. At an exchange rate of 1 Kabuli rupee = 1 Bukharan tanga.

[100] *CD*, 7-9 Nov. 1865.

[101] *CD*, 1-4 Sept 1865. *CD*, 8-11 Sept., 16 Oct. 1865, ESL:257, fols. 859, 889.

[102] *CD*, 21-23 Nov. 1865, ESL:257, fol. 1007. The *Siraj al-Tawarikh* claims that the Hazaras provided these supplies voluntarily.

[103] *LCM*, 27 April 1866, P:IFPC/437/67, no. 138 of April, fols. 167-8; *Son of Late Meshed Agent to Alison*, 8 Oct. 1866, SLEP:168, no. 112, n. pag.

'Abd al-Rahman Khan's rapid advance had been facilitated by the paralysis which had afflicted Sher 'Ali's administration following the death of the heir apparent. When he had entered Qandahar, following the battle in which his sons had been killed, the Amir had abdicated the throne (Katib ii, 277; Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 71-2)[104] and for the next seven months spent his time in religious devotions and memorising sections of the Qur'an. During this time he lived like a dervish, abstaining from meat and sleeping on the floor (Katib ii, 277-8). As his depression deepened, so the balance of his mind was more and more disturbed (Khafi i, 147-53) until court officials reported that the Amir was "unable to bring his thoughts to bear on the affairs of state."[105] One night, sometime towards the end of 1865, Sher 'Ali Khan jumped from the window of his apartment into a cistern of water and began to search for his dead son in the pool. The palace guards finally managed to rescue the Amir, who was carried, unconscious, to his apartment in his sodden clothes.[106]

In October a Bukharan ambassador arrived in Qandahar to discuss the continued Russian encroachment on Uzbek territory and to request the release of Ishan Sudur and the family of Uraq. Even though the Amir must have been aware that Bukhara tacitly supported 'Abd al-Rahman Khan and that Muzaffar Khan had been ceded the rights of *khutba* and coinage in Balkh, Sher 'Ali, who had recovered somewhat from his attack of madness, agreed to release the hostages. Since the ishans had close ties with the shrine of 'Ali at Mazar-i Sharif, the release of Ishan Sudur and other members of his clan must be seen as an act of expiation on the Amir's part, for the breach of his oath to Afzal Khan, rather than merely a gesture of reconciliation towards the amirs of Lesser Turkistan. Indeed, the following year Sher 'Ali Khan appointed Ishan Uraq and other members of this shaikhly clan to act as the mainstay of the defence of Minglik and Aqcha.[107]

The Amir's behaviour at such a crucial time in his reign hardly reassured his supporters that he was competent to govern Afghanistan and, not surprisingly, a number of disturbances broke out in the south whilst senior members of his administration began to look across the

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[104] *CD*, 26-28 Sept. 1865, ESL:257, fol. 853.

[105] *CD*, 1-4 Sept. 1865; *Appendix*, *CD*, 8-11 Sept. 1865, ESL:257, fol. 859.

[106] *CD*, 2-4 Jan. 1866, ESL:259, fol. 76.

[107] *CD*, 20-23 Oct. 1865, P:IFPC/204/79, no. 135 of Nov., fols. 237-8; *CD*, 24-26 Oct. 1865, ESL:257, fol. 901; *CD*, 1-4 Dec, 29 Dec. 1865-1 Jan. 1866, ESL:259, fols. 59-60, 71; *Bokhara News-letter from Akoonzada Abdool Rahim*, n.d. 1866, *Appendix*, *CD*, 11-13 Sept. 1866, P:IFPC/437/69, no. 45 of Oct., fols. 56-7.

Amu Darya for deliverance. By the time the Amir had rallied himself sufficiently to act against 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, it was already too late. It was the spring of 1866 before Sher 'Ali Khan sent an army against 'Abd al-Rahman Khan but, in a battle in the Koh Daman, his forces were swept aside and he was obliged to order the evacuation of Kabul.[108] On May 11 1866, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's forces entered the Afghan capital, released Afzal Khan from prison and placed him on the throne (Katib ii, 284-5, 289-90).

Just when it seemed as if Afzal Khan's cause had triumphed, the new ruler of Kabul decided to recall Faiz Muhammad Khan to Kabul and appoint Muhammad Sarwar Khan, son of Muhammad A'zam Khan, as governor of Afghan Turkistan (Katib ii, 291). Faiz Muhammad Khan, though, refused to surrender his post and defected to Sher 'Ali and Afghan garrisons in the province swiftly followed suit. The local amirs were won over by promises that their ancient rights would be restored and swore at the shrine of Mazari Sharif to remit two year's revenue in return for their assistance (MacGregor, 163).[109]

In response, Afzal Khan sent an army of eight thousand men to Bamiyan to enforce his will, but in the autumn, at a battle near Duab in the Saighan district, they were soundly defeated (Katib ii, 291, 293). However, Faiz Muhammad had more difficulty dealing with Mir Jahandad Shah of Badakhshan, who had remained loyal to Afzal Khan, and was forced to return to Afghan Turkistan in order to combat the threat from the Pamirs (Katib ii, 291, 293). His retreat allowed Muhammad Sarwar Khan to reoccupy the fortresses which had so recently been abandoned.[110]

Jahandad Shah had been asked by Afzal Khan to make as much trouble for Faiz Muhammad Khan as possible, in the hope that this would tie down the Balkh army. Hence, when the the Mir of Badakhshan heard that Faiz Muhammad had set out for Bamiyan, he imprisoned the sardar's envoy, attacked and took Taliqan, capturing Sultan Mir Murad Beg of Qunduz for good measure, and divided Qataghan between Mir Kurram Beg and Muhammad Karim Beg, the cousins and arch rivals, of Murad Beg.[111] Faiz Muhammad ordered his

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[108] Forsyth, *Epitome*, 3; *CD*, 12-22 April 1867, P:IFPF/437/71, no. 69 of May, fols. 52-4 & ESL:260, fols. 435-6.

[109] Faiz Bakhsh, *Badakhshan*, 1872, 62; *CD*, 11-16 Aug. 1865; *LCM*, 28 May 1866, ESL:259, fols. 411-2; *CD*, 12-22 April 1867.

[110] *LCM*, 20-21, 27 Nov. 1866; *CD*, 10 Jan., 27, 28 April, 4 May 1867, ESL:260, fols. 29, 39, 231, 443, 453.

[111] Faiz Bakhsh, *Badakhshan*, 62-3; *LCM*, 23 March 1866, ESL:259, fol. 255. *CD*, 30 Nov.

brother-in-law, Muhammad Hasan Khan, to regain control of Taliqan, but Jahandad Khan, fortified by his recent victory, marched out against the sardar with some twelve thousand men and four guns. In a battle at Gul Augan, the ruler of Badakhshan was completely defeated and retreated in disarray to Faizabad. All support for his cause evaporated and he fled across the mountains to seek asylum with 'Aman al-Mulk, the Mir of Chitral, before eventually making his way to Kabul, where he was warmly received by Afzal Khan. Faiz Muhammad's force, meanwhile, occupied Taliqan and the various districts of Badakhshan were apportioned amongst the governor's followers (Katib ii, 293). Sultan Murad Beg was found alive, released from his captivity and reinstated in Qunduz.[112]

In the south of the country, however, Sher 'Ali Khan was in serious trouble. Following a series of defeats, he abandoned Qandahar which was promptly taken over by A'zam Khan and 'Abd al-Rahman Khan.[113] At this low point in his fortunes, messangers from Faiz Muhammad Khan arrived at the Amir's court inviting him to come to Balkh and join forces. Sher 'Ali Khan left Herat and, travelling via Maimana, arrived at Mazar-i Sharif in the spring of 1867 (Katib ii, 297).[114] By the time that the Amir reached Balkh, Badakhshan had been subdued and all of Lesser Turkistan had declared its support for his cause. To further consolidate his authority and to secure the support of all sections of the population, the Amir summoned all the influential leaders of the province to a *durbar* at Mazar-i Sharif. On 9 May 1867, in a second ceremony at the shrine of 'Ali, Sher 'Ali sought to atone for his earlier breach of faith by swearing on the Qur'an to uphold the ancient rights of the Turkistan amirs to self-government and vowed to remit their revenues for two years, if he succeeded in regaining control of Kabul. Since Afghan Turkistan was then in the grips of a severe famine, the consequence of persistent demands for supplies which were being made by both factions in the civil war, this pledge must have come as a considerable relief to the

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1866; *CMD*, 18 Dec. 1866; *CD*, 20-24, 28 Dec. 1866, 17-20 Jan. 1867, ESL:260, fols. 39-40, 76, 217, 219, 279-80.

[112] Faiz Bakhsh, *Badakhshan*, 63-4; *CD*, 23-26 April, 5-7 May 1867, ESL:260, fols. 439, 467.

[113] Forsyth, *Epitome*, 3; Faiz Bakhsh, *Badakhshan*, 61-2; *Afzal Khan to Viceroy*, 3 Feb. 1867, ESL:260, fol. 295. The envoys are named as Ishan Khan of Dehdadi and "Khushka Uzbek.." The former may well have been a relative of Ishan Uraq whose family still own lands in the Dehdadi region, *CD*, 12-21 March 1867, ESL:260, fols. 383-4.

[114] *CD*, 22-26 March 1867, P:IFPC/437/70, no. 42 of April, fols. 175-6. He was accompanied by sardars Fath Muhammad Khan, Muhammad Ibrahim Khan, Yahya Khan, Sikandar Khan and 4,000 Herat irregular cavalry.

population and rulers of the province alike.[115] As a further sign of good faith, Sher 'Ali elevated Mir Hakim Khan of Shibarghan to the governorship of the important military cantonment of Takhtapul[116] and made Sultan Murad Beg ruler of Badakhshan as well as Qunduz.[117]

Not everything, however, went well between Sher 'Ali and his allies in Balkh. In August intelligence reports reaching India spoke of disagreements between the Amir and Faiz Muhammad Khan, the latter being upset about Sher 'Ali's execution of prominent supporters of Afzal Khan who may well have been relatives of the sardar.[118] Faiz Muhammad also asked the Amir to exempt him from any offensive action against Kabul, since he and 'Abd al-Rahman Khan had sworn not to attack each other.[119] There were rumours, too, that the special war levy which Sher 'Ali had imposed on the province was causing widespread discontent. Even Husain Khan Ming's loyalty was stretched to the limits by these demands. He refused to hand over an ambassador of Afzal Khan's, who had fled to Maimana after being detained by Faiz Muhammad Khan on his return from Bukhara, nor would he collect the one tila war tax which every household in Afghan Turkistan had been required to pay.[120]

On 18 May, Sher 'Ali Khan, accompanied by other leaders of Lesser Turkistan, arrived in Tashqurghan to organise his forces for the march on Kabul. To the south, Afzal Khan, dying from the cholera which was sweeping through Kabul, recalled his son, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, from Qandahar to deal with the threat from Balkh.[121] But disagreements between 'Abd al-Rahman Khan and A'zam Khan and the sickness of Afzal Khan, delayed any move against Sher 'Ali

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[115] *CD*, 21-23 May 1867; *Report of the Cabul Moonshee*, 26 May 1867, ESL:260, fols. 483, 487. Later, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, seeking to discredit Sher 'Ali Khan, claimed that the Amir had done "great mischief" and accused Muhammad Khan Beglarbegi in particular of committing "excesses" towards women and children. However, it is clear from what follows in his account, that 'Abd al-Rahman Khan was angered by the amount of support his rival had received from the local rulers which included gifts of 9,000 rupees, 1,000 chests of grain (500 bullock loads), 50 horses, 1,000 sheep and 1,000 cavalry from Sultan Murad Beg of Qunduz, *Letter from Tashkurghan*, 7 Feb. 1868, *Appendix*, *CD*, 21 Feb.-2 March 1868, P:IFPC/438/1, no. 19 of April, fols. 15-17 & ESL:261, fols. 218-223. No other reports claimed that such violence was wrought by Sher 'Ali and his followers.

[116] *CD*, 12-22 April, 21-23 May 1867; *Report by the Cabul Moonshee*, 26 May 1867; *Affghanistan Affairs*, 25 June 1867, ESL:260, fols. 599-600.

[117] *CD*, 11-16 June 1867, ESL:260, fols. 563-4.

[118] *Intelligence from Afghanistan*, n.d. (Aug.?), 1867, ESL:260, fol. 665.

[119] *CD*, 23 Aug.-2 Sept. 1867, ESL:260, fol. 687.

[120] *CD*, 13-19 Aug. 1867; *Intelligence from Afghanistan*, (Aug.?), 1867.

[121] Faiz Bakhsh, *Badakhshan*, 63; *Cabul Moonshee*, 26 May 1867.

Khan. It was only when news reached Kabul that Faiz Muhammad Khan was advancing on the Panjsher valley, that Afzal Khan sent an army northwards (Katib ii, 294). Faiz Muhammad Khan's campaign, though, had also run into problems. Bukharan-sponsored raids around Aqcha, led by Ishan Uraq, had forced him to send some of his troops back to Balkh and by the time these incursions had been suppressed, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan had taken charge of his father's army in the Koh Daman.[122] Faiz Muhammad was no match for arguably the most skilful Afghan military commander of his generation, and on 19 September 1867 at Qal'a Allahdad, near Khinjan, Sher 'Ali Khan's army was soundly defeated; Faiz Muhammad himself was disembowelled by a ricocheting cannon ball during the course of the battle (Katib ii, 294-5: Khafi i, 240-4; McGregor, 164).[123]

The defeat at Khinjan ought to have been the decisive encounter of the civil war and had not circumstances beyond the control of the protagonists intervened, Sher 'Ali Khan could well have spent the rest of his life as a refugee in Bukhara or India. In the moment of victory, however, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan heard that his father was at death's door and he returned in great haste to Kabul. On 7 October Afzal Khan passed away and was succeeded by his brother, A'zam Khan (Katib ii, 295-6: *Gazetteer* (1907) ii, xxiv). It was not long before A'zam Khan and his nephew were once more at loggerheads; the former accusing the latter of plotting his overthrow. To remove any possible threat to his authority, A'zam Khan ordered 'Abd al-Rahman Khan to march against Balkh to finish the task he had begun before his father's death (Hall, 14; Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 89-90).

The death of Afzal Khan gave Sher 'Ali Khan a breathing space in which to regroup after the defeat and death of Faiz Muhammad. In October the Amir summoned the native rulers of Afghan Turkistan and, in what Katib cynically claims was "scratching their backs with a skilful finger" (Katib ii, 296),[124] did not appoint an Afghan as governor of the region, dividing it, instead, amongst the amirs. Ishan Sudur was made Hakim of Tashqurghan, Aibak and the surrounding country, whilst his son, presumably Qara Sultan, referred to by Khafi

[122] *CD,* 2-8 July 1867, ESL:260, fol. 591.

[123] Faiz Bakhsh, *Badakhshan,* 63; "Abdool Rahman Khan to Afzal Khan," *Appendix* A, *CD,* 20-23 Sept. 1867, 19 Sept. 1867, ESL:260, fols. 798-9. 'Abd al-Rahman Khan treated the body of his dead relative honourably, arranging for the corpse to be brought to Kabul for burial by Faiz Muhammad's mother. It was interred in the shrine complex of Saiyid Mahdi, *CD,* 13-19 Sept. 1867, P:IFPC/437/72, no. 32 of Oct., fols. 49-50; Katib, *loc. cit.*

[124] پشت اشانرا با نگشت تدبیر بخارید

by the title, Mir Ataliq, was placed in control of Aqcha (Khafi ii, 5).[125] Sultan Murad Beg Khan was confirmed as the ruler of Qataghan, Hakim Khan as Hakim of Shibarghan whilst Beglarbegi Muhammad Khan, the astute and warlike amir of Sar-i Pul, was elevated to the rank of Na'ib of Turkistan with overall command of the army. The Amir surrendered his personal seal into the safe keeping of Rustam Khan, the *mutawalli* of Mazar-i Sharif (Khafi ii, 4-5)[126] and it was probably at this time that Rustam Khan, in consultation with other prominent legalists, issued the *fatwa* which proclaimed 'Abd al-Rahman Khan to be a *kafir*, though the grounds for this judgment of excommunication are not given by any source.[127]

Sher 'Ali, having settled affairs in Afghan Turkistan to his satisfaction, sent his family and heavy baggage to Herat as a precursor of a bold, but risky outflanking strategy. Beglarbegi Muhammad Khan and his allies were instructed to hold out in Turkistan as long as possible, in the hope they would draw the best of A'zam Khan's troops away from Kabul and make it easier for Sher 'Ali Khan to attack Qandahar and march on Kabul from the west.[128] This plan required much sacrifice from the Turkistanian forces, for it was they who would bear the full brunt of A'zam Khan's wrath. It was a strategy which very nearly failed.

At the end of 1867, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, despite blizzards and severe frost, marched out of Bamiyan, to attack Sher 'Ali's forward positions at Aibak (Katib ii, 296-7).[129] At about the same time, the Amir left Balkh for Herat, which he reached in the middle of January (MacGregor, 118), passing through Maimana, where he received fresh assurances of help from Husain Khan Ming (Katib ii, 296).[130] Despite the appalling conditions, 'Abd al-Rahman made good progress and Aibak quickly fell. Mir Sultan Murad Beg, fearing the

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[125] *CD*, 12-28 Nov. 1867, ESL:260, fol. 913 says Aqcha was given to the Wali of Maimana; *CD*, 29 Nov.-23 Dec. 1867, ESL:261, fol. 101, that Muhammad Khan Saripuli was made *hakim*. Khafi ii, 5 says that Mir Hukumat Khan, son of Daulat Khan was governor of Andkhui at this time. Nothing is said about Ghazanfar Khan, though other contemporary sources suggest he was still alive.

[126] *Ibid.* See also *CD*, 7 June 1872, ESL:271, fols. 77-8; *CD*, 9-12 May, 17-19 June 1873, ESL:273, part 1, fol. 54 part 4, fol. 617. The Hakim of Mazar-i Sharif and Hazhda Nahr was Mir Aslam Khan, whom Khafi declares was "the author of a hundred thousand deceptions and rebellions" (Khafi ii, 5).

[127] *Letter from Kabul Wakil in Turkistan*, 8 Jan 1889, SLEI:56, fols. 531-2.

[128] *CD*, 11-20 Feb. 1868, ESL:261, fol. 214.

[129] *CD*, 24 Dec. 1867-14 Jan. 1868, P:IFPC/438/1, no. 115 of Feb., fols. 105-6. According to Katib, *loc. cit.*, some 300 men had suffered from frostbite on this march.

[130] Wyllie, *Summary* iii, 38; *CD*, 20-30 Jan. 1868, ESL:261, fol. 173.

sardar's anger, came into the Afghan camp and tendered his submission,[131] whilst Ishan Sudur retreated to Minglik, allowing 'Abd al-Rahman Khan an easy passage to Tashqurghan, where he found that the Uzbeks had been terrorising the Afghan colonists of the region (Katib ii, 297; Khafi ii, 9-10). Within a short space of time, the sardar occupied Mazar-i Sharif and Takhtapul, encountering hardly any opposition.[132] The main Turkistani army, estimated at thirty thousand strong[133] but beset by internal divisions (Khafi ii, 8), withdrew west of Balkh, where they planned to make their stand, though it is possible that this apparent retreat was part of a deliberate strategy by the Uzbeks designed to draw 'Abd al-Rahman Khan deeper into Turkistan and to buy more time for Sher 'Ali Khan and Ya'qub Khan to seize control of Qandahar.[134] If this was so, the plan worked, though the price they had to pay was very high.

*The Fall of Bukhara, 1868*

'Abd al-Rahman Khan reached Takhtapul in the early weeks of 1868, apparently anticipating that he would receive some help from Muzaffar Khan of Bukhara. If this was the case, then the sardar was disappointed, for relations between the two former allies were no longer as amicable as they had been in 1866. Muzaffar Khan, as we have seen, had actively supported the cause of Sardar Afzal Khan, assistance which 'Abd al-Rahman Khan had acknowledged by briefly granting Bukhara rights of coinage and *khutba* in Balkh. It would appear that this concession was revoked once 'Abd al-Rahman Khan had wrested the Afghan capital from Sher 'Ali and elevated Afzal Khan to the throne.

Muzaffar Khan, however, was far too worried about the Russian threat to risk a war with Afzal Khan over Balkh, for the failure of Ishan Uraq's mission to Tashkent and Khwaja Najm al-Din's at St. Petersburg, brought Bukhara and Russia to the brink of war. In late September 1865 Muzaffar Khan publicly proclaimed a *jihad* against the Tsar, all trade with Russia was stopped and Khudayar Khan, the Bukharan quisling in Kokand, was ordered to follow his overlord's example. Muzaffar's action, however, merely convinced Russia that

[131] *CD*, 20-30 Jan. 1868.

[132] *Telegram, Commissioner, Peshawar to Foreign Secr.*, 20 Jan. 1868; *CD*, 15-20 Jan. 1868, P:IFPC/438/1, nos. 114, 324 of Feb., fols. 104, 333-4.

[133] *CD*, 21 Feb.-2 March 1868.

[134] See *Letter from Tashkurghan*, 7 Feb. 1868.

Bukhara and Kokand had joined together in an anti-Russian alliance and an army was sent against Khudayar Khan. The Kokand ruler's forces were quickly overwhelmed and his principality annexed to the Tsar's ever-widening dominions in Central Asia.

Following the fall of Kokand, Russia demanded that Bukhara cede trading posts along the Amu Darya, which merely exacerbated the tension between the two states. In early December 1865, a Russian reconnaissance party was attacked by *mujahidin*, holy warriors, at the border town of Jizakh. In February 1866, Muzaffar Khan imprisoned a Russian envoy, an action which was tantamount to declaring war on the Tsar. Muzaffar Khan moved to the frontier fortress of Jizakh where he gathered his forces for an attack on Russian-held Tashkent. Messengers were sent across the Amu Darya to proclaim the Holy War and a considerable number of volunteers from Aqcha, Shibarghan and other districts of the Chahar Wilayat crossed the river to enlist under the banner of Islam, thus depleting, in the process, the forces available to oppose 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's advance.[135]

The Bukharan campaign against Tashkent was a disaster. Muzaffar Khan was not only comprehensively defeated but he lost most of his equipment and guns.[136] The Russian victory at Maida Yulghun on 23 March 1866 was followed up by the seizure of a number of forts and towns in the Khojand district. On 7 June Khojand itself fell, a general massacre of men, women and children followed and the whole region was annexed to the Russian empire.[137] In September, Uratepa suffered the same fate, followed a month later by the capture of the strategic frontier fortress of Jizakh,[138] which opened the road to Samarkand.[139]

In a final, desperate bid to secure international assistance, Muzaffar Khan sent his chief *mufti*, Khwaja Muhammad Parsa, to India, bearing letters to Queen Victoria and the Sultan of Turkey.[140] Following interviews with the Lieutenant-Governor at Lahore and a personal audience with the Viceroy in Calcutta, however, the Bukharan ambassador realised that he had been sent on a pointless errand. Neither Britain nor Turkey had any interest in perpetuating Uzbek power or

[135] *LCM*, 30 March 1866, ESL:259, fols. 298-9; 'Pundit Munphool' (Faiz Bakhsh), *Khokand*, 21.

[136] 'Pundit Munphool' (Faiz Bakhsh), *Khokand*, 21-3.

[137] *Ibid.*, 23-6.

[138] *Ibid.*, 27-35; *LCM*, 20-21, 27 Nov. 1866.

[139] *CMD*, 20 Dec. 1866, ESL:260, fols. 76-7; *CD*, 17-26 Jan. 1867.

[140] *Shah of Bukhara to H. M. Queen of England and India*, n.d. 1866; *Willie to Secr. of State, Punjab*, 24 Jan. 1867, ESL:260, fols. 91, 103.

the independence of Bukhara. Britain, the ambassador was informed, was "not acquainted with the causes of hostility" between Bukhara and Russia. The Viceroy was unable to advise the Khan on what policy to pursue, nor would Britain contemplate sending any military or financial assistance,[141] despite the fact that Bukhara was certain to be the next Central Asian Khanate to come under Russian domination.

There were several reasons for Britain's indifference and her willingness to abandon Bukhara to its fate. Muzaffar Khan had made no secret of his support for the Afghan Pretender, Muhammad Afzal Khan, to whom Britain had, to date, refused to extend even *de facto* recognition as Amir of Kabul. One of the reasons for this was the belief that 'Abd al-Rahman Khan had allegedly remarked that he had no interest in renewing the Anglo-Afghan Treaty.[142] Bukhara, too, had consistently opposed Britain's alliance with Dost Muhammad Khan; indeed the Mangit ruler had actually declared war on Afghanistan over the issue. Britain, therefore, was not prepared to bail out a state which had set out to undermine her foreign policy in Central Asia. In a secret memorandum to Lord Northcote, the Viceroy also explained that the Russian conquest of Bukhara was actually "advantageous to both empires".[143] Russia had recently reassured Britain that it had no plans to expand its frontiers "among the bigoted and uncivilised population south of the Oxus"[144] and the Viceroy was quite happy to let Russia swallow up the Central Asian Khanates in Transoxiana. After all, it was easier to deal with a rival European power whose system of government one understood, than with Oriental rulers whose culture and law were deemed virtually incomprehensible to the western mind.

The other factor which influenced Britain's decision was the existence, even at that distance in time, of a deep prejudice against the Uzbek kingdom, which originated from the executions of Conolly and Stoddard. The matter of the unavenged deaths of these two British officers, more than twenty years earlier, was raised by the Viceroy, and Khwaja Muhammad Parsa could well be forgiven for expressing surprise at the opening of such an old wound. The executions of these officers, the shaikh pointed out, had taken place during the reign of

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[141] *Willie to Secr. State, Punjab*, 24 Jan. 1867; *Governor-General to Ameer of Bukhara*, 24 Jan. 1867, ESL:260, fol. 104.

[142] *LCM*, 7 March 1866, ESL:259, fol. 229; Faiz Bakhsh, *Badakhshan*, 67-8.

[143] *Lawrence to Afzal Khan*, 5 Feb. 1867; *Viceroy and Council to Northcote*, 3 Sept. 1867, ESL:260, fols. 297, 611-4.

[144] Id.

Muzaffar's father, Nasrullah Khan, and though he deplored the way in which the envoys had been treated, he was unable to comment at any length about the matter since both he, and his master, had been but youths at the time of the executions.[145]

Muzaffar Khan's desperate appeal fell on deaf ears and the Bukharan ambassador left India in February 1867, having abandoned any attempt to appeal in person to the Sultan of Turkey after an envoy from Kokand, who was in Peshawar on similar business, informed him that Turkey was not interested in becoming embroiled in a war with Russia.[146] As he returned through Afghanistan, Khwaja Muhammad Parsa wrote secretly to Afzal Khan and A'zam Khan, suggesting that the Afghans and Uzbeks should sink their differences and combine in an anti-Russian alliance in defence of their independence.[147] Afzal Khan, however, was in no position to help Bukhara. Afghan Turkistan had recently been lost to him and Afghanistan was effectively partitioned into two mutually-antagonistic countries. Britain, finally facing up to the realities of the situation, had belatedly recognised Afzal Khan as *de facto* Amir of Kabul and Qandahar and had begun to try and distance herself somewhat from Sher 'Ali, though still accepting his Amirship over Herat and Balkh.[148] The official recognition of Afzal Khan went some way towards assuaging Afzal and 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's resentment towards Britain, and the ruler of Kabul had no wish to antagonise the British by an alliance with Bukhara. The loss of Balkh was also a further hindrance to the continuation of the relationship, since a hostile power now lay between Kabul and Transoxiana.[149]

In April 1867, a Bukharan ambassador crossed the Amu Darya in the company of one of Afzal Khan's men and sought permission to proceed to Kabul through Afghan Turkistan. Faiz Muhammad, afraid that Afzal Khan's envoys were spies, had them imprisoned and informed the Bukharan ambassador that Muzaffar Khan would not be allowed to conduct any correspondence with Kabul whilst hostilities lasted.[150] Faiz Muhammad's action was not well received and Ishan

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[145] *Willie to Secr. State, Punjab*, 24 Jan. 1867.

[146] *Ibid.*

[147] *CD*, 18-21 Feb. 1867, ESL:260, fol. 353.

[148] *Lawrence to Afzal Khan*, 5 Feb. 1867; *Viceroy and Council to Northcote*, 3 Sept. 1867.

[149] Faiz Bakhsh, *Badakhshan*, 63.

[150] *CD*, 18-21 Feb. 1867. *CD*, 22-26 March 1867 says Faiz Muhammad sent his own ambassadors to Bukhara to offer his submission, but the raids by Ishan Uraq clearly indicate that this was not the case. The Afghan envoy eventually managed to escape and reached Kabul. However, *CD*, 13-19 Aug. 1867 says the Bukharan ambassador, Akhunzada 'Abd al-Rahim Khan,

Uraq, as we have seen, was allowed to cross the Amu Darya and raid outlying areas of the Chahar Wilayat.[151]

By the summer of 1867 Muzaffar Khan was fighting for political survival. In November, following the fall of Jizakh, Ishan Safdar Khwaja b. Bakr Khwaja, a Naqshbandi shaikh from Juibar, helped by dissident officials and the amir of Shahr-i Sabz, set himself up as pretender to the Bukharan throne. Though Muzaffar Khan succeeded in ousting him from some outlying settlements, the ishan continued to defy the Khan from the safety of Shahr-i Sabz, for the Russian army had, by this time, arrived at the gates of Samarkand.[152] The city was invested in early May and fell later in the same month.[153] Following the fall of this ancient city, numbers of refugees fled across the Amu Darya to the Balkh-Aqcha area.[154] In June, the Bukharan army was again defeated at Zerabulaq (Bennigsen & Lemercier-Quelquejay, 10). Muzaffar Khan, with the Russians marching on his capital, capitulated and was forced to turn his country into a dependency of the Russian empire, with its foreign policy determined from St. Petersburg. The subjugation of Bukhara, as well as being an important landmark in the history of Central Asia, was to have an important bearing on the future of Afghanistan and Lesser Turkistan.

### *'Abd al-Rahman Khan and the Chahar Wilayat, 1868*

At the end of 1867, or in the early days of 1868, Ishan Uraq returned from Bukhara and joined his brother in Aqcha. The ishan's arrival signified an important shift in Bukharan policy towards the Afghan civil war, for up to this point Muzaffar Khan had thrown in his lot with Afzal Khan and 'Abd al-Rahman Khan. However, Sher 'Ali Khan's appointment of Ishan Sudur to Tashqurghan, the reaffirmation of his oath to allow the amirs of Afghan Turkistan to regain a measure of autonomy and the death of Afzal Khan, were doubtless the most important factors which influenced this change of mind.

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also reached Kabul after fleeing from Faiz Muhammad via Maimana, and that Husain Khan had refused to hand the ambassadors over to Sher 'Ali Khan, an action which produced friction between the two leaders.

[151] Faiz Bakhsh, *Badakhshan*, 63; *CD*, 17 June-1 July, 9-12 July 1867, ESL:260, fols. 569, 595.

[152] 'Pundit Munphool' (Faiz Bakhsh), *Khokand*, 35; *LCM*, 20-21 Nov. 1866.

[153] *Alison to Stanley*, 15 Aug. 1868, SLEP:170, no. 109; *CD*, 26 May-3 June 1868, P:IFPC/438/1, no. 188 of July, fols. 165-6.

[154] *CD*, 9-18 June 1868 & *Appendices*, A, B, ESL:261, fols. 505-6.

Once Ishan Uraq reached Aqcha he took charge of the town's defences. Ishan Sudur, Sudur's son, Mir Ataliq Qara Sultan, and his own son, Saiyid Ahmad Jan,[155] were sent to Minglik,[156] where two and a half thousand of the bravest fighting men of Lesser Turkistan had "voluntarily offered their lives to protect the fort" (Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 92).

In early January 'Abd al-Rahman Khan marched out of Takhtapul, overran the advanced posts of the Uzbeks and surrounded Minglik. It would seem that 'Abd al-Rahman Khan swore on the Qur'an to grant quarter if the defenders surrendered, but his offer was rejected. Later, the sardar claimed that the reason for the refusal to negotiation was because the fortress was considered impregnable. Certainly it was a formidable stronghold. Situated on a hill, its location made mining very difficult and the deep moat, which guarded the approaches to the high, thick walls, was believed to be "almost impossible to cross" (Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 91-2; cf. Katib ii, 297; Khafi ii, 11).[157] The defenders, however, had not taken account of the resourcefulness of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan and the superiority of the Afghan guns, some of which were of British manufacture. Even so, after two months of more or less constant bombardment by Afghan artillery and the deaths of many of Minglik's defenders, the fort had still not fallen. 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, beset by the spread of disease in his own army (Khafi ii, 11), ordered an all-out assault. At sunrise on, or about, 3 February 1868, the Afghan artillery opened up on the walls in a sustained bombardment which lasted for four hours. At the end of the barrage, the main gate and two towers had been more or less completely destroyed and 'Abd al-Rahman Khan sent his troops into the breaches. Thousands of trusses of straw were thrown into the moat to fill it up and give an easier passage for the assault, but the Uzbeks responded by throwing burning canes from the walls and setting fire to the straw. Despite a hail of bullets and the smoke and flames, the Afghans gained the upper hand and rushed through the breaches. Fierce hand-to-hand fighting followed, in which some seven hundred Afghans, and a thousand Uzbeks, died.[158] By nine o'clock, Minglik

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[155] As provided by Saiyid Mohai al-Din Gauhari, *interview*, April 1993.

[156] Khafi ii, 11 calls the fortress "Qal'a-yi Hazhda Nahr;" Katib ii, 297 has 'Mamlik', 'Mamalik' or 'Mimlik' ( ممـلـک ).

[157] Faiz Bakhsh, *Badakhshan*, 63-4; *CD*, 21 Feb.-2 March 1868.

[158] *CD*, 21 Feb.-2 March 1868. C. E. Yate 1888, 255 puts the total number of casualties suffered by 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's forces at "something like" 1,500. According to Yate, twice,

had fallen and a general sack and pillage commenced (Katib ii, 297).[159]

Amongst the four hundred prisoners that fell into the sardar's hands were Ishan Sudur, his son, Qara Sultan and Saiyid Ahmad Jan b. Ishan Uraq. 'Abd al-Rahman Khan ordered Ishan Sudur and Saiyid Ahmad Jan to be buried alive, whilst Qara Sultan was set free and sent to Aqcha where his account of the events at Minglik struck fear into everyone's heart (Katib ii, 297; Khafi ii, 11-12; Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 92-3; Soboleff, 214-5; C. E. Yate 1888, 255).[160]

Following 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's punishment of the Minglik garrison, on 14 February Aqcha surrendered without a fight (Katib ii, 298),[161] Ishan Uraq, Rustam Khan of Mazar, Ghazanfar Khan of Andkhui and other leaders of Lesser Turkistan having fled to Maimana (Katib ii, 298: Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 95).[162] The son of Qara Sultan was not so fortunate, being captured as he tried to make his way westwards, and was condemned to the gallows (Khafi ii, 13). When A'zam Khan heard that Aqcha had fallen, he ordered a twenty-one gun salute in celebration of the victory.[163] Mir Hakim Khan of Shibarghan, fearing that his country would be the next to be looted and pillaged, came to Aqcha where he submitted to 'Abd al-Rahman Khan and was confirmed in his governorship (Katib ii, 298; Khafi ii, 13). Only ten days after the fall of Aqcha, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan arrived in Shibarghan,[164] where Hakim Khan, thankful that he had not suffered the fate of Ishan Sudur, offered his daughter in marriage to the Afghan prince who, after initially refusing, subsequently agreed to the arrangement (Katib ii, 298; Khafi ii, 13; Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 95).

'Abd al-Rahman Khan's next target was Muhammad Khan of Sar-i Pul. Following the fall of Aqcha, the beglarbegi had sent his son with suitable presents, but 'Abd al-Rahman Khan had rejected them, since the amir of Sar-i Pul had not come to pay homage in person. Instead,

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or three times as many Uzbeks were killed or wounded.

[159] *CD,* 21 Feb.-2 March 1868.

[160] *Ibid. CD,* 11-20 Feb. 1868. Katib implies that Ishan Sudur died at the siege of Minglik, though it does not mention that he, or his nephew, was buried alive by 'Abd al-Rahman Khan. Grodekoff, 40 says Sudur died later as a prisoner in Kabul. Khafi says it was a son of Mir Ataliq, Qara Khan, who escaped to Aqcha.

[161] Wyllie, *Summary* iii, 43; *CD,* 3-12 March 1868, P:IFPC/438/1, no. 20 of April, fols. 18-20.

[162] *CD,* 21 Feb.-2 March 1868; *CD,* 13-22 March 1868, ESL:261, fol. 231. However, one report says that Ishan Uraq and Tora Khan were in Qarshi in May 1868, *CD,* 9-18 June, 1868 (including *Appendices* A, B).

[163] *CD,* 3-12 March 1868.

[164] *CD,* 13-22 March 1868.

the sardar sent his own man, an Afghan, to govern the area, supported by troops (Katib ii, 298).[165] Muhammad Khan Beglarbegi marched his army out to confront the invaders but, in a battle in which 'Abd al-Rahman later claimed some two thousand Uzbeks were killed, the Saripulis were defeated and Muhammad Khan's capital occupied. The beglarbegi, however, managed to escape and joined Ishan Uraq, Ghazanfar Khan and other leaders of the Chahar Wilayat in Maimana (Khafi ii, 13; Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 95).[166] The fall of Sar-i Pul left Maimana as the only bulwark between 'Abd al-Rahman Khan and Sher 'Ali's final stronghold of Herat. At this crucial stage in 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's campaign, with victory apparently within his grasp, his advance ground to a halt.

*The Siege of Maimana, 1868*

'Abd al-Rahman Khan's relationship with his uncle, A'zam Khan, which had always been strained, had become increasingly acrimonious after the fall of Aqcha. His troops in Balkh were at least six months in arrears with their pay and the recent victories, achieved only after much bitter fighting, had left them exhausted and war weary. Whilst in Shibarghan, A'zam Khan had written to his nephew, ordering him to continue his advance and to subdue Maimana, lest Sher 'Ali Khan, free from any fears about an attack on Herat, should march on Qandahar. When this letter reached 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, he informed his uncle that his troops were in no fit state to fight another major action. Indeed, the possibility of further fighting had led to mutinous talk amongst the troops and demands that they be given their back pay before being asked to go into battle once more. As for the Qunduz cavalry, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan had sent them back to Qataghan, for their loyalty was highly suspect.[167]

[165] Possibly called Fath Khan, though *CD*, 13-22 March 1868 implies this was the name of the beglarbegi. Or possibly Fath Khan was the son of Muhammad Khan Saripuli, though there is no other reference to him having a son by this name. Two sons of the beglarbegi are named in the *wakil* diaries, but neither is called Fath Khan. and this is an unlikely name for an Uzbek sultan anyway. Mir 'Abdullah seems to have been Muhammad Khan's eldest son, for he is referred to as "Pekar Begi." Another, Mir "Bilmal" Beg, was sent by his father to Kabul in 1869. In 1881, an unnamed son of Beglarbegi Muhammad Khan was appointed governor of Sar-i Pul by 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, but he never took up his appointment. He was imprisoned in 1889 after the failure of Ishaq Khan's rebellion and fined 20,000 rupees, but was released in 1890 after Muhammad Sharif Khan, Wali of Maimana, stood surety for his good conduct, cf. *PCD*, 27 June 1889, SLEI:57, fol. 963; *PCD*, 21 Jan. 1891, SLEI:62, fols. 601-2.

[166] *NKVT*, 12 Feb. 1889, SLEI:56, fol. 799a; *CD*, 13-22 March 1868.

[167] *CD*, 21 Feb.-2 March 1868.

'Abd al-Rahman made it clear in his reply that he disagreed about his uncle's tactics. Were he to march on Maimana, his army would be even further away from Kabul and Qandahar, making it much more difficult to return to the south if Qandahar were threatened. If, instead, he tried to take the city by storm, many more soldiers would be required, for Maimana's defences were far stronger than those of Minglik or Aqcha. In addition, six or seven lakh of rupees were urgently needed to pay his troops,[168] for Afghan Turkistan had been bled dry during the last three years of civil war.[169] A'zam Khan, with an empty treasury, threatened by Ya'qub Khan's advance on Qandahar and deeply suspicious of his nephew's intentions, refused to listen and sent further *farmans* to Afghan Turkistan ordering 'Abd al-Rahman Khan to march against Husain Khan Ming (Katib ii, 298; cf. Khafi ii, 13-14). Against his better judgment, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan was obliged to obey these orders, but he informed his uncle that "he would be sorry ... one day" (Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 95).[170]

Instead of marching out against Maimana immediately, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan remained in Shibarghan and tried to negotiate a peaceful surrender of the city. In a letter addressed to the wali he demanded the surrender of the rebellious amirs and threatened to attack Maimana if they were not handed over (Khafi ii, 15-6). Husain Khan Ming, realising 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's predicament, set out to delay the Afghan advance as long as he could. Mirza Sadiq Beg, confidential agent of the Wali of Maimana, was sent to Shibarghan with a polite letter in which Husain Khan refused, as a matter of honour, to hand over the amirs who had sought sanctuary with him (Khafi ii, 16). The ambassador drew the sardar's attention to terms of the treaty of 1861 between Hukumat Khan and Dost Muhammad Khan, as well as subsequent agreements with Muhammad Afzal Khan, offering to renew them on the same terms and the payment of the previously agreed *nazarana* of five thousand tilas (30,000 rupees) (Talboys Wheeler, 132-4).[171]

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[168] *CD*, 3-12 March 1868.

[169] *CD*, 13-22 March, 1868.

[170] One report, however, claims that A'zam Khan had ordered his nephew not to advance on Maimana and that it was 'Abd al-Rahman Khan who disobeyed orders, *CD*, 26 June-2 July 1868, ESL:261, fols. 577-9.

[171] *CD*, 13-22 March 1868; Wyllie, *Summary* iii, 43. According to *CD*, 8-12 May 1868, ESL:261, fol. 331 & P:IFPC/438/1, no. 25 of June fols. 24-5 the tribute included a payment, in kind, of sheep to the value of 4,000 tilas.

'Abd al-Rahman Khan rejected this offer out of hand, accusing Husain Khan Ming of materially aiding Sher 'Ali Khan on his march to Herat. He demanded payment of one lakh tilas (600,00 rupees), the equivalent of a year's pay for the sardar's army, and threatened to march on Maimana.[172] A few days later, a second party from Maimana arrived at Shibarghan with the traditional gifts of nine horses, nine camels and nine postins to encourage 'Abd al-Rahman Khan to believe that Husain Khan was still serious about a peaceful settlement.[173] The Sardar, however, continued to press his demands for one year's pay for his troops and a few more days were consumed whilst they awaited Husain Khan's reply to these terms. When it finally arrived, the wali raised his offer to thirty thousand tilas (150,000 rupees) but this "compromise" was rejected by 'Abd al-Rahman Khan who refused to lessen his original demand for one lakh tilas. Shortly after this round of negotiations, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan received A'zam Khan's curt orders to attack Maimana and on, or around, 29 March he set out, travelling by way of Andkhui and sending a second column across the Mirza Wulang pass to Belcheragh (Khafi ii, 15-18; Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 95).[174]

The negotiations between Husain Khan and 'Abd al-Rahman at Shibarghan had dragged out for something like seven weeks, during which time the balance of the civil war had swung, irrevocably, in Sher 'Ali Khan's favour. By the time 'Abd al-Rahman Khan left for Maimana, Sardar Ya'qub Khan was already marching an army to the

[172] As always, the sources disagree about the tribute 'Abd al-Rahman Khan demanded and the counter offers made by Husain Khan, mainly because they tend to confuse the Bukharan currency, used in Afghan Turkistan and Maimana, with the Kabuli rupee. This is particularly so with the historical summaries of Wyllie, Talboys Wheeler and the *Gazetteer* (1895; 1907). Wyllie, *Summary*, 43 is especially prone to this, confusing 'Abd al-Rahman's demand for one and a half lakh tilas for rupees. We know that 'Abd al-Rahman had asked for six and seven lakh rupees from Kabul, being the total amount he required to meet the demand from his troops for six months arrears and six months advanced pay. This figure, in Bukharan tilas, at an exchange rate of between five to six rupees to the tila, was approximately one lakh tilas, which is what the Kabul Diaries state that 'Abd al-Rahman demanded as the price to stop him attacking Husain Khan. Husain Khan's counter-offer was 30,000 tilas, or one lakh rupees—about a sixth of 'Abd al-Rahman's immediate needs. The fact that the sardar persisted in demanding the full payment of such a huge sum indicates how desperate 'Abd al-Rahman's position was and the extent to which Maimana had prospered over the years. After all, there were only two lakh rupees in the Kabul treasury and 'Abd al-Rahman Khan was demanding that Maimana pay three times this sum, cf. *CD,* 24 March-8 April, 11-13, 14-16, 21-27 April 1868, ESL:261, fols. 243-6, 253-4, 263-4, 315-6.

[173] *CD,* 24 March-8 April 1868.

[174] *Ibid. CD,* 21-27 April 1868. However, *CD,* 11-13 April 1868 says 'Abd al-Rahman Khan planned to march after the 'Id festival, i.e. 'Id al-Azha, which fell on 3 April 1868, so he may have left even later.

Helmand river.[175] Husain Khan, who was kept well informed about the situation in the south by means of regular, express messengers from Herat, continued to try and delay 'Abd al-Rahman Khan as best he could (Khafi ii, 17). Shortly after the Afghan army crossed the Maimana border, the wali sent his mother, possibly accompanied by Hakim Khan of Shibarghan, who seems to have acted as an intermediary in the dispute, to the sardar's camp.[176] She made a powerful plea to 'Abd al-Rahman Khan on behalf of her son and promised an additional twenty-five thousand tilas, along with the surrender of the famous jahangir gun if he withdrew to Shibarghan.[177] This intervention resulted in a twelve days' truce to allow time for Husain Khan to collect the agreed sum.[178]

By this time, there were powerful reasons for avoiding a costly and protracted campaign against Maimana. Shortly after leaving Shibarghan, a messenger had arrived in 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's camp with news of the defeat and capture of Muhammad 'Aziz Khan at Girishk on 1 April. Qandahar was now at the mercy of Ya'qub Khan and 'Abd al-Rahman Khan was ordered to send Muhammad Isma'il Khan, post-haste to Kabul with half of the troops in Afghan Turkistan (Katib ii, 299: Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 96).[179] 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, recognising that "it was ... impossible for me to besiege Maimana with only half my army" (Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 96) refused, telling his uncle that he had warned him that something like this would happen (Katib ii, 299).

If this were not enough, there was further trouble with the troops over pay. In an attempt to stave off a mutiny, 'Abd al-Rahman offered to distribute two months salary, presumably hoping that Husain Khan would submit peacefully and hand over a sufficiently substantial sum to buy off the malcontents. This compromise, however, was rejected as inadequate by men who were about to risk their lives against one of

[175] *Telegram, Green to Secr. to Govt., India, Foreign Dept.*, 11 April 1868, P:IFPC/438/1, no. 234 of April, fol. 294. Sher 'Ali had remained behind in Herat and was reported to be seriously ill, *CD*, 9-18 June 1868; *CD*, 4-7 May 1868, ESL:261, fols. 323-4.

[176] *CD*, 17-20 April 1868, P:IFPC/438/1, no. 219 of June, fols. 14-15.

[177] *CD*, 11-13 April 1868; *CD*, 21-27 April 1868 says she actually made the money over to Hakim Khan of Shibarghan., but other reports indicate that no money changed hands until after the failure of the siege of Maimana. Sher 'Ali had presumably left the jahangir gun behind when he passed through the area earlier in the year.

[178] *CD*, 21-27 April, 4-7 May 1868; *CD*, 28 April-3 May 1868, ESL:261, fols. 319-20. Sultan Muhammad Khan, i, 96 says they halted one march from Maimana. According to *Letter from Tashkurghan*, 26 April 1868, P:IFPC/438/2, no. 189 of July, fol. 167 the sardar halted at "Kurra Sheikhi" near Maimana.

[179] *Telegram, Green to Foreign Dept.*, 11 April 1868; *CD*, 21-27 April 1868.

the most formidable fortresses in Lesser Turkistan and they persisted in demanding a full half year's wages.[180] Whilst this argument was raging, the sardar's predicament was made even worse, for Husain Khan Ming, hearing of Ya'qub Khan's victory in Sistan, went back on his latest offer and informed 'Abd al-Rahman Khan that he would only negotiate on the basis of the treaties which had been agreed between his family and previous Amirs.[181] It is no wonder, therefore, that 'Abd al-Rahman Khan is described as being *pareshan*, a Persian word which indicates perplexity, agitation, vexation and disgust all at once.

At the end of April[182] Sardar Muhammad Isma'il Khan[183] (whom 'Abd al-Rahman Khan subsequently, and unjustly, accused of betraying the plan of attack to Husain Khan Ming) and 'Abd al-Rahim Khan were sent forward with two regiments of infantry, two thousand sowars and a battery of guns, to secure the road to Maimana. They soon had clear evidence that Husain Khan was prepared to resist. The Maimana cavalry, supported by Turkman irregulars, made a "sudden swoop" on the Afghan vanguard, killing a large number of them. However, 'Abd Al-Rahman Khan, who was following with the bulk of the army, came up in the nick of time and "put affairs straight."[184] The sardar arrived before Maimana on, or about, the 28 April. Whilst he took up his position on the Talash Khan hills, Isma'il Khan was given charge of directing the entrenching and mining operations before the city walls (Katib ii, 299: Khafi ii, 18; Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 96).[185]

The importance of the siege of Maimana in determining the outcome of the civil war between Sher 'Ali Khan and the Afzalid pretenders, has been completely ignored by modern historians. Yet a year after the event no less a figure than Sir Henry Rawlinson was to write that, "the siege of Mymeneh by Abdul Rahman Khan ... is one of the great events of modern Afghan history,"[186] in recognition of the fact that it was this battle, and not the fall of Qandahar, which secured the Afghan throne for Sher 'Ali Khan. Certainly the significance of

[180] *CD,* 21-27 April 1868.
[181] *CD,* 14-16 April, 11-18 May 1868.
[182] The main army was before Maimana by 28 April, *CD,*8-12 May 1868.
[183] A'zam Khan had given him the title of "Light of my Eyes."
[184] *CD,* 8-12, 11-18 May 1868, ESL:261, fols. 331, 335-6.
[185] *CD,* 8-12 May 1868.
[186] Sir Henry Rawlinson, "Memorandum on the Frontier of Afghanistan," 18 June 1869, *Umballa Papers,* 1869.

the siege was not lost on Husain Khan or 'Abd al-Rahman Khan. Both men knew that the fate of their party and the country as a whole, hung on the outcome of the siege. This undoubtedly accounts for the ferocity with which both sides fought.

Opposing 'Abd al-Rahman Khan were between seven and twelve thousand men with six guns, including the legendary jahangir. In addition, there were ten to twelve thousand Turkman tribesmen from Panjdeh, Sarrakhs and surrounding districts poised in the *dasht* around Maimana and waiting for the least opportunity to attack the exposed Afghan flanks.[187] Sher 'Ali Khan, realising that it was imperative that Maimana hold out, responded quickly to appeals for help from Husain Khan by sending a thousand Jamshidi and five hundred Sunni Hazara horse to strengthen the wali's aid.[188] Not only so, but the wali was able to draw on the experience of Sardar Mir Husain Khan, who had fought alongside Faiz Muhammad Khan, the refugee amirs of the Chahar Wilayat such as Muhammad Khan of Sar-i Pul, and Ishan Uraq.[189]

'Abd al-Rahman Khan realised that he had to subdue the fortress as quickly as possible and appears to have tried to storm Maimana as soon as his army arrived within gunshot range. The attack, however, was called off when Turkman tribesmen, finding the Afghans' baggage unprotected, began to plunder it.[190] After the failure of this rash assault,[191] 'Abd al-Rahman was forced to resort to the time-consuming task of mining the gates and walls and battering down the defences. His artillery was brought up onto the Talash Khan hills and began to rain shells down over the walls into the bazaars and residential areas of the city.[192] Despite subsequent claims by 'Abd al-Rahman Khan that he succeeded in closely investing Maimana, the evidence suggests that in their haste a proper siege was impossible and people apparently were able to come and go more or less at will (Katib ii, 299).[193] Yet, despite commanding the Talash Khan hills, 'Abd al-

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[187] *CD,* 11-18 May 1868. Khafi ii, 16 says Husain Khan had 7,000 men under his command. He does not mention the jahangir gun, but does record that in the citadel of Maimana there were two other large guns, called *qandozi* and *zilzila* (Khafi ii, 18-19).

[188] *CD,* 8-12 May 1868; *MA,* 12 June 1868, SLEP:170, no. 84, n. pag.

[189] "Letter from Tashkurghan," *Appendix* B, *CD,* 4-8 June 1868, P:IFPC/438/2, no. 191b of July, fols. 167-9.

[190] *Ibid.*

[191] It may have been during this attack that "a nearby fort" was taken, *Appendix* A, *CD,* 4-8 June 1868.

[192] *CD,* 19-25 May 1868, ESL:261, fols. 489-90; *CD,* 26 May-3 June 1868.

[193] *CD,* 8-12 May 1868.

Rahman Khan failed to silence the Maimana artillery, which continued to inflict heavy casualties on them daily (Khafi ii, 18-19). Other difficulties soon presented themselves. The Afghan army was suffering from a chronic shortage of provisions, for the presence of Turkman tribesmen in the *chul* made foraging a very dangerous business.[194] Another letter from A'zam Khan had arrived, reiterating the order to send half the army in Afghan Turkistan back to Kabul, for Ya'qub Khan was now at the very gates of Qandahar. Yet again, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan refused to obey his uncle's orders (Katib ii, 299: Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 96).

In the first week of May, a Bukharan ambassador, accompanied by twenty Afghan officers who had been living in Bukhara, arrived at 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's camp, bringing news that the Russian army was besieging Samarkand and asking for Afghan help in the battle against the infidel (Sobeloff, 214-5).[195] The envoy reminded 'Abd al-Rahman Khan of the assistance which Muzaffar Khan had given to his family during the civil war with Sher 'Ali Khan and that the sardar had had the title of *farzand* bestowed on him by the Manghit Khan.[196] 'Abd al-Rahman, however, informed the Bukharan envoy that, with the best will in the world, he was unable to help, for his hands were full until Maimana submitted. Indeed, like Muzaffar Khan, he too was fighting for his political life.

The ambassador responded by volunteering to act as a mediator between Maimana and 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, hoping that a quick resolution of the dispute would release both Afghan and Uzbek to join in the battle against the Tsar. The envoy was admitted to Maimana, where Husain Khan assured him that "nothing could be more honourable and gratifying" than for the wali to "give his head" fighting on behalf of Bukhara. But he, too, was in no position to help, for the Afghans, "contrary to all custom" and in breach of a treaty agreed between his forebears and the father of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, had attacked him. Husain Khan reiterated his position:

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[194] *Ibid.* A'zam Khan in Kabul had ordered his officials to remain silent about the true state of affairs at Maimana and the palace circulated reports that everything was going well, with "supplies plentiful" and the "fire of the besieged silenced," *CD,* 19-25 May 1868.

[195] *CD,* 8-12, 19-25 May 1868; *Letter from Tashkurghan,* 12 June 1868, P:IFPC/438/2, no. 143a of Aug., fol. 171. Soboleff says there were two envoys. A report the following year claimed that the ambassador was a Russian officer rather than Bukharan and "some understanding was arrived at" between him and 'Abd al-Rahman Khan. Since this diary entry was written after Sher 'Ali had taken Kabul, it was probably a rumour spread by his supporters to discredit 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, *CD,* 14-18 Jan. 1869, ESL:262, fols. 331-2.

[196] *CD,* 8-12 May 1868.

> If the Sirdar would be content with that annual tribute and would move away his troops, he would furnish a contingent of troops under his own brother and would pay 40,000 tilas, but would pay nothing unless his terms were agreed to. It was patent to all how cruelly his country had been trampled on by Sirdar Abdool Rahman Khan.[197]

The intransigence of both sides in the conflict, more interested in their own survival than Muzaffar Khan's, meant that there was very little chance of a peaceful resolution to the dispute and the Bukharan envoy returned home empty-handed. Samarkand, meanwhile, had fallen to the Russians and Muzaffar Khan had been forced to sign a humiliating treaty which ended Bukhara's status as an independent Uzbek state. On 9 May,[198] Qandahar fell to Ya'qub Khan and the race for the Afghan throne had been all but won.

Sher 'Ali, realising the importance of this information to Husain Khan, had the news conveyed to Maimana within six days. A short while later, a letter from Muhammad A'zam Khan reached 'Abd al-Rahman Khan informing him of the crisis in the south and recalling him to Kabul immediately. 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, however, was far too committed to break off operations before Maimana. Despite further, frantic, messages from A'zam Khan, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan decided to risk everything on the capture of Maimana and ordered his soldiers to prepare themselves for one, last do-or-die assault (Khafi ii, 42).[199]

Over the previous few weeks of the siege[200] a number of mines had been dug under the walls and gates of Maimana which, with one or two exceptions, had gone undetected by the defenders.[201] Early on the morning of the 17 May, these mines were sprung and the Afghan troops ordered to attack the walls from three sides.[202] Employing the technique which had been so successful against Minglik, the Afghan

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[197] *Ibid.*

[198] Forsyth, *Epitome*, 7.

[199] *CD*, 8-12 May 1868.

[200] Estimates differ for the length of time that 'Abd al-Rahman Khan invested Maimana. *Appendix* A, *CD*, 4-8 June 1868 correctly claims that it took "about a month." Soboleff, 214 reported it took two months whilst C. E. Yate 1888, 33 says the siege lasted 36 days. Khafi ii, 42 makes the extraordinary statement that Maimana was invested for six months. 'Abd al-Rahman Khan left Shibarghan on the last few days of March and was delayed at least twelve days somewhere between Andkhui and Maimana because of the truce agreement worked out with Mir Husain Khan's mother. Probably another week or so would have been needed to march the army to Maimana, so it was the middle of April before the siege was underway.

[201] *CD*, 26 May-3 June, 4-8 June 1868.

[202] *CD*, 4-8 June 1868 and *Appendices* A, B. The mines on the fourth side would also have been sprung to deceive the defenders.

soldiers threw camel bags full of hay and grass into the ditch.[203] Fierce hand-to-hand fighting ensued in the breaches with even the Maimana women joining in the defence of their homeland by raining stones and rocks down from the walls onto the enemy (Merk, 264; Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 96; C. E. Yate 1888, 337).[204] The battle raged throughout the day until six o'clock in the evening, yet, despite the heroic effort of Sardar Muhammad Isma'il Khan (see Khafi ii, 43-4), who appears to have personally led the storming of the walls, "sword in hand, bare-headed and bare-footed,"[205] the attackers were unable to break through the Uzbek defences. Three times the Afghan army was beaten back from the breaches, only to be ordered back into the fray and repulsed once more by the ferocity of the defence (Merk, 264). In the bloodiest and fiercest battle of the whole Turkistan campaign, thousands died. Amongst the many Afghans who perished in the breaches were a number of senior members of the Muhammadzai clan, including Sardar Wali Muhammad Khan, brother of 'Ali Muhammad Khan (Merk, 264).[206] Even 'Abd al-Rahman Khan did not escape injury, being wounded in the arm by a musket ball.[207] The Maimana side also suffered heavy loss of life, but despite the death of Sardar Husain Khan, Sher 'Ali's general who was blown up by an exploding mine,[208] the defences held firm.

By the evening of 17 May, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, with his army decimated and realising that the race to Herat was lost, called off the assault and offered to negotiate with the wali, hoping he could reach some face-saving agreement and retire to Balkh before word of his defeat spread too widely through Turkistan. The following day, several leading *qazi*s and mullahs from Maimana arrived in the sardar's camp and offered to pay forty thousand tilas tribute to the Afghan

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[203] *CD,* 4-8 June 1868, *Appendix* A; "Letter from Tashkurghan," *Appendix, CD,* 19-25 May 1868.

[204] "Letter from Tashkurghan," *CD,* 4-8 June 1868. Neither Katib nor Khafi says anything about the defeat of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, doubtless because once *padshah* he did not like to be reminded of this particularly humilitating defeat at the hands of an Uzbek chief. The *Siraj al-Tawarikh* merely states that at the time that news of the fall of Qandahar was broken to 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, the wali was already on the verge of capitulation, whilst Khafi claims that Husain Khan Ming agreed to settle the matter without further fighting.

[205] *Appendix* B, *CD,* 4-8 June 1868. This discredits 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's biographical attack on the sardar (Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 96) in which he accuses him of treachery and betrayal.

[206] *Appendices* A & B, *CD,* 4-8 June 1868.

[207] *Appendix* B, *CD,* 4-8 June 1868.

[208] *Ibid.* No figures are given for the number dead or wounded on the Maimana side, but they were higher than those suffered by their attackers.

treasury, provided that 'Abd al-Rahman Khan was prepared to agree to deferral of the payment of half of this sum for two months (Katib ii, 300; Khafi ii, 43).[209] 'Abd al-Rahman Khan seems to have rejected this offer and demanded that every household in Maimana should pay six tilas tribute which, if this were the case, would have realised nearly two million rupees. Whether this was merely an attempt to try and save face by claiming a sum only a victor would dare to demand, is unclear. His demand, anyway, was unequivocally rejected by Husain Khan and, with his bluff called, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan was forced to accept anything that Maimana cared to offer (Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 96).[210] In the end, the wali only paid fifteen thousand tilas, though at least one gun was surrendered (Khafi ii, 43). As for the remaining sum, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan had to content himself with the wali's promise that this would be handed over in three months' time (Khafi ii, 43).[211] Within a matter of days after the battle for Maimana, the agreement was sealed on the Qur'an and Husain Khan came in person to pay his respects to 'Abd al-Rahman Khan and confirmed the treaty by an exchange of turbans (Merk, 264).[212]

The following day, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan began the long and dangerous march back to Takhtapul (Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 96). News of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's defeat spread like wildfire throughout the Chahar Wilayat and the Turkman tribes, which had been hovering in the vicinity of Maimana in the hope of plunder, swooped on the dispirited and defeated Afghans, looting and pillaging whatever they could lay their hands on. Within a very short space of time,

[209] *Letter from Tashkurghan*, 12 June 1868; *CD*, 9-18 June 1868; Rawlinson, *Memorandum on Northern Boundaries of Affghanistan*, 1869. Figures for the sums which change hands vary from one author to another. Katib, *loc. cit.* says the agreed tribute was 40,000 gold coins (*mishqal-i tela*). Merk, 264 says the sum was £15,000; Lepel Griffin, "Principle Events in Afghanistan in the Year 1875," in *Papers Related to Afghanistan, 1876-78*, PSDL:MEMO4/3 has 7,000 gold coins.

[210] *CD*, 9-18 June 1868 & *Appendices* A, B. Reports emanating from A'zam Khan in Kabul, tried to make the attack on Maimana sound like a victory. However, even 'Abd al-Rahman Khan later admitted that he "agreed to his (i.e. Husain Khan's) conditions because of the troubles in Kabul," though he tried to play down the extent of the defeat by claiming that Husain Khan had opened negotiations because Maimana was not able to withstand a second assault. He also claimed that he took possession of the fort and guns, which is quite untrue. The 'fort' was probably a minor stronghold outside the city walls, which the sardar's forces had captured early in the siege (Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 96). Later, British officials tended to select the Kabul Diaries which gave the most optimistic reports of the siege of Maimana and portrayed the siege as either a victory for 'Abd al-Rahman Khan or, at the worst, a stalemate which had forced Husain Khan to accept 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's terms and, by implication, Afghan sovereignty and dependency, see e.g. *Principal Events in Afghanistan*, 1875.

[211] *Letter from Tashkurgan*, 12 June 1868.

[212] *CD*, 4-8 June 1868 & *Appendices* A, B.

the whole of western Balkh had rebelled against A'zam Khan.[213] By the end of July, Andkhui, Sar-i Pul and Shibarghan were once more back in the hands of their native rulers, whilst the mercurial Ishan Uraq had laid siege to the Afghan garrison in Aqcha.[214]

At this crucial juncture in his family's fortunes, 'Abd al-Rahman had a recurrence of his chronic illness and was forced to rest up in Afghan Turkistan for three further weeks (Katib ii, 303; Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 96). Sardar Isma'il Khan, who had distinguished himself at the siege of Maimana, disgusted at 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's attitude towards him, separated himself from the main Afghan army and marched by double stages to Mazar-i Sharif (Khafi ii, 44). Having relieved the A'zamid governor of Mazar of 30,000 tangas, Isma'il Khan pushed on to Bamiyan, where he declared his support for Sher 'Ali Khan, and marched on Kabul (Katib ii, 300-2; Khafi ii, 44-8). On 21 August 1868, the Bala Hisar surrendered to him and the Afghan capital was lost to A'zam Khan. After an abortive attempt to make a stand at Ghazni, A'zam Khan, with only a handful of loyal supporters, fled to Afghan Turkistan where he joined 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, who was convalescing in Dahan-i Ghuri (Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 96).[215]

Despite the loss of both Kabul and the Chahar Wilayat, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan believed that they could still salvage something from the wreckage if they stayed in Qataghan. A'zam Khan, however, over-ruled his nephew, insisting on marching south in the middle of winter to try and regain Kabul. A'zam Khan's son, Ishaq Khan, was left in charge of Qataghan and the eastern marches of Lesser Turkistan, and appears to have made some attempt to relieve Aqcha, though without any success.[216] In order to discourage any thought of rebellion, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan reverted to the tactics of terror which had proved so effective after the fall of Minglik and had between three and four hundred Afghans and Uzbeks executed or imprisoned. Amongst those who perished were: Ganj 'Ali Beg and Ghulam Beg, the two sons of the Mir Wali of Khulm; Sufi Khan b. Shuja' al-Din of Mazar-i Sharif; Sultan Mingbashi Tashqurghani; Khwaja Sultan Apki

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[213] Wyllie, *Summary*, introduction; *CD*, 28-31 Aug. 1868, ESL:261, fols. 833-4.

[214] *CD*, 28-31 Aug. 1868. *CD*, 14 Dec. 1868, ESL:262, fol. 251. *Rahman Kuli Aksakal of Shibarghan to Dewan Singh*, 2, 26 Sept. 1868; *Telegram, Commissioner, Peshawar, to Foreign Secr., Calcutta*, 3 Dec. 1868, P:IFPC/438/3, no. 403 of Oct., fols. 604-7, no. 93 of Nov., fols. 157-8, no. 31 of Dec., fols. 423-4.

[215] *Atta Mahomed Khan, Vakil in Kabul, to Commissioner, Peshawar*, 22 Aug. 1868, P:IFPC/438/3, no. 111 of Oct., fol. 132.

[216] *CD*, 28-31 Aug., 14 Dec. 1868.

and Mir Murad Beg's *sahib-i nazar*.[217] Though the sources do not state so specifically, it is likely that Mir Ghazanfar Khan of Andkhui was also executed, though his son, Mir Daulat Beg, managed to escape the sardar's vengeance to carry on the Afshar line.[218] This act of vindictiveness merely fuelled the fires of revolt that were sweeping through Lesser Turkistan and exacerbated the deep, personal animosity which had sprung up between the people of the province and 'Abd al-Rahman Khan.[219]

The *coup de grâce* for A'zam Khan's cause was delivered early in 1869, when Muhammad 'Alam Khan, Sher 'Ali's recently-appointed na'ib of Balkh, occupied Aibak (Katib ii, 305: McGregor, 164).[220] In a battle near Tashqurghan, A'zam Khan's army was completely overwhelmed. Ishaq Khan fled to Takhtapul but, realising that he could no longer offer any serious resistance, and with 'Alam Khan hard on his heels, he fled to Bukhara (Katib ii, 306).[221] On 16 April, a twenty-one gun salute was fired in Kabul in celebration of the news that Afghan Turkistan had fallen.[222]

Whilst 'Alam Khan was occupying Balkh and Takhtapul, Sher 'Ali Khan had completely routed A'zam Khan's army at Shash Gau, forcing his brother and 'Abd al-Rahman Khan to flee. After many adventures, the fugitives reached the comparative safety of Bannu from whence they went to Sistan and then to Khurasan, arriving in Birjand on 17 April 1869 (5 Muharram, 1286) (Katib ii, 307-14, 318). Later in the spring of the same year, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan went to Khiva where he was well received by the Khan, who promised him one hundred thousand men for the reconquest of Balkh. 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, however, refused the offer and insisted on joining the other refugees in Bukhara (Katib ii, 220-5).[223] A'zam Khan, who had been forced to remain in Persia due to sickness, quickly became seriously

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[217] *CD*, 24 Sept. 1868, P:IFPC/438/3, no. 121 of Oct., fols. 142-3; *Rahman Kuli*, 26 Sept. 1868. According to the reports, Murad Beg himself was executed, but this was not the case, though he may well have been one of the leaders imprisoned.

[218] *CD*, 7 Jan. 1868, P:IFPC/438/5, no. 177 of Feb. 1869, fols. 144-51. Cf. *CD*, 17-20 June 1870, ESL:265, fols. 259-60; *CD*, 23 June 1870, P:IFPC/438/10, no. 44 of Aug., fol. 51.

[219] *CD*, 5 Oct. 1868, P:IFPC/438/3, no. 33 of Dec., fols. 41-3.

[220] Wynne, *Recent Events in Afghanistan 1866-1868*, PSDL:B11/B, fol. 99.

[221] *CD*, 12-22 April 1869, P:IFPC/438/6, no. 305 of May, fols. 358-9; *Statement Regarding the Recent Political Status of Maimana and the Petty Fiefs between Balkh and the Oxus and Budukhshan*, 1872, ESL:270, fols. 191-6.

[222] *CD*, 12-22 April 1869.

[223] He was given a house in Chahar Bagh, a mile east of Samarkand, where he was closely watched by both Bukharan and Russian officials, "Abdool Rahman Khan," in *Central Asia, part I, Proceedings of the Foreign Department, 1869-72*, 2-4.

ill and died a short while later. The mantle of pretender to the Afghan throne, was taken up by 'Abd al-Rahman Khan (Katib ii, 318-25).

*Balkh and the Umballa Conference, 1869*

The subjection of the greater part of Afghan Turkistan to the authority of Sher 'Ali could not have come at a better time for the British government for, having abandoned Bukhara to the Russians, it had subsequently become extremely anxious about Tsarist intentions in the aftermath of the Khanate's subjugation. A change of Viceroy, in January 1869, from Lawrence, who had pursued a policy of non-interference beyond the Khyber, to Lord Mayo, a supporter of a more active *rôle* for Britain in Afghanistan, meant that the Forward Policy was again in favour. Early in 1869, even before A'zam Khan was finally defeated, Sher 'Ali Khan was invited to consult with the Viceroy at Umballa in India. At this meeting, held in the spring, Sher 'Ali reassured Britain that he would continue the policy of his father and run his foreign affairs in accordance with British interests, "as long as I am alive." In return for these pledges, he was given a letter which reiterated Britain's wish for friendly relations and the hope that the Amir would quickly establish control over "your entire Kingdom" (quoted in, Fraser-Tytler, 132). A more concrete sign of British support for Sher 'Ali Khan was the immediate gift of ten thousand muskets and two batteries of artillery, a present which undoubtedly gave the Amir the military edge in his war against A'zam Khan(Fraser-Tytler, 132).

The extraordinary haste with which Britain arranged the conference, before the Amir could claim to be fully master of Afghanistan, demonstrated the deep concern in India about Russian intentions. Correspondence between London and St. Petersburg, which eventually led to the Granville-Gorchakov agreement of 1872/3, under the terms of which both European powers formally recognised the Amu Darya as the northern border of Afghanistan, initially suggested that the Russians were trying to renege on their secret undertaking to Britain that they would not lay claim to, or invade, Lesser Turkistan. In April 1869, Lord Clarendon asked the Russian government to clarify their position on Balkh and proposed the establishment of a neutral zone between Russian Turkistan and Afghanistan. The military authorities in St. Petersburg, however, strongly opposed this plan and hinted that, since Balkh had historically been part of Bukhara,

intervention across the Amu Darya could not be ruled out, especially since Russia believed Sher 'Ali Khan had designs on both Persian and Bukharan territory.[224] Tension on the border was increased by the return of Ishaq Khan to the Chahar Wilayat, and the flight of 'Abd al-Malik, the rebellious son of Muzaffar Khan, to Afghan Turkistan, where he was given sanctuary by Sher 'Ali Khan.[225]

Urgent telegrams were sent to India, asking the Viceroy to obtain reassurances from the Amir that he had no claims on Bukharan territory. In October, Sher 'Ali Khan informed the British government that he would "do nothing by act or word in the matter of these foreign borders without communicating with the British Government,"[226] denied any intention of marching across the Amu Darya, and reminded the Viceroy that it was he who had been injured by the Bukharan ruler, rather than *vice versa*. Indeed, the Amir expressed his own concern about Russian designs on Balkh and recommended that the ill-defined border around Qarqi and Charjui be properly delimited to prevent any dispute between himself and Bukhara.[227] Afghan aid to the rebellious Bukharan prince was withdrawn and, in return for this favour, Muzaffar Khan made life more difficult for the Afghan refugees who had sought sanctuary with him.[228] Britain, meanwhile, secretly urged the Amir to strengthen the defences on his northern borders as much as he could and to extend his control over the whole of Lesser Turkistan, without giving offence to either Russia or Bukhara, so that London's hand would be strengthened in the negotiations.[229] The ruthlessness and tyranny which marked Na'ib 'Alam Khan's governorship of Balkh was one of the outcomes of this advice.

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[224] *Précis of Papers on Central Asia, 1867-1872*, nos. 29-31; "Viceroy to Duke of Argyll", 7 Dec. 1869, in *Central Asia*, i, no. 386, fol. 208.

[225] *Viceroy to Duke of Argyll*, 7 Dec. 1869; *Letter from F*[aiz] *B*[akhsh], 17 Nov. 1869, ESL:270, fols. 6d-6f. *CD*, 9-12 Aug. 1869; *Bakht Yar Khan, Moonshi to British Agent at Cabul to Pollock*, 23 Aug. 1867, ESL:263, fols. 913, 1087-90; *CD*, 13-16, 17-19 Aug. 1868, P:IFPC/438/7, nos. 236-7 of Sept., fols. 294-5. 'Abd al-Malik had refused to accept his father's treaty with Russia and continued the *jihad* from Kulab, causing a considerable amount of trouble both for Bukhara and Russia in the area of what is now Tajikistan. With the backing and encouragement of Russia, Muzaffar Khan finally invaded and took control of the area during 1869. 'Abd al-Malik fled across the Amu Darya where he was initially well received by the Amir

[226] "Translation of a Murassila dated 25 Rajab 1286 (31 October 1869) from the Ameer of Cabul to Major F. E. Pollock," in *Central Asia, 1869-1872*, i, 195.

[227] *Viceroy to Duke of Argyll*, 7 Dec. 1869, fol. 4; see also *Pollock to Thornton*, 30 Sept. 1869, ESL:263, fols. 1059-76.

[228] *Letter from F*[aiz] *B*[akhsh], 17 Nov. 1869; Faiz Bakhsh, *Badakhshan*, 64. 'Abd al-Malik fled to Eastern (Chinese) Turkistan.

[229] Id.

Once again Britain had indicated that the Afghan government had a free hand when it came to the 'pacification' of the Uzbek and Turkman amirs north of the Hindu Kush.

The need to more strictly define Afghanistan's 'Oxus Frontier' was a logical outcome of British perceptions on the problem of Central Asia. As the Forward School gained ground during the 1870s, a number of important secret memoranda resurrected and expanded the interventionist arguments which had been one of the prime causes of the fiasco of the First Anglo-Afghan War. As in the previous generation, the argument was essentially the same. The Oxus had "from ancient times" been the dividing line between Bactria and Sogdiana and hence, by association, was still the true border between Bukhara and Balkh. The argument for such a 'natural', 'scientific' frontier was based on the extraordinary theory that:

> ... during the period of the rise and progress of Islam, and the subsequent conquests of the Samanis, Sijuks (*sic*), the sovereigns of Khowarisur (*sic*), the dynasties of Chingez, Taimur and Uzbaks, the old boundaries were upset.[230]

It was Britain's destiny to correct the anomaly and ensure the Alexandrian frontier was recreated.

The most influential memorandum on the frontier issue came from the pen of Sir Henry Rawlinson (Fraser-Tytler, 133-4).[231] This document, which has tended to be quoted very selectively by historians, is a remarkably frank and pragmatic analysis of the situation which obtained in Central Asia at the time of the Umballa Conference. Britain, he argued, needed to act quickly and decisively to eradicate all traces of Balkh's once independent status:

> The definition of the frontiers of Afghanistan at the present time is of more importance than would at first sight appear.... It is impossible to close our eyes to the conviction that the Afghan territory bears the same relation to British India that the Bukharan territory bears to Russia, that both these States will, in progress of time, pass from the condition of allies to dependencies, and will ultimately be incorporated in the respective dominions of the two great European powers which overshadow them.[232]

The Amir's hold on Balkh, he pointed out, was based not on any ancient historical precedents, but had been acquired purely as a result of invasion and annexation, and that within living memory. Unless

[230] *Letter from F*[aiz] *B*[akhsh], 17 Nov. 1869.
[231] Rawlinson, *Memorandum on the Frontier of Affghanistan*, 1869.
[232] *Ibid.*

something was done to muddy the waters, Russia and its proxy, Bukhara, had a very strong argument for claiming sovereignty over the former Chingizid appanage of Balkh. "Their possession," however, was "essential to the safety of the Afghan ruler, and on no account ... should their national dependency be called into question." The Amir must be urged "not to lose a day in consolidating his authority along the Oxus as far as Kurki ... Sher Ali must ... at all hazards be supported in his possession of Turkistan, the Eymaks and especially Mymenah."[233]

Not only so, but if the general public were to believe that the Oxus was the true northern frontier of Afghanistan, then the prevailing assumption that the Amir's territory ended at the Hindu Kush had to be changed. To this end he advocated a double-pronged propaganda strategy to fudge the truth. Official maps of the area should be reprinted, with the Afghan border clearly drawn on the Oxus, "as a sort of corrective to Philip's Map, which defines the Afghan frontier according to the watershed between the North and South and which thus gives a most erroneous notion of the (Political) Geography of the Kingdom of Cabul."[234] Secondly,

> It must be to our advantage that the public should become familiar with the practical fact that the Oxus is the boundary of the Afghan kingdom, to the north; and it would be a further advantage if the misleading (*sic*) title of Turkistan, as applied to the Cis Oxus territory, could be altered, since in popular estimation it is liable to be confounded with Independent (formerly Chinese) Turkistan to the East. I should have thought that the Cis Oxus States would be a better nomenclature, or at any rate Afghan Turkistan.[235]

By advocating that the British government withdraw existing charts of Central Asia and issue new ones, on which the northern border of Afghanistan had been arbitrarily drawn on the Amu Darya, Rawlinson ensured that the embarrassing term 'Turkistan' was literally wiped off the map and replaced by another, more politically acceptable term, which indicated there was some kind of natural, or ethnic, affinity with the Afghans and Kabul. Rawlinson's recommendations were favourably received and, from this point onwards, the former Chingizid appanage of Balkh is referred to as 'Afghan Turkistan'[236] in official documents, maps and publications.

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[233] *Ibid.*

[234] "Rawlinson to Lord Mayo," 18 June 1869, *Umballa Papers*, 1869.

[235] *Ibid.*

[236] Presumably 'The Cis Oxus Territories' was considered too much of a mouthful.

*Balkh Under Sardar Na'ib 'Alam Khan, 1869-1872*

One of the first decisions of Na'ib 'Alam Khan's new administration in Balkh was to remove the capital of the province from Takhtapul to the shrine-city of Mazar-i Sharif. Behind this change of location was 'Alam Khan's obsession with the occult. Shortly after he had become governor of Afghan Turkistan, he had consulted "an astrologer," who prophesied that his name would be changed from 'Alam to 'Alamgir ('World-Conqueror') if he had four virgins always at his side. In accordance with this prognostication, 'Alam Khan insisted on being supplied with a succession of young women whom he kept for a few days then returned to their fathers. Matters came to a head when two saiyids of Mazar-i Sharif, presumably attached to the Alid shrine, were ordered to surrender their daughters for service in this bizarre form of *mut'a*, or temporary marriage. Rather than allow their womenfolk to suffer such a disgrace, however, the families singled out for this dubious honour preferred to put their girls to death. Undeterred by this scandal, Na'ib 'Alam next set his sights on securing the hand of the daughter of Hakim Khan of Shibarghan who had been married to 'Abd al-Rahman Khan and who had taken refuge in her father's house following her husband's flight. Hakim Khan refused point-blank to the alliance, informing 'Alam Khan that if he tried to take his daughter by force, he would resist with everything within his power.[237]

'Alam Khan did not stop here. Rustam Khan, son of Shuja' al-Din Khan and guardian of the Mazar sanctuary, was evicted from his official residence and the tenements surrounding it pulled down to make way for new, government development. Taxation was increased on livestock, fruit and agricultural land. A swingeing flat rate government levy of one third was placed on all harvests, the yield from each *jarib* of land being fixed arbitrarily by the na'ib himself. Such was the hardship this revaluation caused that, within a very short space of time, some twelve thousand families had fled across the Amu Darya to seek refuge in Kulab, Shirabad and other frontier areas. In retaliation, 'Alam Khan closed the border and sent soldiers to prevent anyone using the ferries across the Amu Darya.[238]

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[237] "Turkistan Notes," *Central Asia, 1869-72*, i, 3 in which the reporter puts the visit to the astrologer (*pir*?) seven months earlier.

[238] *Ibid.* This account is based on the report of a native agent who was in the area at the time, cf. *CD*, 7-9 June 1870, ESL:265, fol. 127.

In the middle of May 1869, or just over a month after Na'ib 'Alam Khan's victory, the amirs of Qataghan and the Chahar Wilayat, namely Hakim Khan of Shibarghan, Muhammad Khan Beglarbegi of Sar-i Pul, the son of Ghazanfar Khan of Andkhui, "Somar" Beg, the maternal uncle of Muhammad Husain Khan of Maimana, along with elders from Sangcharak, appeared in person to make their formal submission. The amirs or their appointed representatives were sent south to present themselves in person to Sher 'Ali Khan in Kabul, where they took the opportunity to complain bitterly about the oppression of the na'ib.[239]

'Alam Khan's treatment of his subjects, combined with local prejudice about his Shi'i background,[240] played into the hands of Sardar Muhammad Ishaq Khan and the Afzalid faction, which still had a following in Afghanistan. Ishan Uraq, who had secured Aqcha for Sher 'Ali in the spring, found that his powers had been severely curtailed by the presence of an Afghan garrison under Lall Muhammad Khan. Resentful of the presence of government troops and doubtless angered by Na'ib 'Alam Khan's proceedings in Mazar-i Sharif, the ishan wrote to Ishaq Khan asking him to come to his aid.[241] At the end of July Bukharan troops arrived at the frontier town of Qarqi, ostensibly in pursuit of the rebellious Manghit prince, Sultan 'Abd al-Malik.[242] Muzaffar Khan, however, providing Ishaq Khan with some Turkman troops, allowed the sardar to cross the river and march to Aqcha. Lall Muhammad set out at the head of his troops to confront Ishaq Khan, but some eight hundred *sowar*s and Uzbek infantry defected to the enemy and the government force retreated in disorder to Aqcha.[243] The remains of Aqcha garrison, however, joined the uprising, set fire to the magazine and refused to allow Lall Muhammad to enter the town. Faced with enemies from all sides, Lall Muhammad managed to hold out for twenty-four hours but, realising that all was lost, he surrendered and was imprisoned by the rebels.[244]

The fall of Aqcha early in August 1869 threatened to reopen the civil war and, for a while, it looked as if the province might be lost to

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[239] *Ibid. Letter from a Correspondent in Tashkurghan*, 14 May 1869, ESL:263, fols. 115-6

[240] *CD*, 19-21 Sept. 1871, ESL:268, fols. 31-2.

[241] "Naib Alum to Ameer," *Appendix* A, *CD*, 6-8 Aug. 1869, P:IFPC/438/7, no. 6 of Sept., fols. 7-8. According to Faiz Bakhsh, *Badakhshan*, 64. Ishaq Khan crossed the Amu Darya in the company of Sultan 'Abd al-Malik Manghit.

[242] *CD*, 30 July-5 Aug. 1869; "Naib Alum to Ameer," *Appendix* A, B, *CD*, 6-8 Aug. 1869; P:IFPC/438/7, nos. 5, 6 of Sept., fols. 3-8; *Statement on the Political Status of Maimana*, 1872.

[243] *CD*, 30 July-5 Aug. 1869; "Naib Alum to Ameer," *Appendix* B, *CD*, 6-8 Aug. 1868.

[244] Id.

Sher 'Ali Khan. Hakim Khan in Shibarghan was ordered to rally forces from Andkhui and other areas of the Chahar Wilayat, whilst 'Alam Khan marched out at the head of the Takhtapul garrison to confront the invaders.[245] Ishaq Khan's advance had been swift. Following the fall of Aqcha, he had managed to secure control of Minglik and then Balkh itself.[246] However, as he approached Takhtapul, he was met by Colonel Tohrab Khan and a large force of government troops. At a battle near Chelghazi, between Takhtapul and Balkh, Ishaq Khan was completely defeated and the bulk of his soldiers were taken prisoner.[247] The Sardar fled to Aqcha but, with 'Alam Khan's forces advancing on Minglik and Hakim Khan approaching from Shibarghan with another army, Ishaq Khan abandoned the unequal struggle and fled across the river, taking Ishan Uraq with him.[248] Once safely across the border, Ishaq Khan contented himself with lightning raids on outlying areas of Andkhui and Shibarghan.[249]

When Na'ib 'Alam Khan reached Aqcha, Lall Muhammad was disgraced[250] and replaced by Saiyid Reza Khan. Three thousand Afghans settlers from the Hazhda Nahr area, who had supported Ishaq Khan, were expelled to Kabul[251] and the amirs of the Chahar Wilayat and Qataghan[252] were ordered to present themselves in person to the Amir in the Afghan capital. When they arrived, besides renewing their oaths of loyalty to Sher 'Ali Khan, the amirs complained bitterly about 'Alam Khan's despotism and tyranny which had been partially responsible for the recent uprising. The Amir, though, was unwilling to recall or rebuke his governor, fearing a further round of civil strife. As a sop to local sentiment, 'Ali Muhammad Khan was appointed as a government ombudsman to enquire into the truth, or otherwise, of the amirs' complaints. At the same time, however, Sher 'Ali Khan

[245] "Naib Alum to Ameer," *Appendix* B, *CD,* 6-8 Aug. 1869; *Statement on the Political Status of Maimana*, 1872.

[246] Id.

[247] "Naib Alum to Ameer," *Appendix* B, *CD,* 6-8 Aug. 1869; Faiz Bakhsh, *Badakhshan,* 64.

[248] *CD,* 6-8 Aug. 1869; *CD,* 9-12 Aug. 1869, ESL:263, fol. 913; Faiz Bakhsh, *Badakhshan*, 64. Ishan Uraq reappears later in the year as Bukharan ambassador to the court of Sher 'Ali Khan, sent to discuss the problem of the two states sheltering each other's dissidents, *Alum Khan to Ameer*, 1 Dec. 1869, P:IFPC/438/7, no. 114 of Jan. 1870, fol. 96.

[249] *Correspondent at Tashkurghan*, Aug.(?) & Sept.(?) 1869, ESL:263, fol. 1128; *CD,* 21-23 Sept. 1869, P:IFPC/438/7, no. 283 of Oct., fols. 301-2.

[250] Bukht Yar Khan, *Monshee to British Agent at Cabul*, 23 Aug. 1869; *Correspondent at Tashkurghan*, Aug.(?) 1869, P:IFPC/438/7, no. 280 of Oct., fol. 299.

[251] *CD,* 28 Aug.-2 Sept. 1869, P:IFPC/438/7, no. 280 of Oct., fols. 301-2.

[252] Na'ib 'Alam Khan appointed Sultan Murad Beg Khan as ruler of Qunduz on condition that he pay one lakh rupees tribute in the first year and furnish one thousand cavalry for the Balkh army.

showered favours upon his na'ib as a reward for his recent victory.[253] Disgusted at the Amir's refusal to redress their grievances, the amirs returned to their homeland and opened a correspondence with Ishaq Khan and the other exiles in Transoxiana, Persia and India. Amongst the principal leaders of this discontent was the Wali of Maimana, who, despite having remained loyal to Sher 'Ali throughout the civil war, was no longer prepared to tolerate the treatment that he, and his fellow rulers, were being subjected to by 'Alam Khan.

In the early weeks of 1870, Husain Khan showed his displeasure with the state of affairs by executing a number of "well-wishers" of the government who were living in his country. The wali followed this up by ordering the defences of the city to be strengthened. Supplies were brought into Maimana in preparation for a siege and an agent was dispatched to Bukhara to discuss the situation with the Afghan exiles.[254] Na'ib 'Alam Khan, hearing of Husain Khan's actions, ordered all the amirs and other tribal leaders of Lesser Turkistan to attend a *durbar* in Aqcha on 28 February, which was designed specifically as a test of their loyalty and to force the issue with the wali.

Without exception every amir of the Chahar Wilayat tried to excuse himself, but Na'ib 'Alam Khan would not be denied. Having bullied them into appearing at Aqcha, the governor proceeded to relieve them of between ten and fifteen thousand tangas (30-45,000 rupees) and extorted a further ten tangas from every shopkeeper in the province, claiming that the money was a present for Sher 'Ali Khan's Commander-in-Chief.[255] With one voice, the amirs complained that the civil war had so impoverished the whole region that they did not have the resources to meet such demands.[256] Their pleas were summarily dismissed by the na'ib, who informed them that, following the Aqcha *durbar*, they would be required yet again to go again to Kabul. They were allowed one month's grace to assemble suitable presents to take to the Amir. Despite 'Alam Khan's "tyranny and indecent language" towards them, when the amirs reached Kabul they did not

[253] *Turkistan Notes*, 3.

[254] *CD*, 1-3, 4-7 March 1870, P:IFPC/438/9, nos. 42, 43 of April, fols. 48-50; *Political Status of Maimana*, 1872.

[255] *CD*, 11-14, 18-21 March 1870, P:IFPC/438/9, no. 45 of April, fol. 52, no. 131 of May, fol. 95.

[256] *CD*, 11-14 March 1870. In the autumn of 1871 a formal petition was submitted to the Amir by the amirs of Lesser Turkistan asking for remission of land revenue due to the famine conditions which prevailed in the area. This was refused, on the grounds that the dearth was affecting the whole country and the government was losing revenue hand-over-fist, *CD*, 29 Sept.-2 Oct. 1871, ESL:268, fol. 245.

bother to raise the matter of the governor's conduct with Sher 'Ali Khan, for its was obvious that the Amir was not interested in their complaints and they ran the risk of even more trouble on their return if 'Alam Khan heard that they were disaffected with his government.[257] Sher 'Ali Khan, however, continued to show every kindness to the Turkistani amirs, who had played such an important part in securing the throne for him. Indeed, the Amir honoured Rustam Khan of Mazar and Daulat Khan of Andkhui with a personal visit to offer his condolences on the execution of their father and brother respectively by 'Abd al-Rahman Khan.[258]

The notable absentee from the Aqcha and Kabul *durbar*s was Husain Khan Ming, who refused to attend in person, or to send a representative. By June 1870, reliable sources stated that Muzaffar Khan's name had been inserted in the *khutba* in all the congregational mosques in Maimana. Na'ib 'Alam, who never lost an opportunity of defaming the amirs of Lesser Turkistan to the Amir, reported Husain Khan had declared independence and asked for permission to march against Maimana and overthrow the Ming dynasty. Sher 'Ali Khan, however, wisely ordered him to stay put and consolidate his hold over the regions already within the borders of Afghanistan.[259] Instead, when the other rulers of the Chahar Wilayat left for the north, Sher 'Ali Khan asked Hakim Khan of Shibarghan to inform Husain Khan Ming that, if he persisted in his rebellion, the consequences would be dire. When Hakim Khan returned home, he sent a messenger to Maimana informing the wali of the Amir's displeasure.[260] The threat of military action had the desired effect and in August two senior officials from Maimana arrived in Kabul, presented the Amir with a number of expensive gifts and given a cordial welcome by Sher 'Ali Khan.[261]

Despite this show of submission, Husain Khan Ming and his fellow-amirs were increasingly frustrated and angered by the Amir's uncritical support of Na'ib 'Alam Khan and the amount of clandestine correspondence between the malcontents and Afghan exiles in Bukhara increased. At the end of 1870 'Abd al-Rahman Khan boasted to a British native agent that he had received about five hundred letters

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[257] *CD*, 11-14 March 1870. *CD*, 14-16, 21-23 June, 5-7 July 1870, ESL:265, fols. 133-4, 263-4, 305-6.
[258] *CD*, 17-20 June 1870, ESL:275, fols. 259-60; *CD*, 21-23 June 1870.
[259] Wynne, *Narrative*, 123; *CD*, 21-23 June 1870.
[260] *CD*, 26-29 Aug. 1870, ESL:265, fols. 539-40.
[261] *Ibid. Political Status of Maimana*, 1872.

from various leaders in Afghan Turkistan asking him to intervene and promising that "the whole of Turkistan would rise in their favour, owing to the discontent caused by the rule of the Naib."[262] By November the discontent was such that Na'ib 'Alam Khan had to send reinforcements to Aqcha, following reports that a number of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's followers had crossed the river in the Andkhui area. A short while later a nephew of Daulat Beg of Andkhui was detained by the ruler of Qarqi as he returned to his homeland after paying a secret visit to Bukhara.[263] 'Alam Khan retaliated by warning the amir of Andkhui of the dangers of allowing his country to be used as a base for anti-government activities. The following spring Turkman tribesmen, encouraged by the Bukharan exiles, resumed their raids around Shibarghan and Sar-i Pul. So serious were these incursions that Hakim Khan asked 'Alam Khan to send more troops to the area.[264]

In spite of disturbances and the threat of a rebellion by Maimana, it would seem that the rulers of the Chahar Wilayat, and Husain Khan of Maimana in particular, did not receive sufficient promises of support from either 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, Muzaffar Khan or the Russians, to risk open warfare. Na'ib 'Alam Khan's evident eagerness to depose the native amirs of the Chahar Wilayat on the least pretext, and the exposure of Andkhui's intrigues, were further deterrents to rebellion. By the end of 1870, the na'ib's carrot-and-stick policy reaped dividends when Ishan Uraq, who had recently arrived in Maimana as an envoy for Bukhara, wrote to ask Sher 'Ali Khan's pardon and offered to send his two sons to Balkh and Kabul "for His Highness' consideration."[265] This tentative approach at reconciliation was sufficiently well received for the ishan to risk the journey to Kabul, where he was duly pardoned and even managed to reassure the Amir about Maimana's intentions.[266] Another sign of the improved relations between Kabul and Maimana came in the summer of 1871, when Na'ib 'Alam Khan sent Mustufi 'Abdullah Khan to "settle financial

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[262] "Abdool Rahman Khan," in *Central Asia*, 1869-72, i. See also *Hamid Khan Sarteep to Alum Khan*, n.d. 1870; *CD*, 4-8 Oct. 1870, ESL:265, fols. 770, 761-2.

[263] *CD*, 3 Oct. 1870; "Hamid Khan to Naib Alum," n.d (1870), *Appendix* V, *CD*, 8-10 Nov. 1870, ESL:265, fols. 939-40; *Naib Mahomed Alum Khan to Ameer*, n.d. (28 Sept.?) & 30 Sept. 1870, P:IFPC/438/11 nos. 348, 349 of Dec., fols. 461, 468.

[264] *CD*, 4-6 March 1871; *Naib Alum to Ameer*, n.d. (28 Sept.?) & 30 Sept. 1870; *Appendix*, *CD*, 10-13 March 1871, ESL:266, fols. 451, 455; *Statement on Political Status of Maimana*, 1872.

[265] *CD*, 15-17 Nov. 1870, ESL:265, fols. 1059-60; *CD*, 28 April-1 May 1871, ESL:266, fol. 1051.

[266] *CD*, 28 April-1 May 1871; *CD*, 4-7 Aug. 1871, ESL:267, fols. 315-17.

matters", probably to agree the amount of annual tribute that Husain Khan was expected to pay to the central treasury.[267] In August 1871 another Maimana envoy arrived in Kabul with a letter from Husain Khan, which contained further affirmation of loyalty. Sher 'Ali Khan, however, was beginning to lose patience with the amirs of Lesser Turkistan and publicly accused them of being "self-seeking" and untrustworthy.[268] Husain Khan's professions of submission were not believed and the sons of Hukumat Khan Ming, Dilawar Khan and Muzaffar Khan, who had been living in exile in Herat, were encouraged to cross the Murghab in an attempt to overthrow Husain Khan Ming. In August 1871, with the support of Aimaq tribesmen, the brothers crossed the frontier into Maimana, but their force was soon overwhelmed, both Dilawar and Muzaffar Khan being wounded in the battle.[269]

The following spring, Na'ib 'Alam Khan again insisted that all the amirs of the Chahar Wilayat attend his Nauroz audience and, when they turned up, insisted that they also went to Kabul. This year, however, Husain Khan not only sent his son, but Mirza Sadiq Khan, his maternal uncle, and Muhammad Tahir Mingbashi, chief of the Maimana tribes. Realising that the amirs might take the opportunity of their visit to Kabul to complain about his rule, Na'ib 'Alam Khan detained Muhammad Khan of Sar-i Pul in Afghan Turkistan, claiming that the issue of Afghanistan's northern borders required the beglarbegi's presence. The real motive, however, was that, of all the amirs of the Chahar Wilayat, Muhammad Khan was the most intelligent, cunning and persuasive, and the na'ib was afraid the beglarbegi would use his considerable diplomatic abilities to convince the Amir that it was time to appoint a governor who was more acceptable to the local population.[270] Despite this precaution, 'Alam Khan failed to secure Sher 'Ali Khan's consent to the deposing of Hakim Khan of Shibarghan on the grounds that the amir had failed to suppress Turkman raids in his territory. Reminding the na'ib of his solemn undertakings to the rulers of Afghan Turkistan during the civil war, the Amir admonished his governor that he should not try to "ruin" any of the local chiefs without strong evidence of their treachery (see Katib ii, 335).[271]

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[267] *CD*, 4-7 Aug. 1871.
[268] *CD*, 25-28 Sept. 1871, ESL:268, fol. 243.
[269] *CD*, 19-21 Sept. 1871, ESL:268, fols. 31-2.
[270] *CD*, 7-10, 14-17 June 1872, ESL:271, fols. 77-8, 81-2.
[271] Id.

When Sultan Ahmad Khan, son of Husain Khan Ming, Hakim Khan of Shibarghan and other amirs of Afghan Turkistan arrived in Kabul on 21 June 1872, they were again warmly received and entertained lavishly at State expense.[272] 'Abdullah Jan, the heir apparent, feasted them in his own house and arranged for a guided tour of the Bala Hisar and the magazine. When they finally left, after a stay of a fortnight, robes of honour and other gifts were showered upon them and Sultan Ahmad Khan was given a number of costly presents to take to his father.[273] A combination of the Amir's generosity and warmth of welcome, and fear of reprisals from Na'ib 'Alam Khan when they returned to Afghan Turkistan, meant that Hakim Khan did not raise the matter of the oppression in Balkh. Nor did he dare moot the scheme which the amirs had devised, probably under the guidance of Muhammad Khan of Sar-i Pul, to offer to pay an additional ten lakh of rupees in return for a renewal of the treaty of 1867 which guaranteed them a much greater measure of autonomy.[274] Thus, though the reception Husain Khan's son had received in Kabul was everything that could have been asked for, the refusal of the Amir to address the problem of his governor's tyrannical rule in Afghan Turkistan reinforced the impression that Sher 'Ali Khan was not prepared to redress their grievances. As far as the Wali of Maimana was concerned, the embassy to Kabul convinced him that it was pointless to pursue a negotiated settlement of his grievances any longer.

*The Fall of Maimana, 1872-1876*

Almost before the wali's son had returned to his own country, Na'ib 'Alam Khan moved swiftly to exploit Maimana's submission by sending the "Chief Auditor" (*Wakil al-Daula*) of Afghan Turkistan, Mir Husain Beg, to the area to assess the taxes and tribute due from what was still one of the richest territories of the province. In marked contrast to the fraternal feeling which evidently existed between Husain Khan and Amir Sher 'Ali Khan, 'Alam Khan brusquely informed the wali that if he failed to allow his officer to do his job, or was tardy in paying his dues, "the consequences to him might be unpleasant."[275]

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[272] *CD*, 25-27 June, 5-8 July 1872, ESL:271, fols. 267-8, 277-9.
[273] *CD*, 5-8 July 1872.
[274] *CD*, 14-17 June 1872; *CD*, 11-13 June, 2-4 July 1872, ESL:271, fols. 79-80, 271-2.
[275] *CD*, 17-19 Sept. 1872, ESL:271, fol. 862.

With the net closing around him, Husain Khan Ming suffered a further setback to his fortunes. Sadiq Beg Mingbashi, his maternal uncle and chief ambassador, who was accompanying the *Wakil al-Daula* to Maimana, succumbed to the plague of cholera, which was raging through Lesser Turkistan during the summer, before he was able to return home and report the outcome of his talks with the Amir.[276] Husain Beg, too, fell dangerously ill of the same disease and was carried to Shibarghan where he eventually recovered. Although Husain Khan appointed a brother of Sadiq Beg, Mirza Muhammad Rahim Khan, as his ambassador to the Afghan court, the death of his envoy was a great loss, for he had carried out his task with considerable ability.

We are not told whether Husain Khan Ming co-operated with Na'ib 'Alam Khan's tax officer in the revaluation of Maimana's revenues, but what slight evidence there is suggests that the death of Sadiq Beg and, later in the year, of the wali's wife, provided a convenient excuse for him to defer the visit of Na'ib 'Alam Khan's *wakil*.[277] The continued reluctance of Husain Khan to cede a measure of Afghan sovereignty gave rise to even more concern in Kabul during the winter of 1872/3, since Ya'qub Khan in Herat was also in a state of rebellion, having categorically refused to recognise 'Abdullah Jan as heir apparent to the Afghan throne, publicly stating that he "would neither submit to the Ameer's autograph nor would he allow any festivals or illuminations" to celebrate the announcement.[278] Indeed, it was reported that Ya'qub Khan was preparing to go to war with his father over the issue of the succession.[279]

One unexpected benefit of Ya'qub Khan's recalcitrance was the arrival in the Afghan capital of the two sons of Hukumat Khan Ming. The brothers had been expelled from Herat, probably because they were too closely associated with Sher 'Ali Khan, and made their way to Kabul, travelling via Afghan Turkistan, though presumably making sure they avoided Maimana. The presence of Dilawar Khan, pretender to the Mingid throne, and Muzaffar Khan, at the Amir's court, and

[276] *Ibid. CD,* 20-23 Sept. 1872; *Letter from a Correspondent at Tashkoorghan,* 16 Sept. 1872, ESL:271, fols. 881-2. In addition to cholera, there was also an epidemic of typhus. Throughout the summer of 1872, some eight thousand people, soldiers and civilians, were said to have died from one or other of these diseases in Lesser Turkistan, *CD,* 1-3 Oct. 1872, ESL:271, fols. 1129-31. According to Maitland 1888, ii, 53 the Almar district alone lost over 1,000 families between 1871-73 as a result of the cholera and famine.

[277] *CD,* 7-10 Feb. 1873, ESL:272, part 2, fols. 456-7.

[278] *Meshed Agent to Thomson,* 18 Jan. 1873, SLEP:176, fols. 249-51.

[279] *Meshed Agent to Thomson,* 3 Feb. 1873, SLEP:176, fols. 399-400.

their evident desire to revenge themselves on Husain Khan for his assassination of their father, could not have come at a better time and they received every encouragement from the Amir to pursue their claim.[280] For, by March 1873 Husain Khan Ming not only had not paid any revenue to Na'ib 'Alam Khan, but had even tried, unsuccessfully, to "persuade" the former Mingid-held outpost of Khairabad to secede from Afghanistan and place itself under Maimana's protection.[281]

Maimana's attempted subversion of Khairabad seems to have been the final straw for the Amir, who had adhered strictly to the terms of the 1867 treaty and resisted Na'ib 'Alam Khan's demands that the amirs of the Chahar Wilayat should be removed (Katib ii, 335).[282] Orders were issued to Na'ib'Alam to resolve the Maimana issue one way or the other and a show of force was staged in Mazar-i Sharif to make the point that military action against Maimana was being serious contemplated.[283] The two refugee Mingid princes were sent to Badghis to open up a second front against Husain Khan of the Murghab and to woo the Turkman and Aimaq tribes away from their allegiance to Husain Khan.[284] Hakim Khan of Shibarghan was ordered to Maimana, with instructions to bring the wali's confidential agent, Muhammad Rahim Khan, to Mazar-i Sharif to determine Husain Khan's real intentions.[285]

When the Maimana envoys arrived, in April 1873,[286] they presented Na'ib 'Alam Khan with a letter from Muhammad Husain Khan in which the wali stated categorically:

> Either openly or secretly I have always considered myself a feudatory of the kingdom of His Highness the Ameer and, as a well-wisher to you, I have no intention but to act according to your wishes and you can remain satisfied that I will continue to be your friend.[287]

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[280] *CD,* 10-13 Jan. 1873, ESL:272, part 2, fol. 362.

[281] *Correspondent at Tashkoorghan,* 3 April 1873; *CD,* 15-17 April 1873, ESL:272, part 3, fols. 655-6.

[282] *CD,* 9-12 May 1873, ESL:273, part 1, fol. 54; *CD,* 17-19 June 1873.

[283] *CD,* 15-17 April, 9-12 May 1873.

[284] *CD,* 22-24 July 1873, ESL:273, part 4, fols. 1023-4; *CD,* 21-24 Aug. 1874, ESL:277, fol. 74.

[285] *CD,* 15-17 April, 9-12 May 1873.

[286] *Meer Mahomed Hossain Khan, Meer of Maimana, to Naib Alum Khan,* n.d. 1873, ESL:273, part 1, fol. 59. The Maimana envoys are named as Mir 'Abd al-Karim Khan, Mirza 'Abd al-Faiz and "Ashak Atai."

[287] *Ibid.*

The genuineness of these sentiments, however, was called into question by the governor, who accused Husain Khan and the other rulers of the Chahar Wilayat of a clandestine correspondence with the refugees in Transoxiana and trying to secure Russian support for their cause.[288] If this was indeed the case, then Husain Khan and his fellow amirs were probably unaware that the recently-signed Granville-Gorchakov treaty, which recognised Maimana as part of Afghanistan, meant that Russia was highly unlikely to risk war with Britain by intervening in what the two European Imperial powers now regarded as a purely internal matter. The evidence suggests that, despite Maimana's profession of loyalty, the wali was not prepared to be governed by Na'ib 'Alam Khan. Instead, the envoys informed Sher 'Ali Khan that Maimana would only accept Afghan overlordship on condition that Ya'qub Khan in Herat be made responsible for the external affairs of the country. If the Amir insisted that Maimana come under Afghan Turkistan, then Husain Khan was determined to "fight to the last."[289]

In the end no military action was taken against Maimana during 1873, mainly because of the continued problems between Sher 'Ali and Ya'qub Khan, coupled with Na'ib 'Alam's preoccupation with the subjugation of Badakhshan, which tied up the army in Afghan Turkistan until the late autumn.[290] In the following spring, however, 'Alam Khan again ordered all the amirs of Afghan Turkistan to appear before him and sent them to Kabul to pay their respects to the Amir and congratulate 'Abdullah Jan on his recognition as heir apparent.[291] In the party which went to the Afghan capital were Mirza Muhammad 'Abd al-Rahim, envoy of the Wali of Maimana, Hakim Khan of Shibarghan, Muhammad Khan Saripuli, Rustam Khan of Mazar-i Sharif and "Mir Eshan Khan" (Ishan Uraq?) of Dehdadi.[292] Knowing that the amirs were planning to complain once more to the Amir about his oppressions, Na'ib 'Alam Khan decided to follow in their footsteps and obliged Daulat Khan of Andkhui and Sultan Murad Khan of Qunduz, who were now partisans of his governorship, to join him in the journey south.[293]

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[288] *CD,* 17-19 May 1873; *CD,* 23-26 May 1873, ESL:273, part 4, fol. 607; *CD,* 7-9 Oct. 1873, ESL:274, fol. 169.
[289] *Mirza Abbas Khan to Thomson,* June 1873.
[290] *CD,* 25-27 Nov., 26-29 Dec. 1873, ESL:274, fols. 317-8, vol. 275, fols. 164-5.
[291] *CD,* 26-28 May, 29 May-1 June 1874, ESL:276, fols. 11, 13.
[292] *CD,* 29 May-1 June 1874.
[293] *Ibid. CD,* 16-18, 19-22 June 1874, ESL:276, fols. 301-3.

Na'ib 'Alam Khan reached Kabul in the first week of June and tried to pre-empt the complaints of the amirs by arranging a secret interview with Sher 'Ali Khan in which he denounced the native rulers of Afghan Turkistan. Rustam Khan Mazari, Hakim Khan of Shibarghan and Muhammad Khan Beglarbegi, he informed the Amir, were covertly supporting Maimana's rebellion and, by implication, Ya'qub Khan of Herat, and it would be advisable not to let them return to Turkistan.[294] Sher 'Ali Khan, however, dismissed his governor's recommendations and the subsequent complaints of the amirs, ordering both sides to make up their differences.[295] A token reconciliation between the warring parties took place in order to appease the Amir, but did nothing to dispel the underlying atmosphere of distrust and hatred. Some of the Turkistani amirs even went as far as to say that they preferred exile in Kabul to living under Na'ib 'Alam Khan's government.[296]

The token reconciliation made not the slightest difference to Na'ib 'Alam Khan's style of government. When he finally returned to the northern province, he continued to oppress the local population causing the further exodus of thousands of families either to Herat or Bukhara,[297] and continued his military build-up in Mazar as a precursor to the invasion of Maimana.[298] The amirs of the Chahar Wilayat, disgusted with the Amir's refusal to redress their grievances, used the opportunity of the circumcision of a son of Husain Khan in Maimana to hold a secret council and plot a revolt in favour of Ya'qub Khan.[299] Sher 'Ali's cause was not helped when, in the autumn of 1874, Ya'qub Khan was imprisoned after he had come to Kabul under a promise of safe conduct (Hall, 15).[300] His arrest was followed soon afterwards by the flight of Aiyub Khan, Ya'qub Khan's son, to Persia.

The confrontation with Maimana, which had loomed for several years, finally came to a head the following year. In March 1875, Na'ib 'Alam Khan presented the Amir with further evidence that

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[294] *CD*, 19-22 June 1874; *CD*, 30 April-3 May 1875, SLEI:4, part 1, fols. 37-8.
[295] *CD*, 19-22 June 1874; *CD*, 23-25 June 1874, ESL:276, fols. 303-4.
[296] *CD*, 26-29 June 1874, ESL:276, fol. 305.
[297] *CD*, 4-6 May 1875, SLEI:4, part 1, fols. 41-2. Others were deported by the Na'ib, *CD*, 1-3 June 1875, SLEI:4, part 3, fols. 977-8. Early in 1875 a number of freed Persian slaves, estimated at between two and nine thousand families, arrived in Lesser Turkistan from Transoxiana and demanded passage to Khurasan. They were well organised and had elected leaders who had powers of life and death, *CD*, 19-23, 23-25 Feb. 1875, SLEI:3, part 4, fols. 931-4.
[298] *CD*, 15-17 June 1875, SLEI:4, part 4, fols. 229-30.
[299] *CD*, 30 June-2 July 1874, ESL:276, fol. 305.
[300] *MA*, 29 Oct. 1874, SLEP:176, fol. 1137.

Husain Khan and the amirs of the Chahar Wilayat were plotting with Afghan exiles in Bukhara. Ishan Khan (Ishan Uraq?) of Dehdadi was ordered to Maimana to demand payment of the long-overdue tribute and to force the issue of sovereignty with the wali. Husain Khan sent his son and 'Abd al-Rahim Khan, to wait on the Amir and offered to pay one lakh tangas and a hundred horses a year in tribute.[301] These terms were not acceptable to Sher 'Ali Khan, though the Kabul *wakil* does not record exactly how much the Afghans were demanding as the price of Maimana's submission.[302] Husain Khan's heir and Mirza Rahim Khan were initially well received in Kabul, but the Prime Minister (*Sadr-i 'Azam*) persuaded Sher 'Ali Khan that the wali could not be trusted and it was essential to "extract the thorn from the flesh."[303] Sultan Ahmad Khan Ming and Mirza Rahim Khan were placed under house arrest,[304] troops from Balkh and Herat were ordered to prepare to march against Maimana,[305] and Husain Khan was sent an ultimatum: admit an Afghan garrison or be attacked (Merk, 264). The Wali rejected the Amir's demands, confiscated all the property of his son and Rahim Khan, and wrote to the Russian military commander in Tashkent informing him of the situation, promising Maimana's help if Russia wished to send 'Abd al-Rahman Khan across the river to overthrow Sher 'Ali Khan.[306]

Military preparations continued in Afghan Turkistan and Herat throughout the summer of 1875 then, on 28 September, Na'ib 'Alam Khan and the *mustufi* of Herat set out in a co-ordinated and simultaneous advance against Maimana.[307] After a brief halt in Aqcha

[301] *CD,* 26 Feb.-1 March, 12-15, 19-22 March 1875, SLEI:3, part 4, fols. 934-5, 940-3; *CD,* 27-29 April 1875, SLEI:4, part 1, fols. 72-3; *CD,* 13-15 July 1875, SLEI:5, fol. 31. *CD,* 15-17 June 1875 says the son of the amir actually presented 30,000 rupees to Sher 'Ali Khan.

[302] *CD,* 15-17 June 1875 says the Amir expected one lakh rupees from Afghan Turkistan, but this may have been the amount of money being demanded from Maimana.

[303] *CD,* 23-24 June 1875, SLEI:4, part 4, fols. 1232-3; "*CD,* 18-24 June 1875," *Central Asia,* 1875-76, iv, 252.

[304] *CD,* 18-24 June 1875.

[305] *CD,* 23-24 June 1875; *CD,* 29 June-5 July 1875, SLEI:5, fols. 27-8.

[306] *CD,* 9-12 July 1875, SLEI:5, fols. 29-30; *CD,* 17-19 Aug. 1875, SLEI:6, fols. 226-7.

[307] *CD,* 20-23 Aug., 21-23 Sept., 5-7 Oct. 1875, SLEI:6, fols. 277-8, 300-1, 506. Estimates for the number of troops involved in the attack on Maimana vary considerably. Merk, 264, and Grodekoff, 39-40, 111 have 10,000 men with 20 guns. Maitland 1888, ii, 105 has 25,000 men, consisting of 6 cavalry regiments, 18.5 battalions of troops, 97 *bairaqs* of *khasadars* and Uzbek militia and cavalry, supported by 18 or 24 guns. In addition, he claims there were 2,000 Aimaq irregulars with the Herat troops. The *wakil* diaries for the period give the Balkh army's strength as 7 infantry and 4 cavalry regiments, 2,000 irregular horse with 20 guns. The Herat army was made up of 3 regiments of infantry, 1,000 irregular horse and 6 guns, *CD,* 19-21 Oct. 1875, SLEI:6, fol. 510. A later report, however, based on information provided by the governor of Bamiyan, who had been at the siege, claims the army's number as 11 'Turkistani' and 'Herati'

and Shibarghan, to await news of the progress of the Herat troops and to order Daulat Khan of Andkhui to reinforce Khairabad, Na'ib 'Alam Khan reached Sar-i Pul on 15 October (Maitland 1888, ii, 105).[308] From Sar-i Pul the Balkh army pushed on across the Mirza Wulang pass and into the Shirin Tagab valley, an area which seems to have been particularly discontented with Husain Khan's rule.[309] Progress along the valley was difficult for the army and a road had to be cut for the passage of the heavy artillery (Merk, 264). Resistance from the population of the Zarshui district further delayed their progress and two villages in the area were burnt to the ground in retaliation (Maitland 1888, ii, 102). It was not until 28 October that the Na'ib's force finally arrived before the walls of Maimana.[310]

By the time that the Afghan army arrived, Husain Khan was more or less completely isolated. If he had anticipated help from across the Amu Darya in the shape of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, backed up with Russian money and arms, he was bitterly disappointed. The other rulers of the Chahar Wilayat were in no position to oppose the advance of Na'ib 'Alam Khan, for they had been forced, against their will, to accompany the governor on the campaign. Apparently, there was also internal opposition to Husain Khan's rule—possibly a faction who supported Dilawar Khan—for when the wali heard of the Afghan army's advance, he expelled a number of individuals whose loyalty was suspect.[311] In other ways, though, Maimana was well prepared for a siege. Reports stated that they had accumulated two years' supply of food and acquired, by various means, several pieces of ordnance of European manufacture.[312]

Despite the lack of support from surrounding rulers, Husain Khan Ming had no intention of surrendering without a fight, even boasting to the invaders that "from ancient times no governor had been able to bring Maimena(*sic*) under his own authority."[313] Indeed, when the Afghan forces reached the city they discovered that Husain Khan had

infantry regiments, 4 cavalry regiments, 500 *jezailchis* and 26 guns accompanied by 1,000 irregular Herat horse (Aimaq?). Reinforcements of 2 regiments of infantry and 4,000 irregular horse with 2 guns were expected, *CD*, 21-23 Dec. 1875, SLEI:7, fols. 72-4. Katib, ii, 335 gives the figures as 15 regular infantry regiments, seven regular cavalry regiments, Uzbek forces, irregular horse and artillery.

[308] *CD*, 19-21, 22-25, 26-28 Oct. 1875, SLEI:6, fols. 510, 761-2.

[309] *CD*, 19-21 Oct. 1875. Daniyal Khan, amir of Gurziwan, a relative of Husain Khan, had joined 'Alam Khan (Amir Khan & Shahzada Taimus, 233).

[310] *CD*, 9-11 Nov. 1875, SLEI:6, fols. 765-8.

[311] *CD*, 21-23 Dec. 1875.

[312] *Ibid.*

[313] *Ibid.*

strengthened the defences considerably by the addition of a second ditch inside the curtain-wall. Maimana, which had already earned a reputation amongst those Afghans who had fought with 'Abd al-Rahman Khan for its strength and the bravery of its inhabitants, was thus even more difficult to subdue than it had been in 1868.

To demonstrate their resolve, when the forces from Herat and Balkh arrived before the walls and tried to approach too close, the defenders opened up on the Afghans with a withering fire from their artillery and small arms. This salvo was so effective that Na'ib 'Alam Khan had to withdraw his men out of range and ordered that a proper investment of the city be undertaken.[314] Whilst the besiegers dug in around the city, the course of the Ab-i Maimana, which supplied the water for the town's wet ditch, was diverted[315] and raiding parties were sent into the outlying districts to bring them under Afghan authority and to secure supplies.[316] Amongst other provisions, some twenty thousand sheep, presumably part of the property that Husain Khan had left in the charge of Turkman tribesmen, were seized, a welcome addition to the troops' rations, for winter was approaching and little headway was being made with the investment.[317]

Despite the highly optimistic reports which 'Alam Khan sent to Kabul, and his claim that he would reduce Maimana within a month (Maitland 1888, ii, 105),[318] the Afghan campaign quickly ran into trouble. By November Na'ib 'Alam had to ask Sardar 'Abdullah Khan Nasiri to call up more troops from Herat.[319] Na'ib 'Alam Khan tried to tighten the noose around Maimana by encircling the city. The Balkh army was made responsible for investing three sides of the city, whilst the Herat troops were stationed in the fourth quarter opposite the 'Arab Khana gate. This plan seems to have taken some time to

[314] *Ibid. Mirza Abbas to Thomson*, 7 Dec. 1875, SLEP:178, fols. 45-7; *CD*, 9-11 Nov. 1875; *CD*, 16-18 Nov. 1875, SLEI:6, fols. 767-8.

[315] *CD*, 16-18 Nov. 1875 claims the river ran through the city. The diversion of the Ab-i Maimana would not have affected significantly the amount of water available in the city, since Maimana's drinking water comes from wells. Reports that water was short, like many other claims by the governor of Balkh, cannot be believed. The wet ditch, which was the first line of defence and lay between the Afghans and the city walls, however, was undoubtedly filled from the Maimana river and one reason for diverting the river may have been to try and drain this moat.

[316] *CD*, 9-11 Nov. 1875; *CD*, 19-22 Nov. 1875, SLEI:6, fols. 768-9.

[317] *CD*, 12-15 Nov. 1875, SLEI:6, fols. 766-7; *CD*, 21-23 Dec. 1875.

[318] *CD*, 9-11 Nov. 1875. Maitland says the delay was due to the Amir ordering 'Alam Khan to give Husain Khan a chance to surrender. However, the Kabul *wakil* reports indicate that the real reason was the strength of Maimana's defences and the resistance that the Maimanagis offered whenever the Afghans tried to storm the walls.

[319] *CD*, 16-18 Nov. 1875. *CD*, 23-25, 26-29 Nov. 1875, SLEI:6, 769-70, vol. 7, fols. 65-6.

implement for, during the early part of the siege, movement in and out of the city was still possible.[320] Mining operations were commenced but, because of the sharp fire which greeted anyone approaching too near the walls, the tunnels had to be started from much further away than usual. This was both time-consuming and increased the possibility of directional errors.

By December, two mines were ready: one under the Tora Bakhti Gate and bastion in the west of the city, another under the Darwaza-yi Takhtapul in the southern quarter.[321] When the Tora Bakhti mine was successfully exploded, Na'ib 'Alam Khan ordered his men into the breach and forced the defenders to retreat to their second line of defence. It was probably during this assault that the Afghans secured control of the Talash Khan hills, for from this point on we read of Afghan artillery being directed onto the civilian areas of the town (Merk, 265; Maitland 1888, ii, 105).[322] A short while later, on 21 December, the Takhtapul Gate was blown up and four Kabul and two Qandahar regiments were sent into the breach in a determined effort to seize control of the city walls adjacent to the citadel.[323] The large numbers of troops sent against the defenders ensured that this assault was more successful than that on the Tora Bakhti Gate. A number of defenders were killed and a bastion was seized, providing a platform from which the Afghan artillery was able to bombard the citadel. However, an attempt to push home this advantage, by attacking the walls of the *arg* and crossing its ditch, was repulsed.[324]

Following the battle of the Takhtapul Gate, Husain Khan Ming sent an envoy to 'Alam Khan offering to submit to Afghan authority on the basis of earlier treaties with Afzal Khan and Sher 'Ali Khan, which allowed the Mingid dynasty to continue as autonomous rulers of Maimana.[325] Na'ib 'Alam rejected the terms and ordered his troops to prepare to take the city by storm. His frustration at Maimana's stubborn resistance, combined with his army's inability to reduce the city to servitude despite its superior equipment, was turned against the other amirs of the Chahar Wilayat, who had been forced to remain

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[320] *CD*, 16-18 Nov. 1875.
[321] *CD*, 11-13 Dec. 1875, SLEI:7, fols. 69-70.
[322] *Ibid.*
[323] *CD*, 26-29 Nov., 11-13, 21-23 Dec. 1875. *CD*, 7-9, 17-20 Dec. 1875, SLEI:7, fols. 68-9, 71-2. 'Abd al-Ra'uf Nafir, *interview*, 1985 on the authority of Haji 'Omar Arlat, who was present at the siege.
[324] *CD*, 21-23 Dec. 1875; *CD*, 4-6 Jan. 1876, SLEI:7, fol. 626.
[325] *CD*, 21-23 Dec. 1875.

in the na'ib's camp throughout the course of the siege. Hakim Khan of Shibarghan, Rustam Khan Mazari and Beglarbegi Muhammad Khan of Sar-i Pul, who had all acted, at one time or another, as mediators between the Afghan governor and Husain Khan, had strongly urged 'Alam Khan to reconfirm the 1867 treaty rather than pursuing the siege to its bitter and sanguine end. Their advice, however, went against the grain, for 'Alam Khan was determined to humble Husain Khan and secure the revenues of this rich territory for himself, and he accused the amirs of colluding with, and even spying for, the wali. He had all of them arrested and sent to Kabul in chains, though he subsequently kept Muhammad Khan Beglarbegi a prisoner in Afghan Turkistan, for fear that he would win the Amir's confidence and inform him about the real state of affairs in the province (Katib ii, 335-6).[326]

The removal of the most influential amirs of the Chahr Wilayat was another important milestone in the Afghanisation of the appanage, since it marked the end of amirid rule in Sar-i Pul and Shibarghan. Daulat Khan and the sons of Rustam Khan continued to act as titular heads of Andkhui and Mazar-i Sharif respectively, but their *rôles* were merely ceremonial. Real power lay with the local Afghan Resident, who was able to call on the support of an Afghan garrison also stationed in the district capital. However, if Na'ib 'Alam Khan thought arresting the amirs would frighten Maimana into submission, he was very much mistaken. Indeed, his actions stiffened the resolve of Husain Khan Ming, who now had no illusions about the real intentions of Na'ib 'Alam Khan were he, or his people, to fall into his hands.

The breakdown of the negotiations and the failure of the Kabul and Qandahar troops to take Maimana, forced Na'ib 'Alam Khan to prepare for a protracted winter siege. The Afghan troops were ordered to build whatever shelters they could and collect as much fuel as possible from the surrounding countryside. The orchards and woods surrounding Maimana, a feature which had pleasantly surprised European travellers such as Edward Stirling, were ruthlessly felled until the whole area was denuded. In their place, crude, wooden huts sprung up everywhere. Fodder and supplies were in short supply too, and foragers were forced to scavenge far and wide to find the bare necessities which 'Alam Khan's army needed.[327]

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[326] *CD*, 9-11 Nov., 17-20, 21-23 Dec. 1875.
[327] *CD*, 21-23 Dec. 1875. *CD*, 4-6, 7-13 Jan. 1876, SLEI:7, fols. 628-30.

The Herati sappers were put back to work and given until the middle of January to lay new mines.[328] The people of Maimana, however, aware that digging operations had been renewed, placed piles of millet seed along the city walls in order to detect any vibrations produced by the sappers and dug their own counter-mines.[329] Whilst his sappers were hard at work, Na'ib 'Alam Khan "amused" himself by offering rewards to the gunners on the Talash Khan hill who were able to score direct hits on targets in the town which he personally selected (Maitland 1888, ii, 105; Merk, 264). This daily bombardment seems to have been an attempt to undermine the defenders' morale, for most of the gunfire was directed into the residential parts of the city rather than against the walls or the citadel. Civilian casualties, however, were far fewer than might have been expected, for the population took refuge in their stone-built cellars, which normally were used as cold stores during the heat of the summer (Merk, 265).[330]

Perhaps nothing more exemplifies Na'ib 'Alam Khan's vindictiveness towards the population of Lesser Turkistan than the attack which he ordered on 7 January 1875. Besides being a Friday, the Muslim day of rest and prayer, it was the first day of 'Id al-Azha or, as it is more commonly known in Afghanistan, 'Id-i Qurban, the festival which commemorates Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son and one of the high days of the Muslim ceremonial year. 'Alam Khan, knowing that the defenders would be occupied with their spiritual well-being rather than military activities, exploded a mine which had been run under the goldsmiths' and artillery-makers' houses, killing or seriously wounding a number of people, including, according to one report, a brother of Husain Khan Ming.[331] A week or so later, on 16 January, there was a further, unauthorised raid on the walls of the city by a group of twenty Herati soldiers, which achieved nothing but the capture of a small number of firearms and the deaths of a few defenders, who were duly decapitated.[332] Preparations for another major

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[328] *CD*, 4-6 Jan. 1876.

[329] Abd al-Ra'uf Nafir from Haji 'Omar Arlat.

[330] *CD*, 14-17, 21-24 Jan. 1876, SLEI:7, fols. 631, 633. The latter report says 1,000 rounds a day were fired into the city, but this must be an exaggeration, for it is hard to imagine that 'Alam Khan could have sustained such a bombardment, or that such a vast quantity of shells were available to him. Possibly this was the total number of shells that had been expended in the siege up to the middle of January 1876. Even so, 1,000 rounds of artillery must have caused considerable damage to both the defences, bazaars and residential parts of the city.

[331] *CD*, 25-27 Jan. 1876, SLEI:8, fol. 93.

[332] *CD*, 18-20 Jan. 1876, SLEI:7, fols. 628-9; *CD*, 1-3, 11-13 Feb. 1876, SLEI:8, fols. 95-6, 98-9.

assault, however, were slow, partly due to successful counter-mining operations, which led to the loss and explosion of at least one of the Afghan mines, and partly because the besiegers were suffering severely from exposure to the snow, damp and cold.[333] Small groups of defenders also harassed the besiegers by making night raids on the Afghan encampments and stealing tents and guns.[334] This may explain why, in the middle of the month, Na'ib 'Alam Khan was forced to postpone the planned assault until the end of January.[335]

On 23 January, Husain Khan, realising that another attempt to storm the walls was imminent, wrote to 'Alam Khan asking him to send Beglarbegi Muhammad Khan of Sar-i Pul to him to discuss terms for a peaceful submission. Instead, Na'ib 'Alam informed the wali that if he had anything to say he should come himself to the Afghan camp. On 26 January, a delegation of eight or nine elders from Maimana, led by Ishan Bedil, came out of the city and met with General Faiz Muhammad Khan, but Na'ib 'Alam continued to insist that Husain Khan submit to him in person. Unwilling to risk being sent in chains to join his fellow amirs, Husain Khan refused, the negotiations were broken off and Na'ib 'Alam ordered his men to prepare themselves for an assault against the Nimazga Gate in the western quarter of the city.[336]

On Saturday, 29 January a mine was exploded which destroyed part of the city wall, killing several important individuals, including two sons of 'Abd al-Rahim Khan, the maternal uncle of Husain Khan and Maimana's ambassador to Afghanistan. The Kabul regiments were ordered into the breach,[337] but despite the loss of some one hundred Uzbeks dead, the Afghan regiments were thrown back with little to show for their efforts except a number of captured muskets. Na'ib 'Alam, though, anxious to please the Amir and save his own face, claimed to have killed several hundred defenders. The truth was that "the enemy" continued to hold out "strongly."[338]

[333] *CD*, 21-24 Jan, 1-3 Feb. 1876. *CD*, 4-10 Feb., 10-13 March 1876, SLEI:8, fols. 97-8, 631.
[334] *CD*, 18-20 Jan. 1876; *MA*, 8 Feb. 1876, SLEP:178, fols. 205-6.
[335] Id. *CD*, 21-24 Jan. 1876.
[336] *CD*,4-10, 11-14 Feb. 1876. The latter report says that Husain Khan had been "summoned" to the negotiations by 'Alam Khan who sent Muhammad Khan of Sar-i Pul to the city. Since the beglarbegi had recently been arrested it seems hardly credible that 'Alam Khan would allow him to enter Maimana and risk his defection. I have preferred *CD*, 4-10 Feb. 1876 which says it was Husain Khan who took the initiative. The negotiations appear to have been conducted over a number of days (23-28 January) and may have been one reason why the assault was postponed.
[337] *CD*,11-14 Feb. 1876; *CD*, 15-17 Feb. 1876, SLEI:8, fols. 99-100.
[338] Id. *CD*, 11-14 Feb. 1876 says that 8 or 9 firearms had fallen into Afghan hands, along with

In early February another attempt was made to reduce the city, this time on the curtain-wall surrounding the Maimana citadel. During this assault, Afghan troops succeeded in destroying one of the *arg*'s bastions where some of Husain Khan's artillery had been located. A bazaar, or residential area, which lay between the outer walls and the citadel, in the southern part of Maimana, also fell into the attackers' hands and was looted. The defenders fell back to the citadel itself, which presented a far more formidable obstacle for the besiegers than the city walls.[339]

The failure of these piecemeal attacks and the continued sternness of resistance forced Na'ib 'Alam Khan to realise that the only hope he had of taking Maimana was to prepare carefully for a simultaneous assault from all quarters, and a further month was wasted as more mines were run under the walls of the citadel. By the middle of March, some twenty charges had been laid and Na'ib 'Alam Khan gave orders for the final assault to commence on the morning of 14 March (20 Safar, 1293), provided that there was no rain or snow falling.[340] In an attempt to lull the defenders into a sense of false security, two days before the real attack began, Na'ib 'Alam Khan put on a show of force outside the walls of the citadel. A number of false mines were exploded and two or three regiments were ordered into the breaches with instructions not to press home their attack but to make the defenders believe they had beaten back their attackers. After two days of such goings on, the people of Maimana were duped into believing that the Afghan bolt had been shot and, in their over-confidence, they dispersed from the breaches as soon as the enemy regiments had left them. Na'ib 'Alam, however, observing where the Uzbek soldiers concentrated their strength, was able to ascertain the location of Husain Khan Ming and make plans to prevent the wali escaping during the confusion of the final assault.[341]

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around the same number of prisoners. *CD,* 15-17 Feb. 1876 which is probably based on 'Alam Khan's official reports, claims 3-400 people were killed by the mine and 100 yards of wall had been blown up. However, *CD,* 11-14 Feb. 1876 is probably more accurate when it claims, on the basis of intelligence provided by Hakim Khan of Shibarghan, that only 150 men were killed and 100 wounded with total estimated casualties inflicted on the defenders up to that point being 5-6,000, though this latter figure may well be a considerable over-estimation. Cf. *CD,* 25-28 Feb. 1876, SLEI:8, fol. 634, in which 'Alam Khan claimed only 51 of his men and 8 officers had been killed. The Kabul *wakil* stated that "the reports of the Naib cannot be believed," but Sher 'Ali and his closest advisers continued to trust the governor's reports.

[339] *CD,* 22-24 Feb. 1876, SLEI:8, fol. 631.

[340] *CD,* 3-6, 14-16, 17-20, 24-27 March, 1876, SLEI:8, fols. 634, 637-8, 980-1.

[341] *CD,* 24-27 March 1876.

Having lulled his enemy into a sense of false security, at dawn on the morning of the 14 March the daily pattern of mine explosions, attack and retreat was repeated. However, on this day, once the defenders had dispersed, 'Alam Khan ordered a general assault. A series of false mines were detonated and the defenders, caught by surprise, rushed to the defence of the walls. Twenty-one other mines were then exploded simultaneously at different locations and the Afghan forces poured into the unprotected breaches from all sides. Despite being caught off guard, the defenders quickly regrouped and fought with great bravery and ferocity (*Gazetteer* (1882) i(ii), 590-1; Maitland 1888, ii, 105-6; Merk, 264).[342] For some two hours the outcome of the battle hung in the balance and one section of the Maimana army, led by Husain Khan in person, even managed to repel three separate assaults by the Herat troops on the 'Arab Khana gate (Maitland 1888, ii, 105-6).[343] However, whilst the wali and his men were distinguishing themselves in one section of the defences, the Kabul regiments and other troops succeeded in forcing the breaches in another part of the wall and poured into the town from two other sides. As the attackers rushed through the bazaars and residential quarters, killing and plundering as they went, Husain Khan with his closest supporters retreated to the citadel where he managed to hold out for a further two days (Maitland 1888, ii, 105-6; Merk, 264).[344]

From the comparative safety of the Maimana *arg*, Mir Husain Khan looked on helplessly as Na'ib 'Alam Khan's men went on an orgy of plundering and looting. In the general massacre which followed, as many as fifteen thousand men, women and children were reckoned to have perished (Grodekoff, 39-40; *Gazetteer* (1882) i(ii), 590-1; Merk, 264).[345] Some defenders, realising that it was all over, chose to put their wives and daughters to death themselves rather than see them dishonoured by the Afghan soldiery.[346] So great was the

[342] *CD*, 17-20, 24-27 March 1876; 'Abd al-Ra'uf Nafir from Haji 'Omar Arlat.

[343] *CD*, 24-27 March 1876.

[344] *Ibid.*, which claims 'Alam Khan held his troops back from pillage until Husain Khan had surrendered, but this is not borne out by other contemporary accounts.

[345] *CD*, 17-20, 24-27 March 1876; 'Abd al-Ra'uf Nafir from Haji 'Omar Arlat. Estimates for the number of people killed in the slaughter vary from 4,000, *CD*, 24-27 March 1876; *MA*, April 1876, SLEP:178, fol. 339, to 18,000 (Grodekoff, 39). I have followed Merk's account which is based on interviews with eye-witnesses of the siege conducted less than ten years later. Interestingly, Maitland's account, which is the most detailed we have of the siege of Maimana, does not mention the embarrassing details of the Maimana massacre. After all, the conquest of Maimana was a direct result of British and, to a lesser extent, Russian, Central Asian border policy as enshrined in the Granville-Gorchakov agreement.

[346] *MA*, April 1876. 500 women and girls are said to have died in this way.

slaughter that corpses were still being carried out of the city for burial several days later.[347] Husain Khan Ming, rather than stand by and see his people exterminated, offered to give himself up if Na'ib 'Alam Khan swore not to put him to death and to cease the rape of his city. This was agreed, and on 16 March the Wali of Maimana surrendered and was sent in chains to Kabul. Having achieved his object and taught all amirs of Lesser Turkistan a terrible lesson about the price that would be exacted if they rebelled, Na'ib 'Alam ordered the killing to stop, though the pillaging of homes and bazaars was allowed to continue until the whole three days had run its course (Merk. 264).[348]

When, finally, the Afghan soldiery had exhausted themselves, 'Alam Khan appointed Mir Akhur Ghulam Muhammad Reza Khan, the son of Akhur Muhammad Reza Khan, as the first Afghan governor of Maimana. Three Qandahar and two Herat infantry battalions, along with cavalry and artillery, were assigned to garrison the city.[349] Thus, after centuries of Chingizid amirid rule, Maimana, the last independent Uzbek state south of the Amu Darya, fell into Afghan hands, and though other members of the Mingid dynasty were later to hold office in Maimana, from that day forth, all real hope of regaining their independence was gone.

[347] *CD*, 24-27 March 1876.

[348] 'Abd al-Ra'uf Nafir from Haji 'Omar Arlat. See also *CD*, 24-27 March 1876. *MA*, April 1876 says seven Hindu money-lenders were also put to the sword and their property plundered.

[349] *CD*, 17-20 March 1876; *KD*, 7-10 July 1876, SLEI:9, fols. 493-4.

CHAPTER EIGHT

# AFGHAN RULE AND DILAWAR KHAN, 1876-1884

> He was the lawful ruler of Afghanistan, but a Scientific Frontier was required, and we proclaimed that Sher 'Ali's Kingdom might be devastated because he was only an Asiatic Ruler, and we, a civilized and Christian nation (Opposition MP, 1878; Daniel, 375).

## *Governors of Maimana; the Problem of Chronology, 1876-1880*

Na'ib 'Alam Khan's conquest of Maimana marked another watershed in the history of the Balkh appanage, since for the first time an Afghan Amir could claim to rule the whole of the former Chingizid appanage. True Mingid amirs had co-operated and even submitted to the Afghans, but all previous attempts to impose their authority by conquest had failed and both Barakzai and Sadozai had been obliged to recognise the Mingid's right to govern without interference from Kabul or Herat. From 1876 onwards, however, this was no longer the case. For the first time, Maimana was garrisoned by Afghan troops[1] and a governor appointed by the Amir ruled in the place of the family of Haji Khan Ming. Even though, a few years later, the Mingids re-established themselves, the authorities in Kabul were no longer willing to recognise their right to govern without the presence of government troops and an Afghan Resident. Consequently, the conquest of 1876 marked the beginning of the end of Maimana's self-governing status.

British histories, *Gazetteers*, etc. written in the 1880s, claim that immediately following Na'ib 'Alam's seizure of Maimana, Dilawar Khan Ming b. Hukumat Khan was appointed as Wali of Maimana under Afghan tutelage. Contemporary sources, however, reveal that this was not the case. In fact, Dilawar Khan did not commence his rule until the beginning of 1880 and Na'ib 'Alam Khan appointed an Afghan to govern the newly-acquired territory. The reason for this confusion in the 'official' histories is that in the build-up to the Second Anglo-Afghan War [1878-1880], the flow of intelligence reports

[1] *CD*, 28-30 March 1876, SLEI:8, fols. 981-2. New cantonments were built for the Afghan troops away from the fort, probably in the same location as they are found today in the SE sector of the city.

on Afghan Turkistan reaching India was reduced to a trickle, a consequence of deteriorating relations between Afghanistan and Britain. The Political and Secret Department files in the India Office for the period 1877-1879, therefore, give us only a very sketchy picture of the situation in northern Afghanistan between these dates. Even those reports which did filter through were often mere rumour and different sources frequently contradicteed each other. In trying to piece together events in the area at this important period of Afghanistan's history, one is forced to rely on reports from agents in Mashhad, Baluchistan, Dera Isma'il Khan and Gilgit.

The situation improved very little during the period of the Cavagnari Mission [July-Sept. 1879] and the subsequent occupation of Kabul by British forces under General Roberts. Indeed, one gets the impression that the British military authorities in Kabul had little interest in accumulating accurate information about the situation north of the Hindu Kush. This complacency is remarkable when one considers that there were rumours of Russian spies operating in Lesser Turkistan and that, following 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's return to Balkh, the sardar had proclaimed a *jihad* against the invaders. Although an agreement was finally reached between Roberts and 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, it was not immediately apparent that the Afghan prince was willing to negotiate with the British or would agree to a peaceful hand-over of power to himself. Had 'Abd al-Rahman Khan not been so well disposed, his presence in the north could have spelled disaster for the British army of occupation which was already under severe pressure from the south and east (see Soboleff, 185). This hiatus in the intelligence reports means that it is impossible, at present, to be authoritative about the names and dates of the various governors of Maimana, following the replacement of Akhur Ghulam Muhammad Reza Khan in September 1877.

Unfortunately, the Kabul *wakil* diaries are at odds with the usually reliable history of Merk who claims that a certain Habibullah Khan Barakzai, brother of Shahghasi Sherdil Loynab Khan (governor of Balkh from August 1876 to July 1878), ruled in Maimana until the succession of Dilawar Khan (Merk, 264). The 1882 edition of the *Gazetteer of Afghanistan* (i(ii), 591) claims Maimana was ruled by Mir Muhammad 'Ali Khan, a cousin of Husain Khan Ming. No other source ever mentions this individual and it is certain that he never existed, let alone ruled Maimana. We know that in July 1877, Na'ib 'Alam's appointee, Ghulam Reza Khan, faced with growing unrest as a

consequence of the withdrawal of government troops to Qandahar and Kabul to meet the threat of a British invasion,[2] applied to Amir Sher 'Ali Khan for a transfer to Khurram and was "removed."[3] A certain Munshi Muhammad Khan was given control of the area, temporarily,[4] but he was soon replaced by a more permanent governor, though conflicting evidence makes it very difficult to determine the names of Muhammad Khan's successors. By the summer of 1877, the security situation had become so bad in Afghan Turkistan that Sher 'Ali Khan contemplated sending his son, Ibrahim Khan, to manage affairs in the province, though this idea was later shelved.[5] In November a report from Herat says that the governor of Maimana was Shahghasi Loynab Sherdil Khan,[6] though he was actually governor of Afghan Turkistan. In the middle of the following year, the *Peshawar Diary* claims Sardar Ghulam Mohai al-Din Khan, son of Khwaja Nur of Jalalabad,[7] ruled in Maimana, when many other sources make it clear that he was in charge of the military establishment at Sar-i Pul.[8]

Despite the inconsistent and contradictory nature of this information, these reports may have had some foundation in fact. Given the need for a concentration of forces in the south, Sher 'Ali Khan may have decided to place Maimana under Balkh's authority, rather than Kabul's, with the military affairs of the province being supervised by the garrison commander at Sar-i Pul. We know that this was the situation after 1884, even though there was still a garrison in Maimana

[2] In March 1877 the Maimana garrison was given as: 4 regiments of infantry, 2 troops of horse artillery, 1 mule and 1 bullock battery. In Jan. 1877 the agent at Dera Isma'il Khan reported that General Parwaz Khan had been sent from Maimana to Herat with 4 regiments and 5 guns whilst only 2 infantry and 2 cavalry regiments were sent to replace them from Afghan Turkistan. In May of that year, the *KN* reported more troop movements, this time from Maimana to Kabul. By late May or early June 1877, a Persian agent who had been to the area, reported the strength of the Maimana garrison as only 2 Herat and Kabul regiments. In August/Sept. General Parwaz Khan was forced to march to Maimana with 5 regiments of infantry (3 Herat, 2 Qandahar) to suppress an uprising. In all 8 regiments had to be sent to quell the disturbances. See, *KD*, 9-11 Feb. 1877; *Diary Forwarded by the Herat News-writer*, 20 June 1877, SLEI:13, fols. 173-4, 1269-70. *DIKNL*, 25 Nov. 1878; *KN*, Sept., Oct. 1877; *ECN*, Sept. 1877, SLEI:17, fols. 18-20, 169-84, 456, 467-8. *DIKNL*, 2 Jan. 1878, SLEI:18, fol. 13; *KN*, April, May, July, Aug. 1877, SLEI:20, fols. 549 (p. 31), 551 (pp. 3,4,24,29), 555 (pp. 9,20). *MA*, 5 April 1877; *Report of a Persian Govt. Secret Agent*, 7 July 1877, SLEP:179, fols. 141-2, 545.

[3] *KN*, July, Sept. 1877.

[4] *KN*, Sept. 1877.

[5] *Ibid.*

[6] *Letter from a Correspondent at Herat to the Meshed Agent*, 12 Nov. 1877, SLEP:179, fol. 926; *QN*, 28 Feb. 1878, SLEI:18, fol. 137.

[7] *PCD*, 20 July 1878, SLEI:19, fol. 153; *Statement of Babu Jan*, 5 April 1880, SLEI:25, fols. 233-5.

[8] He was the individual who was primarily responsible for the assassination of Muhammad Sarwar Khan (see below).

(Merk, 265) and it could well be that 'Abd al-Rahman Khan merely revived the system of military administration which had been established under Sher 'Ali Khan. It is only in November 1878, or nearly a year after Ghulam Reza's removal, that we are able to state with any certainty that Maimana was governed by Colonel Muhammad Akbar Khan, nephew of Shahghasi Sherdil Khan (Grodekoff, 104), though it is impossible to say exactly when this individual took up this appointment. In all probability he had been sent to Maimana following the appointment of the *shahghasi* as governor of Afghan Turkistan.

On the basis of the rather thin evidence available, we conclude that Munshi Muhammad Husain's term as governor of Maimana was very brief and he was removed towards the end of 1877, following the appointment as governor of Balkh of Shahghasi Sherdil Loynab Khan,[9] who sent a relative of his to take control of the area. He made the military commander in Sar-i Pul responsible for overseeing what remained of the Afghan garrison in Maimana. These arrangements, however, did not last very long. The withdrawal of troops from Turkistan weakened the tenuous grip that the Amir had on Maimana and led to outbreaks of revolt. By October 1879, Sher 'Ali Khan was contemplating fleeing to Balkh to continue the fight against the invading British. In order to secure a safe haven for himself, the Amir opened negotiations with the exiled amirs of the Chahar Wilayat, or their heirs, and offered to let them return and resume control of affairs in their respective homelands provided they swore to raise troops to fight the British. Amongst those amirs who agreed to these terms were Husain Khan Ming of Maimana, Muhammad Khan Beglarbegi of Saripul, Hakim Khan of Shibarghan, the sons of Ishan Uraq, and Rustam Khan of Mazar-i Sharif.[10]

In December 1878, Sher 'Ali fled north, leaving his son, Ya'qub Khan as his Regent in Kabul. Once the Amir reached Afghan Turkistan, he released the former rulers of the province and sent them to their own countries to raise men and money for his cause. Husain Khan, possibly accompanied by Muhammad Khan Beglarbegi, returned to Maimana where, despite undertaking to allow the Afghan garrison safe passage back to Balkh, rallied the local Uzbek militia, attacked the Afghan cantonments and killed a number of the Afghan troops.[11] The surviving regiments were forced out of the citadel and

[9] The family came from Tirin, some 80 miles north of Qandahar (Kakar 1971, 61).

[10] *PCD*, 7 Aug., 22 Oct. 1878, SLEI:19, fols. 408-10, vol. 20, fols. 67-8.

[11] *GD*, 18-25 Feb. 1879, SLEI:22, fols. 163-4; *DBEK*, 10-16 Aug. 1879; *Statement of Ata Mo-*

retreated in disorder and confusion to Mazar-i Sharif, leaving their property behind to be plundered by the victorious Uzbeks.[12] This probably took place just prior to the death of Sher 'Ali Khan in February 1879. About the same time Herat troops in Maimana were reported to be "deserting" and returning to Herat, though they were compelled to return almost as soon as they reached that city. However, they were unable to gain access to Maimana proper "because the inhabitants would not allow them."[13] Doubtless the presence of Husain Khan Ming in Maimana was the reason for this failure. A few weeks later, Muhammad Khan Beglarbegi attacked Afghan-held Sar-i Pul, having marched eastwards up the Shirin Tagab.[14] This provides further evidence for the belief that Maimana was back in Mingid hands by this time.

Husain Khan's reign in Maimana, however, lasted a matter of weeks, from approximately February to May 1879. At the end of August 1879, the Herat news-writer reported Maimana was once more in the hands of Herat troops under the leadership of 'Abdullah Jan Khan Nasiri, who was acting as military governor there.[15] Since the report records that the sardar had asked Amir Ya'qub Khan to relieve him, it seems that he had already been in Maimana for some time. The Afghan control over the area, however, was extremely tenuous and 'Abdullah Jan Khan complained about the unruliness of the Herat troops, who had not been paid and had threatened to mutiny and even to put him to death.[16] In August 'Abdullah Jan Khan went to Herat to beg for help and cash to satisfy his troops' demands,[17] but instead, Ya'qub Khan removed more troops from Maimana for the defence of Qandahar.[18]

Matters went from bad to worse once news of the British occupation of Kabul and Ya'qub Khan's abdication reached Maimana. A ull-scale mutiny of the Herat regiments followed. The town was looted

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*hamed Khan Barakzai ... of Char Deh*, n.d. 1880, SLEI:23, fols. 341-2, vol. 25, fols. 605-7. *GD* claims that the garrison was destroyed, but this is not borne out by the other reports.

[12] *TNC*, rcvd. 12 March 1879; *TFJ*, April 1879, SLEI:22, fols. 17-8, 683-9. *DIKNL*, 6 June 1879, SLEI:22, fol. 1451 reports an encounter between troops of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan and Sher 'Ali's forces in Maimana in which the former was "victorious." This is palpably untrue and is probably a garbled version of Husain Khan's attack on the Afghan garrison.

[13] *HN*, 16 May 1879, SLEP:181, fol. 757.

[14] *DBEK*, 10-16 Aug. 1879.

[15] *HN*, 12 Aug. 1879, SLEP:181, fols. 757-9.

[16] *HC*, 26 Aug. 1879, SLEP:181, fols. 1325-7. The same situation prevailed in other parts of Afghan Turkistan.

[17] *Ibid. Ayub Khan to Amir Yakub Khan*, n.d. 1879, SLEI:23, fols. 714-5.

[18] *Telegram from Maj. St. John to Foreign Secretary*, Simla, 15 Sept. 1879, SLEI:23, fol. 612.

and the troops and left "en masse" for Herat, forcing their commanders to go with them.[19] On 1 December 1879, 'Abdullah Jan Khan and General Faiz Muhammad Khan arrived in Herat with their mutinous troops (Katib ii, 347).[20] Almost as soon as they arrived in the city, these regiments began to cause even more trouble for Aiyub Khan than they had done in Maimana (see below).

Dilawar Khan Ming was living at that time in Herat and Aiyub Khan, wishing to retain some control over Maimana but unable to enforce his will directly, sent the Mingid Pretender to rule in his name.[21] Dilawar Khan, the oldest surviving son of Hukumat Khan, had a long-standing blood feud with Husain Khan Ming who had brutally assassinated his father. Husain Khan, for his part, had been living in, or around, Balkh following his brief reign in the early part of 1879. General Ghulam Haidar Khan, Ya'qub Khan's newly-appointed governor of Afghan Turkistan, possibly aware of Aiyub's plans, encouraged Husain Khan to regain control of Maimana and thus to thwart Aiyub's plans to extend his power across the Murghab.[22]

Dilawar Khan, being nearer to Maimana than Husain Khan, reached his homeland first and took control of the city, though not, it seems, without a fight.[23] Husain Khan, realising he had been beaten in

[19] *Ata Mohamed Khan*, 1880.

[20] *JSAFF*, 22, 31 Dec. 1879, SLEI:23, part 1, fols. 153-4, part 2, fols. 371-5. The *wakil* diaries refer to Faiz Muhammad as Faizullah Khan. I have preferred the name used by *Siraj al-Tawarikh*. According to the reports, 'Abdullah Jan Khan was summoned by Aiyub Khan, but given the hostility which at that time existed between the Herat and Kabul troops stationed in Herat, Aiyub Khan would hardly have wished to have another rebellious and unruly force join him in the city, even though he was planning an attack on Qandahar. As it was, the returning troops from Maimana nearly overthrew him (see text, below). Given the appalling state of discipline of these troops, the Herat correspondent is surely right when he reports that the troops "abandoned" Maimana after a mutiny which led to the looting of Maimana, cf. *TLH*, 9 Dec. 1879, SLEP:181, fols. 1593-*6; Telegram, Maj. St. John to Foreign Secr.*, 26 Dec. 1879, SLEI:23, fols. 1790-1.

[21] *Narrative of Munshi Abdul Rahim*, 1880, SLEI:25, fols. 927-30 claims Dilawar Khan "escaped" from Herat, but *MANL* is undoubtedly more correct in claiming he was "dispatched" by Aiyub, though it is wrong when it states that Dilawar Khan was the son of Husain Khan, *MANL*, 17 June 1880; *HN*, 16 Feb. 1880, SLEP:182, fols. 75-82, 185-9.

[22] *Ata Mohamed Khan*, 1880. *Munshi Abdul Rahim*, 1880 says the two rivals left "simultaneously" for Maimana; other sources say that Husain Khan was sent from Kabul. *JSAFF*, 19-25 Oct. 1879, SLEI:23, fol. 1339 claims Husain Khan escaped from prison in Kabul, cf. *PCD*, 23 Nov. 1880; *Afzal Khan to Secr. to Govt., Calcutta*, 16 Nov. 1883, SLEI:26, part 7, fol. 1933, vol. 38, fol. 766. I have preferred the accounts of 'Ata Muhammad Khan and Munshi 'Abd al-Rahim, since they were both in Afghan Turkistan when these events took place. Their reports are supported by *KN*, 16 Nov. 1883, SLEI:38, fols. 765-7 (margin note) which states that Husain Khan left Kabul in 1880, "in order to regain Maimana but returned after a short time without having reached the country."

[23] *HN*, 16 Feb. 1880. The extent of the fighting, or the nature of the opposition encountered by Dilawar Khan, is not clear from the source.

the race to Maimana, dared not risk an attack on the city proper; instead he made his base in northern Maimana, probably in the vicinity of Khairabad.[24] Though Husain Khan remained in the area for some time, he made no headway against Dilawar Khan and eventually retired to Kabul, where he awaited a more favourable occasion to regain possession of his country. From March 1880, the *wakil* diaries and intelligence reports begin to mention Dilawar Khan as the ruler of Maimana (Soboleff, 288ff.; Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 177).[25]

According to the evidence available for the period March 1876-February 1880, we conclude that the governors and rulers of Maimana were as follows:

*Afghan Governors and Mingid Rulers of Maimana, 1876-1884*

| | |
|---|---|
| March 1876-Sept. 1877 | Ghulam Muhammad Reza Khan. |
| Sept. 1877-Nov. 1877 | Munshi Muhammad Husain Khan. |
| Nov. 1877-Feb. 1879 | Colonel Muhammad Akbar Khan, for Shahghasi Loynab Sherdil Khan, governor of Balkh. |
| Feb. 1879-May 1879 | Husain Khan Ming b. Mizrab Khan. |
| May 1879-Nov. 1879 | Sardar 'Abdullah Jan Khan Nasiri, for Ya'qub Khan. |
| Dec. 1879-Feb. 1880 | Civil war between Husain Khan and Dilawar Khan. |
| Feb. 1880-May 1884 | Dilawar Khan Ming b. Hukumat Khan. |

## *Maimana and the Fall of Na'ib 'Alam Khan, 1876*

Having established a tentative chronology for the governors and rulers of Maimana up to 1880, we return to events following the sack of Maimana in 1876 and the arrest of Husain Khan Ming.

Despite the encouragement that Dilawar Khan Ming and his brother, Muzaffar Khan, had had from Sher 'Ali Khan prior to 'Alam Khan's conquest of Maimana, the Mingid Pretender was disappointed in any hopes he had entertained of being recognised as the new governor of the region. Na'ib 'Alam Khan had taken the opportunity afforded by Husain Khan's 'rebellion' to discredit the system of

[24] *Munshi Abdul Rahim*, 1880. *Ata Mohamed Khan*, 1880, claims both brothers had been made rulers, but given the animosity that evidently existed between the two families, this is highly unlikely. No other source mentions these two as joint rulers. According to Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 183 Husain Khan was imprisoned until 1884 when he was released by Ishaq Khan, governor of Afghan Turkistan.

[25] *HN*, 17 March 1880, SLEP:182, fols. 291-2 says Dilawar was the "independent" ruler of Maimana, whilst *KN*, 7-13 March 1880, SLEI:25, fols. 41-4 mentions Dilawar Khan in the context of alleged correspondence between Maimana and 'Abd al-Rahman Khan; see also *DQR*, 22-31 May 1880, SLEI:25, fols. 1373-6.

devolved government, which the Amir had upheld faithfully since 1867, and had deposed the amirs of the Chahar Wilayat whose power he had most cause to fear. Daulat Beg of Andkhui was thus, briefly, the sole representive of amirid government in the Chahar Wilayat (Grodekoff, 38-40).

Once Maimana was in Na'ib 'Alam Khan's hands, he had no intention of allowing any Uzbek to rule a country whose revenues were worth some six lakh tangas a year.[26] Not content with placing Maimana in the hands of an Afghan governor, Na'ib 'Alam forcibly resettled the *dasht* regions of Khairabad and Daulatabad with Turkmans from Sar-i Pul (Maitland 1888, ii, 160, 544) and deported some of the women of Maimana to Herat.[27] The Amir further weakened the region by ordering Maimana's defences to be levelled and the ditch filled so that the city would "be exposed like a village;"[28] a short-sighted policy which was later to rebound on the Afghans during the Panjdeh crisis.[29]

Following the sack of Maimana and the capture of Husain Khan, the wali's life hung by a thread, for some of the Amir's counsellors advised that he be put to death.[30] Indeed, some rumours in Kabul claimed that Na'ib 'Alam Khan had secretly disposed of Husain Khan shortly after his surrender.[31] The wali's life, however, was spared and he was sent in chains to Kabul along with the rest of the amirs of the Chahar Wilayat who had been stripped of their power in December the previous year. Na'ib 'Alam Khan arrived in Kabul in June 1876 and was honoured with a seventeen gun salute which must have increased his sense of triumph over the Turkistani amirs, many of whom were in his train.[32] But the moment of his greatest triumph soon turned sour and proved to be his undoing and downfall.

Na'ib 'Alam Khan, though resenting the power wielded by the amirs, had developed a particular animosity towards Rustam Khan of Mazar-i Sharif, who had written secretly to Amir Sher 'Ali Khan about the maltreatment he and his fellow amirs had received whilst prisoners of Na'ib 'Alam Khan and accused the governor of

[26] *NKVT*, 25 June 1889, SLEI:57, fols. 1011-2.
[27] *HNL*, 17 June 1882, SLEI:33, fol. 469.
[28] *KD*, 28-30 March 1876.
[29] Some rebuilding took place during the reign of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, but today little is left of the fortifications, except for a short length of wall behind the prison in the west of the city, Town Plans 1-4 and Plates I-IV; Reis 1974.
[30] *CD*, 28-30 March 1876; *KD*, 25-27 April 1876, SLEI:9, fols. 25-7.
[31] *KD*, 25-27 April 1876.
[32] *KD*, 9-12 June 1876: SLEI:9, fols. 325-6.

appropriating to himself the greater part of the booty from the Maimana campaign.[33] Despite Na'ib 'Alam Khan's attempt to discredit the amirs when, at the end of May, the captives began to arrive in the Afghan capital, Sher 'Ali Khan showed them every kindness, improved the conditions of their captivity and ordered their chains to be struck off. Husain Khan Ming and his fellow amirs were given an allowance and accommodated in the homes of members of the Royal family or other notables. Though they remained under restrictions, the Amir allowed them to receive visits from their families, who had been housed in separate quarters, provided they sought his permission first.[34]

The leniency with which the Amir treated the amirs of Lesser Turkistan, and Husain Khan in particular, did not augur well for Na'ib 'Alam Khan, for it indicated that Sher 'Ali Khan had finally woken up to the true state of affairs in Balkh. Until 1875, the Amir had refused to listen to any criticism about the Na'ib's rule, either from the amirs of Afghan Turkistan on their annual visits to the Afghan capital, or from members of his own council, mainly because 'Alam Khan had ensured that the revenues of the province were sent to Kabul on a regular basis. However, at the turn of the year, Sher 'Ali Khan became more convinced that Na'ib 'Alam Khan was misappropriating funds and he decided to order his governor to present an account of his stewardship during his New Year visit to Kabul. The confrontation was avoided when Na'ib 'Alam Khan, realising what was in the Amir's mind, produced letters from his deputy which claimed that 'Abd al-Rahman Khan had been invited to invade Lesser Turkistan by Husain Khan of Maimana and was allowed to return to the north immediately without the matter of fiscal mismanagement being raised.[35] Subsequently the reports from Balkh were proved to be false and it was suspected that 'Alam Khan had arranged for them to be sent so

[33] *KD*, 16-18 May, 20-22, 27-29 June 1876, SLEI:9 fols. 40-2, 331-3, 486-7.

[34] *KD*, 26-29 May, 30 May-1 June, 13-15 June 1876, SLEI:9, fols. 320-2, 326-7. The annual allowances were: Husain Khan Ming, Rs. 20,000; Rustam Khan Mazari, Rs. 7,000; Hakim Khan of Shibarghan, Rs. 15,000. Muhammad Khan of Sar-i Pul was still a prisoner in Afghan Turkistan. Husain Khan was lodged in the house of the heir apparent, and his family (with 100 retainers) were placed in the fort ("killa") of Saiyid Jan, a trader, in "Isheoka." The family of Muhammad Khan was put up in Behmaru, on the outskirts of Kabul. Rustam Khan's family was originally ordered to Ghazni, but when Rustam Khan himself arrived in Kabul they appear to have been retained in the capital, cf. *KD*, 16-18 May, 20-22 June 1876; *KD*, 5-8 June 1876, SLEI:9, fols. 37-8.

[35] *KD*, 27-29 April 1875.

he could have an excuse to escape any embarrassing questions about his conduct of affairs in Turkistan.[36]

On his return, Na'ib 'Alam Khan angered the Amir further by confiscating the property of Colonel Qazi Muhammad Jan, an old servant of Sher 'Ali Khan's, and depriving him of his cavalry command. The Afghan ruler's vexation at his governor's actions provided a suitable opportunity for senior cabinet officials, including the *Sadr-i 'Azam*, to represent to the Amir that 'Alam Khan's regime was both oppressive and unpopular. Finally convinced that Na'ib 'Alam Khan was guilty of excesses and that he had extorted "vast sums" of money from the local population,[37] the Amir secretly appointed Shahghasi Sherdil Khan to replace him. However, since Na'ib 'Alam had not yet sent some twelve lakh of rupees, being the outstanding revenues of Afghan Turkistan for that year, Sher 'Ali Khan decided to bide his time until such time as the cash was received and Na'ib 'Alam Khan once more came to Kabul and within his grasp.[38]

It would seem that, in spite of the victory at Maimana, Sher 'Ali Khan was deeply distressed at the rape of the town and Na'ib 'Alam Khan's imprisonment of the amirs of the Chahar Wilayat, all of whom had played an important part in securing the throne of Kabul for him. The secret communication from so exalted a religious personage as Saiyid Rustam Khan, who had officiated at the shrine of Mazari Sharif when the Amir had made his treaty with the amirs in 1867, was further reason for Sher 'Ali Khan's distancing himself from the Na'ib's actions. The kind reception afforded the amirs by the Amir encouraged one after the other to pour out their complaints about Na'ib 'Alam Khan's despotic behaviour and his "violent and imperious" temperament (Maitland 1888, ii, 43).

Foremost amongst Na'ib 'Alam Khan's accusers was Husain Khan Ming himself. In a secret submission to the Amir, his officials listed all the "cumulative" fortune of the Mingid dynasty, estimated to equal four crore (forty million) rupees, which Na'ib 'Alam Khan had appropriated for his own family's use following the sack of Maimana.[39] To stave off the rising tide of criticism, Na'ib 'Alam presented Sher 'Ali Khan with a few of the more spectacular items of booty from the Maimana campaign, including two ornamental swords, one of which, of

[36] *Ibid.* "KD, 11-17 June 1875," in *Central Asia*, iv, 1875-76, July 1875, p. 1.
[37] *KD*, 29 Sept.-2 Oct. 1876, SLEI:10, part 1, fols. 353-4.
[38] *KD*, 11-17 June 1875.
[39] *KD*, 20-22, 27-29 June 1876.

Persian origin, had been given to Yar Muhammad Khan of Herat by the Shah of Persia who, in turn, had presented it to Mizrab Khan Ming. There was also a large gun that had been captured during the siege which was of either Russian or some other European origin,[40] nine thousand gold tilas and three lakh of rupees.[41]

The money, however, failed to mollify the Amir, who questioned his governor closely about the finances of Afghan Turkistan and specifically about the whereabouts of the fortune of the Wali of Maimana. Na'ib 'Alam Khan denied that he had found "anything of great value" in the city, claiming that Husain Khan had sent all his movable property to Bukhara prior to the siege and that when Maimana fell he was not even able to find a suitable horse to present to the Amir.[42] Despite these protestations of innocence, the investigation continued, aided by Husain Khan's officials. Faced with imminent disgrace, the confiscation of his property, or an even worse fate, Na'ib 'Alam Khan resorted to the ploy which had worked so successfully before and produced letters, this time from the governor of Maimana, urging him to return north post haste to quell extensive Turkman raids which were allegedly taking place in the territory. The Amir, though, refused to believe these reports and Na'ib 'Alam Khan was denied permission to leave the Afghan capital. A few days later, the sardar was placed under surveillance and officers were appointed to seize his property and locate the whereabouts of the Maimana treasure.[43] At the end of July 1876 it was publicly announced in Kabul that Na'ib 'Alam Khan had had his leg badly broken by a kick from a horse and, subsequent to this accident, had contracted typhus and died on the night of 30 July from the combined effect of his injuries and fever (Katib ii, 336).[44] Some years later, Major Maitland of the Afghan Boundary Commission made his own enquiries about the Na'ib's death. According to his information, the truth behind 'Alam Khan's sudden death had been deliberately hushed up. What had really happened was that two grooms (*syces*), acting on orders from the Amir, attacked

[40] *KD*, 9-12 June 1876.

[41] *KD*, 13-15 June 1876. However *KD*, 20-22 June 1876 states it was 2,000 tilas and 16,000 rupees, though this may have been a further present given by Na'ib 'Alam to stave off embarrassing questions about his finances.

[42] *KD*, 9-12, 27-29 June 1876.

[43] *KD*, 7-10 July 1876. The raids were said to have been carried out by the people of "Khwarism" who had fled from the Russians into "Kalal and Jabal ... the independent tracts in the neighbourhood of Maimana." The Kabul *wakil* believed that this report had been deliberately fabricated by 'Alam Khan.

[44] *KD*, 21-24, 28-31 July 1876, SLEI:10, part 1, fols. 109-10, 111-3.

Na'ib 'Alam Khan with wooden staves whilst he was on a visit to the stables, thus making his assassination appear to be an accident. Though the attackers failed to kill the governor, his thigh was so badly broken that he died from his injuries a few days later (Maitland 1888, ii, 43).

The body of Na'ib 'Alam Khan was sent for an honourable burial in the shrine at Mazar-i Sharif,[45] a place for which he had a special veneration and had spent some of his ill-gotten fortune on restoring (McChesney 1991, 271-2).[46] His family, however, continued to withhold information about the whereabouts of his treasure and were persecuted rigorously.[47] The Na'ib's property in Maimana and throughout Afghan Turkistan was seized[48] and some of the personal effects of Rustam Khan of Mazar were discovered amongst it and returned to the *mutawalli*. Nothing further is recorded about the fate of the Mingid dynasty's fortune and it would seem that the bulk of it was never recovered.[49]

Na'ib 'Alam Khan was not the only ruler of Afghan Turkistan to die during 1876. Probably sometime during the latter part of this year, and certainly before 1878, Rustam Khan of Mazar-i Sharif was murdered by his nephew whilst still an exile in Kabul. He left at least two sons to carry on his line, though as far as the family's rule of Mazar-i Sharif was concerned, the family of Shuja' al-Din never again appears to have held the post of *mutawalli* (Grodekoff, 40).[50] Hakim Khan, the

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[45] *KD*, 28-31 July 1876. However, Katib ii, 336 says that the body was buried in Kabul in front of the Darwaza-yi Khuni ('Bloody Gate') of the Bala Hisar and a wall of baked brick was erected around it, where it was soon covered over with rubble and its location forgotten. It may have been that, in keeping with the cover-up of the Na'ib's assassination, Sher 'Ali Khan publicly announced that 'Alam Khan was to be buried at Mazar-i Sharif but then ensured that the body was quietly disposed of and the site covered over. Given the conflicting nature of the two accounts and in the absence of any confirmatory evidence, I have preferred the contemporary report of the Kabul *wakil*.

[46] Within 5 years of arriving in Mazar-i Sharif, 'Alam Khan had acquired, or built, a considerable amount of property, some of the revenues of which he designated in *waqf* to support a 33-room *madrasa* on land which he owned. Amongst the endowments were a mill in, or on, the Harim Bagh; 25 shops in the Rasta-yi Shahi bazaar; a 56-room *sarai* west of the shrine; a *hamam* and ten shops in the Bazar-i Gosfand (Sheep Bazaar); 5 shops in the Rasta-yi 'Attari; 8 shops at the entrance to the 'Ala al-Din Khan Sarai and 9 shops in the Rasta-yi Baqqaliha (McChesney 1991, 289). Apart from demonstrating his affection for the shrine, this is some indication of the amount of wealth that 'Alam Khan accumulated during his time as governor of Balkh.

[47] *KD*, 29 Sept.-2 Oct. 1876.

[48] *KD*, 15-17 Aug. 1876, SLEI:10, part 1, fols. 119-20.

[49] *KD*, 29 Sept.-2 Oct. 1876.

[50] McChesney 1991, 307-15 argues that there were two branches of the Ansari clan disputing the right to the *mutawalli*-ship of the shrine.

uneasy ally of Na'ib 'Alam Khan and, by 1876, an old man, also died in Kabul shortly after he had been deposed (Grodekoff, 40). One of his daughters was married to 'Abd al-Rahman Khan. The deaths of these amirs, coming as they did so soon after the conquest of Maimana, removed at a stroke some of the most influential amirs of Afghan Turkistan and weakened even further the 'nationalist' cause.

*Balkh and the Fall of Sher 'Ali Khan, 1877-1880*

In the aftermath of Na'ib 'Alam Khan's disgrace and death, the Amir publicly confirmed the appointment of Shahghasi Loynab Sherdil Khan as governor of Balkh.[51] As soon as he arrived in the north, the new governor set out to consolidate his hold over the newly-annexed areas of the Chahar Wilayat and during the autumn and winter of 1876, officials were sent into the region to assess the revenues and taxes.[52] Maimana appears to have presented more problems in this regard than the other principalities, for its accounts were still not ready by the end of the year,[53] though Ghulam Reza Khan did send a contribution of five thousand tilas to Kabul; whether this was an instalment of the taxes, or some other payment, is unclear.[54]

By 1877, affairs in Afghanistan were increasingly being overshadowed by the threat of a second Anglo-Afghan War. In 1876, Lord Lytton, the new Viceroy of India and an ardent advocate of the "Forward Policy," had requested the Amir's permission to send an ambassador to Kabul to negotiate a new treaty which was intended to bring Afghanistan into an even closer dependence on Britain and to offset the continued advances of Russia in Khwarazm and Transoxiana. Another concern was Sher 'Ali Khan's correspondence with the Russian Governor of Central Asia, General Kaufmann, who had replied to the Amir's friendly letters in terms which implied threats to Afghanistan's security (Fraser-Tytler, 140). Although Sher 'Ali Khan had forwarded copies of some of this correspondence to the Viceroy, Lord Lytton decided to exploit the Russian threat to force the Amir into allowing British officers to be stationed in Afghanistan to observe Russian movements across the Amu Darya. Sher 'Ali Khan, however, refused to countenance such an arrangement, declaring,

[51] *KD*, 28-31 July 1876. He held the Turkic title of *Ishik Aqasi* (Katib ii, 336).

[52] *KD*, 15-18 Sept., 17-19 Oct. 1876, SLEI:10, part 1, fols. 348-9, 577; *KD*, 8-11 Jan. 1877, SLEI:12, part 2, fol. 512.

[53] *KD*, 8-11 Jan. 1877.

[54] *KD*, 17-19 Oct. 1876.

rightly, that he would not be able to guarantee the officers' security and was afraid if he granted this concession to the British, the Russians would demand a similar arrangement, thus drawing Afghanistan into the battle for supremacy in Asia between the two European super-powers.

The Viceroy, however, would not be denied and Sher 'Ali was eventually forced to agree to a meeting with British representatives in Peshawar to discuss the matter. From 30 January to 19 February 1877, the Afghan Ambassador and Sir Lewis Pelly met in a series of indecisive meetings, during which the Afghans listed numerous grievances against the British. Whilst his envoy was in Peshawar the Amir, realising that war with Britain was a probability, moved troops from Afghan Turkistan to reinforce Herat, Qandahar and Kabul and other regiments were brought from more distant parts of the northern provinces to Maimana in case they too were needed to march south at a moment's notice.[55] News of these troop movements merely increased the Viceroy's suspicion of the Amir and the negotiations in Peshawar were broken off with the disagreements between Britain and Afghanistan unresolved (Fraser-Tytler, 141).

In early March 1877, Britain presented the Afghan ambassador with an ultimatum: unless the Amir allowed British officers to enter Afghanistan, he would be regarded as an 'unsatisfactory neighbour' and all treaties, other than that of 1855, would be regarded as having been abrogated. Fortune did not favour the Afghans at this crucial juncture in their history, for Sher 'Ali Khan's envoy died before a reply could be received and, despite reassurances from the Amir that his replacement would be empowered to accept the British terms in full, the Peshawar conference was arbitrarily closed and the native news-writer in Kabul recalled to India (Dupree 1978, 407). Thus, ironically, at a time when Britain most needed reliable intelligence from Afghanistan and Turkistan, the only individual who was in a position to provide them with this information was withdrawn in a fit of pique. As a result, instead of the regular stream of weekly intelligence issuing from Kabul, rumours and bazaar gossip, which filtered down the trade routes to Peshawar, became the basis for deciding policy over the ensuing months (Soboleff, 185).

As the relations between Afghanistan and Britain deteriorated, Sher 'Ali Khan imposed a special *jihad* tax to finance the inevitable confrontation. Afghan Turkistan was as yet recovering from the

[55] *DIKNL*, 22 Jan. 1877; *KN*, May, Aug. 1877.

effects of famine, civil war and cholera, but remarkably Maimana still managed to contribute thirty thousand tilas towards the war effort.[56] The imposition of this tax, and the method of its collection, was the last straw for the ordinary people of Afghan Turkistan and during 1877 many thousands fled from the Chahar Wilayat to join Turkman tribes in the independent territory between Badghis and Merv.[57] They then began to raid the settled agricultural lands around the Murghab and in Badghis, thus increasing the misery of those who had stayed behind.[58] In September 1877 Ghulam Reza Khan, governor of Maimana, unable to contain these raids and faced with a rebellion which he was unable to suppress, applied for a transfer and was relieved of his post.[59]

Reports of these raids filtered through to India in very exaggerated form. The Turkmans and other amirs of Afghan Turkistan, it was claimed, were corresponding with 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, while Afghan exiles in Transoxiana, encouraged by the Russians, were actively encouraging the revolt.[60] The Amir too was alarmed at such rumours and ordered all Russian traders to leave Afghan Turkistan and return back across the Amu Darya.[61] Husain Khan Ming, still a prisoner in Kabul, was suspected of fomenting these attacks in Maimana and the windows and balconies of the house where he was under arrest were sealed to prevent his attempting to escape.[62] By October, reports reaching India alleged that Russian envoys had arrived in Kabul and were negotiating cantonment facilities in Maimana and Herat in exchange for territorial concessions.[63] At the turn of the year it was rumoured that Russia, with Sher 'Ali Khan's consent, was extending railway and telegraph lines as far as Maimana, which convinced some observers that Russia was planning "mischief" in Afghanistan with the collusion of Sher 'Ali Khan (Marvin 1881, 362).[64]

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[56] *KN*, May 1877; *Correspondent at Herat to Meshed Agent*, 12 Nov. 1877; *DIKNL*, 25 Nov. 1877. Maimana also sent 100 horses for the artillery, but they were rejected as unsuitable.

[57] *ECN*, Sept. 1877.

[58] *KD*, 9-11 Feb. 1877; *ECN*, Sept. 1877; *KN*, Sept. 1877; *MA*, 5 April 1877; *KN*, Oct. 1877.

[59] *ECN*, May, Aug. 1877.

[60] *Confidential Notes taken from a Sayad of Khanegonum*, 10 March 1878, SLEI:18, fols. 503-4.

[61] *KN*, May 1877.

[62] *KN*, Oct. 1877; *PCD*, 2 April 1878, SLEI:18, fols. 636-7.

[63] *KN*, Oct. 1877.

[64] *NGAJ*, 26 Feb. 1878; *Unofficial Confidential Communication*, 5 June 1878, SLEI:18, fols. 501-2, 983-4.

In January 1878, the Maimana area experienced one of the largest Turkman raids for several years; indeed, with the number of raiders estimated at between four and six thousand men,[65] it was tantamount to an invasion. Initially, the raiders planned to attack Kushk, north of Herat, but prompt action by the garrison there, and the arrival of the first heavy snows of winter, saved the region from devastation.[66] Faced with determined resistance and adverse weather conditions, the Turkmans turned away towards Badghis and the Murghab, plundering and enslaving the population as they went.[67]

News of their advance reached the depleted Maimana garrison in good time, doubtless brought by the terrified inhabitants who had fled from before the Turkmans to seek shelter within the city walls. Urgent messages were sent out to the other garrisons at Sar-i Pul, Shibarghan and even as far away as Mazar-i Sharif.[68] The Hazhda Nahr regiment at Mazar-i Sharif was ordered to relieve Maimana and managed to reach the town in two days (Grodekoff, 115-6) where they combined with the hastily-assembled force of three cavalry and three infantry regiments. Under the command of General Parwaz Khan, they marched out down the Qaisar road (Grodekoff, 115-6).[69] Two stages from Maimana, the Afghan force were warned that the Turkmans, laden with booty and captives, were approaching. As Parwand Khan's men were outnumbered, he decided to set an ambush and one regiment of irregular cavalry was ordered to advance and to lure the Turkmans into the trap.[70] The Turkmans, deceived into thinking that these horsemen were all that the beleaguered Afghans could muster at short notice, attacked and overwhelmed the cavalry, who turned and fled back up the Maimana road. As the Turkmans rushed after them, General Parwaz Khan, who had hidden his men and six artillery pieces out of sight, poured grape shot into the flanks of the enemy with devastating effect. In the carnage that followed some two thousand Turkmans were killed, wounded or taken prisoner, five hundred unfortunate captives liberated and a certain "Nehang," a Turkman amir notorious for instigating such raids, was captured.[71] In

[65] *TLH*, 16 Jan. 1878, SLEP:180, fols. 83-7; *MA*, 26 Jan. 1878, SLEP:180, fol. 81 says 4,000 horsemen accompanied by foot solders and 700 camels. A garbled version of this incident, via Qandahar, stated there were "3,500 Barwamatis of Turkey," *QN*, 28 Feb. 1878.

[66] *TLH*, 16 Jan. 1878; *MA*, 26 Jan. 1878; *QN*, 28 Feb. 1878.

[67] *TLH*, 15 April 1878, SLEP:180, fols. 335-7

[68] *MA*, 26 Jan. 1878; *KN*, 28 Feb. 1878.

[69] *TLH*, 16 Jan. 1878. The actual site of the battle is not given.

[70] *Ibid.*

[71] *Ibid. MA*, 26 Jan. 1878; *TLH*, 16 Jan. 1878. The other sources merely report a great number

recognition of the bravery of the Hazhda Nahr regiment (it seems that they were the regiment sent to lure the Turkmans onto the Afghan guns), the Amir changed their name, and gave them the dubious honour of guarding the Maimana-Bala Murghab road from future Turkman incursions (Grodekoff, 114-5). Cross-border Turkman raids in Badghis, however, continued despite this defeat and the main caravan route continued to be unsafe well into the 1880s (Grodekoff, 120).[72]

The size of the raid, requiring as it did reinforcements to be sent from all over Afghan Turkistan, gave rise to reports that 'Abd al-Rahman Khan had attacked and seized Maimana,[73] which in turn fuelled British anxieties about what was going on beyond the Hindu Kush. By the summer of 1878 all kinds of wild rumours were reaching India. The Peshawar Agent claimed that Sher 'Ali Khan had agreed that Russia could build roads from Samarkand to Kabul and Balkh to Herat.[74] Other reports claimed that the Russians were planning to present the Afghan ruler with an ultimatum which, if rejected, would result in an invasion by 'Abd al-Rahman Khan who had agreed to cede Balkh and Badakhshan to Russia in the event of the success of this enterprise.[75] Another source reported that the Amir had already agreed to Herat and Maimana becoming Russian protectorates, whilst 'Abd al-Rahman Khan would be allowed to govern Balkh.[76] In August, the Mashhad Agent claimed that Russian surveyors attached to the Stolietov mission, then in Kabul, had visited Maimana and other parts of Afghan Turkistan.[77] These garbled and often exaggerated reports, duly recorded by various agents on Afghanistan's borders, reinforced the prevailing prejudices about Sher 'Ali Khan's relations with Russia. Indeed, one gets the impression reading such news-letters,

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of dead and captives. In *HNL*, 27 Feb. 1884, SLEI:40, fols. 365-7 there is a somewhat cryptic reference to "Nehang," a Sariq Turkman who was a friend of the Wali of Maimana (at that time Dilawar Khan), though whether this individual is the same one as mentioned here, it is impossible to say.

[72] Grodekoff was in the area in November 1878. He was forced to travel by the mountain route from Maimana to Bala Murghab escorted by detachments of soldiers from the Hazhda Nahr regiment, now called Zamani(?). There were guard posts every five miles along the main caravan route, but even this did not prevent attacks on villages and settlements. Turkman raids are frequently recorded by members of the Afghan Boundary Commission who were in the area in 1885-86.

[73] *Sayad of Khanegonum*, 10 March 1878; *DIKNL*, 6 June 1879; *PCD*, 2, 8 April 1878, SLEI:18, fols. 636-7, 638-9; *TFJ*, June 1879, SLEI:22, fols. 1561-3.

[74] *NLGAP*, 18 June 1878, SLEI:19, fols. 5-6. The report is very confused about place names and locations, but the implications are clear.

[75] *NLGAP*, 4 Aug. 1878, SLEI:19, fols. 377-8.

[76] *PCD*, 29 Oct. 1878, SLEI:.20, fol. 116.

[77] *MA*, 3 Aug. 1878, SLEP:180, fols. 869-75.

that despite instructions to these agents not to report mere bazaar gossip, the phobia about Russia's intentions in Afghanistan was so all-pervasive that the wakils pandered to the political prejudices of their superiors. Certainly 'confirmation' of secret pacts between the Amir and Russia would have been welcome in Government circles, since it provided the necessary *casus belli* for the invasion of Afghanistan, the overthrow of its 'unreliable' ruler and the annexation of Qandahar and Kabul.

That there was some cause for concern about Russian intentions in Afghanistan cannot be doubted. Since the subjugation of Bukhara in 1868, Russian forces had turned their attention to Khwarazm and the Murghab. In 1877, Kokand and Khiva had fallen and the Tsar's army had advanced within striking distance of Merv. In the summer of the following year, further Russian troop movements were reported in the Ferghana region, which was deemed to threaten Badakhshan, whilst another column had been sent down the Amu Darya towards Charjui (Marvin 1881, 362). For some observers, it seemed but a matter of time before Afghan Turkistan and Herat itself would be part of the Russian Empire. Russian military activity in Central Asia in 1878, however, was primarily a response to events in Europe, and was primarily designed to put pressure on Britain to settle the Dardanelles' dispute which had brought Russia and Britain to the verge of war (Fraser-Tytler, 144-5).

Matters came to a head when the Russian Military Commander in Tashkent, General Kaufmann, decided to send a Russian diplomatic mission to Kabul to negotiate a treaty with the Amir. The Russian embassy, under General Stolietov, reached Mazar-i Sharif, "the capital of the Chahar Wilayat," on 23 June (Yavorski i, 228).[78] Though Sher 'Ali Khan had been technically in breach of the treaty with Britain by corresponding with General Kaufmann, the Amir realised that to receive the Tsar's envoys would inevitably bring down the wrath of the British on his head. Consequently, he tried every means short of force to prevent their arrival in Kabul, but the Russian mission stubbornly persisted, eventually reaching the Afghan capital in July 1878. Ironically, by the time the envoys reached Kabul, Russia and Britain had resolved their problems over the Dardenelles and the political reasons

[78] By this period the term Chahar Wilayat was used in a very broad way by both Russian and British officials (e.g. Yavorski i, 65). This was due mainly to the disintegration of Maimana, Andkhui, Shibarghan and Sar-i Pul as a distinct political entity, but also, one suspects, because of the political biases of the rival European powers.

for the mission was thereby removed. This, however, was no consolation to Sher 'Ali Khan, for Britain had already crossed the Rubicon.

When news of Stolietov's mission reached India, Lord Lytton demanded that the Amir reciprocate by allowing a British envoy to visit Kabul to discuss the Anglo-Afghan crisis. On 3 August, the Viceroy informed Lord Cranbrooke that if Sher 'Ali Khan did not give in to Britain's demand for an exclusive alliance, and if no suitable replacement could be found for the present Amir, then it would be necessary to occupy Afghanistan and to redraw the boundaries of British Indian possessions at the Oxus (Gregorian, 115).[79] Less than two weeks later, on 14 August 1878, Lord Lytton informed the Amir that he was sending a British ambassador to Kabul, without waiting for an official invitation, to demand an explanation for the Amir's conduct (Fraser-Tytler, 142-4).

Unfortunately for Sher 'Ali Khan and Afghanistan, before any reply could be sent to the Viceroy's demand, the heir apparent, 'Abdullah Jan Khan, died from typhoid.[80] The sudden and untimely death of yet another of his sons plunged Sher 'Ali Khan into a further bout of severe melancholia and the whole Court went into official mourning for the traditional forty days. The obsequies meant that an immediate reply to the Viceroy's demand was not forthcoming and when Major Cavagnari, the British Ambassador designate, arrived at the Afghan frontier, he was turned back, because the officials had no orders on the matter from the Amir. Even when Sher 'Ali Khan eventually replied to Britain's 'request', his response was deemed 'unsatisfactory'. A final ultimatum was sent to Kabul and, on 21 November 1878, war was finally declared. Caught up in events which, at least initially, were completely beyond his control, Sher 'Ali Khan appealed to Russia for military assistance, but the Tsar was unwilling to risk a confrontation with Britain and backed off. Meanwhile, in India, the flood of rumour-based intelligence reports that kept pouring in, added

[79] This policy was modified in January 1880, when it was decided to confine the military occupation of Afghanistan to south of the Hindu Kush. In a confidential memorandum, the Viceroy's Council recognised that Turkistan was "divided from Kabul by a strong, natural boundary," in other words, tacitly acknowledged that the true boundary between Central Asia and Afghanistan was the Hindu Kush and not the Amu Darya. The memorandum went on to remark that provided "Russia observes the engagements which place all Afghan Turkistan beyond the sphere of her political action, we should depreciate interference with these provinces which might remain nominally subject to the Kabul Government, though enjoying practical independence," *Memorandum on the Present State of Afghanistan*, 7 Jan. 1880, SLEI:24, part 1, fols. 27-31.

[80] *MA*, 10 Sept., 1878, SLEP:180, fols. 1183-88.

further fuel to the jingoism of Lord Lytton's administration by claiming Russia had pledged Afghanistan fifty thousand troops in the event of an invasion from the south and Russian forces had already arrived in Maimana.[81]

In fact, during the summer of 1878, the Amir's problems in Afghan Turkistan increased with every week that passed. In July, Shahghasi Sherdil Khan, died and had to be replaced by his son, Khushdil Khan.[82] The security situation in the province continued to deteriorate. By the autumn, troops at Maimana, who had not received any pay for several years, were reported to be in a highly mutinous state, there were further, unchecked, Turkman raids (Grodekoff, 1880, 143-4) and "confusion" prevailed throughout the whole region.[83]

In October, a Russian military explorer, Colonel Grodekoff, arrived in Mazar-i Sharif, having been allowed by General Kaufmann to "relinquish [his] duties at Tashkent and to proceed to St. Petersburg or Odessa by way of Afghanistan and Persia" (Grodekoff, 1), though neither Grodekoff nor his superiors, apparently, considered it necessary to request the Afghan government's permission to enter its territory in pursuit of this aim. Grodekoff's arrival on the south bank of the Amu Darya was a further, severe embarrassment to the Amir and merely confirmed the British prejudice that Sher 'Ali Khan had made some secret pact with Russia. Khushdil Khan, at Grodekoff's insistence, was forced to entertain the Russian at Mazar-i Sharif, but managed to persuade his unwelcome guest to wait in the city until the Amir had given permission for the Russian party to proceed (Grodekoff, 2). When this was finally granted, Grodekoff provocatively travelled through the Chahar Wilayat to Herat in full military uniform, openly sketching military installations and noting in his journal how the inhabitants of the area were disposed towards Russia and Britain. The population of Afghan Turkistan, he reported, were partisans of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan as well as being sympathetic to Russia whom, he claimed, they saw as a deliverer from their servitude to the Afghans (Grodekoff, 41-2). How true this was is open to some

[81] *DIKNL*, 25 Oct., 20 Nov. 1878, SLEI:20 fols. 165, 385; see also, Marvin 1881, 362,n.

[82] Lall Muhammad, *farashbashi*, took charge temporarily until Loynab Khushdil Khan reached Balkh, *NGAJ*, 7 Aug. 1878; *PCD*, 30 July 1878; *DIKNL*, 30 Sept. 1878, SLEI:.19, fols. 385-6, 407-8, 1357. According to Adamec 1987, 96 Khushdil Khan was married to a daughter of Dost Muhammad Khan and had a son by this woman called 'Ali Ahmad Khan, who was blown from a gun by order of Habibullah II (*Bacha-yi Saqau*) in July 1929.

[83] *KN*, 22 June 1878, SLEI:19, fol. 281; *MA*, 19 Oct., 2 Nov. 1878, SLEP:180 fols. 1351-3, 1425-34.

doubt and it is likely that he was only allowed to hear what was flattering to his superiors, for the blatancy of this intelligence-gathering expedition and Grodekoff's overbearing arrogance, had resulted in the Afghan officials keeping a close watch on him during his journey. Indeed, the Afghan governor of Maimana would only allow the Russian to pass through the city in the dead of night (Grodekoff, 45).

Whilst Grodekoff journeyed through the Chahar Wilayat, and with the situation north of the Hindu Kush getting out of hand, Sher 'Ali decided to revive the policy of ruling the province indirectly through the native amirs. Apart from trying to restore a measure of law and order to the region, the Amir urgently needed to move more troops south of the Hindu Kush to oppose the British and he realised that the only way this could be done was by restoring a measure of autonomy to Afghan Turkistan. Initial discussions between the indigenous amirs and Lall Muhammad, *farashbashi*, were encouraging and by November 1878 it had been agreed in principal that the sons of Rustam Khan Mazari, the heirs of Hakim Khan of Shibarghan, Muhammad Khan Beglarbegi and the sons of Ishan Uraq would be allowed to take control of their former territories in return for pledges of assistance in the impending war against the British.[84]

Sher 'Ali Khan also had another reason for placating the population of Turkistan, for even before the fort of 'Ali Masjid had fallen to British troops, the Amir was planning to flee north. In October, fifteen hundred camels were forcibly requisitioned from Kochi tribesmen so the Amir could send his wives and the bulk of his treasure to Maimana, where they would be as far away from the invaders as possible.[85] A few weeks later Sher 'Ali Khan released his son, Ya'qub Khan, from prison, appointed him as Regent in Kabul, and fled to Mazar-i Sharif, ostensibly to rally further support in Afghan Turkistan (Katib ii, 342).

When he reached Takhtapul, Sher 'Ali Khan formally confirmed his agreement with the Turkistanian exiles, who had accompanied him on his journey north, and had them swear their loyalty to him on the Qur'an, probably at the shrine of 'Ali.[86] Amongst the deposed rulers of Afghan Turkistan who entered into this agreement was

[84] *PCD*, 7 Aug., 22 Oct. 1878, SLEI:19, fols. 408-10, vol. 20, fols. 67-8.

[85] *DIKNL*, 14 Nov. 1878, SLEI:20, fol. 251; *PCD*, 7 Dec. 1878, SLEI:21, fol. 80; *DIKNL*, 20 Nov. 1878.

[86] *PCD*, 22 Oct. 1878.

Husain Khan Ming of Maimana, who returned to his native land after pledging to permit the remaining Afghan troops to retire unmolested to Mazar. However, when he reached Maimana, Husain Khan rallied his supporters, attacked the Afghan garrison and forced those who were not killed in the battle to flee.[87] Left to fend for themselves in the middle of the Afghan winter, some of the troops merely deserted. Those soldiers who came from the Herat area slipped quietly back to their homes, only to be rounded up later and "compelled" to return to Maimana[88] by Aiyub Khan, the younger brother of Ya'qub Khan, who had recently returned from exile in Persia and taken control of Herat with his brother's consent (Kakar 1971, 59; Katib ii, 344).[89] Husain Khan had little difficulty in preventing the remnant of the Herat garrison from entering his capital and they were obliged to take up temporary quarters at Almar.[90]

The sudden death from gangrene of Sher 'Ali Khan at Mazar on 21 February 1879 (Boulger, 76; Hall, 9; Katib ii, 344-5; Yavorksi ii, 124),[91] deepened the crisis in Balkh and Afghanistan and ended any chance of organised resistance to the British invasion. When Ya'qub Khan heard of his father's demise, he assumed the title of Amir and, following a serious mutiny at Takhtapul, replaced Khushdil Khan as Governor of Balkh with General Ghulam Haidar Khan Wardaki (Katib ii, 344-5, 347).[92] Ghulam Haidar's appointment, however, merely exacerbated a situation which was already getting out of hand, for he placed Shi'is and members of his own tribe in positions of power, alienating in the process both the dominant Sunni population

[87] *GD*, 18-25 Feb. 1879; *TFJ*, April 1879. The Gilgit report was filed before the death of the Amir and gives details of the return of Husain Khan and the attack on the Afghan garrison, though *TFJ* says this occurred "after" the death of Sher 'Ali Khan.

[88] *HN*, 16 May 1879; *TFJ*, April 1879.

[89] *MA*, 8 Feb. 1879, SLEP:181, fols. 93-6. Aiyub had left with Persian agreement. At the time, Britain was concerned that Aiyub and Sher 'Ali Khan would try and link up at Herat and the British Ambassador in Tehran was instructed to keep a close watch on Aiyub's movements. As it was, the sudden death of the Amir changed the whole Afghan situation, *Thomson to Meshed Agent*, 18 Feb. 1879, SLEP:181, fol. 197.

[90] *HNL*, 16 May 1879.

[91] So claimed Yavorski, an official attached to the Russian mission to Kabul, who was in Mazar-i Sharif when the Amir died. Katib ii, 344-5 says he was suffering from severe gout. However, recent evidence points to a chronic hereditary disorder, probably *acute porphyria*, which afflicted both the Barakzai and Sadozai branches of the ruling family (Lee 1991a). Sher 'Ali Khan was buried in the shrine at Mazar-i Sharif.

[92] Shahghasi Khushdil Loynab Khan became Aiyub Khan's Commander-in Chief and fought at Maiwand and Qandahar (see text, below). Some of the intelligence reports claimed he had been arrested, *Ata Muhammad Khan*, 1880; *Muhammad Aziz Khan to Cavagnari*, 11 March 1879; *DIKNL*, 9 May 1879, SLEI:22, fols. 211, 1051-2.

of Afghan Turkistan and the powerful Pushtun clan leaders in the Afghan army. Further, and far more serious, outbreaks of mutiny, civil unrest and attacks on state property followed.[93]

When the news of the Amir's death reached Maimana, Husain Khan Ming joined with Muhammad Khan Beglarbegi and marched on Sar-i Pul, which was still under Afghan control. In a battle near Belcheragh the Uzbeks swept aside troops loyal to Ghulam Haidar Khan,[94] pushed on across the Mirza Wulang pass and probably succeeded in occupying Sar-i Pul for a short while. General Ghulam Haidar, faced with mutinies by Afghan troops and rebellions by Uzbeks and Turkman amirs, begged Ya'qub Khan to send reinforcements and the Amir was forced to send three regiments north in order to maintain his fragile hold over the region.[95] Even so, it was not until early May 1879 that any semblance of order was restored in Sar-i Pul, following the defeat of Muhammad Khan at "Charas" (Chiras?).[96] As punishment for assisting the beglarbegi, Ghulam Haidar's men "barbarously treated" the local population, including women and children. Ghulam Mohai al-Din, son of Khwaja Nur Jan Khan Ghilzai, from Jalalabad, became the new governor of the Sar-i Pul district[97] and Qadir Khan, a Qizilbash, was put in charge of Shibarghan (Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 175-6).[98]

Muhammad Khan Saripuli made his way back to Maimana, but discovered that whilst he had been away, Husain Khan had also been forced to flee, for shortly after the Afghans retook Sar-i Pul a Herat force under General 'Abdullah Jan Khan managed to regain control of Maimana. Exactly what happened to Husain Khan and Muhammad Khan following their defeat, is unclear. 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's official biography claims that Husain Khan was imprisoned by his arch enemy, Dilawar Khan, until 1884, when the then governor of Afghan Turkistan, Ishaq Khan, released him and placed him in charge of Maimana's affairs (Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 239-41). This is certainly not true and it seems that Husain Khan, after spending a part of the

[93] *TNLC*, rcvd., 12 March 1879, SLEI:22, fols. 17-8.

[94] *Ata Muhammad Khan* 1880; *DBEK*, 10-16 Aug. 1879.

[95] *DBEK*, 10-16 Aug. 1879.

[96] *Ata Muhammad Khan*, 1880. Or Belcheragh? Chiras, a mountainous district in the upper Murghab, is in the district of Chaharsada. According to Imam Sharif, 224 Chiras had been repeatedly burnt by Afghans; see also below for the Firozkohi revolt in Chaharsada.

[97] *Ibid.*; *Statement of Baba Jan*, 5 April 1879. It was probably this battle which gave rise to reports that 'Abd al-Rahman Khan had invaded Afghan Turkistan and defeated Ghulam Haidar, see *DIKNL*, 6 June 1879; *DIKNL*, 12 May 1879, SLEI:22 fol. 1071.

[98] *Ata Muhammad Khan*, 1880.

winter of 1879 in Afghan Turkistan, returned to Kabul, only to be imprisoned once more, an incarceration which continued under 'Abd al-Rahman Khan until 1884, when he was appointed to govern Maimana in the Amir's name following the overthrow of Dilawar Khan.[99] During the Second Anglo-Afghan War, Husain Khan appears to have been very friendly with a number of British officers in Kabul who showed him "unlimited generous favours."[100] As for Muhammad Khan of Saripul, he apparently remained in Maimana, for he reappeared as a guest of Dilawar Khan Ming in 1880 (see below).

Following the recapture of Sar-i Pul and Maimana, Afghan Turkistan remained relatively quiet, at least for a while. The uneasy peace allowed the governor to send fifty thousand tomans, possibly part of the booty of the Sar-i Pul campaign, to Herat to satisfy some of the demands of Aiyub Khan's troops who were clamouring for their pay (Katib ii, 345-7).[101] It was not long, however, before 'Abdullah Jan Khan, the garrison commander in Maimana, informed Aiyub Khan that he "was unable to manage the province" and his troops were on the verge of mutiny, but his plea for help fell on deaf ears.[102] By August 1879, 'Abdullah Khan wrote to Aiyub Khan that matters were completely beyond his control. His mutinous soldiers had threatened him with death unless they received their long-overdue back pay and their demands had been put to him bluntly and unequivocally: "if he was the governor he ought to pay them, and if he did not pay them, he could expect no obedience on their part."[103] Unable to pay them himself, and with no promise of immediate assistance from either Herat or Kabul, 'Abdullah Jan Khan requested to be relieved of his post.[104] Similar disturbances were being reported at the same time throughout Afghan Turkistan, with regiments refusing to obey orders and committing "every kind of excess,"[105] whilst other troops simply deserted and made their way back across the Hindu Kush (Soboleff, 183). When Aiyub Khan merely replied that he should stay in Maimana until a suitable replacement for him could be found, 'Abdullah Jan unilaterally abandoned Maimana and marched his troops to Herat. Aiyub Khan, who was just as beleaguered as 'Abdullah Jan Khan,

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[99] *KNL*, 16 Nov. 1883, SLEI:38, fol. 766; *Ata Muhammad Khan*, 1880.
[100] *Report by Assistant Surgeon Elahi Bakhsh*, 2 Oct. 1886, SLEI:49, fol. 440.
[101] *MA*, 3 May 1879; *HN*, 4 May 1879, SLEP:181, fols. 681-2, 751-3.
[102] *HN*, 12 Aug. 1879; *Ayub Khan to Amir Yaqub Khan*, n.d. 1879.
[103] Id. *HC*, 26 Aug. 1879.
[104] *HN*, 12 Aug. 1878; *TLH*, 21 Oct. 1879, SLEI:24, part 1, fols. 118-9.
[105] *HC*, 26 Aug. 1879; *Telegram, Maj. St. John to Foreign Secr.*, 15 Sept. 1879.

sent Mahmud Khan Hazara to meet them with orders to dissuade the Maimana garrison from entering the city and adding to the turmoil (Katib ii, 347).[106]

Aiyub Khan, though nominally the governor of Herat for his brother, Amir Ya'qub Khan, had little authority and even less money. His own troops were, if anything, more unruly than those in Maimana, and were deeply divided between the Herati Shi'is and the Qandahar and Kabul regiments which were staunchly Sunni. Real power lay with Sardar Hafizullah Khan, the *sipah salar*, General Taj Muhammad Khan Ghilzai and other military commanders, without whose agreement "not a single officer or private" would obey Aiyub Khan.[107] Unable to offer any hope of payment to his troops, Aiyub agreed to allow some of the Herat troops to go to Kabul and present their case to the Amir in person, for he had heard that his brother had secured an annual subsidy of £60,000 from Britain under the terms of the recently-signed Treaty of Gandamak (Dupree 1978, 409). Little did Aiyub Khan realise that by following this plan of action, he was to set in motion a series of events which were to change the course of Afghan history.

Following the death of Sher 'Ali Khan in February 1879, the Afghan succession was disputed amongst a number of the Muhammadzai clan. Ya'qub Khan had had himself proclaimed as the new Amir in Kabul, but the succession was disputed by a number of influential sardars in Kabul (Kakar 1971, 12). At the same time as having to contain the claims of his rivals and the internal unrest in Afghan Turkistan, Ya'qub Khan had to oppose the advancing British forces, who had quickly taken control of most of southern Afghanistan. Aiyub Khan, as the oldest son of Sher 'Ali Khan, also resented his brother's assumption of the purple and hoped that he could secure sufficient support in Herat to extend his power across the whole of Afghanistan. To add to Ya'qub Khan's troubles, he was aware that 'Abd al-Rahman Khan and other members of Afzal Khan and A'zam Khan's family, were living in exile under the protection of Bukhara and only needed the right opportunity to cross the Amu Darya and raise the standard of rebellion. Unable to rally sufficient forces to mount any effective opposition to the British invasion, and gambling on the presumption that by giving in to the foreigner's demands he would

[106] *HN*, 12 Aug. 1879; *HC*, 26 Aug. 1879.

[107] *TLH*, 9 Dec. 1879; *Herat Correspondent to the Meshed Agent*, 22 Dec. 1879, SLEP:182, fols. 55-64.

secure military and financial support against other claimants, Ya'qub Khan informed Lord Lytton that he was prepared to accede to all his demands. On 26 May 1879, the Amir put his name to "the most humiliating treaty ever signed by an Afghan ruler" (Kakar 1971, 12). Amongst other concessions, for the first time British officers were to be stationed at strategic points along the frontier and, had not events taken a rather unexpected course, the Treaty of Gandamak would undoubtedly have paved the way for Afghanistan to become just one more Native State in an enlarged India. The agreement with Britain, however, far from securing the throne for Ya'qub Khan, played into the hands of his rivals, who presented themselves as champions of the cause of Afghan independence and accused the Amir of abjectly surrendering Afghanistan's sovereignty to infidels. As far as Cavagnari, the British envoy at the treaty negotiations, was concerned, by signing the Treaty of Gandamak he also signed his own death warrant.

In accordance with the provisions of the agreement, Cavagnari became the British Envoy at the Court of the Amir and the new ambassador, accompanied by a small escort of Guides, took up residence in the Bala Hisar in July 1879. Unbeknown to the Englishman, by the summer of 1879, the regiments in Maimana and Herat were completely out of control and had been allowed by Aiyub Khan to come to Kabul and demand payment from the British subsidy. Men from the Kabul regiments at Herat began to arrive in the Afghan capital a few days after Cavagnari reached Kabul, though no-one in the British mission considered that they posed any serious threat to the Amir, let alone themselves, at least initially.[108] In the first week of August, more troops from Herat reached Kabul via the Hazarajat. These soldiers, if anything, were in a worse state than the first contingent, for they had been given just three rupees each for their road expenses and had resorted to plundering the villages *en route* in order to survive the rigours of the journey.[109] When they reached Sherpur, on 6 August, these regiments continued their lawless ways and the Amir was unable to bring them back under his authority. Of these regiments, the 'Ordal' (ironically called "Orderly" in source) stood out as the most disorderly and riotous.[110] As if this were not enough, more

[108] *Deposition of Ressaldar Major Nakhshband Khan*, 9 Sept. 1879, SLEI:23, fols. 729-3. On 8 Aug. Cavagnari telegrammed Calcutta that "alarming reports" had reached him from several sources of the mutinous behaviour of the Herat regiments, but even then he had no idea that they would threaten his own security, *DBEK*, 3-9 Aug. 1879, SLEI:23, fol. 339.

[109] *DBEK*, 3-9 Aug. 1879.

[110] *General Doran to Quarter-Master General*, 15 Sept., 1879, SLEI:23, fols. 604-5.

troops arrived from Afghan Turkistan, having been sent back to Kabul by General Ghulam Haidar Khan because they "had got beyond the control of their officers."[111]

On 3 September, with the end of the second week of the fast of Ramazan approaching[112] and the summer heat at its most fierce, the Herat and Balkh regiments, along with other troops stationed in Kabul, finally lost what little patience they had left and went in force to the Bala Hisar to demand that the Amir pay their salary arrears. Ya'qub Khan's treeasury was almost bare and, though an attempt was made to distribute what little money was in government coffers, the soldiers, dissatisfied with the meagre hand-out, went on the rampage, killing several of the Amir's senior officers. Next, they turned to the British Residency in the Bala Hisar, demanding that Cavagnari advance them their money from the subsidy which Britain had promised Ya'qub Khan under the terms of the Treaty of Gandamak. Cavagnari, however, was not the sort of man to agree to such a proposal and, far from trying to appease the mob, peremptorily refused their demands. This rebuttal merely inflamed the rioters even more and all their pent-up anger and frustration was vented on the unwelcome foreigner and his escort. Within a matter of a few hours, the poorly-defended compound had been over-run and Cavagnari, along with his escort of Guides, had been slaughtered almost to a man. Amongst the so-called "Herat" troops[113] who reached for their guns on that fateful day were many who, a few months earlier, had mutinied in Maimana and threatened their commander, 'Abdullah Jan Khan, with a similar fate (Katib ii, 352-3).[114]

The death of Cavagnari made a full-scale occupation of Southern Afghanistan by the British inevitable and, on 12 October 1879, General Roberts entered Kabul with a large force, took control of the

[111] *Ghulam Haidar Khan to Amir Yakub*, 6 Sept. 1879, SLEI:23, fol. 716.

[112] The fast month of Ramazan began on 19 August.

[113] When the *wakil* diaries refer to 'Herat' or 'Herati' troops in connection with the Cavagnari massacre, this merely refers to the place where they had been stationed prior to arriving in Kabul, not to their place of domicile or their ethnic origin. The regiments from Herat and Balkh that had recently arrived in Kabul were composed of mainly Afghans, natives of Kabul or Qandahar, see *Memorandum of Information Regarding the Recent Massacres*, n.d. 1879, SLEI:23, fols. 747-9.

[114] Sources dealing with the events surrounding Cavagnari's death, other than those already mentioned, are: *HC*, 4 May 1879; *Telegram, Cavagnari to Foreign Secr.*, 8 Aug. 1879; *Viceroy and Council to Viscount Cranbrook*, 25 Sept. 1879; *Statement of Ali Hasan, Kizilbash of Chandawal*, n.d., 1879; *Statement of Kajir Khan, son of Payanda Khan*, 10 Sept. 1879; *Statement of Timoss, B Troop, Corps of Guides*, 16 Sept. 1879; *Statement of Taimur, Sowar*, 15 Sept. 1879, SLEI:23, fols. 121-2, 193, 599, 604-5, 719, 745, 753-4, 755.

affairs of state and sent Ya'qub Khan into exile in India, never to return (Dupree 1978, 409). In Afghan Turkistan, news of these momentous events plunged the region deeper into anarchy, as each individual amir and sardar sought to carve out a sphere of power for himself. Following his futile mission to Herat, 'Abdullah Jan Khan and his troops returned empty-handed to Maimana from where he continued to send pathetic pleas for help to Aiyub Khan.[115] When news of Cavagnari's death and the British occupation of Kabul reached Maimana, the remaining troops of the garrison, realising that they now had little or no chance of ever being paid, mutinied and returned *en masse* to Herat.[116] 'Abdullah Jan Khan, unable to exert any authority over them, accompanied the remaining Kabul regiments to Herat, whilst General Faiz Muhammad Khan Ishaqzai brought in the Herat troops (Katib ii, 375).[117]

The arrival of the two commanders at the head of separate regiments indicates the depth of the ethnic and sectarian tension which had afflicted the Maimana garrison and was a mirror image of the conflict raging amongst the regiments stationed in Herat.[118] The presence of the Maimana troops in the city, therefore, merely fanned the flames of the uprising which was threatening to consume Aiyub Khan and plunge the whole of western Afghanistan into anarchy. A short while after the murder of Cavagnari, Fakir Ahmad Khan, a "devotee" of Amir Ya'qub Khan, was attacked by mutinous Kabul regiments in Herat who demanded to be allowed to return to their homes and, in a repetition of the attack on the Bala Hisar, put him to death.[119] Following this outrage, Aiyub Khan managed to restore a measure of law and order by appealing for unity in the face of the occupation of Kabul and announcing that he planned to march against the British garrison at Qandahar.

On 2 December, the day after the Maimana regiments had arrived, Aiyub Khan marched his forces out of the city to Pul-i Malan, the first stage on the road to Qandahar, leaving General Faiz Muhammad

[115] *TLH*, 21 Oct. 1879. Ironically, at the same time Major St. John, the officer in charge of British forces in Qandahar, was reporting that everything was quiet in Afghan Turkistan, *JSAFF*, 19-25 Oct. 1879, SLEI:23, fol. 1339.

[116] *Ata Mohumed Khan*, n.d. 1880(a), SLEI:25, fols. 605-7; *JSAFF*, 31 Dec. 1879.

[117] According to *MA*, 17 Jan. 1880 there were six Kabul regiments that came from Balkh to Herat, via Maimana, but these were probably drawn from various locations in the area, and not just Maimana.

[118] *JSAFF*, 31 Dec. 1879.

[119] *Governor-General to Viscount Cranbrook*, 23 Sept. 1879, SLEI:23, fol. 599; *Ayub Khan to Amir Yakub*, 1879.

Khan and his Herat troops in charge of military affairs and 'Abdullah Jan Khan as na'ib with authority over civil matters.[120] Almost as soon as Aiyub Khan's army had quit the city, General Faiz Muhammad declared himself to be the new governor of the city, ordered his Herat troops to close the gates against Aiyub Khan and seized control of the arsenal. Aiyub Khan, taken completely by surprise, hesitated about how best to deal with this volatile situation. The rebels were thus able to attack the Kabul troops which had been left behind in the city, forcing 'Abdullah Jan Khan to take refuge in the *arg*. Some fifty soldiers, who had refused to join the uprising, were captured by the rebels and put to a slow and painful death.[121]

The following day, General Faiz Muhammad Khan marched out against Aiyub's camp at Pul-i Malan, hoping that the Herat regiment with the sardar would change sides.[122] Unfortunately for the rebel General, this did not happen and though this regiment refused to take up arms for Aiyub against their fellow-citizens, they remained uncommitted whilst they awaited the outcome of the confrontation. For four hours the battle raged, during which time some three hundred men were killed. General Faiz Muhammad was finally defeated, his rebellious Herat troops were scattered to the four winds and he himself forced to flee for his life to Persian territory (Katib ii, 375-6).[123] Elated with their victory, and anxious to settle long-standing scores with the Heratis, Aiyub's Kabul regiments rushed into the city and, under the eerie light of torches, spared no-one as they plundered and looted without mercy. By the time Aiyub Khan and his senior officers entered the city the following morning, Herat had been devastated.[124]

The rebellion forced Aiyub Khan to postpone his attack on Qandahar for nearly a year whilst he attempted to restore some semblance of order to the ruined city. One of the problems that faced him was Maimana, which was now out of both Herat and Kabul's control and both Aiyub Khan and Ghulam Haidar Khan in Afghan Turkistan sought to send their own nominee to take the province over. The two main

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[120] *JSAFF*, 22, 31 Dec. 1879; *HC*, 22 Dec. 1879; *TLH*, 9 Dec. 1879; *Telegram, St. John to Foreign Secr.*, 26 Dec. 1879, SLEI:23, fol. 164; A. W. Moore, *Narrative of Events in Afghanistan, Aug. 1878-Dec. 1880*, PSM:A/43, fol. 113.

[121] Moore, *Narrative*, 111; *TLH*, 9 Dec. 1879; *HC*, 22 Dec. 1879; *JSAFF*, 22, 31 Dec. 1879.

[122] *TLH*, 9 Dec. 1879; *HC*, 22 Dec. 1879.

[123] Id. *JSAFF*, 22, 31 Dec. 1879.

[124] Id. The house of the British *wakil* was one of the dwellings plundered. So badly was the city destroyed that in 1885, nearly six years later, Herat had only 2,000 families and the Herat troops were deliberately kept without proper equipment, whilst the Kabulis were reported to be "armed to the teeth" (C. E. Yate 1888, 21ff.).

Mingid pretenders at this time were Dilawar Khan b. Hukumat Khan and Husain Khan b. Mizrab Khan. The former was living at the court of Aiyub Khan in Herat whilst the latter had spent time as a prisoner in Kabul but, by the end of 1879, had apparently returned to Afghan Turkistan.[125] Aiyub Khan allowed Dilawar Khan to leave for his homeland, on condition that he ruled the province as a feudatory of Herat. The wali's family and younger brother, Muzaffar Khan, were held in the city to ensure that this promise was fulfilled.[126] Meanwhile, Ghulam Haidar Khan, who may have been informed of Aiyub's intentions, sent Husain Khan Ming to Maimana to rule in his name, for by this time Ya'qub Khan was already on his way to exile in India and all central authority had been swept aside by the arrival of the British.[127] Dilawar Khan was the first to reach Maimana and, after some fighting, he took control of the city. Husain Khan held out for a while, hoping that he would be able to overthrow his rival but, when it became apparent that Dilawar Khan could not be dislodged, he abandoned his attempt to seize power and returned to Afghan Turkistan and from thence to Kabul to await a better opportunity.[128]

*The Accession of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, 1879-1880*

General Ghulam Haidar Khan's reign as independent governor of Balkh province was brief and bloody. Despite the attempts by Aiyub Khan to extend his power into Afghan Turkistan through his proxy, Dilawar Khan Ming, the most serious threat to Ghulam Haidar Khan lay the other side of the Amu Darya. 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, hearing of the downfall of Ya'qub Khan and the British occupation of southern Afghanistan, sent his cousins Sarwar Khan and Ishaq Khan,[129] along with 'Abd al-Qudus Khan, the son of Sultan Muhammad Khan into Afghan Turkistan to organise a rebellion against Ghulam Haidar Khan and the British (Kakar 1971, 140). After receiving encouragement from the Turkmans on the left bank of the Oxus (Soboleff, 228-9),[130] they crossed the river at Qarqi and made their camp at Saiyidabad from where they opened negotiations with the Afghan

[125] *HN*, 17 March 1880. See text above for discussion of the problem of chronology.
[126] *Ibid.*
[127] *Munshi Abdul Rahim*, 1880.
[128] *KNL*, 16 Nov. 1883.
[129] They were both sons of Amir Muhammad A'zam Khan.
[130] According to Soboleff the sardars made their base at "Burdalik" on the right bank of the Oxus. *Babu Jan*, 5 April 1880 claims they were in Shahr-i Sabz.

sub-governor of Aqcha.[131] When Ghulam Haidar Khan heard of their arrival, he sent a strong force towards Aqcha, forcing Ishaq and Qudus Khan to seek safety back across the river. When they reached the Bukharan border town of Qarqi, however, the inhabitants, hearing that Ghulam Haidar Khan had sent troops towards Andkhui, asked the Afghans to leave (Soboleff, 228-9) and the sardars returned to Afghan Turkistan, hoping to raise support amongst the independent Turkman tribes around Andkhui.[132]

Sarwar Khan, meanwhile, decided to go to Shibarghan and try to win over the Afghan garrison there. Although his brother had strongly advised against this course of action (Katib ii, 366; Kakar 1971, 140; Soboleff, 228-9),[133] he persisted and, accompanied only by Sharbat 'Ali, a trusty servant, the sardar arrived late at night at the gates of the town and requested admission, claiming that he was carrying letters from General Ghulam Haidar Khan. The watchmen were deceived and allowed him to pass, but he was quickly recognised by the guard who demanded to know his real intentions and warned him that if he did not make his escape quickly, Qadir Khan, the governor, would certainly arrest him.[134] Sarwar Khan once more refused to listen to advice and demanded an audience with the governor. When he was brought before Qadir Khan, Muhammad Sarwar urged him to pledge his allegiance to 'Abd al-Rahman. Qadir Khan had no time for such pleas and ordered the sardar to be bound hand and foot. The following morning the prisoner was sent to Mohai al-Din Khan Ghilzai, the last surviving son of Kohundil Khan, at Sar-i Pul (Katib ii, 366; Kakar 1971, 77; Soboleff, 228-9).[135]

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[131] *Ata Muhammad Khan*, 1880(a); *Babu Jan*, 5 April 1880; *Letter from Aman-ul-Mulk of Chitral*, rcvd., 20 May 1880, SLEI:26, part 3, fols. 313-4. Soboleff says Muhammad Sarwar and his companions went to Saiyidabad where they stayed for four days before being forced to flee.

[132] According to Soboleff, 228-9, Ghulam Haidar's force consisted of 1,000 horse and 4 guns, led by Muhammad Khan, "brother of the ruler of the Chahar Wilayat (*sic*)." Sultan Muhammad Khan ii, 176ff. claims they numbered between two and three thousand Qizilbash *sowars*, but this is probably an exaggeration.

[133] Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 176-7 says he went with the other two sardars, but the contemporary sources are clear that they had already returned back across the Amu Darya, see also *Ata Muhammad Khan*, 1880(a).

[134] *Ata Muhammad Khan*, 1880(a).

[135] *Ibid.* About the same time there was a report that Muhammad Khan "Uzbek" (i.e. the ex-Beglarbegi of Sar-i Pul) had retaken Sar-i Pul from Mohai al-Din. However, the numerous accounts of the death of Sarwar Khan, in which Mohai al-Din Khan played such a prominent part, mention nothing about the loss of Sar-i Pul and the report is probably a belated account of the attack on the area in the early part of 1879. Muhammad Khan 'Sar-i Puli' appears to have been living in Maimana at the time of Sarwar's assassination (see below); *KD*, 16-22 Nov. 1879, SLEI:23, fol. 1603; *TLH*, 26 March 1880, SLEP:182, fols. 293-300.

Sarwar Khan could have expected little mercy from Mohai al-Din or Ghulam Haidar Khan. Sher 'Ali Khan had rigorously persecuted Sarwar Khan's family and the Amir's chief *mustufi* had recently sent letters to all officials in Afghanistan with orders to seize and execute any member of Afzal Khan or A'zam Khan's family who fell into their hands (Kakar 1971, 42). When Sarwar Khan reached Sar-i Pul, Mohai al-Din first put him to the torture and then sent him, under strong escort, to General Ghulam Haidar Khan, who ordered a servant (*nadim*) of the governor of Sar-i Pul and a certain "Rizwan," one of Haidar Khan's officials (*khadam*), to finish off the bad work (Katib ii, 365: Soboleff, 228-9; Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 176-7).[136]

It took three days for Sarwar Khan to die, for his enemies chose to slowly cut him to pieces with knives until, at last, his tormentors, tired of their sport, beheaded him.[137] The decapitated body was thrown into an unmarked grave under the walls of the Dehdadi fort and his head was presented to Ghulam Haidar (Imam Sharif, 217-8; Kakar 1971, 140; Katib ii, 365: Soboleff, 228-9; Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 176-7).[138] The barbaric manner in which Muhammad Sarwar had been put to death, however, proved counter-productive to Mohai al-Din and Ghulam Haidar Khan, for the sardar's sufferings aroused the sympathy of the local population as the story was repeated a thousand times in tea houses and caravanserais throughout Afghan Turkistan. Within a matter of months of Sarwar Khan's death, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's agents, who earlier in the year had been cold-shouldered, found that they were welcomed with open arms as liberators (Imam Sharif, 217-8).

Whilst Sarwar was dying in agony, Ishaq Khan and Qudus Khan had encountered further problems in the area of Andkhui. Haidar Khan's advanced guard had caught up with them. After a vain attempt to persuade the governor's troops to change sides, the two sardars were allowed to make their escape but were warned that if they persisted in their attempts to agitate on behalf of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan they would bring disaster upon themselves (Soboleff, 217-8). Instead of returning to Bukharan territory, Ishaq Khan decided to go to Maimana, hoping that Dilawar Khan Ming would give them a warmer welcome, but the wali was still trying to establish his own control

[136] *Babu Jan*, 5 April 1880.

[137] Soboleff, *loc. cit.* says he was shot and he may have been decapitated after his execution.

[138] *Ata Muhammad Khan*, 1880(a). *Aman-ul-Mulk*, 20 May 1880 claims the execution was public. The ritual torturing and execution of Muhammad Sarwar Khan closely parallels that of Fath Khan, cf. Macrory, 35.

over Maimana and had little time or incentive to become embroiled in the Afghan dynastic struggle. Maimana's Turkman allies were ordered to apprehend the two exiles, but Ishaq Khan and 'Abd al-Qudus eluded the search party and, realising that there was little point risking their lives any further, fled to the safety of Bukhara to await a more favourable opportunity to stir up rebellion in Afghan Turkistan (Katib ii, 365; Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 177; Kakar 1971, 143n.).[139]

Meanwhile, in the south, General Roberts was ruling Kabul with an iron fist, publicly executing as many individuals as he could find who were implicated in the murder of Cavagnari and his escort. The hangings did nothing to encourage the Afghans to accept foreign domination, while the decision to exile Ya'qub Khan turned the Amir, never very popular with his subjects, into a martyr and provided the necessary catalyst to unite the tribes against the British (Kakar 1971, 14-5). Roberts further exacerbated the tensions between Sunni and Shi'i, which had been one of the crucial factors in the riots and mutinies in Herat, Maimana and Afghan Turkistan, by placing the Qizilbash in positions of power. Not surprisingly, it was not long before the whole area was up in arms, and by December 1879 the British forces in Kabul were besieged in their Sherpur cantonments. Though this rebellion failed and the Afghans were forced to lift the siege, it provided the impetus in India and England to find some reasonable, long-term solution to the 'problem' of Afghanistan.

In the aftermath of Cavagnari's murder, Lord Lytton seriously considered allowing Afghanistan to disintegrate into a number of smaller principalities or fiefdoms (Kakar 1971, 18). The details of this plan were somewhat vague, though Qandahar and Kabul were to be placed under different sardars who were allied to Britian. By the end of 1879, Herat was a *de facto* independent state under Aiyub Khan and, although the Viceroy was opposed to any member of Sher 'Ali's family having any further say in the affairs of Afghanistan, there was little that he, or anyone else, could do about it, for the British writ ran no further than Qandahar. Ghulam Haidar Khan, though appointed by Ya'qub Khan, was acting as the *de facto* ruler of Balkh and it was assumed, under the dismemberment plan, that the region would eventually fall under Russian influence. It was hoped, however, that the

[139] According to Sultan Muhammad Khan, *loc cit.* and Soboleff, 228 Ishaq Khan and 'Abd al-Qudus were captured by Dilawar Khan and sent to Herat where Aiyub tried to imprison them. Soboleff adds that Ishaq Khan went to Tehran to solicit Persian help. Had this indeed been the case, the sardars would undoubtedly have been put to death by Aiyub Khan or one of his commanders.

future ruler of Kabul, whoever he might be, would be able to reconquer the area and so extend British influence into this sensitive frontier region (Kakar 1971, 18). During the early months of 1880 General Roberts, who also subscribed to the Lytton doctrine, at least at this period, actively pursued a policy of divide-and-rule and Afghan governors and sardars were either appointed or deposed according to whether they were deemed to be friendly, or hostile, to Britain.

In early January 1880, General Roberts turned his attention to the problem of Afghan Turkistan, appointed Nur Muhammad Khan Qizilbash as his na'ib and sent him north with an army under Nur Muhammad Khan[140] with orders to overthrow General Ghulam Haidar Khan (Soboleff, 184-5). [141]After an initial success at Saighan, on 14 February the sardars were defeated by Haidar Khan's forces near Bajgah and retreated in disorder to Bamiyan. Na'ib Muhammad Khan Qizilbash was captured by the inhabitants of Kahmard and had to be ransomed. Meanwhile, to complete the fiasco, Saighan declared its independence from both the Kabul and the Balkh administration.[142] By the turn of the Christian year, General Ghulam Haidar Khan's government was hanging by a thread. His execution of Muhammad Sarwar Khan had alienated both the army and the population and at the beginning of January 1880 there were a number of mutinies amongst the government troops stationed in Afghan Turkistan (Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 185). In early February 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, believing that the time for intervention had come, crossed into Badakhshan. Within a matter of weeks, and with very little opposition, the whole province was in his hands (Kakar 1971, 22-3). Meanwhile in the west, Muhammad Ishaq Khan crossed the Amu Darya and marched on Aqcha.[143] Rather than concentrate his forces to counter this twin threat, Ghulam Haidar Khan decided, instead, to attack Sultan Murad Beg of Qunduz who had taken the opportunity provided by

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[140] *KD*, 6 Jan. 1880, SLEI:24, part 2, fols. 351-2.

[141] They were sent in the name of Sardar Wali Khan, later appointed by General Roberts as 'Governor' of Kabul (Kakar 1971, 18). According to Soboleff, 185 Roberts, "planned the direct subjugation to English rule of Afghan Turkistan ... the self-deceit here displayed is worthy of surprise."

[142] *TFJ*, Feb., March 1880, SLEI:24, part 4, fols. 1311-2, vol. 25, fols. 9-10.

[143] Confirmation of the arrival of Ishaq Khan's forces at Aqcha reached Kabul around the beginning of February, *JSAFF*, 12 Jan. 1880, SLEI:24, part 2, fols. 513-8. *Telegram, Roberts to Calcutta*, 25 Feb., 8 March 1880; *KD*, 8-14, 15-21 Feb. 1880, SLEI:24, part 4, fols. 1197, 1485, 1357-9, 1475-8. *KD*, 22-28 Feb., 19 March 1880; *Telegram, Griffin to Calcutta*, 24, 25 March 1880, SLEI:24, part 6, fols. 1531-4, 1688-9.

the break-down of central authority to re-assert his independence (Kakar 1971, 140-1; Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 183).[144]

Although Ghulam Haidar succeeded in reducing Qunduz, which he put to fire and sword (Kakar 1971, 141),[145] his victory was short-lived. When he returned to Takhtapul, Ghulam Haidar Khan discovered that the garrison, under Colonel Allahdad Khan, had declared for 'Abd al-Rahman Khan and put Haidar Khan's brother, Rahim Khan, and other supporters of the general, to death.[146] Refused entry to Takhtapul and too weak to attack and reduce the fortress, Haidar Khan made his way to Mazar-i Sharif, only to be faced with a similar situation (Kakar 1971, 141; Soboleff, 230; Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 185). By this time Badakhshan had fallen to 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, who had continued his advance, reaching Taliqan around Nauroz (Kakar 1971, 24) where he was joined by the refugee Qataghanid chief, Sultan Murad Beg.[147] On 24 March the Afghan prince and his followers left for Qunduz (Kakar 1971, 24-5; Soboleff, 231; Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 189).[148] In the west, Aqcha and Shibarghan opened their gates to Ishaq Khan.[149] As the Afghan exiles continued their advance on Mazar-i Sharif on both fronts, and with most of the

[144] *Ata Muhammad Khan*, 1880(a).

[145] *Ibid. Aman-ul-Mulk*, 20 May 1880; *GD*, 1-8 July 1880, SLEI:26, part 4, fol. 779. This latter report confused Mazar-i Sharif with Qunduz.

[146] *Ata Muhammad Khan*, 1880(a); *Aman-ul-Mulk*, 20 May 1880; *Telegram, Griffin to Simla*, 24 March 1880; *TLH*, 25 April 1880, SLEP:182, fols. 521-5.

[147] General Roberts seems to have been totally ignorant of the movements of both 'Abd al-Rahman Khan and Ishaq Khan. It was not until 24 March 1880 that Griffin informed Calcutta that the sardars had arrived in Afghan Turkistan, but by this time 'Abd al-Rahman Khan and Ishaq Khan were already in control of most of the province, *Telegram, Griffin to Calcutta*, 24 March 1880, SLEI:24, part 6, fol. 1688. In early to mid-February rumours had reached Kabul that 'Abd al-Rahman Khan was in Tashqurghan (Taliqan?) and in January reports from Qandahar stated that the sardar was in Balkh, though this is probably a garbled version of the earlier incursion by Muhammad Sarwar Khan. Indeed, *KD*, 22-28 Feb. 1880 states categorically that the reports of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan arriving in Afghan Turkistan were "quite false" and Ishaq Khan had been defeated and returned to Transoxiana. This again must refer to the events at the end of 1879, which the Kabul news writer wrongly assumed to be more recent news. By the third week of March authentic intelligence had been received that 'Abd al-Rahman had crossed the Amu Darya, but the details of his movements were confusing and contradictory. By 19 March, General Roberts claimed that one of his messengers had seen 'Abd al-Rahman in Takhtapul but the sardar was "intending to return to Russian territory."

[148] Kakar 1971, 34 says 'Abd al-Rahman Khan reached Qunduz on 10 April. A native agent who had been in Afghan Turkistan recently, informed Roberts that 'Abd al-Rahman Khan was in Takhtapul on 28 February, stayed 3 days and "left for Maimana intending to return to Russian territory". However, this intelligence must be discounted in the light of the other reports, *Cipher Telegram, Viceroy to Secr. State*, 19 March 1880, SLEI:24, part 6, fol. 1585.

[149] *Ata Mohamed Khan*, 1880(a); *KD*, 8-14. 15-21 Feb. 1880; *Telegram, Griffin to Calcutta*, 24 March 1880; *Narrative by an Afghan of a Journey from Meshed to Afghanistan, Turkistan, etc.*, SLEP:182, fols. 1311-8.

government garrisons in Afghan Turkistan having declared for 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, Ghulam Haidar Khan fled across the Amu Darya, leaving the province to make its peace with 'Abd al-Rahman Khan (Kakar 1971, 141; Soboleff, 230).[150]

By early April 1880, less than two months after his arrival in Badakhshan, Afghan Turkistan had submitted to 'Abd al-Rahman Khan or to his cousin, Ishaq Khan. This remarkable feat had been accomplished with hardly any opposition from the Afghan garrisons and was further facilitated by the willingness of the indigenous amirs to accept the sardar's authority. Though little blood had been shed, an exception was made of Mohai al-Din Khan, Ghulam Haidar Khan's governor of Sar-i Pul and the murderer of Muhammad Sarwar Khan. Unlike his superior, Mohai al-Din failed to escape the retribution of Sarwar's brother, Ishaq Khan who, under the Pushtun code of *badal*, was required to avenge the death of his kith and kin in kind (Kakar 1971, 141).[151] It is not surprising, therefore, to find that the stiffest resistance to Ishaq Khan came from Sar-i Pul. Mohai al-Din's small force, however, was soon overwhelmed (Kakar 1971, 141)[152] and he was captured and sent to Mazar-i Sharif along with Qadir Khan, who seems to have taken refuge in Sar-i Pul following the fall of Shibarghan. When they reached the sacred precincts, Qadir Khan and Mohai al-Din Khan (though the sources do not mention the governor of Sar-i Pul specifically) had their beards shaved and were paraded through the town on the back of donkeys. This public humiliation, however, was just the beginning of woes, for Ishaq Khan put them both to the torture. They were finally thrown, still living, into a cauldron of boiling fat (Sobeloff, 231). Meanwhile, Muhammad Sarwar's body was exhumed and buried with all honours in the shrine of 'Ali alongside the grave of Amir Sher 'Ali Khan.[153]

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[150] *Telegram, Griffin to Calcutta*, 24 March 1880; *Aman-ul-Mulk*, 20 May 1880. Various rumours circulated about the fate of Ghulam Haidar Khan. *Telegram, Chief Political Officer, Kabul, to Calcutta*, 23 March 1880, SLEI:24, part 6, fol. 1689 reported that he had been defeated "between Maimana and Balkh" and that he had fled to the former place. Others claimed that he had been arrested by 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, *Babu Jan*, 5 April 1880.

[151] *Ata Muhamed Khan*, 1880(a); *Afghan Journey to Afghanistan*, 1880; *Statement of Mohamed Sarwar*, 22 April 1880, SLEI:25, fols. 601-5; *TLH*, 9 May 1880, SLEP:182, fols. 647-54.

[152] *TLH*, 9 May 1880; *Telegram, Roberts to Calcutta*, 8 March 1880.

[153] *Babu Jan*, 5 April 1880; *Ata Mohamed Khan*, 1880(a); *TLH*, 9 May 1880; *Statement of Mohamed Sarwar*, 22 April 1880; *Report of Ibrahim Khan ... Member of the Mission to Turkistan*, 3 June 1880, SLEI:25, fols. 1289-96. According to Mohamed Sarwar, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan was opposed to these executions, but this seems hardly likely, especially as they took place in Mazar-i Sharif, which 'Abd al-Rahman Khan had made his headquarters. *PCD*, 23 Nov. 1880, says that a number of others were put to death at the same time, presumably these individuals

'Abd al-Rahman Khan rewarded Ishaq Khan's service by making him governor of Afghan Turkistan and distributed the various sub-governorships to local amirs, some of whom, at least, were the descendants of local Chingizid dynasties. Aqcha was placed under a certain Kok Mirza Turkman, whilst one of his (unnamed) brothers was put in charge of Shibarghan. Akhunzada Sultan was given Sar-i Pul and Sultan Murad Beg of Qunduz, who had declared for 'Abd al-Rahman Khan when Ghulam Haidar had attacked him and had been instrumental in facilitating the subjugation of Qataghan, was allowed to continue in control of his family fief.[154]

The *rôle* of Dilawar Khan Ming of Maimana in these momentous events has always been uncertain, though British histories, written shortly after the event, claimed that Maimana initially refused to acknowledge 'Abd al-Rahman Khan (e.g. Maitland 1888, ii, 100), a belief which modern scholarship continues to foster (Dupree 1979, chart 21; Kakar 1971, 25). An examination of the contemporary reports and records in the India Office, however, reveals a different story. By March 1880, Dilawar Khan had only recently secured control over Maimana's affairs, but though he was, at least nominally, a vassal of Aiyub Khan, he appears to have begun an intrigue with the Turkman ruler of Merv in the hope of breaking away from Afghanistan and establishing Maimana as an independent country under the Khan's protection.[155] The arrival of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan and the Turkman defeat at Gök[156] Tepa put an end to any hope of creating a Turkman-Uzbek federal state.

Shortly after Ishaq Khan crossed the Amu Darya, the sardar, or a number of his senior generals, realising the importance of securing Maimana's support for their campaign, visited Dilawar Khan and tried to persuade him to break with Aiyub Khan (Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 188).[157] Dilawar Khan, observing the swiftness with which

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were also implicated in Sarwar's assassination.

[154] *Ata Mohamed Khan*, 1880(a); *Naib Nur Mohamed Khan to Commissioner, Peshawar*, 10 Dec. 1880, SLEI:26, part 8, fols. 2089-91.

[155] *Sipar Salar of Meimaneh to the Sirdars at Merve*, n.d. 1880, SLEP:182, fols. 1541-2. It is impossible to place the exact month that this letter was written, but, on the basis of allusions to events in Afghan Turkistan, it was probably composed in the early spring of 1880.

[156] Russian, Геок.

[157] *KD*, 7-13 March 1880; *Telegram, Roberts to Foreign Secr.*, 10 March 1880, SLEI:24, part 4, fol. 1485. *Telegram, Viceroy to Secr. of State*, 19 March 1880 states that 'Abd al-Rahman was going in person to Maimana, but this claim can be discounted. Soboleff, 228-9 says Ishaq went to Maimana first, before the fall of Shibarghan. As a result of this visit, Dilawar Khan swore allegiance to 'Abd al-Rahman Khan on the Qur'an and gave Ishaq Khan one hundred and fifty sowars to help with the conquest of Afghan Turkistan. Ishaq then proceeded to seize

Afghan Turkistan fell to 'Abd al-Rahman Khan and the chaos of Aiyub's administration, appears to have given Ishaq Khan considerable encouragement. After the defeat of Mohai al-Din Khan and the fall of Sar-i Pul, Dilawar Khan sent presents of money, goods and horses to Ishaq Khan and, although the wali asked that no envoy be sent immediately, probably due to anxiety about Aiyub Khan's intentions, the embassy marks Maimana's formal submission to the overlordship of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan.[158] Evidence of this shift in Dilawar Khan's policy came just after Nauroz. Aiyub Khan, having heard that Maimana was sheltering Muhammad Khan, the ex-Beglarbegi of Sar-i Pul, who was hostile to Sher 'Ali's heirs, demanded that the wali hand the rebel over. In reply, Dilawar Khan informed Aiyub Khan that Muhammad Khan was his guest and would not be surrendered.[159]

The appearance of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan in Afghan Turkistan, and the swiftness with which the region fell into his hands, "completely changed the character of the Anglo-Afghan struggle" (Soboleff, 186) for it was soon apparent to General Roberts in Kabul that 'Abd al-Rahman Khan was now a serious contender for the Afghan throne and posed a not inconsiderable military threat to the army of occupation. Following criticism in London of Robert's public executions of the alleged assassins of Cavagnari, Calcutta had sent Lepel Griffin to Kabul to take control of civil affairs with instructions to partition Afghanistan into two fiefdoms, Qandahar and Kabul, so that the British troops could be withdrawn. The question was, who should rule Kabul? Despite pressure from the 'Nationalist' lobby in Kabul (Kakar

Andkhui, Shibarghan, etc. This account is very unreliable and differs significantly from every other contemporary record. Soboleff, writing from the Russian perspective and at a time when tension between Britain and Russia was running high, portrays 'Abd al-Rahman Khan as a popular leader, whose success in securing control of Afghan Turkistan was due wholly to the support he received from the local populace, rather than any financial assistance from Russia or its Protectorate of Bukhara. Hence Russia was absolved from the accusation that she was supporting 'Abd al-Rahman Khan.

The question of whether 'Abd al-Rahman Khan was encouraged by the Russians to return to Afghanistan was hotly debated by British officials in Kabul, Calcutta and London and it was generally believed that the sardar was more inclined towards a Russian alliance than remaining within the British fold. One report, dating from 1880, claimed that 'Abd al-Rahman Khan had two Russian advisers with him when he crossed the Amu Darya, but this allegation was never confirmed by any other source. Kakar, 1971, 36-7 believes that 'Abd al-Rahman Khan did receive encouragement from Russia, which saw a long-term advantage in promoting his cause. 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, however, frequently denounced both British and Russian interference in Afghanistan's internal affairs, claiming he was no man's slave; something which he frequently demonstrated during his 21 years' reign, to the exasperation of both European powers. Cf. *Telegram, Roberts to Foreign Secr.*, 15 March 1880; *Babu Jan*, 5 April 1880.

[158] *TLH*, 9 May 1880, SLEP:182, fols. 647-54.

[159] *TLH*, 26 March 1880.

1971, 27-9) which led to some disturbances in the city, Ya'qub Khan and Aiyub Khan were discounted as they were the sons of Sher 'Ali Khan who, in British eyes, had proved untrustworthy. The arrival of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan in Afghan Turkistan was thus very timely, for it was known that very little love was lost between the descendants of Afzal Khan and Sher 'Ali's heirs.

Meanwhile, in Afghan Turkistan 'Abd al-Rahman Khan had raised the call of *jihad* and had raised nearly thirty thousand rupees to pay for the anticipated confrontation with the *farangi* (Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 188). Letters were sent to every corner of Afghanistan and the North-West Frontier, calling for a general tribal uprising against the invaders yet, at the same time, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan realised that there was a chance of securing control of Kabul through negotiations and he wrote to Griffin in an altogether more moderate tone. The arrival of the exiled Afghan prince offered Britain a solution to the dilemma they faced over the succession, and on 1 April Griffin wrote to the Viceroy recommending the appointment of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan as Amir of Kabul provided that he was "friendly towards Her Majesty's government," with Qandahar and Herat as independent states.[160] The following day, Griffin sent a confidential messenger, Muhammad Sarwar, to Afghan Turkistan with a letter for the sardar and a confidential verbal proposal. The envoy reached Qunduz nine days later and was ushered into 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's public *durbar*, where several hundred Uzbeks, Turkmans and Afghans were assembled. Griffin's letter was read out in public and a general discussion of the contents and proposals ensued. When the sardar replied, the letter was drafted in accordance with the consensus of opinion that had been reached by the assembly (Kakar 1971, 34).

Lord Lytton had reservations about 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, for it was widely believed in Calcutta that he had received support for his campaign from Russia, but Griffin's memorandum persuaded him that the son of Afzal Khan was preferable to handing Kabul over to Sher 'Ali's family and the go-ahead was given to pursue contacts with the sardar further. On 15 May 'Abd al-Rahman Khan received a second delegation of British-nominated envoys in Khanabad during which interview the ambassadors were informed that he would not enter into any agreement without the consent "of the chiefs of my nation" (Kakar 1971, 40). The British were also asked to clarify their

[160] *Memorandum by Mr. Lepel Griffin to Viceroy*, 1 April 1880, SLEI:25, fols. 223-31. In the final agreement Britain gave 'Abd al-Rahman Khan the option of recapturing Herat.

position on the borders of Afghanistan which, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan maintained, included both Balkh and Qandahar.[161]

Whilst waiting for a reply to this request, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan continued his propaganda campaign through a deluge of letters sent to every conceivable tribal and ethnic grouping, astutely tailoring each individual communication to appeal to the aspirations and grievances of the particular clan, sect, etc, to which it was addressed. Consequently, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's popularity increased throughout the country. Griffin, though, became alarmed by the ground-swell of support for the sardar and feared that 'Abd al-Rahman Khan would be tempted to abandon negotiations for a peaceful hand-over of power, preferring instead to ingratiate himself to the radicals by expelling the British by force. In an attempt to counteract any such moves, Griffin laid plans for subverting the sardar's tribal support by covertly bribing his Afghan troops and inciting the amirs of Afghan Turkistan to revolt (Kakar 1971, 42).

Fortunately, Griffin never had enough time to implement this plot which could have very easily precipitated the very thing he sought to avoid: a Holy War. Instead, on 12 June the Viceroy ordered Griffin to draw up a draft agreement for consideration by 'Abd al-Rahman Khan which conceded that Britain would not stand in the Amir's way were he to seize Herat and depose Aiyub Khan (Kakar 1971, 39). Implicit in this was the recognition that 'Abd al-Rahman Khan was free to retake Qandahar and, as such, it marked a significant change in Lord Lytton's original plan to dismember Afghanistan.

On 20 June 'Abd al-Rahman Khan accepted the terms in principle and left Khanabad for Charikar (Kakar 1971, 46-8), where he summoned "all the chiefs and heads of the Afghan tribes" (Kakar 1971, 50) to a *Loya Jirga*, or national tribal assembly, of Pushtun tribes. On 20 July 1880, this convocation elected 'Abd al-Rahman Khan to the Amirship and two days later Griffin "formally acknowledged and recognised" the sardar as the ruler of Afghanistan (Kakar 1971, 50-1). As far as 'Abd al-Rahman Khan was concerned, however, he had already been appointed as Amir by his own people who had granted him the usual rights of coinage and *khutba*. Throughout his reign this was something of which he never tired of reminding the British, whose officials maintained that the Amir owed his position solely to their patronage of his cause. Given the controversial nature of his

[161] The 'Nationalist' party held the same position on the issue of the frontiers of Afghanistan as 'Abd al-Rahman Khan (Kakar 1971, 40).

reign, it is important to realise that 'Abd al-Rahman Khan came to power with the consent of his peers from amongst the Afghan tribes and with the support of the Turkistanian amirs. Unfortunately, the honeymoon between the newly-elected Amir and his subjects, both north and south of the Hindu Kush, was short-lived. Within two years of his accession, officials were expressing serious anxiety about the Amir's repressive government. In a secret memorandum, Viscount Cross, the Secretary of State for India, was informed that 'Abd al-Rahman Khan had "killed or banished almost every man of rank and influence in the country."[162] The worst, however, was yet to come.

*The Aimaq Revolt and the Fall of Aiyub Khan, 1880-1881*

'Abd al-Rahman's position was strengthened by the weakness of his rivals, particularly Aiyub Khan in Herat, who had failed to offer any coherent or unified resistance to the British occupation or the agreement between Roberts and Afzal Khan's heir due to the chronic internal problems he had faced over the last two years. Although he had succeeded in suppressing General Faiz Muhammad Khan's revolt, Aiyub Khan had been forced to postpone his attack on Qandahar and it was not until the summer of 1880 that the sardar renewed hostilities with the British. On 9 June, Aiyub Khan once more marched his forces out of Herat, having previously had himself proclaimed as Amir and ordered coins struck in his own name (Kakar 1971, 62). On 22 July, the same day that Lepel Griffin accorded official British recognition to 'Abd al-Rahman Khan as Amir, Aiyub Khan crossed the Helmand river and occupied the village of Maiwand. Five days later he completely defeated a British force under General Borrows which had been sent against him, and forced them to flee back to Qandahar in considerable disarray (Katib ii, 375-6).

The battle of Maiwand, though justly celebrated by Afghans as one of their greatest victories over the British, actually had very little influence over the course of Afghan history. Indeed, Aiyub's defeat of General Burrows actually strengthened 'Abd al-Rahman's hand. When news of Maiwand broke in Kabul, the British were even more anxious than ever to tie the knot with 'Abd al-Rahman Khan. 'Abd al-Rahman Khan too, realising that both he and the British had a mutual interest in destroying Aiyub Khan, suddenly became "most friendly"

[162] *Foreign Department to Viscount Cross*, 16 Aug. 1882, SLEI:26, part 1, fols. 8-13.

(Kakar 1971, 66) and it was the Amir who must take the credit for negotiating safe passage through Ghilzai country which enabled General Robert's to make his famous forced march to relieve Qandahar (Kakar 1971, 66).[163]

Maiwand was also a watershed for Aiyub Khan himself, for it marked the zenith of his power. Unlike 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, Aiyub Khan had little military acumen and instead of following up his victory by attacking Qandahar, he decided instead to negotiate with the garrison commander, who deliberately dragged out the discussions until Roberts could come to his aid. Once the relief force was in sight of Qandahar, all pretence at a diplomatic solution was shelved. On 31 August 1880, General Roberts completely routed Aiyub's army at Mazra in Arghandab and in so doing effectively ended the attempt by Sher 'Ali's heirs to regain control of Afghanistan (Kakar 1971, 66).

Aiyub Khan fled back to Herat with the remnants of his broken army and it was not long before the old feuds and rivalries resurfaced. Prior to his departure to Qandahar, Anbiya Khan Taimani of Taiwara and Khan Agha Jamshidi, two of the most influential Aimaq chiefs, with suitable encouragement from Colonel St. John in Qandahar,[164] had rebelled (Kakar 1971, 70). As soon as Aiyub Khan had left Herat, the Aimaqs, along with the 'Alikozai and Ishaqzai Afghan clans, tried once more to take control of the city and place Behbub Khan, the oldest surviving grandson of Wazir Yar Muhammad Khan, on the throne (Kakar 1971, 71).[165] To complicate matters further, Sardar Iskandar Khan, the son of the late Sultan Muhammad Khan of Herat, who was living in exile in Persia, applied for permission to return to Herat, though in the end he never reached Afghan territory.[166]

The Aimaq uprising failed and when Aiyub Khan returned to Herat from the slaughter at Mazra, he was determined to avenge himself on the tribes for their treachery. In late November, Muhammad Hasan Khan, using the pretext of Turkman raids, was sent against Khan Agha's capital of Kushk[167] and "completely crushed" and "annihilated"

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[163] Another effect of Aiyub's victory was to ensure that Qandahar was once more considered to be part of Afghanistan and, following the defeat of Aiyub and the evacuation of the city by British forces, it was handed back to 'Abd al-Rahman Khan. The sardar of Qandahar, Sher 'Ali, chose exile in Karachi.

[164] Col. St. John failed to support these Aimaq chiefs when they most needed it. Having encouraged them to rebel so that Aiyub would be too busy with problems in Herat to march on Qandahar, it was not until later in 1881 that he decided to subsidise the Aimaq chiefs.

[165] *TLH*, 13 Oct. 1880, SLEP:182, fols. 1531-6.

[166] *Thomson to Earl Granville*, 3 May 1880, SLEP:182, fols. 339-44.

[167] *DSAR*, 1-21 Dec. 1880, SLEI:27, fols. 343-50.

the Jamshidis, though Khan Agha escaped to the mountainous districts of Ghor. The Herat troops treated the Aimaqs with great "severity and oppression."[168] Between fifty and one hundred thousand krans were extracted from the population, strategic forts in the region were garrisoned and an Afghan, Muhammad Hasan Khan, was appointed as governor of the area.[169]

Khan Agha took refuge with Anbiya Khan Taimani, who had also participated in the abortive revolt against Aiyub Khan, but when Khan Agha urged the Taimani leader to come to the aid of the Jamshidis, Anbiya Khan, though expressing support for the predicament of his guest, excused himself on the grounds that he had pressing problems within his own country. A bitter dispute which had arisen between Anbiya Khan and his relative, Sadiq Khan of Tulak, had split the tribe in two and the Taimani amir could not risk leaving his own territory undefended, lest his rival were to take advantage of his absence to attack his fief (Maitland 1891, 199ff.).[170] In order to secure Anbiya Khan's support, Khan Agha responded by offering to act as a mediator in the dispute, providing that Sadiq Khan guarantee him safe conduct to pursue the negotiations. Sadiq Khan agreed to these terms, but insisted that Khan Agha come in person.[171] Accompanied by only four retainers, Khan Agha set out in good faith to meet the Taimani chief on neutral ground at Qal'a-yi Kohna, only to find that when he arrived, the Tulak amir was waiting for him with one hundred men. After engaging Khan Agha in a brief conversation, Sadiq Khan gave a signal to his men, who seized Khan Agha and his servants, pinned their hands behind their backs and carried them to Tulak where, by prior agreement, they were handed over to 'Abd al-Wahab Khan, the Afghan commandant of Obeh, who sent the rebels to Aiyub Khan (Maitland 1891, 199).[172]

Khan Agha reached Herat on 7 December 1880 in a "most wretched condition"[173] and was paraded through the streets with his legs tied under his pony's belly like a common criminal. The following day he was brought before Aiyub Khan and, despite the fact that the Jamshidi amir was his father-in-law, the sardar unleashed a torrent of invective, accusing the Aimaq leader of "being friends of the

[168] *Precis of Letters from Merve and Herat*, Jan. 1881, SLEP:183, fols. 249-51.
[169] *TLH*, 6 Dec. 1881; *HC*, 3 Jan. 1881, SLEP:183, fols. 91-2, 233-5.
[170] *HC*, 10 Dec. 1880, SLEP:183, fols. 21-2.
[171] *Ibid.*
[172] *Ibid.*
[173] *Ibid.*

enemies of the Faith [i.e. the British] and working for the destruction of Islam."[174] When Khan Agha denied any formal alliance with the British, Aiyub produced letters inciting the tribes to revolt which bore the impress of the Jamshidi chief's personal seal. Khan Agha maintained that these letters had been sent "in Ayub's own interests," whereupon the sardar replied, sarcastically: "In that case, I will reward the service you have done me by doing you another" and ordered his servants to fall on their prisoners with their daggers, swords and pikes. Khan Agha, along with his escort, was mercilessly hacked to death in front of Aiyub Khan and their bodies were thrown over the citadel walls to be exposed to public gaze. Na'ib Hafizullah Khan was appointed to supervise the seizure of all Khan Agha's property in Herat and a general persecution of the Jamshidi tribe was inaugurated (Kakar 1971, 71).[175]

The brutal assassination of Khan Agha, combined with the tyrannical proceedings of Muhammad Hasan Khan and 'Abd al-Wahab Khan in Kushk and Obeh, precipitated further revolts and alienated the whole of the Chahar Aimaq. Yalangtush Khan, Khan Agha's heir, hearing of his father's murder, fled to Maimana, for he was related by marriage to Dilawar Khan Ming.[176] There he was joined by Fathullah Beg Firozkohi and Muhammad Khan, chief of the Sunni Hazaras (Maitland 1891, 134; Kakar 1971, 70-1).[177] Anbiya Khan Taimani also sought refuge in his mountain strongholds but 'Abd al-Wahab Khan, with help from the garrisons in Farah and Sabzawar, marched out of Obeh and seized the Taimani capital. The Farah and Sabzawar troops, however, got completely out of hand, refused to obey their officers and, in an orgy of looting and plundering, put so many Aimaqs to the sword that 'Abd al-Wahab claimed they had "almost exterminated the Taimanees."[178] Once again this act of gratuitous brutality only provoked further rebellions, as those tribesmen who managed to escape the pogrom fled to the inaccessible mountain fortresses where

[174] *Ibid.*

[175] *Ibid.*

[176] The Wali of Maimana had married a cousin of Yalangtush Khan. She was the daughter of Aminullah Khan, brother of Khan Agha, *DQR*, 1-7 March 1881, SLEI:28, fols. 6-8.

[177] *DQR*, 1-7 March 1881. *Telegram, St. John to Calcutta*, 20, 28 Feb., 7 March 1881 SLEI:27 fols. 1253, 1409, 1431; *TLH*, 25 Dec. 1880, 19 Jan. 1881, SLEP:183, fols. 123-4, 261-3. *HC*, 18 Dec. 1880 says he went to Panjdeh first. Later, Col. St. John denied that the Aimaq chiefs had rebelled, claiming, instead, that they had gone to Maimana with Aiyub's consent, *Telegram, St. John to Calcutta*, 7 March 1881. Aiyub's own actions against the Aimaqs give the lie to this claim.

[178] *TLH*, 25 Dec. 1880, 19 Jan. 1881. Aiyub Khan ordered these troops to be sent home once they were brought back under control.

they joined forces with Anbiya Khan and the other Aimaq leaders (Maitland 1891, 199-200).[179]

In the early months of 1881 Aiyub Khan, unable to grasp the fact that the very severity of his government served merely to exacerbated discontent and rebellion, turned his wrath on the Afghan sardars who had plotted with the Aimaqs against him. Following 'Abd al-Wahab's seizure of the Taimani country, the sons and grandsons of Wazir Yar Muhammad Khan fell into his hands and Aiyub Khan had them "strangled in the dead of night" in the dungeons of the Herat citadel (Kakar 1971, 71).[180] Despite attempts to hush up these murders, by the following day news of the executions was known "all over the city"[181] and so Aiyub Khan, by his own actions, daily added to the number of his enemies both within and without Herat.

During the winter of 1880/1, whilst Aiyub Khan was laying the foundations of his own destruction, Yalangtush Khan moved to Khwaja Kenti, on the Maimana-Herat frontier, where he assembled a considerable force of Turkmans and Aimaq tribesmen recruited from the Kushk and Panjdeh region.[182] His immediate ojective was to exact revenge on the Sunni Hazaras of Qal'a-i Nau (Maitland 1891, 65; Kakar 1971, 71) who were implicated in the plot which had led to the capture and death of his father.[183] His plans to attack Kushk, however, had to be postponed for in the middle of January 1881, Yalangtush Khan fell dangerously ill and for a while his life hung in the balance.[184] Aiyub Khan, meanwhile, completely unable to contain the Aimaq rebellion which had spread like wildfire throughout Badghis, Ghor and Gharchistan,[185] sent an envoy to Dilawar Khan, demanding, amongst other things, the surrender of the Jamshidi chief.[186] Dilawar

[179] *HC*, 10 Dec. 1880 which remarks: "Although Ayub Khan has removed one enemy from his path, ... discontent and trouble has increased for him [i.e. Ayub Khan] in the province of Herat. We shall see what the result will be."

[180] *TLH*, 19 Jan. 1881. Only Behbub Khan, Yar Muhammad Khan's grandson, is named.

[181] *Ibid.*

[182] *HC*, 3 Jan. 1881. It is unclear how many of Yalangtush Khan's followers accompanied him to Maimana. *Telegram, St. John to Calcutta*, 20 Feb. 1881; *DSAR*, 22-28 Feb. 1881, SLEI:27, fol. 1637 say he was accompanied by 1,000 sowars. *DQR*, 1-7 March 188, claims there were only a few men with him and that the tribe deserted him following the death of his father. Later, *DQR*, 8-14 April 1881, SLEI:28, fol. 768 reports 100 retainers with him.

[183] *TLH*, 25 Dec. 1880.

[184] *Ibid.*

[185] There were rumours that Aiyub had dispatched a force across the Murghab to quell Yalangtush Khan's rebellion and that Maimana had been attacked, *Telegram, Commissioner Peshawar, to Calcutta*, 1, 6 Jan. 1881, SLEI:27, fols. 7, 125; *Thomson to Earl Granville*, Feb. 1881, SLEP:183, fol. 195.

[186] *TLH*, 19 Jan. 1881. *TLH*, 18 March 1881; *Thomson to Viceroy*, 18 April 1881, SLEP:183,

Khan, however, was in no mood to comply and informed Aiyub Khan's representative that since Yalangtush Khan was related to his family through marriage, he was bound to offer his relative hospitality and sanctuary,[187] though the wali did send a present of a few horses and a *postin* to soften the refusal.[188]

Yalangtush Khan eventually recovered from his near-fatal illness and began to raid Herat-held areas of Badghis. When it became apparent that Aiyub Khan could do little to prevent these attacks, more tribesmen from Panjdeh and Kushk flocked to the banner of the Jamshidi chief.[189] Not everything, however, went well for Yalangtush Khan, for Dilawar Khan's support for the uprising was only lukewarm. When Yalangtush Khan applied for permission to visit Afghan Turkistan in the hope of obtaining help from Ishaq Khan, the wali at first refused to allow the Aimaq chief to undertake the journey, since during the early weeks of 1881, Maimana was on the verge of war with Ishaq Khan over the disputed ownership of the Darzab district (see below)[190] and it was not until the early part of March that Yalangtush Khan was allowed to visit Mazar-i Sharif.[191]

The Darzab dispute meant that Dilawar Khan was unable to give any military help to the Aimaq rebellion, for Dilawar Khan knew that if Ishaq decided to mount a full-blown invasion of Maimana, it would be all he could do to "keep his own purdah."[192] Unable to rely on Dilawar Khan's practical help, Yalangtush Khan sought to revive the relationship that he, and other Aimaq leaders, had cultivated with the British the previous year (Kakar 1971, 70-2). In a letter addressed to the British ambassador in Tehran, the Jamshidi leader declared that he was "the servant of the British Government" and requested instructions as to whether he should stay in Maimana or "make trouble" for Aiyub around Herat. He was "in great straits" financially for he and

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fols. 431-2, 557.

[187] *DQR*, 1-7 March 1881.

[188] *TLH*, 18 March 1881; *QNL*, 31 May 1881, SLEI:28, fols. 1038-9. The envoy also inquired about reports of Russian (some rumours said English) spies visiting Afghan Turkistan; *TLH*, 22 May 1881, SLEP:183, fols. 721-6; *Letter from ... Herat Frontier to Meshed Agent*, n.d. 1881, SLEP:183, fol. 1469.

[189] *Telegram, Viceroy to Secretary of State*, 28 Jan. 1881, SLEI:27, fols. 825.

[190] *Telegram, St. John to Simla*, 2 March 1881, SLEI:27, fol. 1409. Another (later) report claims Yalangtush Khan refused to go to Balkh even when Ishaq Khan invited him, *QNL*, 8 June 1881, SLEI:29, fol. 12.

[191] *Telegram, St. John to Calcutta*, 21 March 1881, SLEI:27, fol. 1649; *DQR*, 15-21 March 1881, SLEI:28, fol. 310.

[192] *QNL*, 31 May 1881.

his allies had "lost everything through the British Government and we beseech Your Excellency to take us under British protection."[193]

Yalangtush Khan's letter was treated, initially, with some suspicion by the British authorities, who were unsure exactly what was happening in Herat and on the Murghab and the matter was referred to Colonel St. John in Qandahar.[194] During the winter of 1880/1 intelligence from Lesser Turkistan had been very poor and conflicting reports had been received about Maimana and the Aimaq tribes which cast doubt on the sincerity of Yalangtush Khan's communication. Indeed, Colonel St. John had recently heard that there was no Aimaq rebellion against Aiyub and that the fighting in Badghis was merely Aiyub Khan's troops trying to fight off a particularly large Turkman raid.[195] The Darzab dispute between Maimana and Ishaq Khan muddied the waters even further, since Dilawar Khan's disagreement with the Amir's governor of Afghan Turkistan seemed to indicate that the wali opposed 'Abd al-Rahman Khan and might well turn to Aiyub Khan for aid.[196] Intelligence received from Peshawar, quoting "reliable" sources, seemed to support this belief, claiming that Hashim Khan, Ahmad 'Ali Khan and 'Abdullah Jan Khan Nasiri had marched to Maimana with a large army and forced Ishaq Khan to send five regiments to the area to repel them.[197] It was not until some weeks later that the Tehran embassy was able to deny that any Herat troops had moved up the Maimana road.[198] These rumours about Dilawar

[193] *Yalang Toosh Khan to Mr. Thomson*, rcvd., Meshed, 16 March 1881; *MA*, 26 March 1881; *Saryk Elders to Meshed Agent*, March 1881, SLEP:183, fols. 419-20, 469-71, 473-4; *DQR*, 8-14 March 1881, SLEI:28, fol. 218. Dilawar Khan had corresponded with Colonel St. John during the latter half of 1880, but the contact lapsed during the winter of 1880/1, following the defeat of Aiyub. In his reply to Dilawar Khan's letter, St. John confined himself to general platitudes and made no specific commitment to encourage Maimana's independence or rebellion against Aiyub Khan. "It has given me great pleasure to receive your letter and that of the chiefs of Maimeneh.... Although Meimeneh is far distant from its frontiers, the Government of England takes great interest in it, and will always be glad to hear of its welfare and freedom from oppression," *Letter in Reply to Wali of Maimeneh*, n.d. 1880(?), SLEI:27, fol. 328.

[194] *Yalang Toosh Khan to Thomson*, 16 March 1881. Yalangtush Khan wrote a second letter to Col. St. John, which reached Qandahar in April 1881, by which time Britain had decided to support the Aimaq rebellion, *DQR*, 8-14 April 1881.

[195] *JSAFF*, 1-21 Dec. 1880. *Telegram, St. John to Calcutta*, 2, 7 March 1881, SLEI:27, fols. 1409, 1431.

[196] Numerous reports and telegrams supported this claim, e.g. *PCD*, 20 Jan. 1881, SLEI:27, fols. 842-3; *DQR*, 8-14 April 1881; *Statement made by Cossid from Herat*, 27 April 1881, SLEP:183, fols. 599.

[197] *PCD*, 20 Jan. 1881; *Telegram, Commissioner, Peshawar to Calcutta*, 6 Jan. 1881; *PCD*, 2 Feb. 1881, SLEI:27, fols. 7, 125, 1401-3.

[198] *Telegram, Thomson to Viceroy*, 10 Jan., 11 March 1881, SLEI:27, fols. 303, 1650; *Telegram, St. John to Simla*, 18 April 1881, SLEI:28, fol. 610.

Khan's loyalties, gave the British officials a very distorted picture of the situation in Maimana and the Murghab during the early weeks of 1881. To all appearances it seemed that Yalangtush Khan, far from acting against Aiyub Khan, was an agent of the Herat government. He had successfully weaned Maimana away from its loyalty to the Amir, thus giving Aiyub Khan a strong foothold in Lesser Turkistan from which he could launch an attack on Balkh.[199]

In the light of Yalangtush Khan's letter, which contradicted much of the information being received in India, it was important for Britain to establish what exactly were the motives behind the Jamshidi chief's approach and his reasons for visiting Maimana.[200] On 2 March, Colonel St. John telegraphed the Viceroy confirming that the Jamshidi leader was "in open rebellion" against Aiyub Khan and that the problems between Maimana and Ishaq Khan had been a small, regional dispute only.[201] Even then, the Aimaq request for financial assistance was not granted immediately, and it was not until a month later that Colonel St. John was able to make a payment of ten thousand rupees to support the Aimaq rebellion. However, the money was not given to the Jamshidis, but to Anbiya Khan, the Taimani amir, whose brother had gone to Qandahar with a similar request for help against Aiyub Khan.[202]

Despite this rebuff, Yalangtush Khan had continued to make inroads against Herat. By the spring of 1881 the quarrel between Dilawar Khan and Ishaq Khan had been patched up, whilst discontent with Aiyub Khan's administration had become so widespread that the Jamshidi chief moved his headquarters to Panjdeh, from where he attacked the area around Kushk with impunity.[203] At around the same time, a section of the Herat garrison in Kushk mutinied and put to death General Muhammad Jan Khan before Hasan Khan managed to restore order. The Jamshidis, hearing of the unrest, went onto the offensive and it was only with great difficulty that Hasan Khan managed to prevent them retaking Kushk.[204] In late March Aiyub Khan recalled a number of regiments from the Jamshidi capital,

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[199] See, for example, *Telegram, St. John to Calcutta*, 28 Feb. 1881.

[200] *Telegram, Foreign Dept., Calcutta, to St. John*, 1 March 1881, SLEI:27, fol. 1409.

[201] *Telegram, St. John to Calcutta*, 2 March 1881.

[202] *DQR*, 8-14 April 1881.

[203] *Saryk Elders*, March 1881. *MA*, 11 June 1881; *TLH*, 1 June 1881, SLEP:183, fols. 815, 831.

[204] *Saryk Elders*, March 1881; *TLH*, 3 March 1881, SLEP:183, fols. 383-4; *St John to Simla*, 12 April 1881, SLEI:28, fol. 294. *DQR*, 8-14 April 1881; *Telegram, St. John to Simla*, 10 April 1881, SLEI:28, fol. 293 claim Yalangtush had retaken Kushk, but this did not happen until later in the year.

Taiwara, and other regions of Ghor and Badghis in pursuit of his *idée fixe*: the conquest of Qandahar.[205] When news of this withdrawal reached Yalangtush Khan he rallied his forces for a second attack on Kushk, whilst his Turkman allies from Panjdeh intensified their raids.[206] Before he gave orders for an all-out attack on the Herat garrison in Kushk, Yalangtush Khan was concerned that a number of his own relatives were still living in the area at the mercy of Hasan Khan and he sent a force into the Kushk area to rescue them, though he only succeeded in releasing about twenty families. Had not Aiyub Khan sent one thousand cavalry to reinforce Hasan Khan, Kushk might well have fallen.[207] Even so, by the middle of June, Yalangtush Khan and his main army were camped within three farsangs (approx. 30 miles) of Kushk.[208]

By the early days of June 1881, Yalangtush Khan had some twenty thousand Aimaq and Turkman tribesman under his command, some of whom came from as far away as the Merv oasis.[209] Despite the presence of such a formidable army on his northern border, Aiyub Khan seemed oblivious to the threat Yalangtush Khan posed to Herat and the sardar continued preparations for his march on Qandahar. The seriousness of the situation was brought home to him, however, when Aiyub Khan sent Nadir 'Alam accompanied by a handful of men, to investigate reports that Russian officers had arrived in Panjdeh. Not unexpectedly, Aiyub's emissaries were cut to pieces by the Turkmans before they ever reached their destination.[210] In response, a number of additional troops were sent to Hasan Khan at Kushk, though they were hardly sufficient to contain the growing storm.[211]

If the Jamshidi and Turkman rebellion in the north was not enough of a threat to Aiyub Khan, the Taimani Aimaqs, under Anbiya Khan, had also rebelled. Following Herat's conquest of Taiwara, Ghor and Chakhcharan the previous year, the Taimani chief had joined Yalangtush Khan and other dissident Aimaq chiefs in Maimana. When the

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[205] *MA*, 16 April 1881; *TLH*, 20 April 1881, SLEP:183, fols. 576, 592.
[206] *TLH*, 11 May 1881, SLEP:183, fol. 825.
[207] *Ibid. TLH*, 1, 18, 25 June 1881; *MA*, 25 June 1881, SLEP:183, fols. 831, 911-3, 919-20, 821.
[208] *TLH*, 12 June 1881, SLEP:183, fols. 773-5.
[209] *TLMV*, June 25, 1881, SLEP:183, fol. 838; *Telegram, Agent at Quetta, to Simla*, 8 June 1881, SLEI:28, fol. 1019. Hadi Khan, "Chief of the Turkmans," with a thousand *sowars* and a thousand Turkman from the Yalatan oasis, beyond Pandjeh, were amongst the Turkman amirs who came to the Aimaq's aid, *QNL*, 8 June 1881; *TLH*, 18 June 1881.
[210] *TLH*, 12 June 1881.
[211] *Ibid.*

Jamshidi amir moved to Panjdeh to direct operations against Kushk and Badghis, Anbiya Khan returned to the mountains of the upper Hari Rud, where he assembled his tribesmen for an attack on Taiwara. He was joined by Fathullah Beg Khan Firozkohi and secured the support of tribes from Chakhcharan and Siya Chob,[212] the latter place being the Taimani amir's headquarters. The rebellion received a further fillip by the return from Qandahar of Anbiya Khan's brother, Isma'il Beg, bearing the rupees that Colonel St. John had given to him.

By the spring of 1881, 'Abd al-Wahab Khan's position was even more precarious than that of the governor of Kushk. Aiyub Khan had recalled so many troops from Taiwara that there were only two or three thousand men under his command.[213] As the Taimani amir had some ten thousand men gathered in the hills to the north, the Afghan governor had little option but to try and negotiate safe passage for himself and his men back to Herat.[214] However, the discussions were terminated when Anbiya Khan and the other Aimaq leaders realised that 'Abd al-Wahab Khan was so weak that they could take Taiwara and the rest of the Herat-held territory whenever they wished.[215]

At the end of May, or early June 1881, that is at about the same time that affairs around Kushk and the Murghab were already beyond Aiyub Khan's control, there was a popular uprising in Shahrak (between Taiwara and Chakhcharan) precipitated by the oppression of Aiyub's tax-collectors,[216] and Anbiya Khan, supported by the Firozkohis and Sunni(?) Hazaras, decided to go on the offensive. The Aimaqs received further encouragement when an envoy from Ishaq Khan arrived in Chakhcharan and informed them that the Governor of Afghan Turkistan planned to march against Herat through their country and would assist the Aimaq campaign against Aiyub Khan in whatever way he could. When news of Ishaq Khan's plans were broadcast in the region, Anbiya Khan and his allies all declared for 'Abd al-Rahman Khan.[217]

Despite overwhelming numerical superiority over Aiyub Khan's men, the Taimani rebellion did not get off to an auspicious start. In an

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[212] Or Seh Chob? *DQR*, 8-14 March, 8-14 April 1881; *QNL*, 8 June 1881, SLEP:29, fol. 13. Siya Chob is probably in the Chakhcharan area but cannot be located on present-day maps.
[213] *MA*, 16 April 1881; *Telegram, St. John to Simla*, 10 April 1881.
[214] *DQR*, 8-14 April 1881; *QNL*, 31 May 1881; *Telegram, Agent, Quetta to Simla*, 8 June 1881.
[215] *Telegram, St. John to Simla*, 10 April 1881.
[216] *TLH*, 25 Aug. 1881, SLEP:183, fols. 1125-30.
[217] *Ibid.*

encounter with 'Abd al-Wahab Khan's forces, the Aimaqs were obliged to retreat to Siya Chob and Anbiya Khan's brother (Isma'il Khan?), along with a number of other members of his family, fell into Afghan hands. In a subsequent battle, however, the Herat troops were badly beaten and several high-ranking officers were taken prisoner, though they were later ransomed for Anbiya Khan's brother and relatives.[218] The Aimaqs followed up this success by besieging Taiwara, and so desperate was the situation for 'Abd al-Wahab Khan, that he enclosed a farewell letter to his father along with a final, frantic appeal to Aiyub Khan for reinforcements.[219] By this time Aiyub Khan had left Herat for Qandahar and, although Loynab Khushdil Khan and fifteen hundred cavalry, "worthless fellows," were sent to 'Abd al-Wahab Khan's relief, it was too little, too late.[220]

A few days after Khushdil Khan had left for Taiwara, the first of 'Abd al-Wahab's troops began to trickle into Aiyub Khan's camp with their dismal story. They had held out for ten days but, realising that their cause was hopeless, they had abandoned their position and fled, some returning to Herat whilst others, including 'Abd al-Wahab, made their way southwards to join the Herat army before Qandahar.[221] Despite this news, Loynab Khushdil Khan was ordered to continue his march against Anbiya Khan, only to discover that Ishaq Khan, at the head of six regiments of troops, had already reached Daulatyar.[222] A number of the Balkh troops were sent to support the Taimanis and easily defeated and scattered Khushdil Khan's men.[223]

Even though he had lost Taiwara, Ghor and Gharchistan, Aiyub Khan refused to return to Herat, for he had been lulled into a sense of false security by the success of his operations against Qandahar. After defeating a force loyal to 'Abd al-Rahman Khan at Karez-i 'Ata, Aiyub Khan had advanced on the city and the governor, faced with strong popular support for the sardar, fled to Qalat without offering any resistance. At the end of July 1881, Aiyub Khan entered Qandahar unopposed, only to find that he was presented with a strategic dilemma. He could remain in Qandahar and try to consolidate his position in the area, possibly even regaining control of Taiwara, or risk marching to Kabul leaving Herat vulnerable to an attack by Ishaq

[218] *TLH*, 25 June, 8, 19, 31 July 1881, SLEP:183, fols. 919-20, 936-7, 1085, 1089.
[219] *TLH*, 12 June 1881.
[220] *TLH*, 25 Aug. 1881; *TLH*, 10, 20 Sept. 1881, SLEP:183, fols. 1181-2, 1242-3.
[221] *TLH*, 10, 20 Sept. 1881.
[222] *TLH*, 25 Aug. 1881; *TLH*, 24 Sept. 1881, SLEP:183, fols. 1245-7.
[223] *TLH*, 25 Aug., 20 Sept. 1881.

Khan and the Aimaqs, who were advancing on the city from the north and east. In the end, it was lack of funds which forced Aiyub to stay put. In so doing, he found himself stranded in no-man's land, and left Herat defended by only a handful of men (Kakar 1971, 74-5).[224]

'Abd al-Rahman Khan, realising his rival's predicament, swiftly assembled a sizeable army, imprisoned everyone and anyone whom he suspected of supporting Aiyub Khan in Kabul and set out in person to attack Qandahar. Meanwhile, in August, Kushk finally fell to Ya-langtush Khan and he set out at the head of his Jamshidi and Turkman army towards Herat whilst Ishaq Khan and his Taimani and Hazara allies advanced from the east.[225] On 22 September, at a battle near Chel Zina, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan defeated Aiyub Khan and his victorious troops plundered Qandahar. Two days later, the Amir ordered 'Abd al-Qudus Khan, the commander of the Balkh forces, to attack Herat.[226]

The small garrison Aiyub Khan had left behind in Herat had no hope of holding out against the combined forces of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, Yalangtush Khan and 'Abd al-Qudus. Nor did they help their precarious cause by allowing Fathullah Khan Firozkohi into the city to spy out the land. Using the excuse of an argument between himself and his son, Fathullah Khan persuaded Aiyub Khan's son, Musa Jan, who had been left behind to organise Herat's defences, that he had changed sides. Despite Fathullah Khan having been one of the main opponents of Aiyub Khan, Musa Jan believed this story, and for several days the Aimaq leader was allowed to roam the city examining the defences and discovering at first hand the appalling state of its military establishment. Having satisfied himself that Herat could offer

[224] Aiyub had tried to negotiate some form of peaceful co-existence between the heirs of Sher 'Ali Khan and Afzal Khan, and naïvely suggested to 'Abd al-Rahman Khan that they partition Afghanistan. He would retain Herat, his brother, Ya'qub Khan (whose release Aiyub anticipated he would be able to obtain from the British) would be reinstated in Kabul, whilst 'Abd al-Rahman Khan would become governor of Balkh, which was the inheritance given to Afzal Khan by Dost Muhammad Khan. Ishaq Khan is not mentioned in Aiyub's plan, which never had any chance of success and would, in any event, have proved quite unworkable (Kakar 1971, 78).

[225] The evidence for this is conflicting. *TLH*, 24 Sept. 1881 says that Kushk was still under Herat whilst *TLH*, 25 Aug., 20 Sept. 1881 reports Yalangtush Khan still at Panjdeh. However, *TLH*, 20 Sept. 1881 says that Herat had ordered its Jamshidi loyalists in the area to move nearer Herat, implying that the region was out of its control. By September Yalangtush Khan was advancing on Herat, cf. *MA*, 25 June 1881; *TLH*, 25 Aug., 24 Sept. 1881.

[226] One report claims he marched through Maimana, but it is clear that the Balkh army came through Daulatyar and marched down the Hari Rud valley; *Telegram, Thomson to Viceroy*, 12 Sept. 1881, SLEI:29, fol. 1022; *Sayyid Mir Hashim to Col. St. John*, 7 Oct. 1881, SLEI:31, fol. 351. "Dispatch from Bala Murghab," *Pioneer of India*, March 1885.

little or no resistance, Fathullah Khan left Herat as openly as he had come and rejoined the combined force of 'Abd al-Qudus Khan and Yalangtush Khan, which was now a mere thirty miles from the city.[227]

Musa Jan, realising finally that he had been tricked, decided to make a stand outside the city and the few men who had remained in Herat were sent to reinforce Loynab Khushdil Khan who had drawn up his force across the line of Qudus Khan's advance. On 2 October 1881, at a place called Shaflan, the Herat troops, hopelessly outnumbered, were overwhelmed and a few hours later, in the dead of night, Yalangtush Khan, accompanied by two hundred men, entered Herat unopposed. The following morning he was joined by 'Abd al-Qudus Khan and the Balkh army (Kakar 197, 80).[228] News of the fall of Herat reached Aiyub Khan whilst he was still making his way back to the city following his defeat at the hands of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan. Realising that all was lost, he and a number of his close advisers and family turned westwards and sought sanctuary from the Amir's wrath in Persia.[229]

'Abd al-Qudus Khan, who was only twenty-seven,[230] was appointed by 'Abd al-Rahman Khan as the governor of Herat, much to the chagrin of Muhammad Ishaq Khan, who coveted this post for himself (Katib ii, 387-8). The Amir, however, always aware of the threat that A'zam Khan's son posed, preferred to place this important territory in the hands of someone who owed his position entirely to the Amir (Kakar 1971, 40). Ishaq Khan made no secret of his bitterness at being passed over and he wrote to 'Abd al-Rahman Khan complaining that the service he and his family had rendered during the dark days of exile had been deliberately overlooked (Kakar 1971, 142).[231] By the end of 1881, relations between the Amir and the governor of Afghan Turkistan had become so strained that a "complete breach" seemed very likely.[232] Reports from Afghan Turkistan spoke of Ishaq Khan forcing loans and fines out of the people of the province to finance a war with the Amir and that all army commanders,

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[227] *HC*, 2 Oct. 1881; *TLH*, 28 Sept. 1881, SLEP:183, fols. 1219, 1255; *Telegram, Thomson to Viceroy*, 9 Oct. 1881, SLEI:30, fol. 192.

[228] *Mir Hashim to St. John*, 18 Oct. 1881, SLEI:31, fol. 353; *TLH*, 6 Oct. 1881, SLEP:183, fols. 1227-31. 300 men were reported killed in the battle.

[229] *TLH*, 6 Oct. 1881.

[230] *HNL*, 20 Feb. 1882, SLEI:32, fols. 497-500.

[231] *Letter from A.B*, 7 Dec. 1881, SLEI:31, fols. 305-7. This letter goes into great detail about the causes of the dispute between Ishaq Khan and 'Abd al-Rahman Khan which were the origins of Ishaq Khan's rebellion of 1888.

[232] *Ibid.*

along with the amirs and elders, had been obliged to swear an oath of personal loyalty to Ishaq Khan on the Qur'an in the shrine of 'Ali.[233] Sardar 'Abdullah Khan, governor of Badakhshan, informed the Amir that, in his opinion, Ishaq Khan was planning "to establish his own supremacy."[234] This news put 'Abd al-Rahman Khan "into a great rage" and he was reported to have said that "next year, either I or the Sardar must disappear."[235] The inevitable clash of wills, however, was postponed for a few years, partly because the Amir tricked Ishaq Khan's brother, Muhammad 'Aziz Khan, into coming to Kabul to discuss the deteriorating relations between them and detained the unfortunate sardar as a hostage for his brother's good behaviour.[236]

*Maimana, Russia and Afghan Turkistan, 1880-1882*

Despite Dilawar Khan's submission to Ishaq Khan and his recognition of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, Maimana played little part in the overthrow of Aiyub Khan, though arguably the wali's willingness to offer sanctuary to Yalangtush Khan and other rebel Aimaq chiefs enabled them to gather their forces free from harassment by the Herat army. The main reason for Maimana's primarily passive *rôle* during the conquest of Herat was because relations between Dilawar Khan and Ishaq Khan deteriorated markedly in the winter of 1880/1.

By the winter of 1880, Ishaq Khan was in control of most of Afghan Turkistan and had begun to send tax assessors throughout the region to evaluate the amount of revenue each region was expected to contribute to the central government.[237] The activities of Ishaq Khan's officials in the Chahar Wilayat quickly led to local disturbances and government troops had to be sent to Andkhui and Shibarghan to protect the assessors and put down the discontent.[238] A considerable amount of resentment was created over the level of government taxation and Dilawar Khan Ming, though exempt from such assessments, became anxious when rumours began to circulate that the Amir was

[233] *Letter from A.B*, 12 Jan. 1882, SLEI:31, fol. 717.

[234] *Letter from A.B*, 19 Dec. 1881, SLEI:31, fol. 299. See the comment in, *QNL*, 23 April 1882, SLEI:32, fol. 985.

[235] *Letter from A.B*, 12 Jan. 1882.

[236] *Telegram, Waterfield to Calcutta*, 6 Dec. 1881, SLEI:30, fol. 847.

[237] *PCD*, 2 Feb. 1881; *Ishak Khan to Amir*, 23 March 1881, SLEI:28, fol. 697.

[238] *Telegram, Commissioner, Peshawar to Calcutta*, 10 Feb. 1881, SLEI:27, fol. 1001; *DQR*, 22-28 Feb. 1881. 1,000 Turkman cavalry had been sent to Andkhui, ostensibly to strengthen the frontier and observe Russian military activity in Qarshi, *Telegram, Agent, Sibi, to Calcutta*, 27 Jan. 1882, SLEI:31, fol. 315.

planning an invasion of Maimana in the spring of 1881.[239] The arrival of additional troops on his borders increased his suspicion and anxiety even further. Then, in late December 1880, Ishaq Khan, having made a personal tour of Andkhui and Shibarghan, sent his revenue collectors, backed up by a military force, into Sar-i Pul and the autonomous region of Darzab.[240] Located north of the upper Shirin Tagab and bordered by Shibarghan, Sar-i Pul and Maimana, Ishaq Khan (who was out of touch with political developments in Lesser Turkistan after years of exile in Transoxiana) presumed that Darzab lay within Afghan jurisdiction. In fact, Darzab was governed by an Uzbek amirid dynasty that was a feudatory of Maimana and may even have been related to the Ming family.

When Dilawar Khan was informed that Ishaq Khan's men had begun to collect the revenue of the region, the wali took umbrage, called up his tribal levies and sent a force of five thousand Turkman cavalry and four thousand infantry to Darzab with orders to defend Maimana's territory and expel the Afghan officials.[241] War between Ishaq Khan and Dilawar Khan was only prevented by the intervention of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, who was already trying to suppress a revolt of the Shaikh 'Ali Hazaras of Ghorband[242] and had no wish to be drawn into a conflict with Maimana which, from his own bitter experience, he realised was "too strong" to subdue by force. The Amir ordered Ishaq Khan to placate Dilawar Khan at any cost.[243] An envoy was sent to Maimana and the argument was soon settled in the wali's favour. It was probably at this time that Dilawar Khan succeeded in securing very favourable terms of tribute which were significantly less than that which Maimana had paid to Sher 'Ali Khan.[244] To seal

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[239] *Letter from A.B.*, 16 Jan. 1882; *TLH*, 17 Nov. 1881, SLEP:183, fol. 1535.

[240] *Telegram, St. John to Calcutta*, 2 March 1881; *QNL*, 31 May 1881; *Telegram, Resident Kandahar to Calcutta*, 28 Feb. 1881; *JSAFF*, 22-28 Feb. 1881; *DQR*, 1-7 March 1881.

[241] *DQR*, 22-28 Feb., 1-7 March 1881.

[242] At the end of 1881, the Amir had planned to send more troops to Afghan Turkistan to replace men whose loyalty was suspect and to reinforce Ishaq Khan, but the supression of the Shaikh 'Ali rebellion delayed their arrival and they did not reach the province until the following spring. In retaliation for the Hazara rebellion, the Amir imprisoned Saiyid Ja'far, the Agha Khan's representative in Afghanistan. A number of leading sardars were also incarcerated in the fortress of Kham-i Ab, in Afghan Turkistan, whilst Muhammad Jan Khan Wardaki and other Aiyubid supporters were executed at Kotal-i Abdu, Kakar 1971, 116-7; *Telegram, Commissioner Peshawar to Calcutta*, 6 Jan. 1881; *PCD*, 2 Feb. 1881.

[243] *JSAFF*, 1-21 Dec. 1880; *PCD*, 20 Jan., 2 Feb. 1881; *QNL*, 31 May; *DQR*, 1-7 March 1881; *TLM*, 26 Jan. 1881, SLEP:184, fol. 415. In *DQR*, 22-28 Feb. 1881 the Amir is reported to have told Ishaq to wait "until he had received permission from the English."

[244] According to 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, Maimana only sent 100 horses and 100 cured skins of leather. Afghan Turkistan revenue dues, which the Amir claimed Sher 'Ali Khan had raised by

the agreement, Dilawar Khan sent a number of horses and camels as a present for Ishaq Khan.[245] The settlement of the Darzab dispute was not only helpful to the Amir, who managed to avoid a war with a powerful Uzbek state, but was also deemed "very satisfactory" by British officials.[246] Even so, when Ishaq Khan marched against Aiyub Khan later in 1881, he did not dare march any government troops through Maimana lest Dilawar Khan construe it as a further attempt to bring his country back under Afghan authority, instead he sent the Balkh troops to Chakhcharan, probably via Sar-i Pul.

In the winter of 1881, shortly after the fall of Herat, the brittle truce between Maimana and the Amir was broken as a result of the high-handed action of 'Abd al-Qudus Khan, the new governor of Herat, who arbitrarily confiscated the *jagir* of land in Herat which the Ming family had been given by none other than Ahmad Shah Durrani himself.[247] Dilawar Khan's protests at this action fell on deaf ears, Qudus Khan adamantly refusing to return the estate to its lawful owner. Since this *jagir* had been given to Haji Khan Ming to offset the costs of maintaining a government post-house and *mehman khana* in Maimana, Dilawar Khan retaliated by refusing government couriers the right to pass through his territory.[248] Earlier in the year, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan had defused a similar territorial dispute between the wali and Ishaq Khan by giving in to Dilawar Khan, but following the capture of Herat and the flight of Aiyub Khan, the Amir's position was far stronger than it had been in the spring and Maimana's protests were brushed aside. The wali was informed that recent Russian gains in the Akhal oasis meant that government forces must be stationed on Afghanistan's unguarded and ill-defined north-west frontier and Maimana was ordered to admit a garrison of several hundred troops.[249]

The Amir's ultimatum was completely unacceptable to Dilawar Khan, for the presence of an Afghan garrison in Maimana would not

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over 500% during his reign, were returned to the rate charged under Dost Muhammad Khan, *Remarks made by the Amir after his Departure from Peshawar*, 18 April 1885, SLEI:44, fols. 219-40.

[245] *Telegram, St. John to Calcutta*, 2 March 1881; *DQR*, 8-14 April 1881; *DSAR*, 15 April 1881; *QNL*, 8 June 1881. One report claims that Ishaq Khan confiscated these gifts, saying that they were not valuable enough for him to send on to the Amir, *HNL*, 2 June 1882, SLEI:33, fol. 228.

[246] *Telegram, Agent Quetta to Simla*, 8 June 1881, SLEI:28, fol. 1020; *QNL*, 8 June 1881.

[247] *HNL*, 13 Nov. 1882, SLEI:35, fol. 208; *HN*, 24 Feb. 1883, SLEI:36, part 2, fols. 229-30.

[248] *HNL*, 2 March 1882, SLEI:32, fol. 502.

[249] E.g. *Amir's Envoy to Under-Secretary of State*, 8 June 1882, SLEI:33, fol. 127; *HNL*, 17 June 1882; *QNL*, 30 April 1882, SLEI:32, fol. 991.

only mean the end of any independence the area still retained, but would probably have led to his own death at the hands of his own countrymen.[250] The Amir's terms were rejected and the wali began to seek recognition for Maimana's independence beyond the borders of Afghanistan.[251] During the recent British invasion of Afghanistan, Dilawar Khan had corresponded with Colonel St. John in Qandahar about Maimana's situation and, following his breach with the Amir, he wrote again to British officials in the hope that they would be sympathetic to Maimana's predicament. This appeal was naïve in the extreme and indicates how ignorant the wali and his advisers were about Britain's Central Asian policy, for both Russia and Britain had already agreed that the Mingid principality was an integral part of Afghanistan.

In order to avoid detection by the Amir's spies, Dilawar Khan sent two letters by different routes and intermediaries, one to the British news-writer in Mashhad and the other addressed to the British ambassador in Tehran. Both letters made no attempt to conceal Maimana's dissatisfaction with 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's government.[252] The Afghans, he complained bitterly, were acting like "tyrants" and Britain was urged to "do something so that his country may be separated from the Afghan rule."

> The Afghans behave very badly towards the Khan and his followers, they even try to interfere with their honour and their families.... You [i.e. the British] will be blessed night and day if you succeed in rescuing the women of Meimanah from the hands of their enemies.... Should you disappoint them, they will apply to other quarters.[253]

In a third letter sent to Colonel Waterfield in Quetta, Dilawar Khan informed the authorities:

> Since I have become a dependant of the English and been exalted by their kindness, which fact is known to all my neighbours, even to the Russian Government, after the return of Haji Abdur Rahim, I dispatched letters, three or four times, asking for advice and instructions regarding my affairs, but because of the long distances and the disturbances on the road, the messengers could not reach their destination, and were obliged to return. I now again send the bearer,

[250] *TLH*, 12 July 1882, SLEP:184, fols. 1231-2.

[251] *Mir Hashim to Amir*, 20 March 1882; *QNL*, 25 May 1882, SLEI:32, fols. 512, 991; *TFJ*, 1 Jan.-30 June 1882, SLEI:33, fol. 135.

[252] *Secret Letter from Governor of Meimanah*, Jan. 1882, SLEP:184, fol. 205; *Telegram, Thomson to Viceroy*, 4 Feb. 1882, SLEI:31, fol. 450.

[253] *Letter from Merve written by a Friend of the Government of Meimanah to the Meshed Agent*, n.d. 1881, SLEP:184, fols. 207-8.

> and trust that you will not forget or neglect me; also that you will send instructions regarding my affairs, that I may be assured of independence from my neighbours and live comfortably under the shadow of the God-Granted, everlasting Government.[254]

The news from Maimana was not only exceedingly unwelcome to the British administration but it could not have come at a more difficult time. Recent Russian gains in the region now known as Turkmenistan had raised again the spectre of the Tsar's armies at the gates of Herat and it was certainly not in Britain's interests for Maimana to remain independent, lest it be swallowed up by the still-expanding Russian empire. The wali's threat to "apply to other quarters" if Britain's response to his request was unsatisfactory, left little room for doubt that Dilawar Khan had no scruples about placing his country under Russian protection to counterbalance Afghan power. Hence, Dilawar Khan's simplistic attempt to frighten Britain into recognition of his country's independence from Afghanistan backfired badly. The wali's letters merely served to concentrate the minds of both the British and Afghan authorities on the problem of Afghanistan's undefended and undefined border and the urgent need to bring Maimana firmly under the Amir's control before the Tsar's armies marched into the area.

During the build-up to the Second Anglo-Afghan War, Russian armies had continued their inexorable advance south, swallowing up one Khanate after another. In a series of campaigns from 1877-1879 the Tsar's army had penetrated as far as Gök Tepa, near Ashkhabad, the present capital of Turkmenistan, but General Lomakin had eventually been badly defeated by the Turkman tribes and forced to retreat. Russian forces, however, regrouped and, under their new commander, General Skobeleff, the subjugation of the Turkmans was resumed. In 1880 an army of some twelve thousand strong moved south-eastwards from Qizil Arvat to Bami until, by December 1880, Russian forces once more entered the district of Gök Tepa and advanced against its most strategic stronghold of Dengil Qal'a (Maps 8, 9).

After several bloody skirmishes the lightly-armed Turkman cavalry had been defeated again and again until, finally, they had been forced back to the Dengil Qal'a area, where they decided to make their final stand. On 1 January 1881, the Russian army reached Yangi Qal'a where some thirty thousand badly-armed Turkmans had assembled in a last ditch attempt to save their country, their honour and

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[254] *Translation of the Wali of Maimeneh's Letter*, n.d. 1882, SLEI:32, fol. 1131.

their lives; for the Russians had even refused quarter to Turkman women and children—"so hateful a custom," wrote one commentator, "when conducted by the Mussulman Turk, so easily condoned when carried on by the Christian Russian" (Marvin 1881, 392). Superior fire-power quickly dislodged the Turkmans from Yangi Qal'a and the fleeing tribesmen were forced to run the gauntlet of the Russian artillery, which had been deliberately placed across their line of retreat. So one-sided was the battle, that only a single Russian soldier died in the action (Marvin 1881, 390-1).

The Turkmans who survived the withering fire, retired to their main stronghold of Dengil Qal'a. Not that the fort was anything like the *arg*s of Maimana or Minglik, far from it. The *qal'a* consisted of a low, mud wall behind which the Turkmans and their families sought what little protection they could find from the merciless artillery barrage whilst shell after shell smashed into the enclosure. The carnage was terrible. On 24 January 1881, after days of continuous bombardment, the Russians finally stormed the breaches of the *qal'a*. A number of similar, smaller forts, in the vicinty were also captured. The remnants of the shell-shocked Turkman forces fled from the relentless pounding and the bayonets of the advancing troops, but as they sought refuge in flight, the Russian cavalry was ordered to pursue. In the ensuing massacre, thousands of near-defenceless Turkman were hacked to death or run down under the hooves of the very animals they most revere. By the end of the day, over fourteen thousand persons—men, women and children—had been slaughtered at Dengil Qal'a alone, though the official casualty figures released by the Russian military claimed only four thousand had perished (Marvin 1881, 388-90).[255] To add insult to injury, a monument was later erected on the battlefield to commemorate the handful of Russian men who lost their lives in the campaign.[256]

[255] According to General Skobeleff's unpublished and secret account of the battle, "the enemy's losses were enormous." 6,500 bodies were recovered from within the fortress of Dengil Qal'a and another 8,000 were cut down in the cavalry pursuit. This puts the total of known dead at 14,500. However, the final death toll would certainly have been greater, since the official report takes no account of those who escaped the slaughter and died later from their wounds. Nor does it include any figure for the number of Turkmans who were wounded or maimed for life in the bombardment. Taking this into consideration, a final figure of 20,000 dead is probably a conservative estimate. Russian casualties amounted to a mere 4 officers and 55 soldiers killed, *Siege and Assault of Denghil Tépé, General Skobeleff's Report*, transl. Lt. Julian John Leverson, 1881, L/MIL/17/14/84, 55. This report contains numerous maps and charts to illustrate the campaign and the Russian and Turkman defences, two of which are reproduced as Maps 8, 9.

[256] *Information provided by E.*, Intourist Guide, Ashkhabad, May 1992. Apparently before *per-*

When news of the massacre reached London, no tears were shed for the destruction of "this nest of man-stealers" (Marvin 1881, 404) at the Turkman's 'Wounded Knee'. Instead the alarm was raised because Russian armies were now a matter of a few days' march from the Afghan frontier. Though Merv remained independent (it was to fall three years later) it became increasingly necessary for Britain to ensure that Afghanistan's frontier defences in Badghis be strengthened (Marvin 1881, 352).[257] Indeed, at about the same time that Dilawar Khan wrote his letters to the British representatives in Persia and India, a correspondence between Calcutta, London and St. Petersburg was opened which eventually led to the establishment of the Afghan Boundary Commission some four years later.[258]

The problem of the border was exacerbated when Tekke and Sariq Turkman tribes, deprived of their traditional grazing lands, resumed their raids in Badghis and Afghan territory around the Murghab.[259] Almar, in particular, was so badly devastated that it was reported that its inhabitants had "only enough for mere survival" (C. E. Yate 1888, 136). Further strains were put on the local economy by the arrival of a large number of refugees who crossed the border following the defeat at Gök Tepa and to escape the Russian persecution of the Turkmans. Although many of the new arrivals brought their sheep and other wealth with them, the Afghan authorities in Herat had to provide them with shelter, land for cultivation and grazing for their herds.[260]

It is not surprising, in the light of these events, that Britain's response to Dilawar Khan's letters was to urge 'Abd al-Rahman Khan to act swiftly and "recover" Maimana.[261] Nor was the Wali of Maimana left in any doubt about what he should do:

> It is impossible for me to give you orders or instructions in the conduct of your affairs. The British Government ... regards you as owing allegiance to the Amir of Kabul who is the close and trusted ally of the Kaisar-i-Hind. My advice to

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*estroika* Intourist guides were told to plead ignorance about the Gök Tepa massacre and its location. This has now changed. The Russian monument has recently been replaced by a memorial to the Turkmans who were massacred and it is now possible to visit this important historical site.

[257] See, *Confidential Memorandum Related to the Demarcation of the Russian & Afghanistan Borders in Central Asia,* 30 Nov. 1881, SLEI:31, fols. 85ff.

[258] *Ibid.*

[259] *HNL,* 3 May 1882, SLEI:32, fol. 981; *HNL,* 20 July 1882, SLEI:33, fols. 729-30.

[260] Amongst these refugees were 600 families of Kazakhs from Bukhara led by Mullah Ya'qub, a Russian convert to Islam. They eventually settled in Kulab. They brought some 2-300,000 sheep and other cattle with them, *KNL,* 25 Aug. 1882, SLEI:34, fol. 201.

[261] *Waterfield to Grant,* 6 May 1881.

> you is to submit without demur to the authority of His Highness the Amir and pay the accustomed tribute to him. In this way you will gain protection from your enemies, and be able to rest in peace.[262]

Although Britain offered to mediate between Maimana and Kabul, it would only be on the understanding that Maimana was considered as part of Afghanistan and the wali could hope for nothing more than some alleviation of the more excessive demands of the Amir.[263] The only material benefit Dilawar Khan realised from his incautious correspondence, was a pair of binoculars which Waterfield sent as "a token of friendship."[264]

A copy of Dilawar Khan's letter to Waterfield was sent to 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, who realised that he could exploit British fears over the frontier to extract the military and financial assistance which he urgently needed to consolidate his hold over Afghanistan. The Amir informed the Viceroy that he was only too willing to bring Maimana to heel, but:

> I am in great want of arms for two regiments and in spite of all endeavours, I have failed to procure them.... I am in such a pressing need for arms that it would not be out of place if I made the most urgent request for them.[265]

The response was immediate. Fifteen hundred muzzle-loading rifles with a hundred rounds for each gun were dispatched post-haste up the Khyber Pass,[266] which the Amir, in turn, sent to Afghan Turkistan for use against Maimana (Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 262). 'Abd al-Rahman Khan also began to show favour once more to Husain Khan Ming, who was still living as an exile in Kabul, holding out hopes that he would be restored to his former position as a vassal of the Amir

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[262] *Waterfield to Wali of Maimeneh*, 31 May 1882, SLEI:32, fols. 1131-2.

[263] *Amir's Envoy to Under-Secretary*, 6 June 1882, SLEI:32, fol. 1133

[264] *Ibid.* Waterfield ordered the Herat correspondent to send men to Maimana and Merv on a monthly basis to gather intelligence. Intelligence in the *TLH* series for 1882 is based on reliable information received from these secret agents, *TLH*, 6 June 1882, SLEP:184, fol. 1058.

[265] *Amir to General Amir Ahmad Khan*, 20 June 1882, SLEI:34, fol. 57. The Amir had upset the British (not for the first time) by failing to include Maimana in the official list of troops stationed around Afghanistan, a list which had been requested by the Indian authorities so they could estimate the military needs of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan. British officials were worried that, "by excluding Mymeneh from an official return of the distribution of the Amir's troops, a colour was given to the Russian pretension that it was an Uzbeg rather than an Afghan dependency and that they were thus entitled to enter into relations with the wali without giving umbrage either to Kabul or Simla." There were, of course, no government troops in Maimana. Handwritten note addressed to "Sir Henry," preface to, *Afghanistan, Number and Disposition of the Amir's Troops*, 1 April 1882, SLEI:36, part 2, fol. 413.

[266] *Grant to General Ahmad Khan*, 20 Sept. 1882, SLEI:34, fol. 58.

and encouraging him to send secret agents into Maimana to fan the flames of revolt.[267]

By the beginning of February 1882, alarming reports began to reach the news-writers in Mashhad and Qandahar that a number of Russian agents had been to Maimana bringing "a considerable sum of money" for Dilawar Khan to buy modern rifles.[268] Reliable sources also claimed that the wali was in correspondence with Aiyub Khan and other dissidents in Persia and had invited the sardar to come to Maimana and raise the standard of revolt.[269] The following month, Dilawar Khan allegedly purchased between three and five hundred breech-loading rifles, along with twenty thousand rounds of ammunition, from the Russians, via Turkman intermediaries at Charjui. A further twenty thousand tangas, presumably part, if not all, of the money brought by the Russian envoys, were sent to Bukhara to buy further supplies of cartridges whilst Muhammad Khan Hazara, ostensibly a loyal supporter of the Amir, was said to be trying to covertly obtain military supplies for Dilawar Khan from Persia.[270] Orders were also issued for the ditches around the city and *arg* to be cleansed and deepened and the fortifications put in good repair. Provisions were brought into Maimana in case of a siege, hostages were taken from the local amirs,[271] and the transit tax on horses was increased to meet the additional cost of war preparations, an action which was not well received by traders in Afghan Turkistan.[272]

Meanwhile, Ishaq Khan had begun to assemble some eight thousand troops at Shibarghan and Andkhui,[273] whilst over a lakh of

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[267] *Telegram, Govt. Agent at Sibi, to Calcutta*, 16 Feb. 1882, SLEI:31, fol. 609.

[268] *MA*, 23 Feb. 1881, SLEP:185 fol. 199; *QNL*, 7 Feb. 1881; *Statement of Mir Hashim*, 13 June 1882, SLEI:32, fols. 265, 1275-6.

[269] *TLH*, 15 April 1882; *QNL*, 23 April 1882; *Waterfield to Grant*, 6 May 1881. *HNL*, 4 April, 31 July 1882; *MA*, 27 Aug. 1882, SLEP:184, fols. 767-71, 1507-8, 1397-9; *HNL*, 20 July 1882, SLEI:33, fols. 729-30. According to reports, an agent of Aiyub Khan's son, Musa Jan, visited Maimana sometime in the spring of 1882, a short while after the Russian envoys left, but he could offer little practical help other than to urge Dilawar Khan to try and hold out until Aiyub Khan could persuade Persia to fund a rebellion. As usual, Aiyub Khan was penniless.

[270] *HNL*, 20, 19 April 1881, SLEI:32, fols. 525, 971-2. *TLH*, 24 March 1881; *MA*, 8 April 1881, SLEP:184, fols. 587, 721. According to *PCD*, 30 Dec. 1882, SLEI:35, fol. 306 the breech-loading guns were stolen by Turkmans from Russian cantonments.

[271] *TLH*, 24 March 1882; *HNL*, 2, 20 March 1882; *Waterfield to Grant*, 6 May 1882. *HNL*, 4 April 1882, SLEI:32, fol. 894; KNL, 13 June 1882, SLEI:33, fol. 677.

[272] *HNL*, 2 March, 19 April 1882.

[273] *KNL*, 30 June, 4, 11 July 1882, SLEI:33, fols. 713, 717; *MA*, 15 July 1882, SLEP:184, fol. 1219. The number of troops were: from Herat, 4 battalions of troops; at Sar-i Pul, 8,000 men under Ishaq Khan and 2,000 more under Ghulam Rasul at Andkhui, *TLH*, 3 April 1882, SLEP:184, fol. 751; *HNL*, 17 July 1882, SLEI:33, fols. 1173-4.

rupees was extracted from the long-suffering merchants of Afghan Turkistan to pay for the troops, and a large number of pack animals were requisitioned.[274] In late April Ishaq Khan marched with the main column of government troops to Sar-i Pul and threatened to invade Maimana along the Shirin Tagab. The advance of the Afghan army caused panic amongst the population of Maimana, the memory of Na'ib 'Alam's rape of the city still being fresh in their minds. Families began to bury their treasure, whilst the women and children were sent away into remote mountain villages to avoid being caught up in the forthcoming confrontation.[275]

From Shibarghan Ishaq Khan sent an ultimatum to Dilawar Khan: either admit a garrison of government troops, or be attacked. The wali, who still hoped Russia would come to his aid, and in an effort to postpone an attack for a few more weeks, sent eight trusted men with a gift of five horses and five thousand tangas to Ishaq Khan with letters for the Amir. Ishaq Khan sent the Maimana envoys "post-haste" to Kabul. When they arrived in the Afghan capital on 12 May, they were granted an immediate audience with the Amir.[276] The message they bore from Dilawar Khan, however, was not at all to 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's liking. The people of Maimana, though willing to submit to Kabul, would not, under any circumstances, allow Afghan troops to be stationed in their country and would go to war rather than submit to this demand. However, as a concession to the government, the wali was prepared to allow a single Afghan Resident to live in the city and would pay an annual tribute to Kabul. He could not, though, agree to the exorbitant demand of a crore of rupees, apparently the government's assessment of the amount of tribute the Ming dynasty owed the Amir.[277]

'Abd al-Rahman Khan was in no mood to compromise. Secure in the knowledge that Britain supported him, the Amir informed Dilawar Khan:

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[274] *PCD*, 9 July, 8 Aug. 1882, SLEI:33, fols. 233, 1157.

[275] *HNL*, 17 June 1882; *TLH*, 2, 23 Aug. 1882, SLEP:184, fols. 1359-60, 1683.

[276] *Amir's Envoy to Under-Secretary*, 8 June 1882, SLEI:33, fol. 127; *HNL*, 31 July 1882; *TLH*, 12 July 1882. Ishaq Khan had originally demanded that Dilawar Khan's son should go to Kabul, but the wali refused to send him for fear he would be imprisoned or executed, *HNL*, 31 July 1882; *HNL*, 15 Aug. 1882, SLEI:34, fol. 64.

[277] *Amir's Envoy*, 8 June 1882; *QNL*, 25 May 1882; *HNL*, 15 Aug. 1882; *HNL*, 14 Sept. 1882, SLEI:34, fol. 385; *MC*, 21 Sept. 1882, SLEP:184, fol. 1605. It seems that the one crore was arrears of taxes, claimed as unpaid tribute, and backdated to 1868.

> Although Maimena is not large enough to admit of a large army, yet since it is called the frontier of Afghanistan, troops from Turkistan and Herat have been ordered to march on Maimena. You should therefore arrange a place on the border to locate them in. Should you mean to acknowledge my authority, royal favour will be bestowed on you; and in the event of your listening to the advice of certain ill-disposed persons, you will bring about your own ruin, and my victorious troop will destroy and put an end to you. My troops must march to those quarters as the enemy of the God-granted Government has drawn close from every direction; for which reason I have no other course but to station a numerous army in Maimana. It is necessary that you should come in person to pay your respects to Sirdar Muhammad Ishak, so that you may escape mischief at the hands of the victorious army.[278]

After a stay of three days, the ambassadors were presented with dresses of honour and allowed to return to Afghan Turkistan bearing the Amir's ultimatum.[279] When they reached Ishaq Khan's camp, the sardar sent his own man to accompany them and to receive Dilawar Khan's reply to the terms, but they discovered that the wali was in no mood to accept the Amir's demands, for on 20 May 1882, or a few days before the envoys reached Maimana, thirty Turkmans from the Akhal oasis had arrived in Maimana bringing with them several hundred rifles and assurances of Russian help. At the end of their four day visit, Dilawar Khan declared himself "a Russian subject" and hoisted the Tsar's flag, which the Turkmans had brought with them, over the *arg*.[280] On 28 May, Dilawar Khan sent Haji "Siyah," a confidential agent, to Ashkhabad with letters for the Russian authorities there.[281]

Dilawar Khan's decision to place himself under Russian protection, as well as being tantamount to a declaration of war against Afghanistan, was not well received by some of his subjects and led to a bungled attempt to overthrow him by partisans of Husain Khan Ming and Sardar Ishaq Khan. The ringleaders appear to have been three mingbashis from the Qaisar and Qal'a-yi Wali region, Tora Khan, Hakim Khan and Karim Khan. When their plot was discovered,

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[278] *Amir's Envoy*, 8 June 1882.

[279] *Ibid. KNL*, 27 June 1882, SLEI:33, fols. 705-6. *QNL*, 25 May 1882 claimed that one of the ambassadors had been imprisoned by the Amir, but none of the other reports confirm this.

[280] *Statement of Mir Hashim*, 13 June 1882; *HNL*, 2 June 1882; *QNL*, 6 May 1882, SLEI:32, fol. 992.

[281] *HNL*, 17 June 1882; *MA*, 27 Aug. 1882. When the British informed 'Abd al-Rahman Khan of this situation, the Amir was sceptical: "No Russian officer can openly reside in Maimana ... what the Wali of Maimaneh states is perfect nonsense, but it is possible, though not probable, that he himself, through stupidity and weakness of mind, applied to the Russians for a man, and that they have sent one out secretly ... to act the part of a spy and secret agent," *Amir to Amir Ahmad Khan*, 20 June 1882, SLEI:34, fol. 57.

or failed, they fled for their lives to Herat.[282] Another mingbashi, 'Abbas Khan, who had been in correspondence with Ishaq Khan concerning the overthrow of the wali and had planned to defect when the Afghans arrived in Maimana territory, was not so lucky. He was imprisoned, along with a spy from Ishaq Khan who had entered the city in the disguise of a merchant.[283] Suspicion also fell on the envoys who had recently returned from Kabul, possibly because the wali suspected that they had been in contact with Husain Khan whilst in the Afghan capital. Two of the envoys were executed, as were several other maternal relatives of Husain Khan's. The remaining ambassadors were thrown into gaol (Merk, 264).[284]

The events in Maimana delayed the return of Ishaq Khan's envoy, who may even have been imprisoned for a while.[285] When news of Dilawar Khan's declaration was forwarded to Kabul by the British authorities, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan ordered the Balkh and Herat forces to advance on Maimana. At the same time, apparently, he advised a certain amount of caution, for the Amir was concerned lest Russia send troops to support Dilawar Khan.[286] Ishaq Khan, however, lacked the military genius of his cousin and, without waiting for further orders from Kabul, sent the bulk of his cavalry across the Mirza Wulang pass to the frontier town of Belcheragh.[287] The force marched down the Shirin Tagab gorge completely unsupported either by artillery or infantry, nor did Ishaq Khan order any similar troop movement from Andkhui. Meanwhile, troops that had been sent towards Maimana from Herat had been held up by an Aimaq rebellion in Badghis.[288] As well as leaving his advanced guard vulnerable to attack, Ishaq Khan had overstretched his lines of communication and split his small force in Sar-i Pul, for of the eight thousand soldiers that had been assembled at Shibarghan in the early months of 1882, Ishaq Khan had now only two thousand men left.[289] Since Dilawar Khan had eight

[282] *HC*, 28 June 1883, SLEP:185, fols. 981-2; *HNL*, 25 Jan. 1883, SLEI:35, fol. 832. Each was a chief of 1,500 families. See also *HNL*, 21 June 1883, SLEI:37, fols. 1865-6; *HC*, 8 March 1884, SLEP:186, fols. 383-5.

[283] *HNL*, 20, 31 July 1882; *KNL*, 27 June 1882.

[284] *KNL*, 27 June 1882.

[285] *HNL*, 17, 31 July 1882.

[286] One report stated that Dilawar Khan had told the people of Maimana that the Russians had promised to send 2,000 Turkmans if Ishaq Khan attacked, *HNL*, 14 Sept. 1882.

[287] *MA*, 27 Aug. 1882; *HNL*, 20 July, 14 Sept. 1882. *TLH*, 10 Aug. 1882, SLEP:184, fols. 1379-80. Badakhshan had refused to send any troops to assist Ishaq, *KNL*, 11 July 1882; *TLH*, 16 Sept. 1882, SLEP:184, fol. 1589.

[288] See below and, *KNL*, 5 Sept. 1882, SLEI:34, fol. 207.

[289] The troops he had at his disposal are given as three regiments of infantry, four hundred cav-

thousand men under arms as well as many thousands of tribal levies who had pledged to "stand by him to the last,"[290] Ishaq Khan was ill-placed to even attack Dilawar Khan in the open field, let alone contemplate laying siege to Maimana,[291] and he would have been better advised to await the reinforcements which were being assembled in Kabul.[292] The Balkh cavalry reached Belcheragh safely and began to raid villages across the border, causing considerable damage to the crops ripening in the fields. Dilawar Khan responded by sending his regular cavalry against the Afghans, whom they defeated, killing many of them, including their commander.[293] This defeat[294] effectively ended any hope that Ishaq Khan had of subduing Maimana by force[295] and, mortified by the loss of face, the sardar had no option but to order the remnants of his cavalry back to Sar-i Pul and to send an envoy to Maimana to enquire about terms.[296]

The offer of fresh negotiations must have come as a relief to Dilawar Khan, for during the summer all his hopes of Russian intervention on his side had been dashed. His envoy had returned from Ashkhabad empty-handed, for the Russians, fearing a confrontation with Britain, had washed their hands of the affair. The wali had been informed that Maimana did not come under Ashkhabad's jurisdiction and that all further correspondence should be addressed to the authorities in Tashkent or Shahr-i Sabz.[297] Aiyub Khan had also proved to be

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alry and four hundred Uzbek irregular horse, or about two thousand men in all, *TLH*, 23 Aug. 1882; *MA*, 15 July 1882. Two thousand troops had been sent to Andkhui, whilst smaller contingents had been left behind to keep the peace in Shibarghan and Sar-i Pul.

[290] *TLH*, 23 Aug. 1882.

[291] *MA*, 15 July 1882. As usual, the Afghan army was in arrears with its pay and of dubious loyalty, since many of the officers had served under Sher 'Ali Khan, *PCD*, 18 Sept. 1882, SLEI:34, fol. 8.

[292] *HNL*, 30 Aug. 1882; *KNL*, 12 Sept. 1882; KNL, 14 Aug. 1882, SLEI:34, fol. 23.

[293] *MA*, 27 Aug. 1882; *TLH*, 10 Aug. 1882; Thomson to Earl Granville, 5 Sept. 1882; *HNL*, 14 Sept. 1882; *KNL*, 14 Aug. 1882, SLEI:34 fol. 23; *TFJ*, Aug. 1882. *Secret Department Minute*, 15 Sept. 1882; *QNL*, 14 Aug. 1882, SLEI:33, fols. 1255, 1691. *MA*, 27 Aug. 1882 says the commander of the Balkh cavalry was Mohai al-Din Khan.

[294] *TFJ*, Aug. 1882; *QNL*, 14 Aug. 1882; *Thomson to Granville*, 5 Sept. 1882; *Secret Department Minute*, 15 Sept. 1882; *TFJ*, Oct. 1882, SLEI:34, fols. 415-6. However, the Afghan government's official line was that they had Maimana at their mercy and the wali had been "pressed ... so hard that he was on the verge of flight," a position which the British were happy to adopt in their own official histories, *TFJ*, Nov. 1882; *HNL*, 16 Dec. 1882, SLEI:39, fols. 690, 1037-40. This is merely an attempt to gloss over a considerable loss of face for the Amir and Ishaq Khan. S. E. Wheeler, 98 hints at collusion between Ishaq Khan and Maimana, though there is no contemporary evidence to support this claim.

[295] *QNL*, 14 Aug. 1882 says there were several encounters between Maimana and Ishaq Khan.

[296] *KNL*, 19 Sept., 6 Oct. 1882; *HNL*, 14, 29 Oct. 1882, SLEI:34, fols. 188, 373, 683-4,712; *HNL*, 15-24 Sept., 12 Dec. 1882, SLEI:35, fols. 517, 386.

[297] *HNL*, 14 Sept. 1882.

a broken reed, for the Persian authorities finally bowed to British pressure, placed the sardar under house arrest in Mashhad and refused him permission to leave the city.[298] Nor had the independent Turkman tribes in Merv and Panjdeh provided Maimana with any significant military support, though a number of individual Turkmans did volunteer their services.[299] Although Dilawar Khan continued to put on a brave face in public, and even gave out that Russia was sending two thousand Turkmans to fight alongside Maimana,[300] the wali realised that there was little chance of help from outside and it was in his interests to secure the best terms he could before more troops arrived from Kabul.

The first exchanges were not encouraging, for Ishaq Khan's envoy merely repeated the Amir's demand that Maimana must admit a garrison. Dilawar Khan responded by reiterating his offer to allow a single Afghan representative to reside in Maimana. Nor was he prepared to risk sending his son, Muhammad 'Ali Khan, to Sar-i Pul and excused him on the grounds that the heir to his throne was "sick." Instead he deputised another relative and the Commander-in Chief of the Maimana army, 'Abd al-Baqi Khan Mingbashi,[301] to negotiate terms. However, the wali insisted, as a pre-condition of entering into any agreement with Ishaq Khan, that Afghan troops must be withdrawn

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[298] *Thomson to Granville*, 5 Sept. 1882, SLEP:184, fols. 1282-3.

[299] *TFJ*, Aug. 1882, SLEI:33, fols. 1177-8; *KNL*, 12 Sept. 1882; *HNL*, 30 Aug. 1882, SLEI:34, fols. 31, 107-8.

[300] *HNL*, 14 Sept. 1882.

[301] 'Abd al-Baqi Khan Minghbashi was the father of Ghulam Muhammad Mosawar (b. 1873), the famous painter and enameller, who studied under Mir A'zam Khan, the court painter of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, and later in Berlin [1905]. Ghulam Muhammad Mosawar founded the Kabul School of Fine Art and some of his paintings are in the Kabul museum. One of 'Abd al-Baqi's daughters, Maryam Surkhabi, a full sister of Ghulam Muhammad Mosawar, was tutor to Amir Habibullah's children from 1901-1919. During Nadir Shah's reign she taught in the Maktab-i Masturat and founded the Maktab-i Sitara, the first girls' school to be established in Maimana. She died in 1963, but her daughters, Maryam, 'A'isha and Tahira, were still alive in 1987 (Adamec 1978, 98). 'Abd al-Baqi is described as a "man of great influence in Maimana" and was one of Dilawar Khan's most trusted relatives and officials. He was connected by marriage to General Parwaz Khan, a supporter of Aiyub Khan. During the brief war of 1884, which led to the overthrow of the wali, 'Abd al-Baqi was given command of the Maimana troops. After his defeat, he fled for his life, for a price had been put on his head by the Afghans, but in *c.* 1886 he was captured (or possibly handed over to 'Abd al-Rahman Khan by Husain Khan Ming). In November 1886 he was executed, along with a number of other relatives of Dilawar Khan. His property was subsequently sold off at public auction. For 'Abd al-Baqi's life, see *HNL*, 15-24. Sept., 13 Nov. 1882. *Stewart to Burnes*, 6 Feb. 1884, SLEI:44, fols. 334-5; *HNL*, 13 March 1884, SLEI:40, fols. 807-9; *HC*, 11 May 1884, SLEP:186, fols. 585-7; *HNL*, 11 May, 10 June 1884; *News from Maimana*, 5 July 1884, SLEI:41, fols. 4, 579-81, 949. *Col. Stewart to Sir O. Burnes*, 6 Feb. 1884, SLEI:44, fols. 334-5; *KNL*, 5 Nov. 1886, SLEI:48, fol. 1178; *KNL*, 28 Dec. 1886, SLEI:49, fol. 271.

from Belcheragh and Sar-i Pul.[302] Though the governor of Afghan Turkistan complained that these places were Afghan territory and the wali had no right to demand such conditions, his forces were so overstretched that he was forced to comply and the bulk of the Afghan army was ordered back to Shibarghan. The sardar, however, remained in Sar-i Pul and continued his negotiations with Dilawar Khan.[303]

Once more Dilawar Khan had emerged as the victor, for Ishaq Khan eventually conceded to the terms Maimana had offered the Amir earlier in the year and a single government representative, a certain Amir Jan, an officer in the employ of Ishaq Khan, was sent to reside in the Mingid capital.[304] Maimana, however, had to agree to the payment of annual tribute amounting to one lakh of tangas (in excess of 30,000 Kabuli rupees). Ishaq Khan also agreed to marry one of the wali's daughters. When these terms had been agreed, Dilawar Khan sent his son, accompanied by twelve elders, to the governor of Afghan Turkistan with a down payment of fifty thousand tangas and a present of horses and camels. Having handed over the money and concluded the treaty, Dilawar Khan's son was allowed to return to his homeland, though the mingbashis who had accompanied him were retained as hostages.[305] Having sealed the agreement, Ishaq Khan left for Shibarghan to await a more favourable opportunity to revenge himself on Dilawar Khan.

*Herat, the Chahar Aimaq and the Murghab Frontier, 1881-1884*

Following 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's conquest of Herat, in which the Aimaqs of Badghis and Ghor had played such an important part, the uneasy alliance between the Afghans and these hill tribes soon fell apart. The blame for this must be laid at the door of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's governor, 'Abd al-Qudus Khan, who, almost before the dust had settled, refused to recognise the Taimani and Jamshidi contribution to the victory over Aiyub Khan. Instead, Qudus Khan boasted

[302] *HNL*, 15-24 Sept., 14, 29 Oct., 13 Nov. 1882, 25 Jan. 1883.

[303] *HNL*, 15-24 Sept., 13 Nov., 12 Dec. 1882.

[304] *HNL*, 13 Nov. 1882, SLEI:35, fol. 14 (N.B. there are two letters from Taki Khan under this date, the second is at fol. 208 in the same volume); *HNL*, 25 Jan. 1883, SLEI:36, part 4, fols. 881-2.

[305] *HNL*, 29 Oct., 13 Nov., 12 Dec. 1882, 25 Jan. 1883; *PCD*, 30 Dec. 1882. *TFJ*, Dec. 1882; *HNL*, 10 Jan. 1883, SLEI:35, fols. 10, 36; *HC*, 28 Oct. 1882, SLEP:184, fol. 1699. *HNL*, 29 Oct. 1882 says only 40,000 tangas were handed over. *HNL*, 13 Nov. 1882 claims the figure was only 10,000 Kabuli rupees (30,000 tangas). Maimana presented Ishaq Khan with 20 horses and 20 camels.

that the city had fallen solely because of "his personal bravery" and a sordid wrangle ensued with each side claiming they had been primarily responsible for the capture of Herat.[306] Anbiya Khan Taimani responded in kind, by accusing the Kabul troops of having "held aloof" during the final battle against Khushdil Khan.[307] The argument became so acrimonious that Anbiya Khan refused to pay the customary respects to the new governor,[308] whereupon Qudus Khan appointed Dost Muhammad Khan, head of the 'Sahib-i Ikhtiyari' clan and the bitter rival of Anbiya Khan, as chief of the Kaminj Taimanis in a policy of 'divide and rule'.[309] Muhammad Khan Hazara, who had been wounded during the battle for Herat,[310] was imprisoned and accused of not handing over the plunder his tribe had seized when they had pillaged Khushdil Khan's baggage. A short while later, however, he was released following a personal appeal to Qudus Khan by Muhammad Khan's brother, Sher Khan,[311] and early in January 1882, the governor of Herat even married the Sunni Hazara chief's daughter,[312] an alliance which was not well received by other Aimaq leaders, who suspected that the amir would further his own interests to the detriment of the other Aimaq tribes.

It was not long before it became evident that these worries were well justified. Yalangtush Khan, whom Qudus Khan had recognised as paramount chief of the Jamshidis, was in dispute with the Hazaras over the ownership of land in the Bala Murghab area, but by the spring, or a matter of two months after Qudus Khan's wedding, he asked to return to Kushk following several arguments with the governor.[313] More trouble soon followed. On the recommendation of Muhammad Khan Hazara and against the advice of his own counsellors, Qudus Khan appointed Muhammad Saiyid Khan chief of the Firozkohi Aimaq.[314] Fathullah Beg, who up to that point had been the amir of this tribe and who was not on good terms with Muhammad Khan, was furious at this decision and threatened to join with rebellious Maimana.

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[306] *Telegram, Agent Quetta to Simla*, 23 Oct. 1881, SLEI:30, fol. 357.
[307] *Ibid.*
[308] *TLH*, 9 Nov. 1881, SLEP:183, fol. 1531.
[309] *Waterfield to Grant*, 6 May 1882; *HNL*, 4 April 1882, SLEI:32, fols. 867, 893-4.
[310] *TLH*, 6 Oct. 1881.
[311] *Ibid.*
[312] *HNL*, 20 Feb. 1882, SLEI:32, fols. 497-500; *TLH*, 24 March 1881.
[313] *TLH*, 6 Oct. 1881, 24 March 1882; *HNL*, 19 April 1882.
[314] *HNL*, 20 Feb. 1882.

In an attempt to reconcile the deposed chief, Qudus Khan sent Nurullah Khwaja Khan, a Chishti shaikh and a friend of Fathullah Beg's, to discuss the matter. The sincerity of this attempted arbitration must be questioned, for whilst the shaikh was making his way into Firozkohi country, Saiyid Muhammad Khan Firozkohi, Muhammad Khan Hazara, and three hundred cavalry were ordered into the area to seize the rebellious amir and to forcibly relocate his section of the tribe nearer Herat.[315] Before Nurullah Khwaja reached Fathullah Khan's camp, Saiyid Muhammad attacked his rival and plundered a number of villages.[316] Fathullah Beg Firozkohi, accompanied by a hundred followers, fled to Laulash (Bandar) in southern Maimana, "a very strong place," was given sanctuary by Dilawar Khan, and declared war on both the Sunni Hazaras and Saiyid Muhammad Khan.[317]

The arrival of Nurullah Khwaja at Fathullah Beg's mountain stronghold prevented any further hostilities, for he succeeded in calming the Firozkohi chief's anger sufficiently for him to agree to send his son, Niyaz Beg, to Herat to discuss a settlement of the dispute.[318] When Niyaz Khan arrived in the city, he was initially honourably received by the Herat authorities and was allowed to stay in Yalangtush Khan's house, but the failure of the negotiations to make any significant progress, combined with the intrigues of Muhammad Khan Hazara and Saiyid Muhammad Firozkohi, soon led to a change in the governor's mood. About a week after Niyaz Beg's arrival in Herat, he requested permission to return home but was refused. At the end of April he was placed under house arrest.[319] Muhammad Khan Hazara, Saiyid Muhammad Khan Firozkohi, Bahram Khan Firozkohi of Qadis[320] and the Ghilzai nomads around Obeh[321] were ordered to resume the campaign against Fathullah Beg, but this time, the Aimaq amir was ready. When they marched into the difficult terrain around Laulash, Fathullah Beg called on his brother, whose tribe was also in Maimana territory, and together they drove the invaders back across

[315] *Telegram, Thomson to Viceroy*, 27 Feb. 1882; *HNL*, 20 Feb. 1882; *TLH*, 10 Feb. 1882, SLEP:184, fols. 386-8.

[316] Muhammad Khan Hazara was wounded during this campaign. Saiyid Muhammad Firozkohi was another rival of Fathullah Khan, *HNL*, 13 Nov. 1882.

[317] *Telegram, Thomson to Viceroy*, 27 Feb. 1881; *TLH*, 10 Feb. 1882; *HNL*, 20 Feb. 1882; *TLH*, 23 Feb. 1882, SLEP:184, fol. 436; *HNL*, 2 June 1881, SLEI:31, fol. 755.

[318] *HNL*, 4 April 1882; *HNL*, 19 April 1882, SLEI:32, fols. 971-2.

[319] *HNL*, 19 April, 3 May 1882; *HNL*, 15 May 1882, SLEI:32, fol. 1261.

[320] *HNL*, 20 July 1882, says he was chief of "Lahleby." For the history of the feud between Bahram Khan and Fathullah Beg, see Maitland 1891, 129-30.

[321] The Ghilzais told Qudus Khan that they would not fight against Fathullah Beg unless the Amir sent troops from Kabul to help them, *HNL*, 2 June, 31 July 1882.

the Murghab, leaving some seventy of their enemies dead in the field. The brothers then laid siege to the forts of Qadis and Robat but, fearing that this might lead the Amir to think that he was in rebellion against the central government, Fathullah Beg ordered his men to return to Bandar.[322]

Fathullah Beg's attempt at a reconciliation was probably partly motivated by his son's continued detention in Herat and the news that he, along with other Aimaq chiefs, was being sent to Kabul despite Fathullah Beg's offer to go in person to the Amir on condition his son be released. The Amir, who was anxious to avoid a major conflagration on the Murghab, at least until he could deal with the problem of Maimana, adopted a conciliatory tone towards Niyaz Khan on his arrival in the Afghan capital and gave him letters for his father guaranteeing the Firozkohi chief safe conduct to Herat if he submitted to the central government.[323] The recall, disgrace and imprisonment of 'Abd al-Qudus Khan in the autumn of 1882, was a further incentive for the Firozkohi tribe to settle their differences, for the individual who had been one of the major causes of Aimaq discontent had been removed.[324] Hence, when Niyaz Khan returned to Herat, he was allowed to travel to Bandar where he reported the outcome of his meeting with the Amir and, at the end of November 1882, Fathullah Beg himself arrived in Herat, settled his quarrel with the Afghan government and was allowed to return to his own country.[325]

The settlement, or more accurately, the postponement, of the confrontation between Maimana and Ishaq Khan and the submission of Fathullah Beg Firozkohi, gave the Amir a breathing space in which to address the pressing problem of border security in Badghis now that Russian forces were within striking distance of the region. The Amir's strategy of trying to garrison Maimana had been shelved for the moment. Instead he decided to re-colonise the area around Bala Murghab, which for over a century had been devastated by Turkman and Uzbek raids.[326] Since the Aimaqs had played such a vital role in the conquest of Herat, and because at least some of these tribes had

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[322] *HNL*, 15 May, 17, 20 July 1882.

[323] *HNL*, 15 May, 17 July, 14, 29 Oct. 1882.

[324] *KNL*, 25 Aug. 1882; *KNL*, 26 Sept. 1882, SLEI:34, fols. 375-6. 'Abd al-Qudus Khan was later made governor of Bamiyan.

[325] *HNL*, 14, 29 Oct., 13 Nov. 1882, 25 Jan. 1883. One report states that, prior to his arrival in Herat, Fathullah Beg tried to move some families of the "Juni" tribe from Robat, but was defeated by Saiyid Muhammad Khan, *HNL*, 15 Aug. 1882.

[326] *Amir to Viceroy*, 28 April 1883, SLEI:37, fols. 127-8.

lived in these areas before being forced to take refuge in the mountains, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan encouraged sections of the Aimaqs to return to their former territory. In December 1882 a conference was held in Herat attended by many of the chiefs of the Aimaq tribes, including Fathullah Beg Firozkohi and his son, Niyaz Khan, Yalangtush Khan Jamshidi, Muhammad Khan Hazara and his fellow Hazara amirs, Mahmud Khan and Bahram Khan Firozkohi. The meeting discussed the whole issue of Afghanistan's unprotected frontier. Niyaz Beg Firozkohi, who had been instrumental in settling the dispute between Herat and his father, was rewarded with the command of Firozkohi tribes in the region of Chaharsada in the head-waters of the Murghab, whilst Yalangtush Khan Jamshidi and a number of Fathullah Beg's Firozkohi Aimaq were apportioned land around Bala Murghab where the Afghan government planned to rebuild the frontier fort and establish a garrison of regular troops to watch the border (Kakar 1979, 131; Tapper 1973, 58).[327]

This decision to allow Jamshidis and Firozkohis to settle in Bala Murghab was not well received by Muhammad Khan and other leaders of the Sunni Hazaras, for they too had a long, historical association with the Bala Murghab region. They demanded the right to share in the resettlement of the area and opposed the presence of the Afghan army in their homeland, but there was little that Muhammad Khan, or his fellow amirs, could do for, since the disgrace of 'Abd al-Qudus Khan, the Sunni Hazaras had fallen from favour and their demands were rejected by the Amir. Muhammad Khan and other Hazara leaders, therefore, set out to wreck the resettlement plans by sowing dissension between the Jamshidis, Firozkohis and the Aimaq tribes in the area. So successful was the Hazara intrigue that within a matter of months, the whole colonisation programme was in jeopardy (Tapper 1973, 58).[328]

In April 1883 some three hundred regular troops, supported by a number of Aimaq irregulars, under the overall command of General Ghaus al-Din Khan,[329] were sent from Herat to Bala Murghab to begin

[327] *HNL*, 25 Jan. 1882; *News-letter from Sardar Afzal Khan at Jalalabad*, 20 Feb. 1883, SLEI:35, fol. 928; *TFJ*, May 1883, SLEI:36, part 4, fols. 1119-20; *HNL*, 4 Aug. 1883, SLEI:37, fols. 1283-4; *MA*, 10 March 1883, SLEP:185, fols. 273-4. 1,000 families of Sariq Turkman refugees had recently settled in Bala Murghab after the defeat at Gök Tepa, *HNL*, 25 March 1883; Kakar 1979, 131.

[328] *HN*, 6 July 1883, SLEI:37, fols. 827-8.

[329] As usual, figures for the garrison at Bala Murghab differ from source to source. *Sardar Afzal Khan*, 20 Feb. 1883 has 2 infantry regiments and 500 Herati, 500 [Sunni] Hazara and 500 Aimaq *sowar*s, with 6 guns, under General 'Abdullah Khan. *TFJ*, May 1883 says there were

work on the new fort. Yalangtush Khan, meanwhile, began the slow process of moving one thousand Jamshidi families, along with all their cattle and possessions, from Kushk.[330] At this point Saiyid Muhammad Khan Firozkohi, jealous of Fathullah Khan's power, offered to pay an annual tribute of forty thousand krans to the Amir if he were made chief of the tribe. Since up to this point in time the Firozkohis had been exempt from paying state taxes, the offer was readily accepted, for the government, as usual, was chronically short of cash and the additional cost of the Bala Murghab resettlement programme had put even further strains on the treasury. When the news of Saiyid Muhammad Khan's appointment reached Fathullah Beg he removed his section of the Firozkohis back across the border into the Bandar region of Maimana. The threat of further hostilities and the continued problems with Maimana, however, forced the governor of Herat to hastily reverse his decision.[331]

The intrigues of Muhammad Khan Hazara soon led to tensions between the Jamshidis and General Ghaus al-Din Khan and by the beginning of July relations between the Aimaq settlers and the Afghan commander at Bala Murghab were at breaking point. A few weeks later, there were a number of violent incidents between Jamshidi, Firozkohi and Sunni Hazara tribesmen in the region and one eye-witness claimed the region was "in confusion."[332] By the end of the month fighting had broken out between Muhammad Khan's Hazaras and Fathullah Beg's Firozkohis. Yalangtush, despite having made heroic efforts to make the resettlement plan succeed, complained bitterly about his treatment by the Afghan government, and the lack of finance or provisions which had forced his tribe to scatter far and wide in search of subsistence.[333] By the end of 1883 the situation in Bala Murghab had deteriorated to such an extent that the Amir decided to remove both Aimaq and Turkman tribes from the Murghab and colonise the area with Durrani clans from Farah and Qandahar, in the hope that their tribal and ethnic loyalties would ensure the better

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only 100 cavalry and 100 infantry, which were followed later by 300 irregular troops (presumably the Aimaq contingent). *HNL*, 22 May 1883, SLEI:37, fols. 15-16, claims 300 Herati *sowars* were sent under the command of Taju Khan Ishaqzai. It is clear from later reports, however, that the overall commander at Bala Murghab was General Ghaus al-Din Khan, *HN*, 6 July 1883.

[330] *TFJ*, May 1883; *HNL*, 23 April 1883.

[331] *HNL*, 22 May 1883.

[332] *HN*, 6 July 1883; *HC*, 22 July 1883, SLEP:185, fols. 1006-9. The eye-witness was a Jewish rabbi from Maimana.

[333] *HNL*, 4 Aug. 1883, SLEI:37, fols. 1283-4.

protection of the frontier as well as controlling the indigenous population (Kakar 1979, 131; Tapper 1973, 53-61).[334]

Bala Murghab was not the only problem the Afghans encountered on this frontier. Following the decision to colonise the area, the authorities in Herat had tried to consolidate Afghan influence over other areas further down the Murghab river. In June 1883, the Turkmans of Panjdeh, concerned at the continued expansion of Russian power in Turkmenistan, sent a delegation of ten elders to Herat to formally acknowledge the Amir's authority.[335] Mir 'Osman Khan, an Afghan, was appointed as the governor on behalf of Herat, but this diplomatic success was very short-lived, for as soon as he reached Panjdeh he tried to force the area to increase the amount of revenue they sent to Herat. Not unexpectedly, the Turkmans refused and only paid ten thousand krans to General Ghaus al-Din. Resentment against the Afghan government was increased when Mir 'Osman Khan informed the Turkmans that their lands in Marichaq were to be confiscated and set aside for the new wave of Afghan immigrants. Outbreaks of fighting between the two sides ensued and General Ghaus al-Din was forced to send troops to suppress the uprising. When order was finally restored, Mir 'Osman was removed from office and Aminullah Khan Jamshidi, the younger brother of Yalangtush Khan, whose tribe had long had amicable relations with the Panjdeh Turkmans, was appointed in his place (Maitland 1891, 75).[336] The undercurrent of bitterness at Afghan misrule in the oasis was the main reason why, when Russian troops attacked Panjdeh a fews years later, the Turkmans refused to come to the aid of the Amir's troops.

### *The Fall of Dilawar Khan, 1883-1884*

The agreement of 1882 between Dilawar Khan and Ishaq Khan merely deferred the inevitable trial of strength until a later date, for both 'Abd al-Rahman Khan and Britain were determined to see Maimana more securely a part of Afghanistan. Dilawar Khan, aware that the

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[334] *Telegram, Ridgeway to Durand*, 20 Sept. 1885, SLEI:45, fol. 937.

[335] Maitland, 1891, 75 says the submission of Panjdeh took place in March 1884. In the light of the events two years later, the comment of the Herat news-writer in 1883 is somewhat ironic. "Penjdeh has now no choice left but union with Afghanistan, inasmuch as all their agricultural operations are at this season carried on on the very borders of Herat," *HC*, 28 June 1883.

[336] *HC*, 28 June 1883; *HNL*, 10, 12 July 1883, SLEI:37, fols. 299-300, 1081-2; *TFJ*, Dec. 1883, SLEI:37, fol. 142; *HNL*, 11 May, 10 June 1884, SLEI:41 fols. 3, 579-81. Aminullah Khan Jamshidi left Herat on 6 June 1884 to take up his post.

battle for his country had only been postponed, continued to seek support from "no matter what quarter"[337] following the withdrawal of Ishaq Khan from Sar-i Pul, and at the end of 1882 he again approached the news-writer in Herat to request British mediation so that Maimana could retain its autonomous status within Afghanistan. As before, the wali was informed that Britain could do nothing to help him and he should accept the Amir's demands in full.[338]

Dilawar Khan had greater hopes of receiving military and financial aid from Aiyub Khan and supporters of Sher 'Ali Khan's family, and during 1883 a number of secret letters passed between the wali and Aiyub Khan in Tehran. This correspondence was facilitated by 'Abd al-Baqi Mingbashi, whose family was related through marriage to General Parwaz Khan, one of Aiyub's closest supporters.[339] Dilawar Khan informed Aiyub Khan that "he would not be friends with Ameer Abdul Rahman Khan" and urged the sardar to come to Maimana and raise the standard of revolt.[340] He received encouraging replies, for Aiyub Khan was confident that he would be able to escape to Afghanistan without too much trouble. Indeed, he believed that once he crossed the border Herat would soon fall, for he still had a considerable number of supporters in that city and Iskandar Khan, son of the late Shah Nawaz Khan, had also declared his willingness to join the uprising.[341]

News of Maimana's intrigue with Aiyub Khan caused great concern to Britain and the ambassador in Tehran informed the Shah of Persia of London's opposition to Aiyub Khan's plans to return to Afghanistan and demanded the detention or imprisonment of the sardar and his supporters.[342] The Persian government, tired of being bullied by Britain, not only took no action but gave permission for Aiyub Khan to leave for Mashhad, ostensibly to collect his family and bring them back to Tehran.[343] When news of the sardar's arrival at Mashhad

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[337] *MA*, 6 Jan. 1883, SLEP:185, fols. 22-3.

[338] *HNL*, 13 Nov., 12 Dec. 1882; *HNL*, 10, 25 Jan. 1883; *TFJ*, Jan. 1883, SLEI:35, fol. 506.

[339] *Stewart to Burnes*, 6 Feb. 1884.

[340] *Ibid.*

[341] *MA*, 6 Jan. 1883. *Thomson to Granville*, 18 Jan., 21 May, 10 June 1883, SLEP:185, fols. 19, 528, 591-603; "Russian Advances in Asia," vol. v, 1882-1884, *Curzon Papers*, MSS Eur. F.111, no. 117, p. 21; *HNL*, 25 March, 23 April 1883, SLEI:36, part 4, fols. 881-2, part 6, fols. 1377-8. *Thomson to Viceroy*, 22 Sept. 1883, SLEP:185, fol. 1137 says Iskandar Khan was the son of Ahmad Khan and there is some doubt as to whether he was this individual's son, or the offspring of Sultan Ahmad Shah.

[342] *Thomson to Lord Granville*, 10 June 1883; *Government of India, Foreign Department, to Earl of Kimberley*, 3 Aug. 1883, SLEI:37, fols. 523-4.

[343] *Thomson to Steward*, 18 Dec. 1883, SLEP:39, fol. 141; *TFJ*, Dec. 1883.

broke in Herat, there was panic and Afghan troops were rushed to the frontier post of Ghuriyan to intercept the pretender before he could reach the city.[344] Unfounded rumours that Iskandar Khan, or other Aiyubids, had actually reached Maimana, did nothing to calm the storm.[345]

When he arrived at Mashhad, Aiyub Khan began to buy arms and assemble his supporters in a way that made it obvious he either intended to march on Herat or to accept the invitation of Dilawar Khan Ming.[346] However, his plans and those of Maimana, were thwarted when, at the end of 1883, Britain threatened to go to war with Persia if Aiyub Khan was allowed to escape across the border. In February 1884, the Shah, realising that his country could not hope to resist a British invasion, capitulated and placed Aiyub Khan and a number of other Afghan refugees under house arrest. The following month the sardar was deported from Mashhad, kept under close surveillance and obliged to promise two years' good conduct.[347] Aiyub Khan's detention ended any hopes that the sardar had of ruling Afghanistan. At the same time, it ended the only chance that Dilawar Khan Ming had of staving off the inevitable incorporation of his country into Afghanistan. It was not long before the wali was to reap the whirlwind he had sown.

Dilawar Khan's position was weakened even further by his growing unpopularity with his subjects. The wali was reported to have become a virtual recluse, shutting himself away in the citadel and hardly ever appearing in public, possibly because he feared assassination (Merk, 265). In early 1883, there was another attempt to overthrow him and although this, too, failed, a number of powerful amirs from the Gurziwan region managed to escape to Mazar-i Sharif where they joined forces with Ishaq Khan.[348] In March popular discontent with Dilawar Khan's government surfaced in Daulatabad, on the border with Andkhui. The nomadic population of the area, mainly Turkmans, decided that they had had enough of Dilawar Khan's government and sent their cattle into Shibarghan territory as a precursor to migrating

[344] *HNL*, 13 Feb. 1884, SLEI:40, fols. 253-6; *HC*, 12 Dec. 1884, SLEP:186, fols. 115-7.
[345] *HNL*, 23 April 1883; *Thomson to Viceroy*, 22 Sept. 1883. *KNL*, 28 Dec. 1883; *HNL*, 16 Dec. 1883, SLEI:39, fols. 421, 1037-40. These reports were denied by British officials in Tehran and by Dilawar Khan Ming.
[346] *HNL*, 13 Feb. 1884; *QNL*, 22 Feb. 1884, SLEI:40, fols. 243-4.
[347] *MA*, 9 Feb. 1884; *HC*, 10 Feb. 1884, SLEP:186, fols. 225-31, 285-6. *HNL*, 27 Feb. 1884. *HNL*, 26 March 1884, SLEI:40, fols. 857-8.
[348] *HC*, April 1883, SLEP:185, fol. 507; *QNL*, 23 April 1883, SLEI:36, part 4, fol. 1133.

to Afghan-held territory. When Dilawar Khan heard what they had done, he sent the Maimana cavalry to the region, laid siege to the fort at Daulatabad and demanded that Ishaq Khan return the flocks and property that the people had sent to Shibarghan. Ishaq Khan refused and ordered the wali to let the Daulatabad Turkmans migrate. Despite all Dilawar Khan's efforts, by June some three hundred families had managed to slip across the border to Andkhui.[349] In May another mingbashi was found to be plotting with Ishaq Khan and was put to death.[350] Ahmad Jan Khan, Ishaq Khan's representative in Maimana, was placed under close surveillance and no-one was allowed to talk to him or visit his house without government permission.[351] Dilawar Khan also refused to hand over the outstanding money which he and Ishaq Khan had agreed at the conclusion of hostilities the previous year, and an Afghan envoy who had been sent to Maimana to collect the government tribute, was imprisoned.[352]

Relations between Maimana and Herat also went from bad to worse. Following the disgrace and recall of 'Abd al-Qudus Khan, Dilawar Khan resurrected the issue of the confiscation of the Mingid *jagir*, but the Amir showed no interest in returning this land to the wali. Maimana's intrigue with Aiyub Khan and the dispute over the *jagir* did, however, lead to Dilawar Khan's representative in Herat being accused of spying and he was ordered to leave the city.[353] The wali also opposed the presence of government troops and the establishment of a new cantonment at Bala Murghab, which brought a sizeable contingent of Afghan troops within two day's march of his capital, and he secretly encouraged Muhammad Khan Hazara's attempts to sow dissension between the Aimaqs and Afghans.[354] As relations with the Afghan authorities in Herat and Mazar-i Sharif deteriorated, Dilawar Khan sent fifty elders to General Ivanoff in Transoxiana in a further attempt to win Russian support for the cause of Maimana's independence. Russia, however, was reluctant to risk a war with Britain and the wali's overtures were not well received. His envoys were treated with distant coolness and bluntly informed that in

[349] *HNL*, 9 April 1883, SLEI:36, part 4, fols. 1137-8; *HNL*, 6 June 1883, SLEI:37, fols. 299-300.
[350] *HNL*, 22 May 1883.
[351] *HNL*, 9 April 1883.
[352] *Ibid. TFJ*, May 1883.
[353] *HNL*, 23 April 1883.
[354] *HNL*, 25 March, 22 May 1883; *HNL*, 8 May 1883, SLEI:36, part 4, fols. 1559-60.

the Russian view Maimana was an Afghan dependency and it should pay homage to the Amir alone.[355]

By the summer of 1883 'Abd al-Rahman Khan had lost patience with Maimana. Dilawar Khan's correspondence with Aiyub Khan and the Russians, though it had brought the wali little or no material reward, was a matter of concern for both the Amir and Britain, both of whom were concerned about the territory's ambiguous status within Afghanistan and the vulnerability of the border. Determined to bring the wali to heel and to garrison the area, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan began to assemble troops in Herat and Afghan Turkistan in preparation for an invasion of Maimana.[356] The war preparations were significantly helped when Britain sent the Amir a further gift of twelve lakh rupees to pay the Afghan troops and to cover the costs of making the Badghis border secure against Russian encroachment. In effect, Britain had underwritten the costs of the Maimana campaign.[357]

Strengthened by this generous subsidy, the Amir ordered Ishaq Khan to send an ultimatum to Dilawar Khan demanding that he admit an Afghan garrison or be attacked.[358] 'Abd al-Rahman Khan also wrote to Mir Muhammad Sharif Khan, a *sahibzada* of "Siawashan," who was betrothed to a daughter of Dilawar Khan and who had the confidence of both the wali and the Herat authorities, asking him to act as an intermediary in the dispute and promising that Dilawar Khan would be allowed to continue as Wali of Maimana if he complied with Ishaq Khan's demands.[359] The wali, however, rejected both Ishaq Khan's ultimatum and the Amir's overtures[360] and, hearing that the

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[355] *QNL*, 23 April 1883; *TFJ*, May 1883; *Newsletter from - to* - (Aman to Sarwar Khan?), n.d. (c. May) 1883, SLEI:37, fols. 130-1. Later there were reports that Siahposh Khan, the leader of an Islamic *mujahidin* group in Yalatan, called *Jawan-i Siyaposh*, announced that "the Russian government consider that Maimana belongs to them." However, this seems to have been propaganda in order to rally opposition against the Russians amongst the Turkman tribes around Panjdeh and Marichaq. Other reports of Russian agents in the Maimana area, and that Dilawar Khan had once more become a Russian subject, do not appear to have any basis in fact, cf. *HNL*, 21 June 1883; *TFJ*, May 1883; *MA*, 3 June 1883; *ANL*, 6, 7 July 1883, SLEI:38, fols. 107, 108-9.

[356] *MA*, 26 May, 3 June 1883, SLEP:185, fols. 643-4, 658-9; *KNL*, 1 June 1883, SLEI:36, part 5, fol. 1366.

[357] *Viceroy to Amir of Afghanistan*, 16 June 1883, SLEI:37, fols. 137-8.

[358] *HC*, 28 June 1883.

[359] *HNL*, 12 July, 4 Aug. 1883.

[360] *HNL*, 4 Aug. 1883 which claims that Dilawar Khan saw the Amir's offer, coming as it did from Herat, as an opportunity to question whether Maimana was now expected to conduct its correspondence with the Amir through Herat, rather than Balkh. The Amir, in reply, informed the wali that no change in Maimana's position as part of the province of Afghan Turkistan was contemplated.

Afghans were assembling troops in Herat and Afghan Turkistan, he ordered the town's defences to be repaired, took hostages from his amirs and imposed additional taxes to raise money for the war effort.[361]

The opportunity to commence hostilities came in July 1883 when three dissident mingbashis, Tora Khan, Hakim Khan and Karim Khan, who had fled Maimana the previous year, heard that the Turkman tribes of Qal'a-yi Wali wanted to shake off the wali's yoke and pay revenues to General Ghaus al-Din Khan at Bala Murghab.[362] The mingbashis were given leave to go to Bala Murghab, but were later delayed in Herat, for General Ghaus al-Din Khan, without waiting for orders from the Amir, sent a number of Yalangtush Khan's men to Qal'a-yi Wali to collect the revenue of the region. The Uzbek garrison stationed in Qal'a-yi Wali would have none of it, attacked the officials and forced them to retreat back into Herat territory, whereupon Ghaus al-Din Khan sent Taju Khan Ishaqzai to the area with four hundred men and two guns to claim the territory by force. Dilawar Khan's soldiers, greatly outnumbered, fled back up the Qaisar road whilst Taju Khan occupied Qal'a-yi Wali in the Amir's name.[363]

The wali, however, was not prepared to give up this frontier fort without a fight. Yazdan Quli Khan,[364] Maimana's *sipah salar*, along

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[361] *HNL*, 8, 22 May, 6 June 1883; *MA*, 26 May, 3 June 1883; *TFJ*, Aug. 1883, SLEI:37, fol. 1056. Reports say that Dilawar Khan was planning to flee to Bukhara and was sending as much money and portable property there as possible. The fact that the wali did not flee, however, must cast some doubt on these reports.

[362] *HNL*, 6, 21 June, 6 July 1883; *HC*, 28 June 1883. Qal'a-yi Wali, according to the Afghan Boundary Commissioners, had "long been deserted" but had recently been recolonised by Sariq Turkmans from the Panjdeh region (Peacocke, 116).

[363] *TFJ*, Aug. 1883; *HNL*, 12 July, 4 Aug. 1883.

[364] Following the defeat of Dilawar Khan, Yazdan Quli Khan fled first to Qarqi and thence to Ashkhabad, where he found employment with the Russian government. In 1885 he appeared in Merv and intrigued, on behalf of the Russians, with dissidents in Maimana, even sending agents to Panjdeh, apparently hoping to stir up revolt and seize Maimana for himself. In 1887, he was joined by Shahghasi Khushdil Loynab Khan and other supporters of Aiyub Khan. The 1887 uprising did not come to anything but in 1892, following the rebellion of Muhammad Sharif Khan Ming of Maimana, Yazdan Quli arrived in the Daulatabad region with a number of Turkman and Uzbek sowars and intrigued so successfully with the Hazaras of Qal'a-yi Nau that a number of them fled to Russian territory. He died at Hisar on 21 April 1896. For his biography, see *HNL*, 4 Aug. 1883; *HNL*, 13 March 1884, SLEI:40, fols. 807-9. *Sarrakh Correspondent*, 29 Jan., 4 Oct., 2 Nov. 1885; *Derieghez Agent*, 27 Sept. 1885, SLEP:187, fols. 127, 1406-9, 1279-82; *HNL*, 10 June 1884, SLEI:41, fols. 579-81; *MVNL*, 17 Feb., 24 March 1884, SLEI:44, fols. 261, 751-2; *Sher Ahmad Khan to Ridgeway*, 15 Sept. 1885; *Intelligence from Reza Khan in Ashkhabad*, 14 Oct. 1885, SLEI:45, fols. 1144, 1855; *TFJ*, Dec. 1886, SLEI:46, fols. 219-21. *Tarkhanov to Ghaus al-Din Khan*, 1887; *Précis of News from C. Asia*, May-June 1887; *Najam-al-Din to Abdullah Khan Nasiri*, 1887; *Birjund News-letter*, 8 July 1887; *Panjdeh News-letter*, 11 Aug. 1887; *Ashkhabad News-letter*, 15 Sept. 1887; *Kahka News-letter*, 28 Sept.

with Mustafa Qul and three hundred men were sent to Qal'a-yi Wali to demand an explanation for this arbitrary annexation and, if necessary, to use force to regain possession of the fort. Taju Khan, hearing of the advance of the Maimana cavalry, sent urgent messages to Bala Murghab and Ghaus al-Din dispatched Yalangtush Khan Jamshidi with a further two hundred men and three guns to reinforce the Afghan outpost.[365]

When the reinforcements reached Qal'a-yi Wali, Yazdan Quli Khan, who had camped some distance away, was told to withdraw his men within two hours or else be pursued "to the walls of Maimana."[366] Yazdan Quli stood his ground, but was unable to withstand the better-equipped Afghan army and was forced to retreat to Maimana. On their return, however, they tried to put on a brave face by firing their guns as if celebrating a settlement of the issue, but the fall of Qal'a-yi Wali and the defeat of Yazdan Quli was soon common knowledge throughout the region.[367]

At around the same time that Ghaus al-Din's men were occupying Qal'a-yi Wali, Ishaq Khan launched a diversionary raid across the Andkhui border around Daulatabad and seized some four thousand sheep.[368] In retaliation, Dilawar Khan diverted the course of the Shirin Tagab and Ab-i Qaisar, thus cutting off Andkhui's water supply.[369]

Following this confrontation and the fall of Qal'a-yi Wali, Ishaq Khan sent Muhammad Reza Khan to Maimana with another letter from the Amir which was "couched in peremptory style unlike the moderate tone which the Amir has before adopted in writing to the

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1887, SLEP:189, fols. 830-2, 923-7, 1072-4, 1107-17, 1539-2, 1616(a), 1937-8. *Munshi Sayyid Diwan Mohammad*, 11 Feb. 1889, SLEI: 56, fol. 769; *HNL*, 12 May 1892, SLEI:66, fol. 1273; *TFJ*, May 1896, SLEI:87, no. 108, n. pag.

[365] *HNL*, 4 Aug. 1883. *TFJ*, Aug. 1883; *HNL*, 19 Aug., 3 Sept. 1883, SLEI:38, fols. 63-4, 393-4.

[366] *HNL*, 4 Aug. 1883.

[367] *HNL*, 3 Sept. 1883.

[368] *HNL*, 12 July 1883; *TFJ*, Aug. 1883. KNL, 4 Sept. 1883, SLEI:37, fol. 1315 has a garbled account of this attack. The action of Maimana cutting off the water supply is evidence enough to support the belief that the wali held Andkhui responsible for the attack. A short while before the raid on Daulatabad, Dilawar Khan had apparently sent Ishaq Khan 2,000 tangas as part of the overdue tribute, *HNL*, 12 July 1883.

At SLEI:37, fols. 1037-8 there is a sketch, copied from one drawn by the Amir, showing Maimana, Bala Murghab, Andkhui, Marichaq, etc. See Plan 2.

[369] *KNL*, 4 Sept. 1883. Probably the rivers (the report says "canals") were dammed at their confluence a little north of Daulatabad. Since it was high summer, these streams would have been at their lowest point but, even so, the loss of the water must have devastated Andkhui's crops, which relied exclusively on this supply of water for their irrigation. A similar course of action was taken by Maimana in 1991 after Hafizullah Amin re-organised provincial boundaries and removed Andkhui from Faryab province.

Wali." Afghan troops must be stationed in Maimana for the security of the whole of Afghanistan and the outstanding tribute money due to the Afghan treasury must be paid. Failure to comply with these terms would lead to the invasion of Maimana and the wali's disgrace.[370] To reinforce the Amir's demand, Ishaq Khan ordered General Sharbat Khan and several hundred infantry, with four guns, to reinforce the frontier post of Belcheragh.[371]

Despite the loss of Qal'a-yi Wali, Dilawar Khan was still unwilling to accede to the Afghan demands but with Afghan troops advancing on three fronts he was in "a condition of great perplexity" and decided to call a council of elders to discuss the matter before sending any reply.[372] Though we do not know the outcome of this meeting and the contents of Dilawar Khan's reply to the Amir, his actions indicate that the Afghan terms were rejected, the wali apparently still expecting Aiyub Khan's imminent arrival in Maimana.[373]

In retaliation, the Amir withdrew the promise to permit Dilawar Khan to remain as wali of Maimana were he to admit government troops. Instead he turned once more to the exiled Mingid ruler, Muhammad Husain Khan Ming, who declared his willingness to accept the Afghan government's conditions and the payment of an annual tribute. In the middle of December 1883, Husain Khan, having sworn to be a faithful and loyal servant of the Afghan government, was sent to Afghan Turkistan with a promise of men and a gift of money to cover road expenses and the costs of recruiting local levies.[374] Dilawar Khan, meanwhile, had gone onto the offensive and,

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[370] *HNL*, 18 Sept. 1883, SLEI:38, fols. 621-2; *QNL*, 3 Oct. 1883, SLEI:38, fol. 413.

[371] *Ibid. TFJ*, Dec. 1883; *HNL*, 1 Nov. 1883, SLEI:38, fols. 467, 1007-8; *HNL*, 16 Dec. 1883, SLEI:39, fols. 1037-40. Estimates for the number of troops sent to Belcheragh vary from 400 to 500 men.

[372] *Ibid. MA*, 6 Oct. 1883, SLEP:185, fols. 1352-4. Maimana was said to be able to muster 3,000 "well armed" infantry and between 6,000 and 7,000 cavalry, but they were only armed with obsolete "needle guns"—flintlocks and muzzle-loading rifles. These would have been no match for the Amir's troops, who were equipped with British-made breech-loading rifles and modern artillery. According to *QNL*, 18 Dec. 1883, SLEI:39, fols. 715-6 the wali had succeeded in casting 11 new guns, but if this report is true (and it is not confirmed by sources which had more immediate access to intelligence from Maimana such as *HNL* and *HC*), they would have been small bore guns, based on obsolescent patterns, and no match for the Afghan artillery.

[373] However, one report from a traveller from Yarkand who had travelled to Peshawar via Mazar-i Sharif claimed that Maimana had submitted to the Afghans and had sent presents of horses and other items to Ishaq Khan, *PCD*, 20 Dec. 1883, SLEI:39, fols. 433-6.

[374] *KNL*, 16 Nov. 1883; *HNL*, 1 Nov. 1883. *QNL*, 26 Oct., 27 Nov. 1883, SLEI:38, fols. 923, 1032. *KNL*, 18 Dec. 1883; *PCD*, 31 Jan. 1884, SLEI:39, fols. 421, 1197-1202. *Stewart to Burne*, 13 Feb. 1884, SLEI:44, fols. 335-6; *HC*, 12 Dec. 1883, SLEP:186, fols. 115-7. In his biography, the Amir maintained that Husain Khan had been a prisoner of Dilawar Khan and that

in retaliation for the loss of flocks and herds in the Daulatabad area raiders were sent across the border to attack settlements in Andkhui and Shibarghan and a large amount of cattle and livestock fell into his hands.[375]

Fortunately for Dilawar Khan, there was no attempt by government forces to follow up the defeat of Yazdan Quli Khan at Qal'a-yi Wali, for the Herat regiments had been diverted by the outbreak of a rebellion amongst the Aimaqs. The problem arose when Muhammad Jan Beg, chief of the Chaharsada Firozkohis, refused to pay taxes to the government and General Rustam Khan had to be sent into the area to re-establish the Amir's authority. On his approach the Firozkohi chief, along with a number of his tribesmen from Chakhcharan and Chaharsada, fled to Maimana, where Dilawar Khan presented him with a robe of honour and sent six hundred of his own men with three guns to Chiras, which easily fell into the rebel's hands whilst Rustam Khan was struggling to pacifying the area around Chakhcharan.[376]

Fortune, however, once more favoured the Amir. At the time of the Chaharsada outbreak, Daniyal Khan of Deh Miran, a half-brother of Muhammad Husain Khan Ming and the semi-independent ruler of Gurziwan (Amir Khan & Shahzada Taimus, 232; Griesbach, 197),[377] was in close contact with Ishaq Khan. Hearing that General Sharbat Khan was marching to Belcheragh, he declared for the Amir. When Dilawar Khan heard of this defection, he sent two hundred cavalry

he was made wali after being freed from the Maimana gaol (Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 239-40). This is quite a different story from the contemporary reports in the Herat and Kabul news-letters, though there is one reference which claimed that during the campaign, Husain Khan had "arrived" in Maimana and been thrown in prison by Dilawar Khan, *KNL*, 29 April 1884, SLEI:40, fols. 1045-8. Since no other report substantiates this, I have dismissed both reports. Husain Khan was actually a prisoner of the Amir in Kabul.

*QNL*, 27 Nov. 1883 reports that the Amir had second thoughts about sending Husain Khan to Maimana fearing that he would side with Dilawar Khan and they would join together against the government. However, it is inconceivable that the two rivals would have sunk their differences, or ended the blood feud, which had its origins in Husain Khan's assassination of Hukumat Khan.

[375] *QNL*, 18 Dec. 1883. *QNL*, 22 Feb. 1884; *KNL*, 22 April 1884; *Amir to Viceroy*, 4 June 1884, SLEI:40, fols. 243-4, 1041-2, 1674-5. In the summer of 1883, pilgrims arriving in Peshawar reported that in May or June there had been a serious fire in and around the precincts of the shrine at Mazar-i Sharif, during which a number of shops and the shrine gate were destroyed, or badly burnt, *PCD*, 1 July 1883, SLEI:37, fol. 310.

[376] *HN*, 19 Aug. 1883; *QNL*, 22 Feb. 1884; *HNL*, 1 Nov., 16 Dec. 1883. *HN*, 16 Nov. 1883; *HNL*, 1 Dec. 1883. SLEI:39, fols. 425-6, 553-4. One reason for General Rustam Khan's problems was that he had collected vast flocks of sheep as revenue-in-kind from the villages around Chakhcharan and was unable to move quickly to counter the movement of Maimana troops to Chiras.

[377] He had helped Na'ib 'Alam Khan during his Maimana campaign in 1875/6 (Amir Khan & Shahzada Taimus, 232).

into Gurziwan to try and force Daniyal Khan to change his mind, but General Sharbat Khan, hearing of the movement of Maimana troops and of the fall of Chiras, marched into Gurziwan and captured the majority of Dilawar Khan's small force (Maitland 1888, ii, 99).[378] The Afghan troops continued their march southwards across the high passes of the Tir Band-i Turkistan and reached Chaharsada whilst Dilawar Khan's men were still in Chiras. Dilawar Khan was forced to abandon Chiras and recall his soldiers to Maimana. Muhammad Jan Firozkohi, abandoned by Maimana, opened negotiations with General Rustam Khan and quickly made his peace with the Afghans.[379]

The failure of the Chaharsada campaign and the loss of Chiras and Gurziwan were further bodyblows to Dilawar Khan, who could only watch and wait as his country was torn from his hands district by district. In January 1884, Husain Khan Ming, supported by two regiments of regular soldiers and artillery which the Amir intended should form the core of the Maimana garrison, joined forces with 'Abd al-Ghani Khan at Andkhui.[380] General Sharbat Khan followed up his successes in Gurziwan and Chiras by persuading the populations of first Gilimbaf, and then Zarshui, to submit peacefully to the Amir.[381] In February Tora Khan and his fellow mingbashis were given robes of honour and gifts of money and allowed to leave for Qal'a-yi Wali, from whence they planned to intrigue with their own tribesmen around Qaisar prior to advancing on the area.[382] In February Dilawar Khan heard of the arrest of Aiyub Khan in Mashhad and all hope that Maimana would be saved by the arrival of Aiyub Khan was dashed. Even though a number of partisans and supporters of Sher 'Ali Khan had taken refuge in Maimana,[383] the presence of Aiyub Khan was

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[378] *Stewart to Burne*, 13 Feb. 1884. *HNL*, 13 Feb. 1884; *TFJ*, March 1884, SLEI:40, fols. 89-91. Although these reports are dated February 1884, it is reasonable to deduce that the Gurziwan incident took place in late 1883, around the same time as the Firozkohi rebellion in Chaharsada. The submission of Gurziwan would have made it much easier for General Sharbat Khan to march his army across the difficult and hazardous terrain which lies between Sarchakan and Chaharsada. Griesbach, 198 says General Sharbat Khan was unable to subdue the wali's garrison in Yakh Darra, a very narrow valley near Deh-i Jauz of Gurziwan.

The people of Belcheragh were at odds with the Firozkohis of Chiras and never went into this area, though the reason for this is not given. The Firozkohis from this district were said to be notorious robbers (Imam Sharif, 223-4).

[379] *HNL*, 13 March 1884.

[380] *Stewart to Burne*, 13 Feb. 1884; *HNL*, 13 Feb. 1884; *HC*, 10 Feb. 1884. *HC*, 8 March 1884, SLEP:186, fols. 383-5; *TFJ*, Feb. 1884; *KNL*, 15 Feb. 1884, SLEI:39, fols. 1115-7, 1315-6; *HNL*, 13 March 1884, SLEI:40, fols. 807-9.

[381] *Stewart to Burne*, 13 Feb. 1884; *HNL*, 13 Feb. 1884.

[382] *HNL*, 27 Feb. 1884, SLEI:40, fols. 365-7; *HC*, 8 March 1884.

[383] *KNL*, 18 March 1884, SLEI:40, fols. 119-20; *PCD*, 15 June 1884, SLEI:41, fol. 265.

crucial if there were to be any universal rising of the Afghan tribes against 'Abd al-Rahman Khan. Realising that Dilawar Khan had no chance of help from any outside source, the Afghan armies poised on his borders moved in to deal the *coup de grâce*.[384]

Early in March 1884, all roads into Maimana were closed and elephants brought up heavy siege guns across the Mirza Wulang pass to Belcheragh (Peacocke, 107).[385] Once these preparations were complete, Ishaq Khan then ordered a general advance on all fronts to spread Dilawar Khan's forces as thinly as possible.[386] General Sharbat Khan, who had recently been joined by Ishaq Khan in person, marched down the Shirin Tagab river to Qata Qal'a where 'Abd al-Baqi Mingbashi engaged the Balkh army, but was defeated and driven back towards Maimana. Next, Husain Khan Ming and 'Abd al-Ghani Khan moved southwards and, in a battle near Jumjum Qal'a, Yazdan Quli was forced to abandon Daulatabad. As the Maimana armies retreated in the north and east, Dilawar Khan sent his son, Muhammad 'Ali Khan, to try and halt the advance of Sharbat Khan, but once more the Maimana army was defeated. Meanwhile, the Herat force moved out of Qal'a-yi Wali and, in another engagement, this time at Qal'a-yi Bashlamas, south of Chahar Shanbeh, Taki Beg Mingbashi was soundly defeated and fled to Qaisar. Tora Khan Mingbashi and his fellow-exiles followed up this success on the Badghis border by routing yet another force loyal to Dilawar Khan, under Mullah Quli Muhammad, and occupied Hirak, Alti 'Azizan and Khwaja Kenti.[387]

News of this succession of defeats spread quickly throughout what remained of the Khanate of Maimana and, with memories of 'Alam Khan's massacre still fresh in their minds, those amirs and tribal

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Amongst the partisans of Aiyub Khan reported in Maimana were Ghulam Haidar Khan Wardak, Hafizullah Khan Ghilzai and Sardar Hashim Khan.

[384] As usual, rumours abounded that Russian forces had come to Maimana's help and that great quantities of arms had been sent to the wali from Russian territory. The evidence, though, points to no such involvement during the 1884 campaign. Had Russian money or arms been available to Dilawar Khan, he undoubtedly would have put up a better fight than he did. *PCD*, 23 Sept. 1884, SLEI:42, fol. 123 claims forty wagon loads of guns had been sent to Maimana by Russian agents in Bukhara; *QNL*, 14 April 1884, SLEI:40, fol. 1223-4 'confirms' that the Russian flag had been raised in Maimana, but this refers to events some two years earlier, Cf. *QNL*, 8 April 1884, SLEI:40, fol. 953.

[385] *QNL*, 14 March 1884; *KNL*, 4, 15 April 1884, SLEI:40, fols. 361-2, 397-8, 815-7; *HNL*, 27 Feb. 1884.

[386] According to Merk, 265 some 8,000 troops and 24 guns were employed in the Maimana campaign, or about the same numbers as Ishaq had mustered two years earlier. However, this time Afghan forces had not been spread so thinly and there was more planning and strategy.

[387] *HNL*, 13 March 1884. *QNL*, 13 March 1884; *HNL*, 26 March, 12 April 1884, SLEI:40, fols. 951-2, 957-8, 1313-5.

heads who were able to make their way to the Afghan camp gave up the unequal struggle and went to tender their submission to the Amir, having been assured by Ishaq Khan that they would be well treated (Merk, 265).[388] In a final, desperate effort to hold onto power, Dilawar Khan smuggled a confidential servant through the Herat lines concealed in a bag of grain with orders to plead his cause with the Russian commander at Yalatan.[389] Dilawar Khan's messenger, however, was given an even cooler reception than on previous occasions, the wali being curtly informed by the Russian general that he had "no authority to interfere in Maimana."[390] In order to allow time for the Russian reply to reach Maimana, the wali sent 'Abd al-Baqi Mingbashi to Ishaq Khan's camp at Qata Qal'a and convinced the governor that he was willing to surrender and would come in person to the Afghan camp on 3 May. Despite the Amir's warnings that the wali could not be trusted, Ishaq Khan halted his advance until the deadline had passed. Dilawar Khan, though, failed to put in an appearance on the day he had promised, and the Afghan armies were ordered to advance from all sides.[391]

The wali, unable to trust the population of the city, decided to make his last stand outside the walls and divided his army in two across the lines of advance of Ishaq Khan and the Heratis. In doing so, he abandoned Qaisar and Almar to the combined forces of Tora Khan Mingbashi and the Herat troops. Husain Khan and 'Abd al-Ghani Khan, meanwhile, pushed from their forward base of Jar Qal'a and marched up the Shirin Tagab to "Sumagh" (Su Bakht?), where they probably combined with Ishaq Khan and Sharbat Khan, who were advancing on the strategic crossing of Khesht Pul. In the south of the country, Afghan troops at Gilimbaf marched into the Ab-i Maimana, taking the strategic fortress of Qal'a-yi Niyaz Beg. Ishaq Khan, meanwhile, arrived at Khesht Pul on 20 May 1884 and early the following morning he took three hundred men and rode out across the *chul* to Nauroz Tepa, where the city of Maimana lay in plain view.

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[388] *QNL*, 13 March 1884; *HNL*, 13 March 1884; *Amir to Viceroy*, 6 June 1884, SLEI:40, fols. 1674-5.

[389] *HNL*, 12 April 1884; *HNL*, 26 April 1884, SLEI:40, fols. 1513-5.

[390] Id.

[391] *Amir to Viceroy*, 6 June 1884; *HNL*, 13, 26 March 1884; *QNL*, 8 April 1884. *HNL*, 11, 26 May 1884, SLEI:41, fols. 4, 31-3; *HC*, 11 May 1884, SLEP:186, fols. 585-7. *HNL*, 26 May 1884 says Ishaq Khan waited until 21 May, but this was the day when Dilawar Khan surrendered. *HC*, 11 May 1884 gives a different version of the terms, claiming that Dilawar Khan promised to surrender Maimana provided Ishaq Khan gave him five days start on the road to Bukhara before Afghan forces entered his capital.

The appearance of the Afghan cavalry on the hills above the town completely demoralised Dilawar Khan's men, who began to desert in groups of five and ten until some two hundred had crossed the lines and surrendered.[392] The exodus continued throughout the day and by the following morning the "majority of the population" had come into Khesht Pul and tendered their submission.[393] With Afghan forces pressing in from all sides and his own soldiers deserting him by the score, Dilawar Khan was forced to throw himself on Ishaq Khan's mercy. At eight o'clock on the evening of 21 May 1884, the wali of Maimana, accompanied by his few remaining supporters and officials, arrived at Khesht Pul[394] and fell at the feet of the governor of Balkh to beg forgiveness and pardon, declaring:

> I am one of the humblest slaves of His Highness. Up to the present I did not know what to do. I have now put the halter of submission on my neck. Both Maimana and I are at your service. You can do with me what you will.[395]

For the moment, his life was spared, but in the Amir's eyes he had forfeited his right to govern Maimana and he was arrested and sent to Kabul. His inveterate enemy, Muhammad Husain Khan, was appointed in his place, though never again was any Mingid to wield absolute power. Indeed, Husain Khan's every move was watched suspiciously by an Afghan governor, who was able to call on government troops garrisoned in the city to enforce the Amir's will (Merk, 265).

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[392] *HNL*, 26 March 1884. *HNL*, 14 April 1884; *Ishaq Khan to Amir*, 24 May 1884, SLEI:40, fols. 1085-6, 1523.

[393] *HC*, 17 May 1884, SLEP:186, fols. 532-5. According to *Amir to Viceroy*, 6 June 1884 another delegation of elders went to the Herat camp at Khwaja Kenti.

[394] Merk, 265 says the wali surrendered at Kafir Qal'a about 2 miles south of Koh-i Saiyid.

[395] *Ishaq Khan to Amir*, 24 May 1884.

CHAPTER NINE

# MUHAMMAD HUSAIN KHAN, 1884-1888

> The exaggerated fears of Russian power and intrigue ... invested Herat with a fictitious importance wholly incommensurate with the strength of the place and its position in regard to Candahar and the Indus. To speak of the integrity of the place as of vital importance to British India was a hyperbole so insulting to common sense as scarcely to need refutation.[1]

## *The Khanate of Maimana under Muhammad Husain Khan*

The fall of Maimana brought considerable satisfaction to the Amir, for he had exceeded the conquests of his grandfather, Dost Muhammad Khan, by bringing the principality under the Afghan yoke in a way that it had never been even under Sher 'Ali Khan (cf. Kakar 1971, 143). It is not surprising, therefore, that the Amir ordered the illumination of all the towns and cities of Afghanistan to celebrate the acquisition.[2] This delight, however, was tempered by the actions of Ishaq Khan who, with the memory of Herat still fresh in his mind, made sure that he was the first commander to enter the Mingid capital and refused permission to the Herat troops to enter. Instead, he sent them away after presenting them with dresses of honour.[3] Once again, though, he was thwarted in his ambition of extending the territories under his command. Ishaq Khan's unseemly haste in taking possession of Maimana aroused the Amir's suspicion. The region was, therefore, placed under Herat's jurisdiction and Muhammad Husain Khan Ming was restored to his old fief, closely watched by an Afghan Resident who was a loyal supporter of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan (Kakar 1971, 81; Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 239-40).[4]

The territory which Husain Khan inherited was a shadow of its former greatness. Not only had its boundaries been much reduced

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[1] H. M. Durand, *The First Afghan War and Its Causes* (London 1879) (quoted Gregorian, 99n.). Though this comment was made about the policy of Burnes and others during the First Anglo-Afghan War, Durand's remarks, written in 1879, were implied criticism of the contemporary Central Asian policy pursued by Britain.

[2] *KNL*, 27, 30 May 1884, SLEI:40, fols. 1521-3, 1685-6; *PCD*, 15 June 1884.

[3] *PCD*, 19 Dec. 1884, SLEI:43, fol. 72.

[4] *Ibid. KNL*, 1 July 1884; *QNL*, 17 July 1884, SLEI:41, fols. 291, 941.

since the days of his father, Mizrab Khan, but decades of war and civil unrest, combined with a series of economic and natural disasters, had reduced this once wealthy and princely appanage to the level of an impoverished client state. Nothing more exemplified this decline than the capital of the Khanate itself. The Afghan Boundary Commission,[5] in what, to this day, remains the most extensive survey

[5] The official reason for the Boundary Commissioner's presence in Afghanistan was to demarcate the ill-defined border between Herat and the Amu Darya, thus preventing any incursion by Russian forces. During the survey, however, a number of British and native agents made extensive journeys throughout the area as part of an intelligence-gathering operation. The reports of these officers were not published in the *Gazetteer* (1895), though some of the less confidential material was incorporated in this official publication. Instead, the Surveyor General's office ran off about ten copies of a five-volume work entitled *Records of the Intelligence Party of the Afghan Boundary Commission*, for use by the Viceroy, the Secretary of State for India and a few of the most senior members of the Administration. Only two complete sets of these highly secret volumes appear to have survived. One, belonging to Curzon, is located in the *Curzon Papers* at the India Office Library [MSS Eur. F.112/388/1-5; Microfilm POS 9037, 9038, 9040]; the other, in the National Archives of India, is still apparently classified as "secret." Vols i-ii, *Diary of Major Maitland*, 1888; vol. iii, *Diary of Major Peacocke*, 1887, are self-explanatory. Vol. iv, *Report on the Tribes*, 1891 contains extensive reports on the Chahar Aimaq, Hazara and Turkman tribes of Herat, Badghis, Ghor and the Hazarajat, as well as accounts of journeys undertaken by various surveyors who were sent into the region. Volume iv remains the most extensive historical, anthropological and geographical survey of the Aimaq tribes ever undertaken in Afghanistan. Amongst other things, this volume contains comprehensive genealogies of all the heads of these tribes. These are reproduced in Appendix V of the present work. Vol. v, *Miscellaneous Reports*, 1888 is a compilation of surveys of different regions of Afghan Turkistan, including Merk's *Report on the City of Maimana:* accounts by Griesbach, Imam Sharif, Amir Khan, Shahzada Taimus and others, of their exploration of Maimana, Gurziwan, Sar-i Pul, Shibarghan and the Tir Band-i Turkistan. There are also reports by Ney Elias, Major Holditch, Captain Drummond, etc. However, copies of many of the original, uncensored, Boundary Commission survey reports can be found in the appropriate volumes of the L/P&S/7 (SLEI) series of the Political and Secret Department.

In addition to these five volumes, a series of photographs, sketches and drawings of Maimana and other cities of Afghan Turkistan were taken by Carl Ludolf Griesbach, the Austrian surveyor attached to the Commission. In 1887, two albums of his photographs were purchased by the Foreign Department but although the India Office recorded the acquisition of these albums, so far neither the India Office Library, nor the National Archives of India, have been able to trace their whereabouts; cf. *Register of Indian, Foreign, Proceedings*, Z/P/1381, Nov. 1887, under subject heading, *Afghan Boundary Commission*: "Photographs purchased by the Foreign Dept. of 2 albums (second set of), taken by Mr. C. L. Griesbach of the ABC," which gives a location at, FRONTIER BRANCH, Sept. 1887, nos. 116-123, part B. The India Office Records' *Proceedings* does not contain any of the 'B Series'. In the annual file for this year there is merely a cross-reference, INTERNAL, part B, Sept. 1886, nos. 182-187. There is a further reference to these photographs in the next year's register (Z/P/1382) under the subject heading of the Afghan Boundary Commission (April 1888): "Disposal of Photographs taken by C. L. Griesbach and Dr. Owen whilst with the Afghan Boundary Commission," FRONTIER, part B, 1888, nos. 1543-171. Once again, the actual correspondence is missing from the *Proceedings* volume in question.

The negatives of Griesbach's Afghanistan photographs remained in his possession until his death in the early part of this century. They were inherited by his daughter, Hilda Griesbach, along with a large amount of other material related to Griesbach's Afghan period. In September 1922, she wrote to the India Office, offering to sell her father's Afghan Diaries to the British

of the area, recorded that Maimana's population in 1885/86 was, at the most, two thousand five hundred resident families (Peacocke, 111; C. E. Yate 1888, 339) with probably about the same number of semi-sedentary families living in the immediate vicinity of the city walls (Maitland 1888, ii, 105; Merk, 266).[6] The city itself had such "a deserted and decayed appearance," that Maitland doubted that the true number of inhabitants was even this high (Maitland 1888, 533). The principality as a whole had a mere ten thousand families living within its borders (*Gazetteer* (1907) ii, 213; Maitland 1888, 545; C. E. Yate 1888, 339), a steep decline since the days of Mizrab Khan, even allowing for the reduction in the Khanate's territory, when Maimana boasted a population of well over one hundred thousand people.[7]

Signs of decay could be seen everywhere in the capital. Many of the houses, shops and other buildings were in a poor state of repair, as were the bazaars and towns throughout Afghan Turkistan (Elias, 167-8; Maitland 1888, ii, 105-8, 538).[8] Maimana had also become an unhealthy place to live. In the summer not only was the region

government for the sum of £300 and enclosing a handlist of the contents of his 'Afghan box'. Amongst the items listed were: 7 books of photographs (prints?); "Afghan negatives;" other negatives; a "roll" of photographs; her father's personal diaries whilst with the Boundary Commission (1884-1886); an "Afghan Diary" (presumably *Journeys in Afghanistan from 7 Feb. 1888-6 July 1889*); sketches of Herat (including one of the fort), Hazarajat, Badghis, Afghan Turkistan and other locations in Afghanistan drawn during the period of the Afghan Boundary Commission; geological notes and analysis related to his survey of Afghan Turkistan's mineral resources; Boundary Commission maps of Mazar-i Sharif, Andkhui, Aqcha, Maimana, Band-i Amir, Herat valley, and many other locations; copies of memoranda and letters to the government and Amir 'Abd al-Rahman Khan as well as numerous other letters and papers.

It was Miss Griesbach's wish that her father's diaries would eventually be published, but the India Office deemed it unwise to allow such sensitive material to see the light of day. After some debate, the autograph manuscript of *Journeys in Afghanistan, 1888-89* was purchased by the India Office, along with a typed copy of the same, but since this journal showed 'Abd al-Rahman Khan in an unfavourable light, it was never allowed to become public. Originally, both the autograph and Hilda's typescript copy, was filed with the Political Department (4th Floor, Room 348A; Political Department Record no. 194), though now it is filed under the temporary number of L/P&S/19, TN/139 [IOR:NEG 5425]. For the handlist and correspondence between Hilda Griesbach and the India Office see L/P&S/11/202, 4813 (the catalogue in the Reading Room's handbook erroneously has it filed at 202, 4786). The fate of the rest of Griesbach's papers is yet unknown, though enquiries to ascertain their whereabouts continue and it may be that some, or all, of the collection remains in the possession of the family.

[6] *PCD*, 28 Nov. 1885, SLEI:45, fol. 1639 has 8,000 houses; Amir Khan & Shahzada Taimus, 241 give the figure as only 2,000 families.

[7] Khalfin, 258 grossly over-estimated the population, claiming some 300,000 people lived in Maimana with an additional 2,000 Afghans. Since he gives the population of the whole of Afghan Turkistan as 640,000, this would have meant that Maimana accounted for nearly half of the total population of the province.

[8] *Panjdeh Correspondent, now at Maimana*, 5 July 1885, SLEP:187, fols. 951-7; *Abdul Hakim, News Agent at Maimana*, 15 Aug. 1885, SLEI:45, fol. 661; Maitland, *Hari-Rud to Balkh*, 1886, SLEI:46, fols. 143-89.

plagued by malaria, but a native surgeon attached to the Boundary Commission, who visited Maimana to treat the wali and other officials, found that "ague, debility after fever, bronchitis, dyspepsia, diarrhoea, burns, sore eyes ... stiff joints and convulsions"[9] were endemic. There was no native *hakim* in the city and public sanitation was non-existent. Empty houses, the empty, unfrequented streets, the ditch around the *arg*, the Maimana river and even wells, were being used as latrines (Griesbach, 195).[10]

The country which Husain Khan Ming ruled from 1884 to 1889, covered a fraction of the area ruled by his forefathers. It consisted of eight "sub-districts:" Maimana itself, Namusa with Langar, Almar, Karai, Qaisar, Chichaktu, Shirin Tagab and Khairabad. The important region of Daulatabad, which, in former time, had been the main frontier defences on Maimana's border with Andkhui, was taken out of Husain Khan's hands, garrisoned with government troops and placed under the administration of Aqcha (Maitland 1888, ii, 159; Merk, 265).[11] In the east, both Darzab and Gurziwan had also been lost and were administered from Sar-i Pul, whilst on the Murghab side, Qal'a-yi Wali and Ghormach were part of the province of Herat. Only Maimana's mountainous southern border appears to have remained unchanged, the boundary still following the course of the Murghab and including Laulash, Hastomin and other Aimaq settlements which made up the semi-autonomous region of Bandar (Maitland 1888, ii, 532-46).

The mediaeval bazaar was a *chaharsu* ('crossroads') design, consisting of four covered streets radiating from the *arg*, like the spokes of a wheel, to the four gates of the city. Some two hundred and thirty five shops[12] lay within the walls of the provincial capital. A handful of Hindu shopkeepers (including three goldsmiths) and eight Jewish shops provided the local population with the necessary credit facilities required by merchants of the business community (*Gazetteer* (1907) ii, 203; Maitland 1888, ii, 533; Merk, 266; Peacocke, 111).[13]

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[9] *Report from Assistant-Surgeon Elahi Bakhsh on Special Duty*, 2 Oct. 1886, SLEI:49, fol. 440.

[10] *Ibid.*

[11] There seems to be some discrepancy over the position of Khairabad, the other strategic fortress on the Maimana/Andkhui border. Maitland includes Khairabad, with the villages of "Tokhmána Kala" and "Khuda-imad," under Maimana, but Merk, 265 says that this region had been severed from the principality.

[12] Peacocke, 111 says there were only about 100 shops, Maitland has 150 (Maitland 1888, ii, 533; *Gazetteer* (1907) ii, 203). For discussion, see n. 133 below.

[13] Maitland, *loc. cit.*, following Peacocke, reports that there were 20 Hindus from Shikapur

Despite the general atmosphere of decay, the bazaars were busy, for the town was still an important crossroads for trade, Bukhara and Herat being the most significant 'foreign' markets. Many European goods were on sale. Imported wares included: Bukharan and Mashhad silks, Russian leather, paper and printed cotton goods, French sugar (which had come via Russia), Austrian Lucifer matches, English knives, needles, chintzes, velvets and other cotton goods imported from India, Indian tea and indigo as well as *lungis* from Peshawar (Merk, 266).

Merk (*loc. cit.*) claims that the only important manufacture of the truncated Khanate was a local kind of coarse cotton cloth and a type of thick cloth made from goat's hair, called "barak" or "kurk." No mention is made of karakul skins, carpets and leather, all of which must have constituted an important, if less visible, component of Maimana's revenue. The main export was grain (wheat and barley) for the region continued to produce huge surpluses and prices were lower than in any other district of Afghan Turkistan.[14] Yate estimated that within the borders of Maimana alone, there were some three hundred and fifty thousand sheep—or seven sheep to every individual. These flocks could double every five years, provided that the weather was favourable and peace reigned (C. E. Yate 1888, 344). Other produce included walnuts, tobacco, pounded mulberries, rice, cotton, raisins, "fruit of every description" and horses (Merk, 265-6). One of the ecological side-effects of the numerous sieges and wars was that all the trees and orchards surrounding the city had been cut down and the once-green valley was "quite destitute of trees or cover of any sort" (Maitland 1888, ii, 105-6; Merk, 266; Peacocke, 111).

Different sources give widely divergent figures for the revenues of Maimana between 1884 and 1889. Maitland (1888, ii, 546), quoting Merk, states that the principality's total revenue, in cash and kind, came to 700,000 tangas or 233,333 Kabul rupees on an exchange rate of approximately three tangas to one rupee (Maitland 1888, ii, 547).[15]

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and a total of 80 Jewish families left in the town. Merk (whom the official *Gazetteer* follows) says there were 4 Hindu shops (Shikapuris), 3 Hindu goldsmiths from Attock and Hazara in the Rawalpindi District and 8 shops owned by Jews.

[14] *Extract from a Report of a Special Messenger*, 8 April 1887, SLEP:189, fols. 579-96. The prices quoted are: 12 kran per 100 maunds (*mann*) or 4 English seers.

[15] According to Maitland (followed by, *Gazetteer* 1895), the exchange rates in 1885/6 were:

3 tangas = 2 krans = 1 Kabuli rupee

20 tangas = 1 Bukharan tila

2½ Herati krans = 1 English (Indian) rupee

20 Herati krans = one 5 rouble Russian gold piece.

Merk's figures are probably based on the receipts for 1884, the first year of Husain Khan's resumed reign. Three-sevenths, or 300,000 tangas (100,000 Kabul rupees) were remitted to the Amir as tribute, whilst the remaining sum, 400,000 tangas (Rs. 133,333), was retained by the wali for his own expenses. These figures are almost the same as those presented by Muhammad Sharif Khan, the son of Husain Khan, to the Amir in 1889, when 'Abd al-Rahman Khan was assessing the revenues of Afghan Turkistan following the failure of Ishaq Khan's rebellion.[16] Mir Allah Bakhsh, who was in Maimana a year after Merk, confirms that Maimana's annual tribute was set at 300,000 tangas,[17] but this did not include a twice-yearly *nazarana* or *turtuq* that could cost Husain Khan Ming anything from thirty to sixty thousand rupees (Maitland 1888, ii, 546).[18]

In July 1885, however, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan informed the Viceroy that Maimana's revenues amounted to a staggering 1,440,000 tangas (240,000 English rupees),[19]or more than twice the amount estimated by Merk and Allah Bakhsh, whilst the wali's tribute was only one lakh tangas, or ten percent of the annual revenue. The Amir also deliberately inflated the wali's known expenses some two hundred and fifty times, to one million tangas (Rs. 160,000).[20] This distortion of the revenues of Maimana was undoubtedly designed to give the British the impression that the Afghan yoke lay light on Maimana and that Husain Khan was allowed to enjoy the bulk of the state's revenues, which was not, in fact, the case. It is therefore impossible to use the Amir's figures as a basis for assessing the fiscal health, or otherwise, of Maimana and it is to Merk's figures that we have to turn

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Accounts were made out in tangas, but the most common coins in circulation were the Herat kran and the Kabul rupee (*Gazetteer* (1907) ii, 215).

[16] Total revenue, six lakh tangas, divided as follows: 250,000 for the wali's expenses, 300,000 to Afghan government and 50,000 tangas remitted, presumably as *waqf* and other charitable donations, *NKVT*, 25 June 1889, SLEI:57, fols. 1011-2.

[17] *Memorandum from Mir Allah Bakhsh*, Meshed, 1886, SLEI:49, fols. 529-31 who gives an exhange rate of 3.75 rupees to the tanga.

[18] Allah Bakhsh, *Memorandum*, 1886. Maitland gives the *nazarana* and its value (in Kabuli rupees) as: 60 horses (Rs 30-40 each); 9 pieces of "kurk" (Rs 5 each); 9 pieces of "kaghmai,", or camel-hair cloth (Rs 25 to 40 each); 18 camels (Rs 80 each); 91 karakul *postins* (Rs 4 each); 3 "Birjindi namdahs" (i.e. felt carpets) (Rs 160 each); 4 Turkman carpets (Rs 80 each); 9 pieces Bukharan silk (Rs 10 each); 9 antelope skins (Rs. 2 to 3 each); 1 gilt dagger (Rs 90); 2 bridles with silver and gold ornaments (Rs 250 each). Thus the minimum cost to the wali was Rs 5,372 (16,116 tangas), the maximum, Rs 6,116 (18,348 tangas). Additional costs would have been incurred for transportation of the *nazarana*, road expenses and smaller gifts to give to minor officials on overnight stays whilst travelling to and from the Afghan capital.

[19] See also *PCD*, 28 Nov. 1885.

[20] *Ibid. Amir to Viceroy*, July 1885, SLEI:44, fols. 1435-41.

for an accurate picture of the state's revenues and expenditure. Even the Amir's figures, however, cannot conceal the poverty-stricken state of the Khanate, for in the earlier part of the century the Mingid dynasty had an annual income of thirteen lakh Kabuli rupees, or approximately 3,900,000 tangas (see also, C. E. Yate 1888, 338).[21]

The loss of population and of some of the richest and most fertile districts of the Khanate, went hand-in-hand with swingeing tax increases and a heavy burden of tribute which the Amir exacted from the wali. Ney Elias in the mid 1880s gives the following breakdown of Afghan government dues imposed on the province (Elias, 293-4):

*In cash* (Kabul rupees)

family poll tax: 2½%
plough tax: per pair of bullocks, $10\frac{1}{3}$; per single bullock, $5\frac{1}{6}$
mill tax (grain and oil): $5\frac{1}{3}$
sheep: 10 rupees per 100 head.

*In kind*:

grain tax: one kharwar (about 2 Indian maunds) *per annum*
grass: one bag in ten sold in the market
bazaar duties: cloth and textile, one pul per rupee (i.e. $\frac{1}{60}$); on traders entering town (laden or not), 4 rupees; per horse load of merchandise of whatever value, 1 rupee.
Other: government right to requistion transport for official business.

"*Uzbek*" *(i.e Chingizid) system* (kind only)

crops: 10% per annum
flocks and herd: $\frac{1}{40}$
each *arbab*, or village headman: 1 sheep *per mensum*
Other: the amir had right of requisition.

Even this was probably not the whole story. Maitland (1888, ii, 545-5) indicates that there were a number of other impositions made in addition to those given above:

[21] See also *Panjdeh Correspondent*, 5 July 1885.

| *item taxed* | *pre 1884* | *1884-1888* |
|---|---|---|
| irrigated land (*abi*) | 10%(?) | 20% |
| cotton (irrigated) land | 10% | 20% |
| unirrigated land (*lalmi*) | n. a. | 10% |
| houses (each) | 4 tangas | 10 tangas |
| sheep | $\frac{1}{40}$ in kind | 30 tangas per 100[22] |
| orchard, vineyard | 1 tila (20 tangas) each[23] | 15 tangas per *jarib* |
| lucerne, grazing lands | do. | 6 tangas per *jarib* |
| mares, female camels | n.a. | 2½ tangas each |
| silk (raw and processed) | n.a. | 10% *ad valorum* |
| flour ground at mill | n.a. | 10% in kind |

These figures suggest that the Amir increased taxation in Maimana by between 100% and 300% across the board. Not surprisingly, such impositions inevitably pushed up prices and there is evidence that the period 1884-1888 was one of hyper-inflation in the Khanate and Afghan Turkistan generally.[24]

These impositions were not all that the long-suffering Maimanagis had to endure. Husain Khan Ming was obliged to maintain one hundred mounted men in Kabul at a cost of twelve rupees *per mensum* each. This added a further 14,400 Kabuli rupees (43,200 tangas) per year to state expenditure. In addition, a further, sizeable sum had to be laid out to cover the costs of the men's mounts and equipment. This expenditure was met by requiring every twenty families to maintain and equip one of these *sowar*s with an additional tax of 100 to 120 tangas *per annum* towards their pay (Maitland 1888, ii, 545-6).[25]

There were, however, other, unofficial, exactions. The Afghan garrison, which was paid only at infrequent intervals, were forced to to live off the land and the indigenous population, requisitioning whatever they required without payment. Forced labour was conscripted from Maimana and Almar to rebuild the city's defences and for the construction of cantonments. Eye-witnesses recorded how "foully" the Uzbeks were treated.[26] The Afghan Resident, Auliya

[22] Maitland, *loc. cit.* on the basis of information provided by Merk claims the tax on sheep remained at one sheep in forty, but this is probably a pre-1884 figure.

[23] After Pottinger, *Memoir*, 1838.

[24] Cf. *HNL*, 4 Sept., 2 Oct., 4 Nov. 1884, SLEI:42, fols. 455-6, 779-80, 1001-2 which all talk of prices, particularly of grain, being very high in the Khanate during the summer and autumn of 1884. This may account for the higher exchange rate of the tanga used by Mir Allah Bakhsh in his report.

[25] *Report of a Special Messenger*, 8 April 1887. According to *Panjdeh Correspondent*, 5 July 1885 the Uzbek cavalry never received more than one third of their salaries, presumably the rest of the money was misappropriated by various government officials.

[26] *PCD*, 28 Nov. 1885; *Panjdeh Correspondent*, 5 July 1885; *Abdul Hakim*, 15 Aug. 1885.

Khan,[27] was reported to have extorted large sums from the local population which Husain Khan was powerless to prevent and it is no wonder that the Maimanagis complained that they were being "eaten up."[28] During the visits of various members of the Boundary Commission, Auliya Khan made sure that the wali and local officials always had a government 'minder' at their side whenever they entertained the British officials (Merk, 262).[29] Despite these precautions, the intelligence officers attached to the Commission still managed to secretly recruited Husain Khan Ming as a news-writer, for which he was paid two hundred rupees a month.[30] British concern about the evident discontent and misrule in the region was communicated to the Amir, since it was futile trying to strengthen Afghanistan's borders against Russian aggression when "the enemy is within."[31] As a consequence of this diplomatic pressure the Amir, in the autumn of 1885, ordered significant reductions in Maimana's taxation and tribute, and payment was made for work done by labourers on government projects.[32]

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[27] Merk says of this individual:

> Aulia Khan is an extremely intelligent man with much experience and a naturally acute mind which has been sharpened by travel and by an unusually eventful career. His father was one of the leading Barakzai supporters of Dost Muhammad Khan, for whom he held Ghazni in 1839 [i.e. against the British]. Aulia Khan, then a boy, was in the besieged fortress, and well recollects the blowing in of the gate.... Taken prisoner with his father, Aulia Khan accompanied Dost Muhammad Khan to Calcutta and returned with him to Afghanistan in 1842. Upon the accession to power of Sher Ali Khan, Aulia Khan went into exile and spent six years in Swat as a guest of the Akhund. During this time he visited Kandahar to obtain news of the present Amir's family, which had been left there, and returned, travelling as a fakir via Bombay, Madras, Calcutta and Simla to Lahore, whence he proceeded to Peshawar. There he was arrested as a spy, but was set free by Mr. Donald Macnabb, of whose kindness he spoke with gratitude. Returning to Swat from Samarkand, where he had gone to report to Abdur Rahman Khan, he remained with the Akhund till 1877, when he went back to Russian Turkestan, and in 1800, he came in the Amir's suite to Kabul. On the surrender of Maimena, he was despatched (*sic*) to this place as Resident, a post for which he seems eminently fitted by character, antecedents and devotion to the Amir's cause (Merk, 262-3).

[28] *Abdul Hakim*, 15 Aug. 1885; *Panjdeh Correspondent*, 5 July 1885.

[29] *Abdul Hakim*, 15 Aug. 1885.

[30] Mir Allah Bakhsh, *Memorandum*, Nov. 1886. The wali agreed to undertake this "very dangerous" business "in return for unlimited generous favours once shown him by the British officers in Kabul," presumably during the Second Anglo-Afghan War, when Mir Husain Khan was living in exile in Kabul. We are not told who the officers were, or what services Husain Khan Ming rendered to the British. A cipher system was set up and one of the wali's relatives, "Yamak" Uzbashi, acted as the liaison officer between him and the British camp. Husain Khan seems to have only provided intelligence during the period of the Commission's work.

[31] *Ibid.*

[32] *PCD*, 28 Nov. 1885; *TFJ*, Dec. 1885, SLEI:46, fol. 220. The construction of the cantonment was carried out on high ground outside the city, probably on the same site as the present barracks. Construction of these, and repairs to the mouldering fortifications and walls of the city, were started in August 1885. The forced labourers were obliged to abandon their crops unhar-

By the time that Husain Khan resumed his reign in Maimana in 1884, the Khanate was once again in the forefront of the 'Great Game' as Russian forces continued their advance down the Murghab and threatened the Panjdeh oasis. Since Maimana was by now a strategic frontier post, the Amir ordered between two and three thousand troops to be stationed in the city. These were placed under the overall command of General Sharbat Khan whose headquarters was located in Sar-i Pul (Merk, 262).[33] In his absence, Qari Taj Muhammad Khan acted as the senior officer in Maimana with the assistance of Brigadier Mullah Muhammad Khan.[34] Apart from building new cantonments for their accommodation and generally putting the walls and ditches of the city in good repair (for there was a real fear during the period of Husain Khan's reign that Russia might well try to take Maimana by force) a new gate, known as the Sardar's Gate, was driven through the city walls opposite the cantonments to allow the troops faster access to the town in the case of trouble (Peacocke, 110).[35]

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vested to work on this government project. The site of the cantonment required that a number of houses belonging to "respectable" Uzbeks should "be injured," i.e. pulled down. The occupiers demanded government compensation, or the right to leave the town and build houses in one of the outlying areas. When their request was ignored, they threatened to emigrate to Russian territory, *Abdul Hakim*, 15 Aug. 1885; *Panjdeh Correspondent*, 5 July 1885.

[33] General Sharbat Khan was a native of Khost and a *ghulambacha*, or slave, of Amir A'zam Khan who fled with 'Abd al-Rahman Khan to Samarkand in 1869. The district under his command included the whole of the Chahar Wilayat and Aqcha (Merk, 262).

[34] The number of troops stationed in Maimana during the period of the Panjdeh crisis tended to vary. In the summer of 1885 there were only 500 infantry and 800 khassadars with 4 guns. By 1886 the numbers had increased to 1,500 infantry, 1,000 cavalry, 500 khassadars and 4 guns. In addition, Brigadier Mullah Muhammad Sarhang had command of 600 infantry. Official figures released in November of this year give the number of troops in Maimana as 18 companies of regimental infantry, 6 troops of cavalry, 5 companies of *khassadars* and 6 guns (field batteries). The regular infantry consisted of The Second Kabul Regiment (620 men) under Colonel Khudai Nazr; The Second Hazhda Nahri Regiment (620 men) consisting of Afghans drawn from the Balkh area; 400 men of the Chahar Yari Cavalry Regiment under Resaldar Adam Ahmadzai; the 'Abbasi Regiment of 400 men, under Colonel Saiyid Shah Khan Kabuli and Resaldar Major Bhawaldin Khan; 12 *khassadar* companies, or *bairaqs* (flags), of 104 men each, 4 companies being commanded by a "sartip" and the other eight by a "sarhang." The number, organisation, and command of the individual regiments and troops, however, frequently changed. The constant uncertainty in the chain of command, and the location and size of the regiments, must have seriously affected morale, never very good at the best of times, Barrow 1893, ii, 378; Peacocke, 111. See also, Mir Allah Bakhsh, *Memorandum*, 1886; *Panjdeh Correspondent*, 5 July 1885; Maitland, *Hari-Rud Valley to Balkh*, 1886. "Troops in Turkistan," in *TFJ*, Nov, Dec. 1886; *HNL*, 2 Dec. 1886, SLEI:49, fols. 72-6, 237; *KNL*, 28 June 1887; *List of Regular Troops in Service of Government of Afghanistan*, 1887, SLEI:50, fols. 1279, 1757.

[35] *Report of a Special Messenger*, 8 April 1887. For description of the defences of Maimana between 1884-89, see Peacocke, 110-11; C. E. Yate 1888, 337; Maitland 1888, ii, 105-8; Merk, 266; Griesbach, 195.

In 1884, Husain Khan Ming was no longer the fiery and impulsive youth whom Vambery met in 1863, but a "heavy, determined-looking" individual in his early fifties who suffered from chronic malaria and probably other diseases as well (Merk, 263).[36] He returned to a dispirited country where his every move was treated with suspicion by Auliya Khan and the Amir. At least two of the wali's sons, Muhammad Zaman Khan and Muhammad A'zam Khan, along with other members of his family, were detained in Kabul as hostages for his good behaviour (Merk, 265).[37] Husain Khan Ming's powers were also stringently curtailed. Foreign policy and relations were handled exclusively by the Afghan Resident whilst defence was in the hands of Sharbat Khan at Sar-i Pul and the garrison commanders in Maimana.

Even the wali's authority over the internal affairs of the principality was restricted, for the right to appoint *mingbashi*s had been taken away from him.[38] These officials were the most powerful members of the Maimana aristocracy, being both heads of their tribe, feudal landlords and military commanders of districts. The loss of this right of patronage was, therefore, a further severe blow to Husain Khan's power, for Auliya Khan ensured that only *mingbashi*s whose loyalty to the Amir was unquestioned, were appointed (Merk, 262-3, 265). Even so, Husain Khan was able to place members of his family in other posts of influence to offset the power of these amirs, including

[36] Elahi Bakhsh, *Report*, 1886.

[37] They were well treated and given an allowance of 600 Kabuli rupees *per mensum*. At first they were housed in the fort of Saiyid Khan, a merchant, but in January 1884 they were allowed to live in the Jandal quarter of Kabul, *KNL*, 1 Jan. 1884, SLEI:39, fol. 933. The whereabouts of Muhammad Sharif Khan, who succeeded Husain Khan in 1889, is not stated, but presumably he too was obliged to live in Kabul, though there is a reference to the Amir sending a dress of honour to Husain Khan and his son, which implies he may have been living in Afghan Turkistan, *HNL*, 23 July 1884, SLEI:41, fols. 1439-41.

[38] Maitland 1888, ii, 532-4 on the basis of information gathered in 1885-86, gives the names of the *mingbashi*s and *hakim*s (sometimes called *mir*s) of the various districts of Maimana as:

1. Maimana district: "Nafas" (Nafs?) Beg Mingbashi of Aq Darra; Yahiya Khan Mingbashi of Dahan-i Darra.
   Maimana city: Tora Khan Mingbashi and Maddat Beg Mingbashi, "heads of the town population".
2. Namusa/Langar: Tora Khan Mingbashi (a different individual, presumably, from above); Maddat Beg Mingbashi (resident in Maimana); *hakim* ("mir") "Huzar" Beg (or Shahghasi Wazir Beg of Kata Qal'a?).
3. Almar: Shaghashi Tora Khan Mingbashi (different person from one at Namusa).
4. Karai: Farhad Beg, amir of Gaujan; Mir Tora Beg, amir of Parakhman.
5. Qaisar: Mirza 'Abd al-Faiz, *hakim* (in 1885).
6. Chichaktu: Mir Daulat Beg (*mingbashi*?) of Hazara Qal'a; Mir Hazrat Qul of Birkah (*hakim*?), subordinate to Qaisar.
7. Shirin Tagab: 'Ali Yar Beg Mingbashi of Khanaqa.
8. Khairabad: not given.

Mirza 'Abd al-Faiz, son of his maternal uncle, as hakim of Qaisar (Maitland 1888, ii, 541);[39] "Ewaz Badal" as his chief munshi; "Yamak Uzbashi," who was probably head of Husain Khan's secret service;[40] and "Huzar Beg" hakim of the Namusa district (Maitland 1888 ii, 536).[41] However, his two most valued and trusted maternal uncles, Mirza Sadiq Khan and Muhammad Rahim Khan, who had skilfully handled Maimana's relations with Sher 'Ali Khan, had long since died and his government was the poorer for it. Indeed, one observer claimed that the wali was "a man of no ability" who would not remain in power above five or six months.[42] In the end, however, Husain Khan was to prove more resilient and was to show that, despite the decline in his own power and the political status of Maimana, he still retained the courage which had sustained him during his first reign.

*Muhammad Ishaq Khan and the Maimana Succession, 1884*

Ishaq Khan did not give up Maimana easily and it was over a month before the Amir confirmed the appointment of Muhammad Husain Khan Ming. During these weeks of deliberation, the governor of Afghan Turkistan did everything in his power to secure control of this important principality, even sending a delegation of seventeen of the "most influential" persons in the Khanate to Kabul where they petitioned 'Abd al-Rahman Khan not to appoint Husain Khan Ming.[43] "Feuds and fights," they explained, existed between themselves and Husain Khan and, were he to be allowed to return to his homeland,

[39] He was in charge of supplying the Afghan Boundary Commission during survey operations in 1885/6 and later held the post of mirza to Muhammad Sharif Khan Ming. He was put to death by the brother of an Afghan officer who had been killed during the rebellion of 1891. A number of 'Abd al-Faiz's relatives held office in the Qaisar region during the reign of Husain Khan Ming. These included his younger brothers, Baba Jan Beg and 'Abd al-Hakim Beg; Elahi Bakhsh, *Report*, 1886 (who says, erroneously, that Baba Jan Beg was hakim of Qaisar); Maitland 1888, ii, 541.

[40] Elahi Bakhsh, *Report*, 1886.

[41] He was related by marriage to the wali. During the reign of Sher 'Ali Khan, he had been a refugee in Bukhara [1876-1880] whilst Husain Khan was a prisoner in Kabul. He probably returned to Afghanistan with 'Abd al-Rahman Khan in 1880.

Kakar 1979, 51 says that the qazi of Maimana between 1884 and 1889 was a certain Mullah Mustafa, who was rebuked by the Amir for punishing adulterers by whipping and not by stoning to death, though no action was taken by 'Abd al-Rahman Khan other than letting it be known he disapproved. He may have been the *qazi* dismissed by 'Abd al-Rahman Khan following the crushing of Ishaq Khan's rebellion (see chapter 10).

[42] *QNL*, 1 Aug. 1884; *TFJ*, Aug. 1884, SLEI:41, fols. 1263, 1203-4.

[43] *TFJ*, June 1884; *KNL*, 17 June 1884; *News from Maimana given by Amir Mohamed*, 5 July 1884, SLEI:41, fols. 23-7, 39-41, 948-9.

disturbances were bound to follow. However, whilst the Amir received these mingbashis kindly and assured them that he would appoint "a governor who shall be acceptable to them,"[44] 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, suspecting them to be partisans of Ishaq Khan, secretly ordered his advisers to make sure that no-one connected with the governor of Afghan Turkistan be appointed to any position of authority in the Khanate.[45]

In the first week of July 1884, the Amir officially informed Ishaq Khan and the Maimana delegates that, despite their objections, he had confirmed the appointment of Muhammad Husain Khan. The governor of Afghan Turkistan was ordered to remain in Maimana only long enough to ensure a smooth hand-over of power and to oversee the laying of the foundations of the new cantonments in the city.[46] In an attempt to offset the sardar's disappointment at not being given Maimana, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan ordered Parwana Khan to collect sumptuous presents, dresses of honour and cash for Ishaq Khan and the chiefs and officials who had distinguished themselves during the Maimana campaign.[47] This gesture, however, did little to appease Ishaq Khan, who was said to have been "bitterly disappointed"[48] and to have fallen into such "a state of great dejection"[49] that he had locked himself in his *zanana* and consoled himself amongst his wives.

The dispute over the future of Maimana placed a further strain on the already uneasy relations between the Amir and Ishaq Khan. In July 1884, the Herat news-writer warned Calcutta that:

> ... this affair of Maimanah will detach the Sardar from the Amir's cause ... relations between him and the Amir are so strained that the veriest trifle might snap them altogether.[50]

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[44] *TFJ*, June 1884; *KNL*, 17 June 1884; *KNL*, 24 June 1884, SLEI:412, fols. 281.

[45] *KNL*, 1 July 1884; *QNL*, 17 July 1884; *News from Maimana given by Amir Mohamed*, 5 July 1884.

[46] *News from Maimana given by Amir Mohamed*, 5 July 1884. In another snub to Ishaq Khan, the Amir ordered that the Maimana mail, which used to pass through Balkh, should in future be sent via Herat, *HNL*, 23 July 1884. The foundation of the Maimana cantonment was laid at the end of June. In the first week of July a courier arrived with, amongst other things, a portion of the sweetmeats distributed in Maimana at the occasion of the foundation laying, as a present for the Amir, *KNL*, 4 July 1884, SLEI:41, fol. 350.

[47] *PCD*, 14 Aug. 1884, SLEI:41, fol. 1268; *PCD*, 10 Nov. 1884, SLEI:42, fol. 855. Included in the gift was 3,000 rupees cash for Sultan Murad Beg of Qunduz as a "reward" for unspecified service, *PCD*, 14 Oct. 1884, SLEI:42, fol. 385.

[48] *News from Maimana given by Amir Mohamed*, 5 July 1884.

[49] *HNL*, 23 July 1884.

[50] *Ibid.*

The governor of Afghan Turkistan, however, managed to conceal his "chagrin," and consoled himself for the loss of Maimana's revenue by appropriating as much of Dilawar Khan Ming's family fortune as he could before returning to Afghan Turkistan via Sar-i Pul.[51] Later, in October, following the meeting between General Sir Peter Lumsden of the Afghan Boundary Commission and General Zeleonoi at Sarrakhs to discuss the issue of Afghanistan's north-west frontier, the Amir ordered Ishaq Khan to Kabul to discuss the border crisis, but he excused himself on the grounds of sickness, doubtless realising that, were he to undertake the journey, he faced certain imprisonment, if not execution (Kakar 1971, 145).[52]

Not unexpectedly, relations between Muhammad Husain Khan and Sardar Ishaq Khan were very poor. The wali, having received a promise from 'Abd al-Rahman Khan that he would be allowed to govern Maimana as long as the Amir ruled in Kabul (Maitland 1888, ii, 105-8),[53] exploited the divisions between Ishaq Khan and 'Abd al-Rahman Khan to the full. Whenever the opportunity presented itself, he showed his contempt for the governor of Afghan Turkistan and publicly declared that he could not care less what Ishaq Khan did or thought.[54] Ishaq Khan, in retaliation, refused to hand over certain military items and other property of the Mingid dynasty which had fallen into his hands. He also rejected Husain Khan's demand that 'Abd al-Baqi Mingbashi, who had held high office under Dilawar Khan, be handed over for punishment and had one of the wali's men so badly beaten that he nearly died.[55]

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[51] *News from Maimana given by Amir Mohamed*, 5 July 1884. Ishaq left Maimana on, or around, 19 July 1884, *PCD*, 23 Sept. 1884; *HNL*, 4 Sept. 1884. Ishaq Khan also deported many rebels and potential rebels from Maimana to Balkh and replaced them with people (Afghans?) from Takhtapul and Sar-i Pul, *PCD*, 10 Nov. 1884.

[52] *PCD*, 19 Dec. 1884, SLEI:43, fol. 72. *PCD*, 10 Nov. 1884 claims that Ishaq Khan even went as far as sending his family to the safety of Ab Bariq on the Amu Darya, which suggests that he was either expecting the Amir to attack him, or was already planning to rebel or flee.

[53] *News from Maimana given by Amir Mohamed*, 5 July 1884.

[54] *Ibid.*

[55] *Ibid.* Sometime in August, the Amir had ordered Herat to buy up the grain surplus in Maimana for the troops stationed at Bala Murghab and had sent 20,000 rupees to Herat to cover the cost of 1,000 kharwars of grain. Husain Khan MIng, however, was reported not to have "behaved at all well," informing the governor of Herat that the grain would cost twice this sum and that there was no carriage available. Although one cannot rule out the possibility that the wali was trying to extort as much money as he could for the grain, as we have seen above, prices of essentials may well have risen steeply in Maimana in the wake of the Afghan annexation and the massive tax increases imposed on the province, *HNL*, 4 Sept., 2 Oct. 1884. *PCD*, 14 Oct. 1884 says the 20,000 rupees were "cash for support of the new ruler of Maimana," but this sum is more likely to have been for the purchase of grain.

Whilst Muhammad Husain Khan re-established himself in his old seat of government, the deposed ruler of the Khanate, Dilawar Khan Ming, had been sent in chains to the Afghan capital for his fate to be decided. He reached Kabul on 1 August and a few days later held private talks with the Amir. Although the subject of these discussions is not known, they could not have gone well for Dilawar Khan, for 'Abd al-Rahman Khan had him imprisoned and other members of his family were ordered to the Afghan capital from Afghan Turkistan.[56] About a month later the conditions of the ex-Wali's confinement were made more harsh when he was transferred to the notorious Zakariya' Khana Sarai prison house,[57] where many hundreds of the people of Afghan Turkistan were incarcerated during the 'Turkistan Atrocities' of 1889-91 (Martin, 146, 302-3).[58] Dilawar Khan remained in this gaol, under armed guard, for a further two years until, in early November 1886, he was finally put to death, along with one of his sons, 'Abd al-Baqi Mingbashi and the amir of Kulab.[59] Earlier in the same year Muhammad Khan, ex-Beglarbegi of Sar-i Pul, had also been executed[60] as part of the Amir's systematic plan of eradicating any native leader of Afghan Turkistan who might, at some future point in time, unite the Uzbeks and "recover their ancient supremacy."[61]

*The Panjdeh Crisis and the Frontier Demarcation, 1884-1886*

The subjugation of Maimana, as far as Britain was concerned, put an end to an archaic anomaly which had been a destabilising influence in Central Asia. For too long the semi-independent status of the Khanate had undermined the British pursuit of a centralised, united Afghanistan. Since 1868, successive Viceroys had urged Kabul to take firm measures to bring the Mingid principality to heel in order to pre-empt any Russian claims that, since the principality had

[56] *HNL*, 10 June 1884; *KNL*, 1, 5 Aug. 1884, SLEI:41, fols. 579-81, 929, 933-4.

[57] *KNL*, 5 Sept. 1884, SLEI:41, fol. 1263.

[58] E.g. *KM*, 19 June 1889, SLEI:57, fols. 895-6.

[59] *KNL*, 5 Nov. 1886, SLEI:48, fol. 1178; *KNL*, 28 Dec. 1886; *KM*, 18 March 1887, SLEI:49, fols. 271, 1137. Dilawar Khan's execution may have been partly the result of the help that Yazdan Quli, his *sipah salar*, had given, and continued to give, the Russian military authorities in Ashkhabad and Merv.

[60] *KNL*, 12 Jan. 1886; *TFJ*, March 1886, SLEI:46, fols. 1224, 1422. *PCD*, 7 April 1887, SLEI:50, fols. 219, 245, says that the Amir appointed Muhammad Khan's son as governor of Sar-i Pul, but Ishaq Khan would not allow him to take up his appointment. Daulat Beg, the ex-amir of Andkhui remained a "pensioner" of the Afghan government at Mazar-i Sharif (C. E. Yate 1888, 346-7).

[61] *Remarks made by the Amir after his Departure from Peshawar*, 15-16 April 1885.

historically been affiliated to Bukhara, it was consequently within the Tsar's sphere of influence. Following the Gök Tepa massacre and the subjugation of the Turkman tribes, British fears about Russia's ambitions were, if anything, even more pronounced, an anxiety which the Duke of Argyll wryly summed up as "Mervousness." Hence when, on 14 February 1884, the Russian government officially announced, in contradiction of all previous assurances, that they had formally annexed the Merv oasis to their empire (Fraser-Tytler, 160), the need to demarcate Afghanistan's amorphous border between Persia and the Amu Darya, was placed at the top of both European powers' agendas. The Afghan conquest of Maimana, coming as it did only a matter of weeks after the Russian statement, was therefore not only a triumph for 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, but seen as a victory for the 'Buffer State' policy. Afghan sovereignty over Maimana had been re-established and central government troops, not an Uzbek militia, assumed the responsibility for border security. The presence of an Afghan Resident in the Khanate also reduced the risk of a pro-Russian rebellion in the region. Even so, the Boundary Commissioners expressed grave reservations about the ability of the Amir's troops to resist a determined assault by the Russian army.

Britain's primary concern following the annexation of Merv was to prevent the Russian annexation of Herat, which was deemed to be the gateway to India. Badghis, Maimana and Andkhui had a substantial Turkman population living within the ill-defined boundaries of Afghanistan, and the Russians took advantage of this situation to claim that all the Turkman tribes should come under their authority. The British, on the other hand, refused to accept a frontier based on ethnicity or tribal identity, preferring an arbitrary geographical line demarcated by a joint Commission. Russian demands would have required the Merv frontier to be drawn beyond the great Karakum desert, preferably as near to Herat as possible, and to include within it the Panjdeh oasis, Kushk, the Zu'l-Faqar Pass and other regions which the British regarded as Afghan territory. Unfortunately for Britain, they were at a disadvantage. Russian forces were already in Merv, a matter of a few days march from Badghis and Herat, whilst British troops were hundreds of miles away in India. The Tsar, therefore, was in a position to enforce his will, by right of conquest if necessary and, whilst their European rival made generalised statements about the need for some amicable agreement over the Afghan frontier, the Russians deliberately delayed the first meeting of the

boundary commission and left their commanders to act as they saw fit in the meanwhile (Dupree 1978, 421-2; Fraser-Tytler, 161-3).

During the summer and autumn of 1884, Russian officers sent surveying and intelligence-gathering parties up the Amu Darya, Murghab and Hari Rud. The occupation of Pul-i Khatun, the Zu'l-Faqar pass and a number of other settlements followed. By November 1884 Russian troops had come within twelve miles of the Afghan outpost at Aq Tepa (Fraser-Tytler, 163-4). The arrival of Sir Peter Lumsden, the British Commissioner, failed to prevent further incursions into Afghanistan, even though he had held preliminary discussions with General Zeleonoi at Sarrakhs in the middle of October (Fraser-Tytler, 163). In January 1885, a number of Russian officers, accompanied by an escort of sixty *sowars*, visited Andkhui, whilst further frontier violations in Maimana were also reported.[62] At around the same time there were a number of Turkman raids on Badghis, Andkhui and Maimana by tribes from the other side of the frontier (Peacocke, 95),[63] any one of which could provide the Russians with the excuse for 'hot pursuit'. Then there was the problem of the Turkman refugees who had fled to Afghanistan and the migration of disaffected Uzbek and Turkman families into Russian-controlled territory.[64] The movements of Yazdan Quli, Dilawar Khan's *sipah salar*, who had fled to Qarqi after the fall of Maimana and obtained employment as an adviser to the Russian military, were cause for further concern, for he was in contact with dissidents in Maimana who made no secret of their preferrence to exchange the Afghan yoke for Russian annexation.[65] In an attempt to prevent rumours circulating about the situation in Maimana and Badghis, the Amir placed severe restrictions on travel to and from Afghan Turkistan and ordered more troops to the area, a move which Ishaq Khan misinterpreted as an attempt to oust him from power.[66] Indeed, the Amir seems to have tried to persuade Ishaq Khan to take over the governorship of Herat, but merely succeeded in creating even

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[62] *KNL*, 16 Jan. 1885, SLEI:43, fol. 711; MVNL, 15 Jan. 1885, SLEI:44, fol. 51.

[63] *HNL*, 19 Oct. 1884, SLEI:42, fols. 917-8.

[64] *Ibid.*

[65] *HNL*, 10 June 1884; *MVCN*, 17 Feb., 24 March 1885, SLEI:44, fols. 261, 751-2; *Sher Ahmad Khan to Ridgeway*, 15 Sept. 1885, SLEI:45, fol. 1144; *HC*, 24 March 1885, SLEP:187, fols. 412-3; *TFJ*, Dec. 1885. One report based, apparently, on intelligence from the Boundary Commissioners, claimed that after the Panjdeh incident Husain Khan had sent a secret letter to Bukhara by hand of "Ashur Beg," agent of Shahzada 'Abd al-Malik of Bukhara, in which he placed himself at the disposal of the Russians "if they came to that country," *PCD*, 28 Nov. 1885. No other source substantiates this rumour.

[66] Cf. *PCD*, 19 Dec. 1884; *HNL*, 19 Oct. 1884; *PCD*, 20 Feb. 1885, SLEI:44, fol. 266.

greater tension between himself and his cousin (Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 266).[67]

In the spring of 1885, the situation on the Badghis border took a turn for the worse when Colonel Alikhanoff wrote a quite undiplomatic letter to General Ghaus al-Din at Bala Murghab accusing him of being a liar and a coward. No Afghan worth his salt would sit back and take such abuse and Ghaus al-Din, a soldier of considerable ability himself, returned the insults in kind, declaring that the Russians were thieves, stealing territory which rightfully belonged to Afghanistan (Dupree 1978, 422; Fraser-Tytler, 164). As tempers became more and more frayed, Britain finally tried to clarify its position on Russian encroachments into Badghis. On 14 March, the Tsar's officials were informed that an attack on Panjdeh,[68] which lay on the Murghab river to the north of Marichaq, would lead to Britain breaking off negotiations with Russia which, in turn, could lead to serious, though unspecified, consequences. So vague was this statement that a week later Her Majesty's Government was forced to make a further declaration, which this time was quite unequivocal. Any Russian attack on Herat would be regarded as a declaration of war.

The British government's failure to be more lucid about the position of Panjdeh, gave rise to the belief that "England has agreed to fight only for Herat" and that she was prepared to let the Russians help themselves to the oasis. A few days after the second statement had been delivered in St. Petersburg, the British Boundary Commissioners in Afghanistan reported that the Russians "meant to take Panjdeh even if opposed by the Afghans."[69] On 30 March 1885, a large force advanced with hostile intent against the Afghan outpost at Pul-i Kheshti, forcing its commander to send his troops across the river to oppose the on-coming enemy. A bloody battle ensued, but the Amir's men, supported by Yalangtush Khan's Jamshidis, were outnumbered

[67] *PCD*, 19 Dec. 1884, 20 Feb. 1885; *KNL*, 23 Jan. 1885, SLEI:45, fol. 567.

[68] Now known as Takhta Bazar. For a detailed account of the Panjdeh oasis, see Lumsden's lecture, read in his absence in Central Asia to the Royal Geographical Society, a few months after the Panjdeh crisis. Amongst other things, he claimed that the trade in Panjdeh was "carried on entirely by Jews, of which some twenty families settled there; they are offshoots from the Jewish colony at Herat..... They are known as Kasvini Jews, having been originally deported by Nadir Shah from Kasvin to Meshed.... They have in their hands most of the trade with Balkh, Bokhara, Khiva and Merv. When the slave trade prospered they were the agents through whom all transactions for ransoms used to be effected and they still continue to hold the property of many members of the tribes in pledge" (Lumsden, 567). Cf. *HNL*, 9 July 1884, SLEI:41, fols. 945-7.

[69] "Telegram, 28 March 1885," in, *Telegraphic Communications from the Afghan Boundary Commission 1884-86*, 6 vols., PSDL:L/P&S/20/A/MEMO3/AH, henceforth, *ABC, Telegrams*.

and, having received no support from the local Turkmans, retreated, with great loss, to Marichaq (Dupree 1978, 422-3; Fraser-Tytler, 164-5; Maitland 1891, 76).

The occupation of Panjdeh brought Britain and Russia to the brink of war. Rumours circulated that a further advance on Maimana was planned as a precursor to an assault on Herat itself.[70] However, whilst the more jingoistic newspapers in both countries played on nationalistic and imperialistic aspirations (Dupree 1978, 423; Fraser-Tytler, 165), there was a flurry of diplomatic activity behind the scenes for, as a British diplomat of a later generation put it, "no one wanted to go to war over the ownership of the Panjdeh oasis" (Fraser-Tytler, 165).[71] Thus, ironically, the occupation of Panjdeh provided the necessary fillip for the settlement of the boundary issue. The Russians realised they could push their rivals no further and the British, for their part, were obliged to take a strong stance or risk seeing their Central Asian policy fall apart before their eyes. In September 1885 a protocol was signed, under which Russia agreed to give up control of the Zu'l-Faqar Pass in exchange for retaining Panjdeh, and to undertake, forthwith, a joint demarcation of the north-west boundary of Afghanistan from the Hari Rud to 'Khwaja Saleh' on the Amu Darya (Fraser-Tytler, 166).[72]

At the time of the Panjdeh crisis, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan was out of the country, meeting with British officials in Rawalpindi to discuss the issue of his northern borders, but although the Amir, when informed of the loss of the outpost, complained that his allies had not taken a strong enough line with the Russians, his own priorities towards this frontier were found to be quite different from those of the British. The Amir insisted that the Zu'l-Faqar Pass, Gulran and Marichaq were vital to Afghanistan's security, but "he showed no anxiety to retain Panjdeh"[73] and was far more worried about the Russian threat to Balkh than to Herat:

[70] "Telegram, 4 April 1885", *ABC, Telegrams*; *MA*, 18 April 1885, SLEP:187, fol. 533; *Aminullah Khan and Faiz Mohamed Khan to Governor of Herat*, 23 May 1885, SLEI:44, fol. 1152.

[71] This comment, however, is not quite true. A number of Russian generals were strongly in favour of an advance on India and were prepared to risk war with Britain over Panjdeh or Herat. Indeed, General Kuropatkin even drew up a plan of campaign for the conquest of Badakhshan, Balkh, Maimana and Herat which was to commence in the winter of 1886, *Translation of General Kuropatkin's Plan for a Russian Advance on India approved by H.Q., St. Petersburg*, 1886, SLEP:188, fols. 189-507.

[72] Khwaja Saleh, which Burnes claimed was the ferry port where he crossed the Amu Darya, proved not to exist as a single settlement.

[73] *Memorandum on the Visit of the Amir of Afghanistan to India*, n.d. March 1885, SLEI:44, fols. 175-81.

> Andkhui formed an integral part of his dominions and ... he could never, of his own free will, admit any question as to its remaining within the boundaries of Afghanistan. If the Russians should claim possession of the place, their claim ought to be resisted to the uttermost, as a Russian occupation of Andkhui would give them a footing in Afghan Turkistan beyond the desert which formed the proper frontier. It would be almost equivalent to a Russian occupation of Balkh itself.[74]

Ishaq Khan, the Amir believed, was colluding with the Russians and he even suggested to 'Abd al-Malik, the rebellious son of Muzaffar Khan Manghit whom 'Abd al-Rahman Khan met during his stay in India, that the *shahzada* accept the governorship of Afghan Turkistan as a sop to Uzbek nationalist feeling. The Manghit prince could then incite the people of Bukhara to revolt and revive the Chingizid kingdom, howbeit under Afghan tutelage.[75] Though nothing came of this incredible plan, the Amir showed that even at this late date, the Muhammadzais still held to the dream, first articulated by Dost Muhammad Khan, that their dominions would one day extend across the Oxus and embrace Bukhara and Samarkand.

The conflicting priorities between the Amir and his European ally showed in 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's reluctance to allow British engineers to organise Herat's defences. Senior British officials of the Afghan Boundary Commission were prevented from entering the capital of western Afghanistan until 1 November 1884, seven months after the 'Panjdeh Incident'.[76] The Amir's apparent indifference to the fate of Herat, was in marked contrast to the policy being pursued, ostensibly on his behalf, by the British government and had Russia chosen to call the British bluff, there would have been little that London could have done about it, at least in the short term (Dupree 1978, 423; Fraser-Tytler, 166-7).[77]

The Amir was not the only person who did not see eye-to-eye with official British policy. The Panjdeh crisis also gave rise to a fierce, internal argument within the administration about the best course of

[74] *Ibid.*

[75] *Remarks made by Amir*, 15-16 April 1885; see also *Statement of Haji Muhammad Hossain, News-writer at Panjdeh*, 16 March 1885, SLEI:44, fols. 315h-316. This belief was shared by Russian observers, such as General Soboleff who claimed that, because the Afghans were regarded "as aliens and are hated by the Uzbeks," they would eventually break away from Afghanistan, elect their own Khan and come under Bukharan authority (Soboleff, 11-18).

[76] *Ridgeway to Durand*, 22 Nov. 1885, SLEI:46, fols. 99-100.

[77] British officials recognised that the "good, natural frontier" of Afghanistan lay to the north of Panjdeh. The Russian annexation of the oasis, however, scuppered any hope that the border in the area was to be either 'natural' or 'good,' *Government of India to Earl of Kimberley*, 11 March 1884, SLEI:39, fols. 1137-42.

action. Sir Peter Lumsden, head of the Boundary Commission in Afghanistan, expressed his disgust at his government's dithering so forcibly that he was recalled and replaced by Colonel West Ridgeway, thus delaying the work of the surveyors even more.

The new head of the Commission quickly concluded that it would not be possible to defend Bala Murghab or Badghis against a determined Russian advance, arguing instead for a British occupation of Herat and "the depopulation and devastation of all the country between Panjdeh and the Paropamisus, a Russian advance or ... occupation of the country will then be impossible."[78] Fortunately, this scorched earth policy was never implemented, though tragically British officers persuaded the Amir to sanction the demolition of Gauhar Shad's *musalla* north of Herat, to provide a better field of fire in the event of a Russian attack.[79] The demarcation, however, went ahead, but even after the final agreement had been signed on 26 January 1888, Commissioners were openly expressing their doubts about chances that the frontier would remain, for it "was only an arbitrary line based on the circumstances of the moment rather than on any permanent and natural basis" (C. E. Yate 1888, 178).

There was, however, a much more fundamental argument about British Central Asian policy which raged behind closed doors throughout the period of the Panjdeh crisis and the boundary demarcation. This was no mere discussion about the long-term viability of Afghanistan's north-western border, but a debate which questioned the prevailing assumptions about the nature of Afghanistan which had been the corner-stone of Britain's Central Asian policy for over half a century.

One of the most powerful critics of the 'Buffer State' policy was no less a person than General Sir Frederick Roberts of Qandahar fame.[80] In May 1885, a few weeks after the fall of Panjdeh, he circulated a secret memorandum which began as a military analysis of how

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[78] West Ridgeway, *Panjdeh, the Military Situation*, 16 March 1885; *Diary of Events at Panjdeh*, March 1885, SLEI:44, fols. 315i-316, 313-315e.

[79] This included the *musalla* of Gauharshad and the *madrasa* of Sultan Husain Baiqara. For a comprehensive bibliography covering the ancient monuments of Herat and the destruction of the musalla complex, see Ball i, 123-5.

[80] See the scathing criticism by Sir Henry Marion Durand of Britian's Herat and Oxus policy quoted at chapter head (n. 1). Gregorian says of him that he was "one of the few" British officials who disagreed with the prevailing doctrine, but the indications (e.g. from Robert's comments and internal memoranda mentioned in this and subsequent chapters) are that there were quite a number of senior members of the administration who had grave doubts about British policy.

best to pursue a campaign against Russia in the event of war, but concluded with a scathing criticism of the belief that Afghanistan could ever be forged into a strong 'United Kingdom' with its northern border on the Oxus. Roberts, with his customary military bluntness, exposed the cracks which Britain had sought to paper over since the days of Alexander Burnes, and which Rawlinson, in an earlier generation, had tried to patch up by the simple expedient of changing a few names on the map and arbitrarily moving the frontier line a hundred miles north.

> A glance at the map shows us that Kabul is divided from Afghan-Turkistan by the Hindu Kush and other lofty ranges..... Although the inhabitants on both sides of these mountains are known by the generic name of Afghans, there is a very considerable difference between those dwelling respectively on the northern and southern sides. The true Afghan is chiefly to be found on the south of the Hindu Kush, whereas the population on the northern slopes ... is composed of Uzbegs, Parsiwans, Kuzilbashes, Tajiks, Eimaks, Hazaras and Kafirs. Some of these have no affinity whatsoever with the Afghans, while others, though resembling them .... are rejected by them as brethren and assigned a different origin. The Uzbegs of Afghan-Turkistan, for instance, numbering about 300,000, are more nearly allied to the tribes north of the Oxus than to those south of the Hindu-Kush. The Badakhshies (55,000) are believed to be of Caucasian origin, as are the Tajiks (500,000) who are scattered all over Afghanistan; both these races speak Persian, as do the Eimaks (250,000) and the Hazaras (150,000), the two latter, however, being apparently of Tatar origin.... Every tribe in Afghanistan has its own clannish feelings and prejudices and every Afghan, as soon as he is old enough to bear arms, attaches himself to some Chief. These Chiefs usually reside amongst their tribes in fortified villages; they will, as a rule, sell their services to the highest bidder, without feeling any compunction or incurring the least disgrace.... With so many heterogeneous elements, it is not to be wondered at that there is no real cohesion throughout Afghanistan. Indeed, as Sir Charles MacGregor truly remarks: "It may be said in Afghanistan there are as many sovereigns as Sirdars..... There is no unity, nothing is permanent; everything depends on the pleasure or caprice of a number of despots always at variance with each other."[81]

British policy, Roberts argued, deliberately swept these stark facts under the carpet. Consequently, the Panjdeh crisis was largely "of our own making." Russia had marched on inexorably to the Oxus, whilst Britain had "implicitly accepted her assurances that she had no designs" on Afghanistan:

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[81] General Sir Frederick Roberts, *Memorandum*, 22 May 1885, SLEI:64, fol. 30 (p. 14).

> We have buoyed ourselves up with the hope that Afghanistan would become a strong United Kingdom, capable of acting as a buffer on our North-West Frontier and also of resisting Russia should it so happen that the boundaries of the two nations became coterminous. In consequence of these illusions, we have undertaken responsibilities, the fulfilment of which will involve us in serious complications. We have, in fact, been living in a fool's paradise and we now find ourselves face to face with a condition from which it will be difficult to extricate ourselves without a loss of dignity and prestige.[82]

Afghanistan could never be a 'United Kingdom' in the way that Britain was and to try and forge a sense of national identity from so many disparate ethnic, religious and linguistic groups, was both a dangerous, and unattainable, illusion.

Not only so, but Roberts argued that Britain's support for 'Abd al-Rahman Khan was profoundly misplaced. Firstly, "were it not for the money and arms which he gets from us, his position would be untenable" and he would soon fall. Despite the subsidy and the supply of modern weapons, it was a "fallacy" to believe that the Afghan army was sufficiently well trained or equipped to offer anything more than token resistance to a full-scale Russian invasion of Balkh or Herat. Indeed, Afghan Turkistan was likely to rebel anyway, which could split Afghanistan in two, with the north placing itself under Russian protection. Continued British support for the Amir also raised an important ethical issue. 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's reign was "at best, a reign of terror," governing "by fear alone in a kingdom divided against itself." The nature of the Amir's style of government, far from securing peace, security and stability in the region, was a prescription for fragmentation and perpetual civil strife. When he finally passed away, there was every prospect that there would be a protracted and bloody civil war similar to that which followed the death of Dost Muhammad Khan. The Amir's tyrannical style of government would be certain to reflect badly on Britain and "make the Afghans feel that we are strengthening their Ruler's power of oppression, while at the same time it furnishes a text on which the fanatical and disaffected can preach against us."[83] Finally, Roberts had been told in confidence by the royal physicians that 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, far from being afflicted by the occasional attack of 'gout', as was generally believed, was suffering from an acute and degenerating renal condition which could carry him off any day.[84]

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[82] *Ibid*, 16.

[83] *Ibid*, 15, 17.

[84] *Ibid*, 15; Surgeon-Major Roe, *Memorandum on the State of Health of H. H. Amir of*

Having driven a coach and horses through assumptions which had been sacrosanct for decades, Roberts urged the dismemberment of Afghanistan into smaller states, with the present Amir reigning from Kabul over the southern, predominantly Pushtun, population. The untenable Oxus frontier must be abandoned and the border of Afghanistan should be drawn at the Hindu Kush. Qandahar, and "certain strategic points in its vicinity," and not Herat, would become the pivot on which the defence of India depended, though Britain should retain its paramount influence at the Afghan court in Kabul. The Tsar should be informed unequivocally where the "line beyond which we are determined that Russia shall not pass" was to be drawn, thus removing any doubt as to when, and over what, Britain would go to war.[85]

The revolutionary and uncomfortable opinions of General Roberts failed to move his superiors, who dared not risk making such a radical change in Central Asian policy with the threat of war hovering over the region. Instead, Britain indirectly reaffirmed its commitment to the 'United Kingdom' of Afghanistan by sending an emergency delivery of five thousand Martin-Henry rifles to the Amir for the troops stationed in Herat and Badghis[86] and conferred on him the Order of the Star of India.[87] Public pronouncements and actions regarding Russian aggression against Herat, further confirmed and consolidated the 'Classical' view on the Oxus frontier and hitched British policy irredeemably to 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's juggernaut.

Meanwhile, the population of Maimana and Badghis tried to come to terms with the problems posed by the occupation of Panjdeh and the seemingly inexorable advance of the Russian frontier into their country. Following the Afghan army's evacuation of the oasis, a large number of tribesmen from around Marichaq and Bala Murghab, fearing the arrival of Russian troops, abandoned their houses and sought safety in Maimana, Herat or Qal'a-yi Nau.[88] So great was the exodus that General Ghaus al-Din was forced to send some of his forces back to Herat, for the refugees had taken all their stock and grain with them and he was unable to find sufficient provisions for the soldiers or their

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*Afghanistan*, March 1885, SLEI:44, fols. 190-1.

[85] *Ibid*, 15-18.

[86] *Viceroy to Amir*, 17 March 1885, SLEI:44, fols. 35-6.

[87] *MA*, 15 Aug. 1885, SLEP:187, fols. 1057-8. Andkhui and Maimana were ordered to illuminate the towns for three days and nights and to fire volleys to make it known that "the most friendly relations exist" between Afghanistan and Britain.

[88] *TFJ*, May 1885, SLEI:44, fol. 657.

horses.[89] This internal refugee problem was exacerbated by the flight of many Turkmans from Panjdeh who crossed the Russian lines to seek asylum in Afghanistan (C. E. Yate 1888, 187-9).[90] To add to the prevailing atmosphere of panic in the region, some of the soldiers who had fought at Panjdeh deserted and fled to Maimana, where they spread reports that the Russian army was marching on the principality, until they were arrested and sent under escort to Herat.[91]

The Afghan reverse at Panjdeh and the rumours of a Russian advance into Badghis and Maimana led to public displays of discontent as the population demonstrated their "bitter feelings ... against the Afghans"[92] and the "cruelty and oppression" of Auliya Khan,[93] by breaking out into revolt. Preferring, as one news-writer put it, "Russian despotism to Afghan rule,"[94] Muhammad Husain Khan Ming was reliably reported to have sent secret agents to Panjdeh to encourage the Russians to come to their rescue (Amir Khan & Shahzada Taimus, 1885, 241; Maitland 1888, ii, 105-8).[95] Auliya Khan's response was to have a number of the "chiefs of Maimana" and their families arrested and sent to Balkh.[96] By July the situation was so far out of hand that General Ghaus al-Din Khan was obliged to send troops from Bala

[89] *Proclamation from Amir to Khans and Sowars at Herat*, 22 April 1885, SLEI:44, fols. 691-2.

[90] *PCD*, 31 May 1885, SLEI:44, fol. 858; *Mirza Yakub Ali*, Chahrshambe, 5 Feb. 1886, SLEI:46, fol. 1539; *TFJ*, May 1886, SLEI:47, fol. 328; *MA*, 15 May 1886, SLEP:188, fols. 461-74.

[91] *HNL*, 22 April 1885, SLEI:44, fols. 763-5.

[92] *Panjdeh Correspondent*, 5 July 1885; *HC*, 24 March 1885. *HNL*, 24 June 1885; *BMNL*, 22 June 1885, SLEI:44, fols. 1350-1, 1354-5.

[93] *HN*, 4 Aug. 1885, SLEP:187, fols. 1034-40.

[94] *Ibid.* Yet, when the Afghan Boundary Commission published its official survey report, it presented Afghan rule in Balkh as "good and, as judged by an Asiatic standard, .... by no means oppressive. Order is well maintained" (*Gazetteer* (1895) ii, vi). It quoted Maitland's assertion that "in 1886 we observed no signs of oppression, or markedly unjust dealings on the part of the Afghan rulers towards the subject races. The administration was decidedly good for an Asiatic state..... In Turkistan both Uzbaks and Turkomans allowed they had no serious cause of complaint, though they naturally feel their inferior position" (*Gazetteer* (1895) ii, vii). Maitland would have read the reports quoted above but deliberately chose to ignore these politically uncomfortable facts.

[95] *HNL*, 30 June 1885; *PCD*, 28 Sept. 1885, SLEI:45, fols. 507, 1156; *SC*, 4 Oct. 1885, SLEP:187, fols. 1295-7; *BMNL*, 22 June 1885; Mir Allah Bakhsh, *Memorandum*, 1886; *TFJ*, Dec. 1885. *KNL*, 10 Nov. 1885, SLEI:46, fol. 133 reported that the Amir stated that there was "no evidence" to support these claims. However, he did suggest that relatives of Dilawar Khan Ming might be with the Russians. We know that Yazdan Quli, Dilawar Khan's *sipah salar*, was acting as an adviser to the Russian military and their movements may have led to reports that officials from Maimana were in Panjdeh, but there is sufficient evidence, from a variety of sources, to suggest that Husain Khan Ming did make secret approaches to the Russians.

[96] *PCD*, 16 June 1885, SLEI:44, fol. 1065, though it is more likely that they were sent to Herat than to Ishaq Khan.

Murghab to put down the disturbances and extra men and guns were drafted in from Afghan Turkistan and other parts of Afghanistan.[97] The Amir wrote a letter of "exhortation, advice and menace" to the wali and elders of Maimana, threatening the use of "more stringent measures" if they did not submit to Afghan rule and "withdraw the hand of tyranny."[98] Auliya Khan, the Afghan resident, was recalled and Sardar 'Aziz Khan b. Sardar Shams al-Din Khan appointed instead to try and control the turbulent frontier province.[99]

At about the same time, the native amir of Darzab, A'zam Beg, was accused of unspecified "misconduct,"[100] which was probably linked to the Panjdeh crisis and the uprising in Maimana, and deposed by force. His brother, however, escaped Ishaq Khan's clutches and made his way to Russian territory, from whence he returned a short while later and laid siege to the district capital.[101] Afghan troops from Maimana and Sar-i Pul were sent to relieve the Afghan garrison in Darzab and finally succeeded in defeating the rebels (Amir Khan & Shahzada Taimus 1885, 244). There was trouble, too, amongst the Firozkohis of Chaharsada, Bandar and Bala Murghab (*Gazetteer* (1895) ii, 140).[102] To add to the misery of the ordinary people, Ishaq Khan summoned all the chiefs of Afghan Turkistan to an emergency security meeting and imposed a further "contribution" on them to pay for additional tribal levies and the costs of the anticipated confrontation with Russia.[103]

The occupation of Panjdeh dealt a further, severe blow to the already crippled economies of Maimana, Andkhui and Badghis.[104] Maimana and Bala Murghab, in particular, had always had very close

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[97] *HNL*, 8, 26 June 1886, SLEI:47, fols. 989, 1207; *Deriaghez Agent*, 27 Sept. 1885, SLEP:187, fols. 1279-82 which says the governor (presumably Husain Khan King) fled, though this is probably a reference to the brother of the deposed hakim of Darzab.

[98] *Amir to Foreign Secretary*, 10 Sept. 1885, SLEI:45, fols. 1139-40.

[99] *HNL*, 8 June 1886. Auliya Khan seems to have brought to Kabul a delegation of elders from Maimana. At the end of June they waited on the Amir and claimed to have brought 15,000 rupees "to pay the state debt." The Amir, however, said that they had only brought 15,000 tangas (5,000 rupees). The son of Husain Khan Ming was present at the audience but he, and all of the wali's family, with the exception of one wife, were obliged to live in Kabul, on an allowance of 15,000 rupees *per annum*, *KNL*, 22 June 1886, SLEI:47, fol. 879; *PCD*, 26 Aug. 1886, SLEI:48, fol. 74.

[100] He seems to have been replaced by an Afghan, Fath Muhammad Popalzai (*Gazetteer* (1907) ii, 285).

[101] *Deriaghez Agent*, 27 Sept. 1885 which is probably referring to the problems in Darzab rather than Maimana.

[102] "Telegram," 13 June 1885, in *ABC, Telegrams*.

[103] *PCD*, 31 May 1885.

[104] *TFJ*, July 1885, SLEI:45, fol. 76.

economic and political ties with Panjdeh and Yalatan and a considerable amount of Maimana's huge grain surplus had traditionally been exported to the Turkmans of the area.[105] Following the Russian occupation of these areas, the border was sealed, all trade ceased and great distress resulted on both sides of the border (C. E. Yate 1888, 335-7).[106] Their main export market closed, the merchants of Maimana sought a new market at Qarshi[107] from whence the grain was resold to Samarkand and Bukhara. However, the Afghan authorities began to buy up wheat in large quantities to supply a deficit in the south and later, following the arrival of Pushtun colonists in Badghis in 1886, all surplus grain was diverted to provide for their cattle and sheep, since they had no other means of feeding their flocks. If this were not enough, between 1885 and 1887 Afghan Turkistan was hit by a double, natural disaster. For three years in succession the spring rains failed and plagues of locusts decimated the meagre crops the people had managed to grow.[108] Afghan ignorance of the traditional trade networks of the local economies, combined with these natural catastrophes, led to the deaths of many thousands of people, as well as sheep and cattle, from starvation, and further fuelled the rising tide of resentment against the Amir's administration (Tapper 1973, 670).[109]

Another consequence of the loss of Panjdeh was the disruption of the centuries-old pattern of grazing and agriculture. The difficulties began even before the Boundary Commissioners started their work, for the words of the London Protocol of 10 September 1885, which

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[105] *Panjdeh Correspondent*, 5 July 1885; see also, *TFJ*, July 1885. The *Gazetteer* gives the annual supplies of wheat and barley in Afghan Turkistan (excluding Qunduz) as 242,180 maunds, of which 130,110 maunds were wheat and 112,070 maunds, barley. With the exception of the Hazhda Nahr district (Balkh, Aqcha and Mazar-i Sharif) which was irrigated by the extensive canal network, Maimana produced by far the greatest amount of grain in Lesser Turkistan: 53,100 maunds (wheat, 32,700 maunds; barley, 20,400 maunds), or over 21% of the total production of the region and more than 25% of the wheat; and this was after Gurziwan, the upper Shirin Tagab and the regions bordering Murghab, had been removed from Maimana's control (*Gazetteer* (1907) ii, x, table II).

[106] Kakar, 1979, 210, however, says that Maimana continued to supply grain to Panjdeh, but see *Mirza Yakub Ali*, 5 Feb. 1886; *Aslam Khan to Ridgeway*, 14 Aug. 1885, SLEI:45, fol. 456; *Memorandum by Mr. Merk on a Meeting with the Russian Governor of Panjdeh*, 2 Oct. 1886, SLEI:49, fols. 49-50. The Amir hoped to use the economic distress this prohibition caused to his own advantage, *KNL*, 15 Sept. 1885, SLEI:45, fol. 897.

[107] *PCD*, 7 Jan. 1886, SLEI:46, fol. 461. During the autumn of 1885 a cholera epidemic swept through Qarshi in which some 12,000 people were said to have died, *Said Abdul Hakim, Newswriter at Andkhuy*, 4 Oct. 1885, SLEI:45, fols. 1857-8.

[108] *HNL*, 5, 9 May 1887, SLEI:50, fols. 882-3; *KNL*, 6 Dec. 1887, SLEI:52, fol. 83.

[109] *PCD*, 7 Jan. 1886; *Said Abdul Hakim, Andkhuy*, 4 Oct. 1885.

roughly outlined the course of the frontier, were found to be "misleading." In some cases, places referred to in the agreement were later found to be non-existent, the most glaring error being the location of Khwaja Saleh on the Amu Darya. Based on Burnes' dubious and inaccurate geographical observations, it was discovered that several villages, a number of river crossings, a ferry port and a border post were all called by this name, none of which were in the particular area specified by Burnes (Dupree 1978, 423-4; C. E. Yate 1888, 341-2). Indeed, the further north the boundary went, the more inaccurate the Protocol was proved to be. Each new error was seized upon by the Russian Commissioners as an excuse for acquiring even more territory in Badghis and Maimana (C. E. Yate 1888, 342-4).[110] Turkman raids in the area were also used to lay claim to further slices of land and, when everything else failed, the Russians actually attacked Afghan positions around Qara Tepa and Islim (C. E. Yate 1888, 23-4).

British ignorance about the area was particularly noticeable when it came to the demarcation of the Badghis frontier. The Commissioners quickly discovered that the cultivation of Panjdeh and Marichaq were so inextricably intertwined that it was almost impossible to define where Russia's territory began and Afghanistan's ended (C. E. Yate 1888, 335). Many of the irrigation ditches on which the Panjdeh oasis relied, drew their waters from a river which lay on the Afghan side of the border and the crops which had been planted before the Panjdeh occupation dried up from lack of irrigation when the summer heat came. A similar problem occurred in the Kashan valley where the canal heads were found to be eight miles inside Afghanistan (C. E. Yate 1888, 334-5). In the western half of the Marichaq valley, on the left bank of the Murghab, there were disputes over the crops themselves. After the boundary had been demarcated, the Russians pointed out that the inhabitants of Khwaja 'Ali, a small settlement in the Panjdeh oasis, had earlier sown a lot of wheat on land subsequently apportioned to Afghanistan (C. E. Yate 1888, 335). In Maimana, the Russians tried to exploit the inaccuracy of the protocol to lay claim to the Shirin Tagab district north of Maimana, which would have effectively meant the loss to Afghanistan of part, if not all, of Maimana and Andkhui. Eventually, the most glaring anomalies and injustices were ironed out by the simple expedient of conceding territory in one part of the border for more land in other areas (C. E. Yate 1888,

[110] See also, *HNL*, 11 June 1886, SLEI:47, fols. 362-3.

342-3), the final frontier, nearly 400 miles (630 kilometres) in length, being agreed by all parties at Kham-i Ab on 16 January 1888.

Although the Russians, British and Afghans expressed varying degrees of satisfaction about the frontier, the local people had to cope with the new arrangements as best they could. For them, the European concept of an international border as a 'thin black line', which to step over meant imprisonment or death for them and a flurry of anxious diplomatic activity in London, St. Petersburg, Calcutta and Kabul, was completely alien to their world view and went against the habits and customs of millenia. Regular 'violations' of the frontier by shepherds and traders, who could not understand what all the fuss was about, were to cause Britain, in particular, many an anxious moment in the years to come. Even today, the people of Maimana and Badghis have never really come to terms with the European fetish for an inflexible, inviolable frontier which, in many cases, has resulted in members of the same extended family being forced to live cut off from each other in different countries.[111]

Local bewilderment at the strange carryings-on of the foreigners on the Badghis frontier is aptly summed up by the wry remark of one Turkman from Panjdeh who, when told by a British officer that "you have gone over to the Russians and now you must stay with them," remarked indignantly, "Not a bit. We have not gone over to the Russians, it is the Russians who have come over to us" (C. E. Yate 1888, 106).

### *Bala Murghab and the end of Aimaq Colonisation, 1884-1886*

The Russian occupation of Panjdeh marked the end of the Amir's experiment with the Aimaq colonisation of Badghis, for 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, in an attempt to find a scapegoat for the loss of the oasis and the defeat of government troops, put the blame on the Jamshidis and Firozkohis whom he had encouraged to settle around Bala Murghab. In fact, Yalangtush Khan and his one hundred and fifty men who had taken part in the defence of Pul-i Kheshti, had acted with exemplary courage throughout the confrontation. Not only had

[111] When I was discussing the frontier with a Turkman refugee from Andkhui in 1988, he casually remarked that he regularly used to graze his flocks in Russian territory. During the Russian occupation [1979-1991] Turkman *mujahidin* made several incursions into Turkmenistan, attacking Russian frontier forts; indeed, one group even had a video of the Russian border posts! When I was in Maimana (1977/8) I was told that there was regular cross-border contact with settlements in Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, both officially and clandestinely.

two Jamshidi *sowar*s had a number of the Aimaq horses shot from under their riders, Yalangtush Khan himself had narrowly escaped death, or serious injury, when a Russian bullet passed through his coat. Indeed, after the Afghan troops were eventually forced to retreat, Yalangtush Khan and his men stayed behind "for several hours" so they could protect the British officers who were in the area until they were compelled to quit "by force of circumstances" (Maitland 1891, 76). During these hours in the British camp at Panjdeh, General Alikhanoff, the Russian commander, sent several messages to Yalangtush Khan urging him to defect, but the Aimaq chief refused to even meet with the Russians lest the Amir were to later accuse him of intriguing with the enemy. Once the order to retire from Panjdeh had been given, Yalangtush Khan picketed his horsemen on the neighbouring hills to cover the flanks of the retreating officers "until they were clear of the Turkoman settlements." Only when he was certain that neither the Sariqs nor the Russians were going to launch a surprise attack did he order his men back to Bala Murghab, arriving there the morning after the battle (Maitland 76-7).

Once in Bala Murghab, Yalangtush Khan, instead of taking a well-deserved rest, busied himself collecting supplies for the fugitives and refugees who were already beginning to trickle into the town. On the night of 1 April, the Jamshidi amir received another, verbal message from General Alikhanoff which implied that if he were to support the Russians he would be made governor of Badghis and urged him to think again, since he owed no loyalty to the Afghans who had so brutally murdered his father, Khan Agha. Similar messages were sent to the Sunni Hazaras of Qal'a-yi Nau but Yalangtush Khan, who had always been a great partisan of the British, exerted his diplomatic skills and persuaded the other Aimaq chief not to rebel even though tribal opinion was opposed to continued Afghan domination (Maitland 1891, 76-7). Commenting on the bravery of the Jamshidis at Panjdeh and Yalangtush Khan's "loyalty and good faith" to both Afghanistan and Britain, Major Maitland later wrote that the Aimaq leader merited "every praise, and ... great reward" (Maitland 1891, 76). Instead, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan was to show his gratitude by having the Jamshidi chief executed and his tribe broken up and dispersed.

In an attempt to calm the Aimaq clans, Yalangtush Khan decided to visit his old capital of Kushk and the Sunni Hazara chief at Qal'a-i Nau, leaving orders for his tribe to remove to the mountains of the Tir Band-i Turkistan until the crisis was resolved. Having gathered

together the other Aimaq chiefs Yalangtush Khan went to Herat, arriving on 17 April 1885 and immediately sought an interview with the British Commissioners who were camped at Tirpul, in order to reassure them of his continued support for the Amir. However, the Afghan authorities in Herat, hearing of the Aimaqs' plans, ordered the Aimaq chiefs back to Herat forthwith. As with Husain Khan Ming of Maimana, Afghan officials, probably on direct order from Kabul, discouraged any local amirs from holding private conversations with the British, fearing that they would reveal the depth of discontent with the Amir's government. Another reason for official opposition to this meeting was that Yalangtush Khan, in gratitude for British support against Aiyub Khan during the Second Anglo-Afghan War, had done everything within his power to facilitate the work of the Boundary Commission. Indeed, the authorities in Herat deemed he had been far "too helpful" for comfort (Maitland 1891, 76-7).[112]

As soon as Yalangtush Khan re-entered Herat, he and his fellow-elders were arrested and charged with conspiring with Russia. Yalangtush was deposed as governor of Bala Murghab and his "weak and unpopular" (Maitland 1891, 77) eldest brother, Haidar Quli Khan, placed in charge of the tribe in his stead. When news of these arrests reached Bala Murghab, the elders and chief men of the Aimaq tribes in the area immediately opened clandestine correspondence with the Russians and refused to obey the Afghan order to leave. At the end of April 1885, three of the leading headmen of the Jamshidis paid a secret visit to Panjdeh, taking with them Yalangtush Khan's eldest son, a lad of ten years old, and held discussions with the Russian military governor. Herat's response was to send three hundred regular cavalry to the area to reimpose Afghan authority but, when it was rumoured that a much greater force was approaching, the Jamshidis, fearing a massacre, decamped *en masse* to Qarawul Khana and threatened to migrate to Russian territory. The Afghan commander, hearing of the panic amongst the Aimaq, sensibly halted his advance and sent Yalangtush Khan's brother, Aminullah Khan, to persuade his tribe to return. It was not, however, until 15 May, that the Afghan troops were finally allowed to enter Bala Murghab (Maitland 1891, 77-8).

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[112] *HNL*, 22 April 1885. Yalangtush Khan had already told the British officers that he was "disgusted" at the way he and his tribe were being treated by the Afghans and that he was contemplating going to live in India.

Once the Afghan presence in Bala Murghab had been re-established, the crisis took a different, and potentially more dangerous turn. The Russian commander informed the Afghan officer-in-charge that, in his opinion, the frontier lay above Qarawal Khana, at the head of the Marichaq valley, and threatened hostilities if the Afghans ventured downstream beyond this point. Aminullah Khan also received letters from Ewaz Khan, the governor of Panjdeh, who had been a friend of Khan Agha, urging him to declare for the Russians. Amidst rumours of a further Russian attack up the course of the Murghab, Aminullah Khan wrote to Colonel Ridgeway pleading for the Commission to demarcate the border and sort out the affairs of Bala Murghab before the situation got out of hand. Ridgeway replied by return, informing the Jamshidi amir that Britain had no intention of giving up Bala Murghab and sent Sardar Muhammad Aslam Khan, a native *attaché* in the Bengal Cavalry, to the area. His "tact and judgment ... reassured the tribe" (Maitland 1891, 78). Finally, on 30 June, Sardar Muhammad Sarwar Khan bowed to pressure and reappointed Yalangtush Khan as chief of the Jamshidis, though refusing him permission to leave Herat (Maitland 1891, 78-9).

Having brought the Aimaqs to the verge of rebellion and seriously threatened the work of the Boundary Commission, the Amir still did not learn from his mistakes. Following the conquest of Panjdeh, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's distrust of the Turkmans who remained on the Afghan side of the border increased and he determined to remove them (Tapper 1973, 59). In June, C. E. Yate of the Boundary Commission recommended that the Jamshidis ought to be replaced by Ghilzai and Pushtun nomads from the south, a plan which Colonel Ridgeway endorsed and forwarded to the Amir, who seized on the idea as a means of killing several birds with one stone (Tapper 1973, 61).[113]

The Ghilzais had been a thorn in the flesh of the Durranis for generations, but by transplanting them into a strange, foreign and hostile country, he could break the tribe into manageable segments yet still flatter their leaders that he was entrusting them with the defence of a vital border against the infidel (Kakar 1971, 131).[114] At the same time, the presence of large numbers of Pushtun tribes in a region where the population had very little linguistic, cultural or historical affinity with

[113] C. E. Yate, *Badghis,Its Frontiers and Capabilities*, 1 June 1885; *Telegram, Ridgeway to Durand*, 8 July 1885, SLEI:44, fols. 1007-12, 1359; *Telegram, Ridgeway to Durand*, 19 May 1886, SLEI:47, fol. 248.

[114] See also the comment in, *PCD*, 5 Sept. 1885, SLEI:45, fols. 751-2.

the government in Kabul, would "strengthen the country by an admixture of Afghan races in the case of war"[115] and convert the ancient rivals of the Durrani tribe into advocates of Pushtunism since, like all colonists, the Ghilzais would increasingly emphasise their ethno-linguistic ties with the Amir and Afghanistan in direct reaction to the unfamiliar Perso-Turkic ethos of Badghis (Dupree 1978, 419). Later, in the winter of 1885/6, the Amir widened this plan by encouraging the migration of members of his own tribe, the Durranis, from Qandahar (Tapper 1973, 62ff.).[116] The policy of 'Afghanisation', or "internal imperialism" (Dupree 1978, 417) was extended to Afghan Turkistan (see below) and financial and tax incentives were offered to those willing to emigrate to the north and cultivate land which lay fallow, or had been seized from the disgraced and deposed leaders of the Chahar Wilayat (Tapper 1973, 60-2).[117]

There remained the problem of finding an excuse to justify the forced removal of the Jamshidis and Firozkohis, who, after all, had been given land on the Murghab as a reward for their part in the defeat of Aiyub Khan and the conquest of Herat for 'Abd al-Rahman Khan. In September two and a half thousand cavalry from Herat were sent to Bala Murghab to "overawe" the Jamshidis and to ensure that none of them escaped to Russian territory when the news of their enforced transportation became public.[118] Next, the Amir ordered all the Firozkohi, Jamshidi and Sunni Hazara amirs to be deposed and replaced by Afghan officials.[119] 'Abd al-Rahman Khan then justified the policy of 'Afghanisation', by appealing to divine retribution and the 'Manifest Destiny' of his race:

> The Turkomans and the Uzbeks disobeyed the commandment of God, they used to capture Mussalmans and sold them as slaves. None of their priests and leading men ever forbade them to do so. At last the vengeance of God overtook them and the Russians subdued them. I wished to see them free.[120]
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> It is proper that, as the King is an Afghan, his tribesmen, the Afghans, should guard the frontier.[121]

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[115] *PCD*, 28 Nov. 1885.
[116] *Mirza Ghulam Ahmad*, 30 April 1886, SLEI:47, fol. 713.
[117] *PCD*, 24 Oct. 1885, SLEI:45, fols. 1251-8; *TFJ*, Dec. 1885.
[118] *Telegram, Ridgeway to Durand*, 20 Sept. 1885, SLEI:45, fol. 937.
[119] *Ibid.*
[120] *KNL*, 16 Oct. 1885, SLEI:45, fol. 1631. Nothing, of course, was said about the existence of slavery at the Afghan court, where Hazara and Kafir *ghulambachas* were commonplace.
[121] *KNL*, 29 June 1886, SLEI:47, fols. 901-2.

> The government is in the hands of Afghans therefore no reliance can be placed on any other tribe than the Afghans. You should proclaim this truth in your assemblies and impress it on your descendants so that your tribesmen may take a warning.[122]

The policy of Afghanisation was implemented immediately and when, on 1 November 1885, Ridgeway was finally allowed to enter Herat, he found that Yalangtush Khan Jamshidi, Muhammad Khan Hazara, Anbiya Khan Taimani and Bahram Beg b. Fathullah Khan Firozkohi had been confined to their houses, whilst Bahram Beg's father was under arrest in Kabul. Though they were closely watched, the Aimaq amirs managed to send Ridgeway an indirect message, warning him that they expected the Amir to launch "a crusade" against their tribes and reminding the British officer of the support they gave to his country during the recent Afghan War.[123] However, since it was Ridgeway who had promoted the idea of removing the Aimaqs in the first place, he turned a blind eye to what was going on and stood by and watched whilst their tribes were broken up and the very amirs whose support they had so valued against Aiyub Khan and the Russians, were one by one put to death.

During the winter of 1885/6 Muhammad Sarwar Khan, the Governor of Herat, moved to Bala Murghab to supervise the deportation and fragmentation of the Aimaq tribes and the arrival of the first tribesmen from Qandahar and Pusht Rud. On 29 April 1886, Yalangtush Khan Jamshidi, along with his son Mahmud Khan and brother Amanullah Khan, Anbiya Khan Taimani, Muhammad Khan Hazara and other Aimaq leaders were formally charged with sedition and their property confiscated (Maitland 1891, 79).[124] Yalangtush Khan and other Aimaq elders[125] were sent in chains and with an armed guard to the Afghan capital. In October of the following year Yalangtush Khan, along with his brother Aminullah Khan Jamshidi, Amanullah Khan's son and at least three other Aimaq amirs, were finally executed.[126] Muhammad Khan Hazara and his brother, Mahmud,

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[122] *KNL*, 31 Aug. 1886, SLEI:48, fol. 519.

[123] *Ridgeway to Durand*, 22 Nov. 1885.

[124] *Mirza Ghulam Ahmad*, Herat, 30 April 1886; *MA*, 15 May 1886. Telegram, *Ridgeway to Durand*, 1 June 1886; *QNL*, 1 June 1886, SLEI:47, fols. 470, 867; *HNL*, 17 Aug., 4 Sept. 1886, SLEI:48, fols. 553, 709. Some reports claimed that Fathullah Beg Khan Firozkohi had died a few weeks earlier. This was not the case. He was executed in November 1887 (see text, below & Maitland 1891, 135).

[125] Anbiya Khan Taimani remained in Herat, *HNL*, 4 Sept. 1886.

[126] They were hanged, *HNL*, 4 Sept. 1886; *PCD*, 26 Aug. 1886, SLEI:48, fol. 74; *HNL*, 3 Nov, 1886, SLEI:48, fol. 1167. A general persecution of Yalangtush Khan's family took place, *HNL*,

however, were pardoned, though they were obliged to remain in Kabul.[127]

Following the arrest of their leaders, the displacement of the Aimaq and Turkman tribes of Badghis was implemented with clinical ruthlessness. Of the 360 families of Sariq Turkmans at Qal'a-yi Wali, all but fifteen had chosen to migrate to Panjdeh, the remnant choosing to live in Aqcha, Chahar Shanbeh or Hirak and 300 families of Achakzais took over the settlement in their place.[128] In May, the Jamshidis were evacuated from Bala Murghab and sent back to Kushk in "one of the most curious migrations ... ever seen" (C. E. Yate 1888, 216-7). Several thousand Ghilzai nomads, who had gathered on the western bank of the river until the Aimaqs had passed by, immediately occupied the lands they had vacated. Not surprisingly, Yate, recording his own impressions of the migration, remarked that the Jamshidis were "delighted" to return to their former homeland. After all, it was he who had advocated their removal in the first place (C. E. Yate 1888, 216-7).

In fact, the presence of the Pushtun colonists was deeply resented (Maitland 1891, 79) and numerous clashes between the colonists and those Aimaqs and Turkmans who remained, occurred over the ensuing years. Lands which had been assigned to the Turkman and Jamshidi tribes were occupied by the *maldar* nomads and much of the grain in the area was bought up by the new arrivals, adding to the distress already being felt by the population as a result of three years of famine and locust plagues (Tapper 1973, 65-6).[129] Other causes of complaint by the remaining Aimaqs and Turkmans were the additional taxes levied to cover the cost of the resettlement and colonisation and the fact that they were forced to build shelters for the new arrivals (Tapper 1973, 65).[130]

Following the execution of Yalangtush Khan and the departure of the Afghan Boundary Commissioners, the Amir was free to deal the *coup de grâce* to the Jamshidi tribe. Haidar Quli Khan Jamshidi, the nominal chief of the tribe,[131] was deposed and the tribe at Kushk split

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10 Jan. 1887, SLEI:49, fol. 467.

[127] *HNL*, 4 Oct. 1886, SLEI:48, fols. 1153-4.

[128] *TFJ*, May 1886.

[129] *Turkistan News-letter*, rcvd., Meshed, 9 May 1887, SLEP:189, fols. 630-2; *HNL*, 29 Nov. 1886, SLEI:49, fol. 235; *HNL*, 14 July 1886, SLEI:50, 1745; *KNL*, 6 Dec. 1887; *HNL*, 5, 9 May 1886.

[130] *HNL*, 11 Oct. 1886, SLEI:48, fol. 1155. See also the comment in, *HNL*, 24 Jan. 1887, SLEI:49, fol. 407.

[131] *HNL*, 18 Oct. 1886, SLEI:48, fol. 1159.

up into several, smaller divisions and "forcibly" relocated in the Obeh, Karokh and Shaflan districts so they "would be unable to act in concert for any purpose." Only eleven hundred families were allowed to remain in Kushk, whilst a few hundred managed to flee across the new border to Russian territory.[132] The fragmentation of the tribe was the final blow and a few years later Maitland records:

> The Jamshidis as a distinct tribe have almost ceased to exist. They can no longer be considered a factor in the politics of Herat, and in another generation will probably be merged in the general population (Maitland 1891, 79).

## *The 'Afghanisation' Of Badghis and Lesser Turkistan, 1885-1888*

'Abd al-Rahman Khan's decision to implement the Yate plan was an extension of a wider policy of Afghanisation which the Amir had been pursuing on a smaller scale since the early 1880s. Although many thousands of Afghans had served in the government army in Afghan Turkistan since Muhammad Akram Khan's conquest of Balkh, before the accession of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan only a small number of Pushtuns had made their permanent homes north of the Hindu Kush. Most of these were the families or descendants of government officials or the Kohna Nokar. If the population statistics published in the official Gazetteer of Afghan Turkistan can be trusted,[133]

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[132] *KNL*, 14 July 1888, SLEI:54, fol. 729a; *HNL*, 23 Jan. 1888, SLEI:52, fol. 709.

[133] The population figures given by the *Gazetteer* (1895 & 1907, ii ) (which formed the basis of all subsequent statistics in the updated British *Gazetteers* until 1947) have to be treated with caution as they do not represent the results of a formal census such as occurred at regular intervals under British rule in India. The figures are based on information provided by village and tribal headmen, Afghan government officials and, when these were doubted, on 'guesstimates' made by individual Commissioners, or native surveyors, who visited the village or town. The margin of error, therefore, is potentially very great. To add to the problem of obtaining an accurate figure for the population of Afghan Turkistan, a large minority of the population was still semi-nomadic or semi-sedentary. A good percentage of the Aimaq and Hazara population lived in small, remote mountain villages in the Tir Band-i Turkistan, or on the northern slopes of the Hindu Kush and, although a number of surveys were made in these areas, only a small percentage of these settlements were visited.

Maimana is a good example of the questionableness of the Boundary Commission's population statistics. Afghan officials, who tended to be the main source of information for the Commissioners, had only been in the region for just over a year and had little or no knowledge of the region's geography, economy or demography. Maitland, who was primarily responsibile for the compilation of the *Gazetteer* as well as the *Reports of the Intelligence Party*, preferred his own, and Merk's, estimate of 4,000 "inhabited houses" for the population of the city of Maimana. C. E. Yate 1888, 339, however, gives a much higher figure: 2,500 families within the walls and 2,500 households outside in the hills, i.e. 5,000 families. Peacocke, probably following Yate's report, mentions the 2,500 families within the city, but makes no mention of the other

in 1885/6 ethnic Afghans (Pushtuns) in the province numbered less that 3,500 households,[134] or under 5% of an estimated population of 87,000 families.[135] Of these 3,500, the vast majority of them (3,000 families) lived in the Balkh district (*Gazetteer* (1907) ii, x, Table I).

From the winter of 1882/3, the Amir began to actively encourage sedentary and nomadic Pushtuns from the more populated areas of the south to settle in the north (Kakar 1979, 131, 188) and a year or so later political prisoners and their families from the south began to be exiled to Baghlan and Afghan Turkistan, a policy which continued throughout the rest of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's reign.[136] These early

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2,500 semi-nomadic and 'out-of-town' households. Another, unpublished, report from the same date, and certainly based on information from the Boundary Commission, puts the number of households in Maimana at 8,000, *PCD*, 28 Nov. 1885. Maitland, on the whole, erred on the side of caution (see also n. 235 below).

There are other fundamental discrepancies between the intelligence officers' reports. Merk, 266 who made a specific study of Maimana and its bazaar, says Maimana contained 235 shops. Maitland, however, disagreed with this figure and reduced the number of shops by over 35% to 150, preferring his own figure in the published report and relegating Merk's statistic to a footnote (*Gazetteer* (1907) ii, 203; Maitland 1888, ii, 533). Peacocke, 111 disagrees with both Merk and Maitland, claiming Maimana had a mere 100 shops. Since the number of shops in any town is a reflection on its overall population, the decision by Maitland to prefer his own, much lower, figures, has a direct bearing on his estimates for the population of the city. If Merk is correct and there were over eighty more shops in Maimana than Maitland would have us believe, the population of the city was certainly much larger than the official *Gazetteer* suggests. The same probably applies to other market centres in Afghan Turkistan. Maitland also fails to agree with Merk over the number of Jewish and Hindu shops in the city.

[134] Khalfin, 254 says that just before Ishaq Khan's rebellion in 1888 there were 11,750 Pushtuns living in Afghan Turkistan.

[135] Excluding the population of Qunduz and Badakhshan. All the indications are that the *Gazetteer*'s claim that the combined population of Maimana, Afghan Turkistan and Saighan-Kahmard (excluding Qunduz and Badakhshan) was just over 87,000 families is a considerable under-estimation, even given the series of natural and man-induced catastrophes which occurred during the 1870s and 1880s. Indeed, Maitland (1888 ii, 554) admits as much. Russian sources in *c.* 1888 estimate the population of the Khanate of Maimana alone at 300,000 persons, with the population of the whole of Afghan Turkistan (including Qunduz) being put at 640,000 souls (Khalfin, 254). One suspects that the low figures served both the Amir and Britain's purpose. By (deliberately?) under-estimating the population of Afghan Turkistan, the perception was created that the area was the wasteland 'Abd al-Rahman Khan claimed it to be, and that his colonisation programme was, therefore, justified. At the same time, Afghanistan's main minority groups, the Uzbeks, Turkmans, Hazaras and Tajiks, were shown to be only a small percentage of the whole population of Afghanistan; or rather that the Afghan tribes were more numerically superior than they really were. The ratio of Pushtun tribes to other minorities in Afghanistan has always been a highly emotional issue over the last hundred years and the Afghanistan government has always resisted moves by the United Nations or other bodies to organise a census conducted on a proper, scientific basis. Even today, official government estimates for the the numbers of Uzbeks, Turkmans, etc. are hotly disputed by their leaders and representatives, who are convinced that their people are far more numerous than official statistics indicate.

[136] *KNL*, 18 March 1884; *KNL*, 29 April 1884, 12 Jan. 1886, SLEI:40, fols. 1075-6, vol. 46, fol. 1224; *PCD*, 8 Dec. 1887, SLEI:51, fol. 1395.

migrations, however, had little effect on the ethnic balance in the province, but from the autumn of 1885 the number of Pushtu-speaking colonists increased dramatically as the Amir implemented the Yate plan in a deliberate attempt to alter the ethnic balance in Afghan Turkistan and Badghis and to ensure that Afghans not only controlled the political, but also the agrarian and even the social, life of the region.

In January 1885, as the famine and dearth in Afghan Turkistan began to bite deep, the Amir issued a decree prohibiting anyone, including soldiers, from moving to the south and announced that certain Afghan families, whose loyalty to the régime was proven, were to be encouraged to move north.[137] At about the same time many Turkmans and Uzbeks from the Chahar Wilayat gave up the unequal struggle for survival south of the Amu Darya, abandoned their lands and homes and fled across the border to Bukhara.[138] Little was done, or could be done, by the Afghan authorities to prevent this leakage of wealth and manpower and one suspects that, in many ways, this exodus was not unwelcome to the Amir, who was free to seize the lands the refugees left behind and hand them over to the new settlers from the south.[139]

'Abd al-Rahman Khan's policy of changing the ethno-linguistic map of Afghan Turkistan was promoted publicly as a pioneer venture of reclamation. The province was "an extensive plain ... which was lying waste" which the Amir "had a great mind to make ... a cultivated and inhabited place" (Tapper 1973, 60).[140] This 'wasteland' theory completely disregarded the rights, wishes or, indeed, the existence, of the third of a million or so native inhabitants of Lesser Turkistan and bears a striking resemblance to the philosophy which, a decade later, was propounded by Theodore Herzl to justify the colonisation of Palestine (Tuchman, 298-300).[141] Since the plan was

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[137] *KNL*, 23 Jan. 1885.

[138] *PCD*, 28 Nov. 1885, 7 Jan. 1886; *HNL*, 25 Oct. 1888, SLEI:55, fols. 1154-6. The Amir, however, told the British *wakil* that he expected large numbers of Turkman and Uzbek refugees to try and flee from Russian territory to Afghanistan, *Amir to Attaullah Khan, News-writer in Kabul*, 15 Sept. 1885, SLEI:45, fol. 987. Though a relatively small number of refugees did arrive in Afghanistan, they were outweighed by the numbers who sought asylum in Russian territory, *HNL*, 29 Dec. 1887, SLEI:52, fol. 397. The Amir estimated that 12,000 families from Afghanistan, who had fled Lesser Turkistan since the days of Sher 'Ali Khan, were living in Bukharan territory, *Amir to Viceroy*, 23 Nov. 1886, SLEI:49, fol. 91.

[139] The migrations accelerated following Ishaq Khan's rebellion; e.g. *NKVT*, 8 Feb. 1889, SLEI:56, fols. 797-8; *NKVT*, 2 Jan. 1890, SLEI:59, fols. 525-6; *KNL*, 16 Oct. 1891, SLEI:64, fol. 944.

[140] *KNL*, 29 Aug. 1885, SLEI:45, fol. 759; *PCD*, 28 Nov. 1885.

[141] Cf. Golda Meir's comment on the rights of the Palestinians: "It was not as though there was

of European origin rather than Afghan, this is not particularly surprising. Indeed, the Gazetteer of Afghan Turkistan and hence, by association, Maitland too, endorsed the wilderness theory and the Amir's plan to change the ethnic balance of Afghan Turkistan in favour of his own race. At the same time, it implied that Afghan rule represented order and civilisation, whilst Chingizid government was the symbol of disorder and misrule.

> The population of the province is small in comparison with the area. This is partly due to the devastating wars and to the chaotic conditions of the country before it came under Afghan rule, but in a great degree to famine and pestilence ... This immigration is encouraged by the Amir for obvious and perfectly sound reasons. There is plenty of room for a much larger population than now exists and it is possible that if the province remains Afghan, and at peace, the Turki-speaking population may come to be in a minority in the next 20 or 30 years (*Gazetteer* (1907) ii, vii).

C. E. Yate, writing in 1893, was even more forthright about 'Afghanisation'—the word which he himseelf coined to describe the colonisation programme. It was an "excellent" idea:

> It is only the non-Afghan tribes such as the Maimanah Uzbegs, the Herati Hazarahs and Jamshidis, etc. that have any intercourse or communication with the Turkomans or Russians, and once encircled by Afghans they are safe.[142]

Having decided to settle large numbers of Afghans in the north, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan acted swiftly and by the end of October 1885 eighteen thousand families had already left, either voluntarily or by compulsion, and been resettled on "crown lands" which had been set aside for their use by Ishaq Khan (Tapper 1973, 61).[143] Included amongst these colonists were three thousand families from the Deh Afghanan district of Kabul and five thousand Ghilzais, two thousand of whom were young men eligible for military service (Tapper 1973, 61).[144] Those who went voluntarily were given road expenses of between five and ten rupees as well as two pounds of flour per day, free carriage and one mule for every seven migrants. In addition, there was

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a Palestinian people in Palestine ... They did not exist," quoted in Colin Chapman, *Whose Promised Land?* (Lion, revised ed., 1986), 168.

[142] C. E. Yate, *Notes on Fortification and Troops of Herat*, 25 May 1893, SLEI:70, fols. 1787-94.

[143] *PCD*, 24 Oct. 1885; *KNL*, 29 June 1886. Figures for the number of migrants to Afghan Turkistan vary, *PCD*, 7 Jan. 1886 says 12,000 families. The variation in figures can probably be attributed to each report using different criteria, e.g. omitting those who were forcibly exiled.

[144] *PCD*, 5 Sept., 24 Oct. 1885.

the incentive of the grants of high quality irrigated land, government-supplied tools and tax concessions on yields (Tapper 1973, 61).[145] The "strongest Afghans" were sent to Maimana, but colonies of Afghan settlers were spread throughout Afghan Turkistan with major concentrations in Baghlan, Balkh and Sar-i Pul where the best irrigated land was found (C. E. Yate 1888, 254).[146]

In November 1885, Maitland records how he saw a "constant stream of people migrating from the country about Kabul to Afghan Turkistan" (quoted in, Tapper 1973, 61). Unfortunately, we do not have accurate figures for the total number of Afghans who settled in the area between 1885 and 1888, but one report in the summer of 1888, just before Ishaq Khan's rebellion, claimed that the number of forcible deportations alone numbered 14,000 individuals.[147] To this figure must be added at least 20,000 households (100,000 individuals) who took advantage of the Amir's incentives and made the trek northwards to start a new life. By the autumn of 1888, therefore, the number of Afghan families living in Afghan Turkistan had risen from 3,500 in 1885/6 to over 26,000 and possibly as high as 40,000,[148] or from approximately 4% of the population to over 30%—an eight-fold increase, in the space of some three years. Had it not been for the 1888 rebellion, following which the Amir forcibly redistributed both the indigenous and Afghan population of Afghan Turkistan, it is very likely that the Gazetteer's prediction of the Uzbeks, Turkmans and Tajiks ending up as a minority in their own country, would have become a reality by the time of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's death.

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[145] *PCD*, 28 Nov. 1885, SLEI:46, fols. 220-21; *TFJ*, Dec. 1885, March 1886.

[146] *PCD*, 24 Oct. 1885.

[147] *PCD*, 12 Sept. 1888, SLEI:55, fols. 497-8. Other sources put the figure much higher, at 40,000 families, *KNL*, 17 Aug. 1888, SLEI:54, fol. 965. Amongst the deportees were the Armenian Christian community of Kabul who, at the end of December 1885, asked the Amir to grant permission to the Armenians in Mazar-i Sharif to come and join them in Kabul. Instead, the Amir ordered the Kabul Armenians to move to Balkh. Within two months, the forty families had been forced to sell up and move north, ending, in the process, the Armenian presence in Kabul which dated back to the Mughal period (cf. Gregorian, 66 n.61 where he discusses the fate of this community). According to one report, a number of the Armenians wrote a petition to the British government in India complaining about the Amir's rule, his threat to confiscate their property and to expel them to Samarkand. The Armenian church in the Afghan capital, which had been subject to frequent desecration since the Second Anglo-Afghan War, appears to have been pulled down. I have been unable to find any other reference to an Armenian community in Mazar-i Sharif though the report in *KNL*, 1 Jan. 1886, SLEI:46, fol. 1190 implies that it was larger than that in Kabul, *TFJ*, March 1886, SLEI:46, fol. 1428; *PCD*, 13 Feb. 1886, SLEI:47, fol. 1548; see alsso Gregorian, 65-6, 430 n. 62.

[148] *KNL*, 17 Aug. 1888, SLEI:54, fol. 965.

The 'Afghanisation' of Badghis did not go as smoothly as in Turkistan, mainly due to the reluctance of the Pushtun tribes to leave, their lack of knowledge of the climate and general mismanagement and incompetence by government officials. In the spring of 1886, and despite the Amir's announcement of generous incentives,[149] the Durranis informed the governor of Qandahar that they unanimously opposed any permanent relocation on the Murghab, though they were careful to couch their refusal in diplomatic terms (Tapper 1973, 62-4).

> The Amir was their Padshah and if he ordered them to go, they could not resist his orders, but they would go unaccompanied by their families.[150]

When the Amir was told this news, he was far from pleased and, in order to force them into compliance, he ordered that, from henceforth, the Barakzais of Qandahar were to pay taxes on all their lands which, to this point in time, had been rent free.[151] In April, it was decreed that one family per 12,000 ploughs of land in the Qandahar district was to be compelled to move to Badghis (Tapper 1973, 64).

Whilst the outcome of the power struggle between the Amir and these Durrani chiefs hung in the balance,[152] 'Abd al-Rahman Khan invited Taju Khan of Nauzad, leader of the Ishaqzai clan, who had already seen service in Badghis some years earlier, to Kabul. The Ishaqzais were nomadic *maldar*s, or flock-owners, who already migrated to Ghor during the summer months (Tapper 1973, 62).[153] Although Taju Khan was regarded by the Qandahari Durranis as a person of no importance,[154] the Amir realised that because the Khan held a very lowly position in the Durrani pecking order, he could be flattered and cajoled into spearheading the migration, whereas the tribal leaders of Qandahar had to be handled with kid gloves. The financial incentives were extremely generous (Kakar 1971, 132; Tapper 1973, 63), but it was the Amir's offer of a marriage alliance between Taju Khan's daughter and the heir apparent, Habibullah Khan, that finally persuaded the Ishaqzai chief to move his tribe to Badghis.[155] No greater compliment could have been offered to this relatively obscure Afghan chief, for by becoming the father-in-law of the future Amir of

[149] *TFJ*, March 1886.
[150] *QNL*, 1 March 1886, SLEI:47, fol. 5; *TFJ*, March 1886.
[151] *QNL*, 6 Sept. 1886, SLEI:48, fol. 721.
[152] *HNL*, 13 April 1886, SLEI:47, fol. 87.
[153] *Ibid.*
[154] *HNL*, 11 June 1886.
[155] *Ibid.*

Afghanistan, Taju Khan's prestige, and that of his tribe, was greatly increased and he would be able to demand, if not command, the same respect and honour as a member of the Royal Family.

Within a matter of a month or so, "several thousand" Ishaqzais of Pusht Rud were on the move towards the Murghab, along with some 1,000 to 2,000 Ghilzais and several hundred Achakzais and Nurzais from Pusht Rud (Tapper 1973, 64-5; C. E. Yate 1888, 216-7).[156] Taju Khan, appointed by the Amir as the overall head of the colonists, made his headquarters in Bala Murghab, though the military command remained in the hands of General Ghaus al-Din Khan. The Ishaqzais, who made up the bulk of the new colonists, spread themselves throughout the region, with their major concentrations in Qadis and the Firozkohi country once ruled by Fathullah Beg Khan (Tapper 1973, 65).[157] Some Durrani chiefs, however, who resented Taju Khan's new-found power and status, went to Kabul where they appealed against the Amir's decision to force those tribes who already possessed land in Pusht Rud to migrate to Badghis (Tapper 1973, 64-5).

During the latter half of 1886, thousands of *maldar*s moved into Badghis in three or four waves and, although Taju Khan seems to have had specific orders from the Amir not to cross the Murghab,[158] a native agent in the employ of the British agent at Mashhad who travelled through the area in December 1886, reported that "Afghan nomads with their black tents extend all the way from Chahar Shanbeh to Qala-i Wali,"[159] probably because there was insufficient free land or supplies of grass or fuel to meet their needs on the left bank of the Murghab. Certainly, the 'Afghanisation' of Badghis appears to have been far more extensive than Tapper suggests in her excellent paper on the subject (Tapper 1973, 64-5).[160] However, as with the case of the Afghan colonisation of Turkistan, it is extremely difficult to give the exact number of families who made the journey to Badghis during

[156] *Ibid. QNL*, 13 Sept. 1886; *HNL*, 5, 16 Sept. 1886, SLEI:48, fols. 723, 807-8, 957; *MA*, 28 Aug. 1886, SLEP:188, fol. 749.

[157] *HNL*, 5, 16 Sept. 1886.

[158] *HNL*, 21 Oct. 1886, SLEI:48, fol. 1161.

[159] *Report by Special Messenger*, 8 April 1887; *TFJ*, May 1886. In May 1886 Ridgeway stated that 2,000 Afghan families had arrived and were to settle in Qal'a-yi Wali, *Telegram, Ridgeway to Durand*, 19 May 1886. According to the report of the special messenger (unnamed), he "succeeded in obtaining some important photographs," presumably of the migration and the flock-owners. I have been unable to trace the whereabouts of these photographs.

[160] She does not seem to have been aware of the L/P&S/9 (Persia) series, which contains the secret agent's report quoted above, as well as several mentions of the migrations in the Mashhad news-letters.

the summer and autumn of 1886, for the sources give widely differing figures. Kakar (1971, 132), says that the Ishaqzais alone came to 5,000 households (25,000-30,000 souls). In September, the Herat *wakil* reported that 'Abd al-Rahman Khan had ordered 12,000 families to be moved to the area,[161] but earlier in the year the Kabul newswriter, also citing the Amir as his source, said 25,000 households were to go,[162] a number also used by the Mashhad agency in August.[163] This latter figure is almost certain to be the number of individual migrants rather than families[164] and Tapper's estimate of 4,000 households (20,000-24,000 individuals) (Tapper 1973, 64-5) is probably the most reliable.[165]

The arrival of thousands of nomadic stock-breeders in Badghis, all within a matter of a few months, wrought havoc on the local economy, and merely increased the misery and suffering that the indigenous population was already obliged to endure. Not only so, but the migration proved to be a disaster for the *maldar*s themselves. The authorities in Herat were ordered by the Amir to provide the immigrants with shelter and grain (Tapper 1973, 65),[166] but the harvest had failed that year because of the drought. What had survived had been eaten by locusts and there were insufficient supplies to go around. It was estimated that an additional 24,000 kharwars of grain had to be found by Herat to tide the settlers over, for the late spring harvest was still eight months away.

Nor was it at all clear, either to government officials or the nomads themselves, whether they were expected to abandon pastoralism and become sedentary cultivators. Certainly, there is evidence to suggest that the Amir had an ulterior motive in using the migration as a means of destroying traditional leadership structures and forcing the nomads to adopt sedentary occupations. This is supported by the comments of tribal leaders, who complained that 'Abd al-Rahman Khan was trying to "ruin and disperse" the most powerful Afghan tribes (Tapper 1973, 66-7).[167] Whatever the Amir intended, only the settlers around Gulran made any attempt at cultivation, and Taju Khan's Ishaqzais

[161] *HNL*, 16 Sept. 1886. See also, C. E. Yate 1888, 216-7 who was told by one of the nomads that 12,000 families were due to be relocated in the area.
[162] *KNL*, 29 June 1886.
[163] *MA*, 28 Aug. 1886.
[164] See *HNL*, 28 Oct. 1886, SLEI:48, fol. 1165.
[165] See also, *HNL*, 29 Nov, 1886 where Taju Khan gives the numbers who had migrated as 2,600 families or 19,000 individuals.
[166] *HNL*, 16 Sept. 1886.
[167] *QNL*, 6 Sept. 1886.

clamoured for more government hand-outs and seemed to have had little interest in changing their traditional way of life (Tapper 1973, 66).

By the end of August 1886, a matter of weeks after the first wave of Ishaqzais reached Badghis, most of their sheep had died, more than likely from a combination of exhaustion after the privations of their long, summer march from Pusht Rud and the chronic shortage of fodder.[168] News of this catastrophe was quickly relayed to other *maldar*s that were *en route* to Badghis and many of them promptly returned home.[169] Blaming the "stupidity"[170] of Taju Khan, the Amir was forced to order the release of 10,000 kharwars of grain from the Herat reserves, any short-fall being made up by Maimana.[171] The Ishaqzais, however, "greatly afraid of the snowy season" which was far more severe than anything they had encountered to the south, bought up all of Maimana's surplus wheat on their own initiative, forcing the price of grain beyond the level that the ordinary citizens of the area could afford.[172]

By October, local resentment of the Amir's 'Afghanisation' policy, the use of forced labour to build shelters for the immigrants and increased taxes and disputes over grazing and land rights, led to a number of violent incidents between the Pushtun settlers and the indigenous peoples.[173] The colonists, too, began to fight amongst themselves. Following one particularly unpleasant confrontation between rival Pushtun clans in Qal'a-yi Wali, which resulted in a number of people being wounded and one death, two or three *malik*s were brought under arrest to Herat, where they were fined and thrown in prison.[174] Britain, too, had cause for concern. The Russian authorities, uncertain as to the real motive behind the resettlement programme,

[168] *Ibid.* There seems to be no truth in the report in *HNL*, 29 Nov. 1886 that the Ishaqzais had left all their flocks behind in Pusht Rud.

[169] *Ibid.*

[170] *HNL*, 18 Oct. 1886.

[171] *HNL*, 18 Nov. 1886, SLEI:49, fol. 161.

[172] *HNL*, 29 Nov. 1886.

[173] *HNL*, 11, 18 Oct., 18 Nov. 1886; *TFJ*, June 1886; Merk, *Memorandum on a Meeting with Russian Governor of Panjdeh*, 2 Oct. 1886; *Report by Special Messenger who left Meshed 25 Nov. 1886*, 8 April 1887. Mir Allah Bakhsh, *Memorandum*, 1886 reported that 'Abd al-Hakim Khan, elder brother of Baba Jan Beg of Qaisar, complained about the Afghan settlers near Qal'a-yi Wali who had stolen some sheep and melons from the area. He informed the native surgeon: "the Commission has put an end to the Turkoman raids but let the stronger enemy come and settle near them and encroach gradually on their lands." Similar complaints were made by Sher Muhammad Khan, "Karawal Begi" of Almar, about both the Pushtun colonists and the Afghan governor of Maimana.

[174] *HNL*, 27 Dec. 1886, 20 Jan 1887, SLEI:49, fols. 387, 547.

sent more troops to reinforce the border posts in case it was a harbinger of an Afghan attack on Panjdeh (Tapper 1973, 66-7).[175]

The deteriorating security situation in Badghis during the late autumn of 1886 was not improved by the outbreak of the Ghilzai rebellion in October, which led to the destruction of an estimated 24,000 members of the tribe (Kakar 1971, 115-137). Fighting spread to Herat where a number of Ghilzai troops were stationed,[176] as well as amongst the colonists in Badghis and the garrison in Maimana. These latter disturbances were finally suppressed by General Ghaus al-Din Khan and the Bala Murghab garrison, but only with great difficulty (Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 257).[177] The Amir, unable or unwilling to trust his Pushtun-dominated army to deal with the uprising, raised twelve thousand Uzbek troops from Afghan Turkistan for the campaign, an action which exacerbated even more the growing racial tensions between the Pushtuns and the Turkic tribes.[178]

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[175] *HNL*, 16 Sept. 1886. In February-March 1887 tension was particularly high. Rumours circulated that Russia had "strong designs" on Maimana and that a number of Russian native spies were surveying the region. Yazdan Quli, Dilawar Khan's *sipah salar*, was reported to be gathering troops in Merv for an attack on Maimana and Andkhui. Cf. *HNL*, 28 Feb., 10 March 1887, SLEI:49, fols. 779, 1147-8. *HNL*, 7 April 1887; *TFJ*, April 1887; *HNL*, 5 May 1887, SLEI:50, fols. 219, 533, 881; *Governor of Herat to Col. Maclean*, 21 May 1887; *Maclean to Governor of Herat*, 30 May 1887; *Tarkhanoff, Governor of Panjdeh, to General Ghaus ud-Din Khan*, n.d. 1887; *Précis of Intelligence from Central Asia*, May-June 1887, SLEP:189, fols. 651-5, 763-4, 830-2, 923-7.

[176] The disturbances were partly fuelled by the intrigues of Aiyub Khan b. Sher 'Ali Khan, who tried to reach the Ghilzai country in response to an invitation from the rebels. He managed to escape from Mashhad accompanied by some eighteen followers and crossed into Afghanistan, only to be turned back by Ibrahim Khan at Dokani(?) near Ghuriyan. Despite 'hot pursuit' by the Amir's forces, Aiyub made his way back to Mashhad where, on 9 November 1887, he gave himself up to British officials and was sent into comfortable exile in India (Kakar 1971, 135); *HNL*, 5 Sept. 1887; *TFJ*, Nov. 1887, SLEI:51, fols. 657, 1329. The intervention of Aiyub Khan in the Ghilzai rebellion gave the Amir the excuse he sought to destroy powerful, pro-Aiyubid, chiefs of his own tribe, the Durranis.

[177] According to Sultan Muhammad Khan, the most serious Ghilzai mutiny took place on 6 June 1887. Cf. *MVNL*, 9 June 1887, SLEP:189, fols. 1033-4; *HNL*, 27 June 1887, SLEI:50, fol. 1557; *TFJ*, Aug. 1887, SLEI:51, fols. 293-5. *HC*, 6 June 1887; *HNL*, 11 June 1887, SLEP:189, fols. 822, 994-5 says the rebellion in Herat was by (Sunni?) Hazaras.

[178] *KNL*, 5 May 1887; *List of Regular Troops in the Service of Government of Afghanistan*, 1887. *KNL*, 24 May 1887; *PCD*, 19 July 1887, SLEI:50, fols. 873, 1657; *PCD*, 24 Aug., 23 Sept. 1887, SLEI:51, fols. 241, 615-8. Some of these Uzbek cavalry were formed into a personal bodyguard for the Amir and his wives. *PCD*, 14 Sept. 1887; *TFJ*, June 1887, SLEI:50, fols. 543, 1239 say there were 20,000 Uzbeks sent to the Ghilzai country, who had "a powerful effect" on the rebels.

The Amir is said to have recalled 2 cavalry regiments from Maimana, 4 infantry regiments from Herat and 4 more infantry regiments from Balkh to deal with the Ghilzai uprising, though Ishaq Khan refused to send the 4 regiments from Afghan Turkistan, claiming that Maimana was "preparing to raise a rebellion," *KM*, 29 April 1887; *KNL*, 6 May, 28 June 1887, SLEI:50, fols. 524, 592, 1279.

Somehow or other the *maldar*s and other Pushtun settlers managed to survive the bitter Badghis winter, mainly because of government supplies and their own stockpiles of grain. In the spring of 1887, however, the crops failed again, with Maimana being particularly badly hit, and the colonists' sheep and cattle began to die in large numbers (Tapper 1973, 67).[179] As the prices of grain and *ghee* rose ever higher[180] and with no prospect of being able to subsist in Badghis or Maimana area, the Ishaqzais decided to move to their traditional summer pastures in the Siya Band in the hope of finding sufficient grazing for their animals. En route, they were attacked by the Firozkohis, who resented the Afghan occupation of their traditional pasturage and had been driven to revolt by famine and starvation, with the loss of five thousand sheep and one hundred camels (Kakar 1979, 133; Tapper 1973, 67).[181] The Ishaqzais, already disillusioned by the mismanagement of the Afghanisation programme and the unsuitability of the area for pastoralism, decided that enough was enough, and abandoned the whole project. The majority of them returned to Pusht Rud, whilst others fled to Persian territory.[182]

Taju Khan wrote a bitter letter to the Amir informing him that Badghis never had sufficient spare pasturage for so many thousand nomads and that their camels and stock had been decimated by flies, mosquitoes, starvation and the hard winter. 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, however, was not prepared to accept the blame for his ill-conceived plan and sent a scathing reply to the Ishaqzai chief. The Amir had intended:

> ... that the Durranis should become the ruling race and accordingly he offered them a chance of displaying their valour by holding against the enemies the frontier of Afghanistan; but as they have chosen to decline this honourable post, it is their own affair (Tapper 1973, 68).[183]

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[179] *HNL*, 9 May 1887; *KNL*, 6 Dec. 1887; *Turkistan News-letter*, 9 May 1887.

[180] *Turkistan News-letter*, 9 May 1887.

[181] *HNL*, 27 June 1887; *TFJ*, Aug. 1887; *HNL*, 14 July 1887, SLEI:50, fol. 1745.

[182] *HNL*, 9 May 1887; *HNL*, 7 Nov. 1887, SLEI:51, fol. 1357; *HNL*, 25 Jan. 1888, SLEI:52, fol. 465. When the refugees in Persia tried to return, in the late autumn of 1887, the Iranian authorities refused them permission and detained their families. Some of the Ishaqzai tribesmen moved upstream, eventually settling in the area of what is now north-east Badghis province. In the spring of 1994, during a visit to Qadis, I met four Ishaqzais from the Jawand *wulswali*. They confirmed many of the above details of their enforced relocation in the Bala Murghab area as discussed in the text. The story of Taju Khan's migration and his argument with the Amir is well known and, I gather, some of his descendants are still living in the region. A large number of Ghilzais and other Pushtuns still live in the village of Langar, north of Qadis. These Pushtuns, too, appear to have settled in the region during the reign of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan.

[183] *KNL*, 16 Aug. 1887, SLEI:51, fol. 259.

The Amir, however, was unable to force the settlers to return as his army was already overstretched in the Ghilzai campaign and he could not risk a rebellion in Farah or Qandahar. Reprisals against the Ishaqzais were therefore postponed until a "more convenient opportunity."[184]

The Amir's opportunity for revenge came in 1888. In March of that year, Taju Khan was summoned to Kabul to answer allegations that he had under-paid the taxation on his sheep.[185] After a stay of several weeks in the Afghan capital, the Ishaqzai chief appears to have satisfied the Amir over the question of revenues and returned with instructions to buy up and repair all the old and disused *karez* systems in the Pusht Rud area.[186] Following the suppression of Ishaq Khan's rebellion at the end of 1888, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan recalled all the Durranis of Zamin Dawar in Badghis and demanded they return the four hundred kharwars of grain which the government had distributed to them during the winter of 1886/7.[187] In the summer of 1889, a number of Taju Khan's supporters went to see the Amir in Mazar-i Sharif and complained about their leader's tyranny and oppression. Following an enquiry by the governor of Qandahar, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan removed Taju Khan from the khanship of his clan and put the Ishaqzais under the authority of Qandahar (Tapper 1973, 72).[188]

The attack on the Ishaqzai colonists was the signal for a general rebellion by the Firozkohi Aimaq, which soon spread to the Kushk Jamshidis, the Bandar sub-district of Maimana and the hill country south of Sar-i Pul.[189] Although more troops were sent to General Ghaus al-Din Khan at Bala Murghab, he was unable to make any headway against the rebels who controlled the mountainous terrain of Ghor (Maitland 1891, 133). In early August, two columns of troops from Herat, under Brigadier Zabardast Khan and Rustam 'Ali Khan, marched against Qadis and Chakhcharan to attack the rebels in the rear. It was not until the end of that month, however, that the revolt was finally put down.[190] As interim compensation for the estimated

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[184] *Ibid.*

[185] *QNL*, 10 April 1888, SLEI:53, fol. 529.

[186] *QNL*, 7 June 1888, SLEI:54, fol. 7171.

[187] *NKVT*, 26 July 1889, SLEI:57, fols. 1287-8.

[188] *QNL*, 31 Aug., 7 Dec. 1889, SLEI:58, fols. 301, vol. 59, fol. 72.

[189] *Report from Chajui Khan at Maimana*, 20 Aug. 1887, SLEP:189, fols. 1713-20; *HNL*, 4 Aug. 1887, SLEI:51, fol. 319.

[190] *HNL*, 4 Aug. 1887; *HNL*, 1 Aug. 1887, SLEI:51, fols. 261-2; *TFJ*, Aug. 1887. Troops from Maimana were sent to help General Ghaus al-Din but, before they could go into action, the Aimaqs had been defeated, *KNL*, 18 Oct. 1887, SLEI:51, fol. 893.

losses of between 25,000 and 30,000 sheep which the Firozkohis had plundered from the *maldar*s, they were obliged to hand over 12,000 head from their own flocks.[191] The crushing of the revolt was followed by another round of persecution of the Aimaqs, with the remaining members of the families of Yalangtush Khan Jamshidi and Muhammad Khan Hazara being singled out. In November 1887, Fathullah Beg Khan, chief of the Firozkohis, was also put to death.[192]

*The Butkhak Incident, 1888*

In the spring of 1888, the Amir's administration, already stretched to its limits by the Ghilzai uprising and the revolt of the Firozkohis, faced a further, unwanted challenge, which had wide implications for the survival of Afghanistan. We have seen how, before the Panjdeh crisis, Russia had claimed sovereignty over all of the Turkman tribes in Khwarazm and Badghis but, following the boundary demarcation, a small number of Salor Turkman families had remained on the Afghan side of the frontier (Maitland 1888, ii, 34). Amongst these were the Butkhak Turkmans of the Namusa subdistrict of Maimana. On 26 April 1888, about one hundred Turkmans from Sarrakhs, accompanied by two or three Russian officers, began a tour of inspection of the boundary posts on the Maimana border which had been laid down by British and Russian surveyors a few months earlier. When the Turkman cavalry reached the frontier, however, they crossed over to Butkhak, in Afghanistan, and either persuaded, or forced, the settlement's one hundred and forty Turkman families, to migrate to Russian territory.[193]

When news of the Russian incursion and the flight of the Turkmans reached Maimana, Muhammad Husain Khan, worried that the Amir would lay the blame for the incursion at his door and use it as an excuse to depose him,[194] ordered his son, Muhammad Sharif Khan,

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[191] *KNL*, 18 Oct. 1887; *HNL*, 1 Sept., 13 Oct. 1887, SLEI:51, fols. 65, 1018; *HNL*, 1 Dec. 1887, SLEI:52, fol. 129. The actual losses may well have been a great deal less, since these are the figures given by the colonists themselves.

[192] *HNL*, 20 Oct. 1887; *KNL*, 4 Nov. 1887, SLEI:51, fols. 985, 1010.

[193] *HNL*, 7 May 1888; *KNL*, 15 June 1888; *Amir to General Amir Ahmad Khan*, 9 June 1888; *Mir Muhammad Hossain Khan, Wali of Maimana, to Amir*, April/May(?) 1888; *Governor of Herat to Col. Maclean*, 3 May 1888; *Col. Tarkhanoff, Governor of Panjdeh, to Mullah Aziz Khan*, 29 April 1888, SLEI:54, fols. 72, 265, 705-707a.

[194] *HNL*, 17 May 1888, SLEI:54, fol. 189. Indeed, the mingbashi who had killed the Turkman chief, was summoned to Mazar-i Sharif by Ishaq Khan to give an account of the incident in person.

along with Ishan Khan, Mirza 'Abd al-Faiz and Naf(a)s Beg Mingbashi to intercept the raiders and persuade, or force, the population of Butkhak to return home.[195] It is not at all clear exactly what happened next, for each side later blamed the other. However, it seems that the Maimana cavalry pursued the Turkmans across the Russian border, overtaking them at "Hazarakui." The Russian force, surrounded and outnumbered by the Uzbeks, made rough defences out of their baggage and threatened to open fire if Muhammad Sharif Khan's men came any nearer. Whilst the two sides stood off from each other, the Turkmans sent one of their number to Panjdeh to inform Tarkhanoff, the Russian military commander, that they were under attack and six hundred[196] levies were hastily dispatched to their relief. Whilst the reinforcements were arriving, the Russians opened negotiations with Muhammad Sharif Khan but insisted that the Butkhak Turkmans had left of their own free will, a fact which both the Afghan government and Husain Khan Ming were later to strongly dispute.[197]

By the morning of the following day, Muhammad Sharif Khan had conciliated the Butkhak Turkmans to such an extent that they agreed to return with him to Afghanistan. However, as the Maimana cavalry rode back across the border with the Turkmans in tow, the Pandjeh levies, who had travelled through the night, fell upon them and opened fire. Muhammad Sharif Khan, with his horse shot from under him and a number of his men wounded, ordered his men to return fire in self-defence. In the ensuing skirmish one of the Turkman amirs in the Sarrakhs column was killed by a Maimana *mingbashi* and a number of other individuals on both sides were killed or wounded before Muhammad Sharif Khan managed to escape.[198] The Butkhak Turkmans were recaptured, brought to Panjdeh and later resettled in Sarrakhs.[199]

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[195] *Ibid.*

[196] *HNL*, 7 May 1888 says only 50 were sent, but this seems hardly likely. I have preferred the account of Husain Khan, Wali of Maimana, which is presumably based on the report made by the commander of the Maimana cavalry.

[197] *Hossain Khan to Amir*, 1888; *HNL*, 7 May 1888; *Governor of Herat to Maclean*, 3 May 1888; *Durand to General Amir Ahmad Khan*, 21 July 1888, SLEI:54, fols. 707b-8; *The Times*, 17 May 1888, p. 5 col. d, 18 May 1888, p. 5, col. d.

[198] *Hossain Khan to Amir*, 1888 says the Maimana cavalry lost one man and one horse killed, with another soldier wounded. The Panjdeh and Sarrakhs Turkmans had "one or two" wounded or killed, *HNL*, 17 May 1888; *HNL*, 10 May 1888, SLEI:54, fol. 127; *KNL*, 15 June 1888; *Durand to General Amir Ahmad Khan*, 21 July 1888.

[199] *Governor of Herat to Maclean*, 3 May 1888; *Durand to General Amir Ahmad Khan*, 21 July 1888.

The Butkhak incident[200] called in question the frontier treaty Britain and Russia had agreed a few months earlier and threatened to caused a major diplomatic row between Britain and Russia, especially as the Russians and Afghans heatedly began to accuse one another of "a flagrant transgression of all international law"[201] and blame each other for the deaths. Colonel Tarkhanoff in Pandjeh, demanded that the Afghans pay compensation for the four "Russian" lives that had been lost in the incident and sent more troops to the border.[202]

The Amir rejected the demand out-of-hand and referred the matter to Britain, expecting, no doubt, that his ally would support his version of events. However, the British government, which had been reluctant to go to war over Panjdeh, had even stronger reasons to avoid a confrontation over a few Turkman families from Butkhak and accepted the Russian version of events without question, playing down the importance of the incident to the press at the same time.[203] Britain's prompt action calmed Russian tempers and avoided any 'unpleasant' consequences. 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, however, was furious, for once again the Russians had managed to violate Afghan territory with impunity. There was also disquiet amongst British Indian officers that the 'softly, softly' approach merely encouraged further Russian incursions. In a letter to Sir Mortimer Durand, Colonel Maclean, who was occupied with the demarcation of the Sistan-Persian border at the time, voiced his unease at his government's pusillanimous attitude which was a "discouragement" to the Afghans.[204]

There was, though, an ulterior motive in the British decision to accept the Russian version of the Butkhak incident. For many years, the authorities in India had tried in vain to persuade successive Amirs to allow British officers to be stationed on Afghanistan's northern

[200] As far as I can ascertain, nothing has been written on the Butkhak incident or the intended visit of Durand to Kabul in 1888. As well as throwing new light on the original reasons for the Durand mission in 1893, the Butkhak incident itself was the most serious violation of the Badghis frontier since the Panjdeh crisis, and could have had serious implications for British-Russian relations, despite the attempt to play it down to the press. Britain's unwillingness to take a strong line with Russia over the matter made it that much more difficult to be firm with 'Abd al-Rahman Khan during the 'Turkistan Atrocities' of 1889-1891. This may go someway to explaining why the authorities in Calcutta and London were reluctant to condemn the Amir's 'Reign of Terror'.

[201] *HNL*, 5 July 1888, SLEI:54, fol. 77, the words are 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's. *The Times*, 18 May 1888.

[202] *Durand to Ahmad Khan*, 11 July 1888; *HNL*, 21 June 1888, SLEI:54, fol. 722.

[203] *The Times*, 17, 18 May 1888: "No reason for apprehending complications in Central Asia or for attributing importance to insignificant skirmishes ... which ... must be inevitable on a wild frontier like the Afghan."

[204] *Maclean to Durand*, 23 May 1888, SLEI:54, fol. 801.

border to watch Russian movements first hand. In the aftermath of the Butkhak incursion, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, worried about the long-term security of the Maimana frontier, suggested that a mission be sent to Kabul to discuss the whole border problem and hinted that he might agree to allowing observers to be located in Afghan Turkistan. In August, the Viceroy informed the Amir that Sir Mortimer Durand and Sir Donald Wallace, Private Secretary to the Viceroy, accompanied by an escort of one hundred cavalry and fifty infantry, were to set out for Kabul in the first week of October to discuss frontier questions and the matter of British officers in Afghan Turkistan. Unfortunately, as far as Britain was concerned, the Amir's near-fatal sickness, followed by the rebellion of Ishaq Khan, put an end to this mission.[205] It was not until 1893 that Durand finally left for Kabul.

*The Rebellion of Sardar Muhammad Ishaq Khan, 1888*

The turmoil in Badghis and Maimana, the bungled Afghanisation of the Murghab basin and the Ghilzai rebellion was watched with growing concern by Ishaq Khan in Balkh. Discontent with the Amir's rule was widespread throughout Afghan Turkistan,[206] which continued to suffer severely from drought and the side-effects of other natural, and man-made, disasters. Nor was dissatisfaction confined to the indigenous population. The Amir had been using the province as the Afghan Siberia, sending political dissidents and religious or clan leaders who posed a real or imagined threat to his autocratic rule, into exile in the north, in the hope that this would break their resistance to his government. However, as with the Afghanisation programme, the Amir failed to think through the long-term implications of his policy of enforced, internal exile. This merely removed dissident elements from the south, where they could at least be kept under observation, to an area of the country where to all intents and purposes, he had little authority, for the governor of Afghan Turkistan had already given very clear indications that he was disillusioned with the style of government emanating from Kabul. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that these exiled Afghans joined forces with Ishaq Khan to mount the most serious challenge that 'Abd al-Rahman Khan was to face in over twenty years of rule.

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[205] *Telegram, Viceroy to Secretary of State*, 16 Aug. 1888; *Viceroy to Amir*, 28 Aug. 1888, SLEI:55, fols. 8,9.

[206] *Report of Special Messenger*, 8 April 1887.

Though scholars have advanced different theories as to why Ishaq Khan chose to rebel in 1888, the evidence suggests that the seeds of the revolt were planted when, in October 1881, the Amir's refusal to make Ishaq Khan governor of Herat following the defeat of Aiyub; a decision which strained relations between the two sardars almost to breaking point (Kakar 1971, 142). The Amir's subsequent decision not to place Maimana under the jurisdiction of Afghan Turkistan after the surrender of Dilawar Khan in 1884, increased the tension between the two sardars to such a level that Ishaq Khan was reported to have been on the verge of revolt. Though this was averted, the succeeding years did nothing to lessen the antipathy between the rulers of Kabul and Balkh and reports regularly circulated that Ishaq Khan aspired to the Amirship. It was a matter of time before the sardar would raise the standard of revolt.

Apart from Ishaq Khan's loss of face over Herat and Maimana, another reason for the animosity was undoubtedly Ishaq Khan's disgust at the tyrannical nature of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's rule. This was plainly seen in the misery of thousands of Afghans forcibly exiled to Afghan Turkistan, for whom the Amir expected Ishaq Khan to provide land and supplies. In many ways, Ishaq Khan's style of government was the antithesis of his cousin's, for had a reputation for the mildness of his administration and for justice and fair taxation. Consequently, he was popular with both the ordinary people and the local amirs, with the notable exception of Husain Khan Ming of Maimana (Maitland 1888, ii, 62). His own, rather unusual, upbringing, may well have given contributed to his general humanitarianism and given him a broader world view than other members of the Barakzai clan. His mother was an Armenian Christian and maybe stories told him during his childhood years were to leave him with a compassion for peoples and cultures discriminated against by the central government because of religion and race.[207]

As well as the benevolence of his rule, Ishaq Khan's popularity was enhanced by his attachment to Naqshbandi Sufism, an Order which had originated in Bukhara and to which the majority of the Uzbeks, Tajiks and Turkmans of Afghan Turkistan belonged. He was said to have spent much time in prayer and other spiritual exercises,

[207] 'Abd al-Rahman Khan in his 'autobiography' is scathing about Ishaq Khan's background and parentage. He was "an illegitimate child of Mir Azam ... his mother was an Armenian girl, who was one of the women of the harem, and not one of my uncle's wives" (Sultan Muhammad Khan ii, 262-3).

preferring to be addressed by the lowly title of *fakir* (mendicant) rather than sardar. Not only so, but he held the shrine of 'Ali b. Abi Talib at Mazar-i Sharif in particular veneration (Kakar 1971, 143-4; McChesney 1991, 262; Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 264).[208] Indeed, it seems 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's order, in December 1886, to nationalise certain *waqf* endowments attached to the 'Alid shrine, convinced Ishaq Khan that something had to be done to stop the Amir's excesses (Kakar 1971, 145). He refused to implement the decree from Kabul, and from this point onwards, the *wakil* diaries contain numerous references to Ishaq's proceedings in Afghan Turkistan which, with hindsight, reveal that plans for rebellion were being laid as early as the first weeks of 1887.[209]

British officers of the Afghan Boundary Commission who had audiences with Ishaq Khan painted a somewhat ambivalent picture of him. Maitland (1888 ii, 61) described him as "a big, stout man" with a full, handsome dark-brown beard, a straight nose and dark, narrow "oriental" eyes and noted there was a marked physical resemblance between him and 'Abd al-Rahman Khan. As for his character, Maitland claimed he was "lazy, good-natured and rather weak ... but not deficient in intelligence. He appears greatly bored ... and evidently considers himself royalty." Griesbach, on the other hand, describes him as "a middle-aged man of not very pleasant features, squints and looks either ill, or dissipated" (Griesbach, 214). Neither description does Ishaq Khan justice and his photograph (Kakar 1971, 150, facing) shows him as a handsome, full-bearded individual with kindly eyes and face and not at all portly or squint-eyed. Griesbach, did, however, remark that the sardar was "exceedingly polite and friendly and expressed himself very much pleased that I had seen so much of his province." He was kept well informed about the world situation through regular deliveries of newspapers, presumably from India and Russia (Griesbach, 214).

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[208] 'Abd al-Rahman Khan later tried to defame Ishaq Khan as a *munafiq*, or 'hypocrite', who "posed before the people of Turkistan as a holy saint and a very virtuous strict Mahomedan." His membership of the Naqshbandi Order, the Amir claimed, was a cynical attempt to "curry favour" with the people of Afghan Turkistan. 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, who believed he was exempt from all restraints laid on him by Islam, or indeed, any other religion (Lee 1991a, 228-9), tried to discredit his cousin's religious credentials by quoting the words of Shaikh Ansari of Herat. The reference, of course, would not have been lost on the people of Afghan Turkistan, for it was a branch of the Ansari clan who had held the *mutawali*ship of the Mazar shrine since the days of Sultan Husain Baiqara (Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 262-66; F. Buhl, "Munafikun," *SEI*, 410-11).

[209] E.g. *Turkistan News-letter*, Meshed, 9 May 1889.

In February 1887, following Ishaq Khan's refusal to confiscate the religious endowments attached 'Ali's shrine, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan instructed Sardar Jan Muhammad Khan to ascertain if Ishaq Khan was "the Amir's friend or foe" and to inform the governor of Balkh that he was required to present himself in Kabul at Nauroz or be attacked (Khafi ii, 166-7).[210] As on other occasions, Ishaq Khan refused, knowing well that were he to obey he would most likely be put to death (Kakar 1971, 145). In April, Ishaq Khan complained that he was no longer able to supply any more regular troops to help put down the Ghilzai uprising, for he believed that Maimana was about to rebel.[211] He also prevented the son of Beglarbegi Muhammad Khan, whom the Amir had appointed to the governorship of Sar-i Pul, from taking up his appointment.[212]

Though, technically, the affairs of Husain Khan were nothing to do with the governor of Afghan Turkistan, since Maimana had been placed under Herat after the fall of Dilawar Khan in 1884, Ishaq Khan never abandoned his attempts to bring the province under his own authority. Unfortunately for the sardar, Auliya Khan, the Afghan Resident appointed in 1884, and Muhammad Husain Khan both proved to be faithful supporters of the Amir. However, when Auliya Khan was replaced by Sardar 'Aziz Khan, Ishaq Khan had a freer hand, which may suggest that the new Resident was partisan to his cause.[213] Husain Khan Ming, though, refused to change sides since not only had the Amir appointed him as wali, but he was related to 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, howbeit distantly, by marriage.[214]

Not unnaturally, Husain Khan Ming resented Ishaq Khan's intrigues and in early July 1887 a delegation from the wali arrived in Herat to hold talks with the governor.[215] A few weeks later, Husain Khan Ming uncovered a plot to overthrow him and only prevented an outbreak of violence by the use of "fair words and promises."[216] The Herat *wakil*, who reported this attempted putsch, implies that Ishaq Khan was behind it; the governor doubtless hoped to replace the wali

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[210] *KNL*, 1 Feb. 1887, SLEI:49, fol. 566.
[211] *HNL*, 5 May 1887; *KM*, 29 April 1887.
[212] *PCD*, 7 April 1887; *TFJ*, April 1887.
[213] Cf. *HNL*, 9 May, 4 Aug. 1887; *TFJ*, Aug. 1887; *KM*, 29 April 1887; *HNL*, 4 July 1887, SLEI:50, fol. 1687. See the comment in *Turkistan News-letter*, 9 May 1887.
[214] Husain Khan was married to a daughter of the Hakim Khan of Shibarghan, who had given another of his daughters in marriage to Amir 'Abd al-Rahman Khan in 1868 following the fall of Aqcha.
[215] *HNL*, 4 July 1887.
[216] *HNL*, 4 Aug. 1887.

with his own nominee, possibly Muzaffar Khan Ming, the half-brother of Dilawar Khan, who was living at government expense in Mazar-i Sharif.[217] A short time afterwards, the wali sent his son, presumably Muhammad Sharif Khan, and a number of his senior amirs, to attend Ishaq Khan's wedding, but the governor of Afghan Turkistan snubbed Husain Khan's son and instead intrigued with members of the Maimana delegation behind his back.[218] Ishaq Khan also weakened Maimana's defences by ordering the Herat cavalry regiments stationed there to Badakhshan without consulting Kabul.[219] Meanwhile, Ishaq Khan began to strengthen strategic garrisons such as Aqcha and Mazar-i Sharif, justifying this work on the basis that there were persistent rumours that Russia still had designs on the Chahar Wilayat.[220] On 11 July, Ishaq Khan appointed his eldest son, Isma'il Khan,[221] as Commander-in-Chief of the Balkh army, moved his headquarters to the hill station of Shadyan and then embarked on a tour of the western provinces.[222]

Shortly after these events, Ishaq Khan was ordered by the Amir to start sending the revenues of Afghan Turkistan to Kabul, where they were desperately needed to fund the campaign against the Ghilzais and the Afghanisation programme in Badghis. This was something Ishaq had never done and he refused point-blank to countenance such interference from Kabul. A subsequent order to send more troops for the Ghilzai campaign was also rejected.[223] In order to emphasise that he had the right to run Afghan Turkistan as he thought fit, Ishaq Khan

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[217] *Ibid. HNL*, 4 July 1887. Dilawar Khan's daughter had married Ishaq Khan, which explains the good relations which existed between the sardar and the Mingid Pretender.

[218] *HNL*, 25 July 1887, SLEI:50, fol. 1851. At about this time a house built by Na'ib 'Alam Khan in Maimana was destroyed, *Chajui Khan*, 20 Aug. 1887.

[219] *NKVT*, 23 Oct. 1889, SLEI:58, fols. 705-6.

[220] *Ishaq Khan to Governor of Herat*, 9 July 1887, SLEP:189, fols. 1480-2; *Chajui Khan*, 20 Aug. 1887; *KM*, 29 April 1887. This latter report says the repairs at Aqcha cost 3 lakh tangas and that the people of Sar-i Pul, Andkhui and Aqcha, who had to pay for the repairs, were "much displeased." The new(?) fort was said to have been built on salt ground and would not last six months. The wells in the *chul* between Andkhui and Panjdeh were also cleansed, but this was probably necessitated by the arrival of the Pushtun settlers, *Panjdeh News*, 3 Aug. 1887, SLEP:189, fols. 1441-2.

[221] In 1887 Isma'il Khan was about 21 years old, married, with one child (Maitland 1888, ii, 62).

[222] *Chajui Khan*, 20 Aug. 1887; *PCD*, 14 Sept. 1887, SLEI:51, fol. 543; *HNL*, 24 Nov. 1887, SLEI:52, fol. 125.

[223] The motive for this refusal may have been personal as well as political and military, since Ishaq Khan was on good terms with the Ghilzais and related to the tribe through marriage (Kakar 1971, 146).

released several important political exiles whom the Amir had expelled to Balkh, informing his cousin:

> Balkh belongs to me, Kabul, Kandahar, Herat, Badakhshan and Jalalabad are in your possession. It is not a proper thing to demand revenue of me. It is also desirable that your Highness should show mercy to, and leniency towards, your subjects so that disturbances may not extend.[224]

The tone and content of Ishaq Khan's letter reveals a considerable impatience with 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's government and a conviction that the governor of Afghan Turkistan was in no way inferior to the Amir. Kabul, consequently, had no right to interfere in the affairs of the province. This epistle, therefore, was a clear warning to the Amir that Ishaq Khan was on the brink of rebellion and wished to establish his own, and Balkh's, independence from Kabul. Not unexpectedly, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan was infuriated with his governor's message and wrote back an angry riposte,[225] but Ishaq Khan refused to back down and continued to defy 'Abd al-Rahman Khan by insisting that the prisoners were guiltless of the crimes of which they had been accused and added insult to injury by fixing allowances for the exiles (Kakar 1971, 146).[226]

The power struggle between the two Barakzais intensified during the winter of 1887/8. In December, the Amir imprisoned a number of Ishaq's officials who had come to Kabul and summoned the governor of Afghan Turkistan to appear in Kabul in person (Kakar 1971, 146).[227] A variety of reasons are given for this decision (Kakar 1971, 147). Ishaq was required in the Afghan capital to discuss the problem of the Maimana border. Furthermore, at the beginning of the winter, the Amir had a recurrence of the chronic disease which had plagued him since his youth and was planning to spend the winter in the warmer climate of Jalalabad in the hope that he would find some relief from the excruciating pain which was one of the side effects of the disease (Lee 1991a, 211). As a sop to encourage the governor's compliance with the order, the Amir offered to appoint Ishaq Khan as his deputy in Kabul whilst he was in the south and to send the heir apparent, Habibullah, to take control of Balkh (Khalfin, 256).[228] Ishaq

[224] *KNL*, 23 Aug. 1887, SLEI:51, fols. 383-7.
[225] *Ibid.* The letter seems to have been brought by hand of an agent of Ishaq Khan's who was in Kabul escorting a number of anirs from Afghan Turkistan, *PCD*, 24 Aug. 1887.
[226] *Ibid.*
[227] *KNL*, 20 Dec. 1887, SLEI:52, fols. 381-2.
[228] *PCD*, 9 Feb. 1888, SLEI:52, fol. 717.

Khan suspecting, probably correctly, that the Amir was merely finding excuses to lure him to the capital and have him done away with, ignored the order and the Amir set out for Jalalabad, leaving his son and heir in charge of Kabul (Lee 1991a, 221).

During the winter months, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, far from recovering, grew worse until, by his own admission, he was afflicted by the worst and most prolonged attack of the illness he had ever experienced. This "long and severe" attack lasted for some six months, until the spring of 1888 when the warmer, drier weather brought some remission from the terrible agonies he had been suffering (Lee 1991a, 219-20). Rumours of the Amir's state of health circulated widely, even though those found spreading them risked being put to death. When the road to Afghan Turkistan reopened in the spring of 1888, these reports began to trickle northwards. Ishaq Khan, realising that Nauroz would signal a new diplomatic offensive by Kabul to bring him to heel and hearing of the Amir's chronic sickness, began to prepare for the inevitable confrontation.

In the early weeks of 1888, intelligence reports from "trusted" persons claimed that Russian officials had been to see Ishaq Khan,[229] something which both Imperial Russian and Soviet 'official' historians emphatically deny as "factually untrue and politically harmful" and based on the "falsified publications of British bourgeois historians" (Khalfin, 253).[230] Though the evidence for Russian support of Ishaq Khan's rebellion is far from conclusive, it would seem only logical that the sardar would try to enlist the Tsar's support and sound out the attitude of the authorities in Bukhara and Tashkent in the event of an uprising. Certainly, a rebellion north of the Hindu Kush, led by a member of the Afghan royal family, would have been welcomed by the more hawkish Russian generals, since it provided an opportunity to control the affairs of Afghan Turkistan indirectly whilst dealing a potentially mortal blow to Britain's erstwhile ally in Kabul.

The clandestine visit of the Russian envoys to Balkh must have given some grounds for encouragement, since in May, Ishaq Khan sent his own confidential agent, General Ahmad Khan, to Samarkand where he provided intelligence of the situation in Afghanistan to N. V. Charykov and appealed for "the protection of the 'White Tsar'"

[229] *PCD*, 22 Feb. 1888, SLEI:52, fol. 755; *KNL*, 17 July 1888, SLEI:54, fols. 727-9.

[230] Khalfin's comments are directed at Pokrovskiy and his school who maintained that Russia did support Ishaq Khan's rebellion.

(Khalfin, 256-7). Khalfin's account of Ahmad Khan's time in Samarkand, however, raises nearly as many questions as it answers. The reasons why Ishaq Khan's envoy remained in Russian Turkistan for over three months and the nature or extent of his discussion with the authorities there, still remain something of a mystery. Certainly, had Russia already decided not to support the rebellion in the spring of 1888, as Khalfin would have us believe, then there was every reason for Ahmad Khan to be summarily dismissed back across the Amu Darya in case Britain got wind of his presence.[231]

Spring brought another problem for Ishaq Khan. Several years of drought and the combined effect of locusts and the requirements of feeding many thousands of immigrants, had not only produced serious shortages of food and supplies, but put severe strains on his treasury. As crops failed, landowners began to default on their taxes, trade slumped and the amount of pay overdue the Afghan troops consequently increased with every month that went by. In April matters had reached such a pitch that at least one regiment mutinied, killing their colonel, and a more regular system of payments for the soldiers was inaugurated to retain their loyalty.[232] Ishaq Khan also tried again, unsuccessfully, to subvert Maimana's authority, while a number of troops loyal to him, "with utter disregard for the authority of the ruler of the district," began to oppress the Uzbeks.[233]

Towards the end of April or early May, the Amir renewed his demand for the presence of the governor, or his son, in Kabul. Once more, Ishaq Khan refused, informing 'Abd al-Rahman Khan that his son, Isma'il Khan, was studying and was unable to make the journey lest his education suffer.[234] 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's next move was to order two senior generals in Afghan Turkistan to Kabul in an attempt to remove some of the forces available to Ishaq Khan, but this order, too, was disregarded, the Amir being told that their departure would affect the morale of the army.[235] Meanwhile, Sardar 'Abdullah Khan, governor of Badakhshan and an enemy of Ishaq Khan, along with other informers, reported to the Amir that Ishaq Khan was intriguing

[231] In the summer there was one report that Ishaq Khan had sent his son, Isma'il Khan, to Russian territory, *KNL*, 10 July 1888, SLEI:54, fol. 650. There were also reports that Bukhara's Amir planned to send troops to help if 'Abd al-Rahman Khan were to invade, *KNL*, 7 Aug. 1888, SLEI:54, fols. 925-6.

[232] *HNL*, 24 Nov. 1887, 17 May 1888; *PCD*, 8 Dec. 1887. *TFJ*, April 1888; *PCD*, 4 May, 30 June 1888, SLEI:53, fols. 544, 923, vol. 54, fol. 369a.

[233] *HNL*, 30 April 1888, SLEI:54, fol. 6.

[234] *PCD*, 4 May 1888; *KNL*, 12 June 1888, SLEI:54, fol. 185.

[235] *KNL*, 10 July 1888.

with the Russians. 'Abd al-Rahman Khan responded by issuing a general order to the governors of all districts north of the Hindu Kush to appear in Kabul and account for their actions in person.[236]

The Amir's order was the catalyst for the rebellion. Using the excuse of the royal decree, Ishaq Khan summoned all the senior civil and military governors to a general council at Shadyan (Kakar 1971, 147; Khafi ii, 619-70).[237] On 25 June 1888 (14 Shawwal, 1305) the assembled dignitaries, both Afghan and Turkistanian, almost unanimously agreed that the Amir was ruining the country and swore on the Qur'an to support Ishaq Khan in a bid to wrest the whole of Afghanistan from 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's hands (Kakar 1971, 147; Khafi ii, 169-70).[238] The elders and commanders placed their individual seals on four Qur'ans, which were subsequently placed in the sanctuary of the shrine at Mazar-i Sharif where they were recovered by 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's followers after the failure of the uprising.[239] The outcome of the meeting was kept secret from Kabul by the imposition of strict censorship on all letters leaving Afghan Turkistan. This allowed Ishaq Khan the few weeks' grace he needed to canvas the support of junior officers, commanders of individual regiments who had not been present at the meeting and other amirs and elders of Turkistan (Kakar 1971, 147).[240]

For about a month[241] Ishaq Khan successfully maintained his facade of still being subject to Kabul, sending a gift of two hundred asses to the Afghan capital, requesting the Amir to provide him with a lithographic press (to which 'Abd al-Rahman Khan consented) and even distributing 12,000 rupees in alms for his cousin's recovery.[242] Indeed, in the middle of July the Amir's household, unaware of the rebellion about to burst out of the north, contemplated a pilgrimage to the shrine at Mazar-i Sharif to pray for the *padshah*.[243] It was not until

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[236] *KNL*, 7 Aug. 1888. S. E. Wheeler, 149 suggests that the Amir deliberately provoked the rebellion, "in order that the northern provinces might be brought more completely under his control."

[237] *NKVT*, 1 Jan. 1889, SLEI:56, fols. 287-9.

[238] C. L. Griesbach, *Journeys*, 1888-89 says that, though the governors went to Mazar-i Sharif, a number of them did not submit. Khalfin, 257 claims the rebellion started on 18 July, but without citing any authority. Like most Russian and Soviet authors, he confuses the Chahar Wilayat with Afghan Turkistan.

[239] *NKVT*, 1 Jan. 1889.

[240] *KNL*, 7 Aug. 1888.

[241] Kakar 1971, 147, from Khafi; *PCD*, 29 Aug. 1888, SLEI:55, fols. 175-6, both of whom say 2 weeks, but see text.

[242] *PCD*, 14 July 1888, SLEI:54, fols. 727-9; *PCD*, 12 Sept. 1888; *KNL*, 17 July 1888.

[243] *PCD*, 14 July 1888.

4 August, when a messenger arrived in Paghman with a letter from the governor of Badakhshan, which he had managed to smuggle past Ishaq Khan's guards, that the Amir realised that his cousin had rebelled.[244]

The failure of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan to apprehend the true state of affairs beyond the Hindu Kush must be attributed mainly to the sudden return of his affliction, which attacked him with even greater severity than it had during the previous winter. At about the time of the Shadyan *majlis*, the Amir had a dangerous relapse and cancelled all meetings with his advisers, with the exception of one or two of his most loyal courtiers (Lee 1991a, 212; Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 266-7).[245] A few days later the Amir, somewhat recovered from the physical pain but with his mind still affected by the disease, assembled his *durbar* and made use of the occasion to castigate "all the Afghans," including himself, as infidels, declaring that the only real Muslims were "the Persians and the Kizilbash." 'Ali, he stated, "had issued orders from Mazar-i Sharif that ... tigers and goats should drink water from the same spring."[246] Had the Amir really the gift of prophesy, which he claimed (Lee 1991a, 228-9), he would have known that quite a different message was emanating from the shrine of Mazar-i Sharif.

Using the excuse of a plague of cholera which was sweeping through Kabul, the Amir moved his court to the cooler and less fetid climate of Paghman, but a few days later, he was said to have caught "a cold" which was swiftly followed by fever, 'gout' and chronic insomnia. Sharp neuralgic pains shot through his feet, thighs and arms, whilst his limbs and joints swelled to such an extent that he became immobile. By the end of the month, the pain had spread to the kidneys and, at the height of the attacks, he fell into prolonged periods of insensibility and unconsciousness (Gray, 159; Lee 1991a, 212-3).[247] Despite the application of leeches and other physic, the exquisite agony continued, punctuated only by brief, intermittent remissions (Lee 1991a, 212).

As had happened on previous occasions when the Amir was this ill, a veil of secrecy was flung over the whole proceedings, which merely added to the rumours which were already circulating that the

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[244] *KNL*, 7 Aug. 1888.
[245] *KNL*, 6 July 1888, SLEI:54, fol. 443.
[246] *KNL*, 10 July 1888.
[247] *KNL*, 31 July 1888; *PCD*, 16 Aug. 1888, SLEI:54, fols. 813, 953.

*padshah* was either dead or dying. In order to quash such stories, on the occasional days when the attacks were less violent and the pain somewhat abated, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan was either carried or hobbled on crutches, into his council chamber. These public appearances, however, far from reassuring his people, merely emphasised how very ill the Amir was.

Not only was it plain from his physical appearance that the Amir was chronically sick, but his mental condition gave cause for even greater concern. The extraordinary and bizarre condemnation of all Afghans as infidels and the idiosyncratic proclamation of the 'tigers and goats' oracle, was followed, at the end of July, by a public tirade against the "ignorant and short-sighted" people he ruled. He hurled abuse and obscenities at senior army commanders, threatened to turn their wives over to the Russians and ordered an escalation in executions, most of which were carried out in particularly brutal and unIslamic, ways.[248] During such terrible moods no one, not even Habibullah, the heir apparent, dared to carry out the meanest function of his office without the Amir's specific approval, lest he too should be condemned to a similar fate. By the end of July the Kabul *wakil* reported that the government was "at a standstill" (Lee 1991a, 212-3).[249] The problem of Afghan Turkistan was the last thing anyone in the Afghan Court was concerned about.

At the beginning of August, reports reaching Afghan Turkistan stated that the Amir was either dead, or at death's door (Gray, 146; Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 266-7). Having already secured the loyalty of nearly all the leaders of Afghan Turkistan, both Afghan and indigenous, with the exception of Husain Khan Ming of Maimana, who had been executed (see below), Ishaq Khan returned to Mazar-i Sharif where, on Friday 10 August 1888, "by beat of drum," he caused his own name to be inserted into the *khutba* prayer in the mosque attached to 'Ali's shrine (Kakar 1971, 147; *Gazetteer* (1907) ii, xxvii).[250] Having assumed the Amirship, Ishaq had a seal made and struck coins with the inscription, "Amir Muhammad Khan, son of the late Amir A'zam Khan" (Kakar 1971, 147-8)[251] and sent

[248] *KNL*, 24 July 1888, SLEI:54, fol. 787.

[249] *KNL*, 27 July 1888, SLEI:54, fol. 791.

[250] *PCD*, 29 Aug. 1888; *KNL*, 14 Aug. 1888, SLEI:54, fols. 939-41; *PCD*, 25 Sept. 1888, SLEI:55, fol. 635; *NKVT*, 18 June 1889, SLEI:57, fol. 1006.

[251] From Khafi. Kakar rightly dismisses 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's version of Ishaq Khan's seal, "There is no God but God, Amir Muhammad Ishaq Khan." This is a parody of the *shahada*, or the essential confession, of Islam, and is clearly official propaganda designed to denigrate his

proclamations throughout Afghanistan urging all tribes and races to join him in *jihad* (Kakar 1971, 148-9; Khafi ii, 172).[252] In order to lend more credibility to his mission he announced that he had had a vision in the shrine at Mazar-i Sharif which had called him to "stand against Abdul Rahman Khan's oppressions,"[253] an oracle which apparently was endorsed by the *mutawalli* and ishans of that sanctuary (Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 265). This proclamation may well have deliberately harked back to the millennialism of Ishan Rasul's revolt during Nadir Shah's occupation of Balkh, and it says much about the importance of the Mazar-i Sharif shrine in the national life of both Lesser Turkistan, and Afghanistan as a whole, that both the Amir and Ishaq Khan sought to legitimise their actions with oracles purporting to issue from it.

News of Ishaq's declaration reached Kabul within thirty-six hours. The Amir, who was still chronically ill and mentally disturbed, broke into a violent, incoherent fury. The whole Muhammadzai clan, he fumed, was "bad ... lawless" and "untrustworthy," its members were "like camels" with "no sense of their own" and he even remarked that, "if I belong to this tribe, I ought not to be trusted either" (Lee 1991a, 213).[254] The Amir expressed himself dumbfounded at Ishaq Khan's revolt for, he claimed, he "could not bring [himself] to believe anything against him" (Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 265-6), a myth which he was to maintain, at least publicly, until the end of his life. The Sardar had been "brought ... up as my son," he asserted, and he had had "full confidence in him and his Oath of Allegiance" (Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 262).

The rebellion caught both Kabul and Calcutta completely unprepared and the Amir had no contingency plans for a war with Balkh. The machinery of government was as paralysed as 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's feet and hands. The shock of the news and the superhuman effort required to organise an adequate and swift response precipitated a

rival. It implies that Ishaq Khan aspired not just to equality with the Prophet of Islam, but that he was also guilty of the sin of *shirk* by claiming equality with Allah.

[252] *KNL*, 14 Aug. 1888; *TFJ*, Aug. 1888, SLEI:55, fols. 133-4.

[253] *KNL*, 24 Aug. 1888, SLEI:55, fol. 17, which claims Ishaq Khan had written to the Ghilzais stating, "I am determined to destroy the tyrant Abdur Rahman Khan." Cf. the "extraordinary" report in Herat from a *haji* who had come from Afghan Turkistan and who claimed that Ishaq had declared 'Abd al-Rahman Khan a *kafir*, *KNL*, 26 Oct. 1888, SLEI:55, fols. 777-8.

[254] *KNL*, 14 Aug. 1888. As early as 1885, during the visit of the Amir to India, the extent and severity of the Amir's illness was known within the British administration. He admitted to Surgeon-Major Roe that he had "chronic kidney disease of old standing and which ... seems progressive," Surgeon-Major W. A. S. Roe, *Memorandum of the State of Health of H.H. the Amir of Afghanistan*, 1885.

new, more virulent attack of the terrible disease which was inexorably eating into the Amir's body and mind (Lee 1991a, 213). The Kabul *wakil* warned his superiors not to underestimate the seriousness of the rebellion. The people of Afghan Turkistan, he wrote, were "so much pleased" with their governor that even women and children were prepared to take up arms on his behalf and there was every likelihood that Ishaq Khan would overthrow a ruler whose repressions and terror had alienated every tribe and ethnic group in the country.[255] However, though his assessment of Ishaq's popularity was undoubtedly correct, the *wakil* grossly over-estimated the extent of support for the sardar, claiming that Badakhshan and Maimana had gone over to the rebel cause. Both provinces had, in fact, remained loyal to Kabul.[256] Nor had the British native agent taken into account the courage and military genius of the Amir and his battle-hardened generals. Both factors were to play a major part in the swift extinguishing of a revolt which, had it been better led and organised, could well have toppled the Amir and changed the course of Afghan history.

Following the August declaration at Mazar-i Sharif, Ishaq Khan sent troops against Sardar 'Abdullah Khan Tokhi, governor of Qataghan and Badakhshan, who had remained loyal to Kabul, and laid siege to Andarab, Khanabad and Khinjan (Khafi ii, 173-6; Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 268).[257] Though it was a military necessity for Ishaq Khan to secure his eastern and western flanks before he marched against Kabul, the opposition of the Afghan governors in Badakhshan and Maimana to the uprising and the decision of Ishaq Khan to simultaneously send troops against these three strategic fortresses, spread his forces very thinly. Even so, in the early weeks the rebellion prospered. The Shaikh 'Ali Hazaras, who controlled the main route between Bamiyan and Khulm, joined Ishaq, closed the road and seized several thousand sheep from the vicinity of Bamiyan. 'Abdullah Khan Tokhi was forced to abandon Khanabad and fled to Khinjan, where he and a few hundred men decided to make a stand. Ishaq.Khan's forces followed up their victory by seizing Badakhshan (Kakar 1971, 149).[258] Further encouragement came when nearly all of the Pushtun exiles and colonists joined Ishaq and swelled the ranks of the rebel army.[259] Following the defeat of 'Abdullah Khan Tokhi,

[255] *Ibid. KNL*, 21 Aug. 1888, SLEI:54, fols. 969-70.
[256] *KNL*, 28 Aug. 1888, SLEI:55, fols. 21-3.
[257] *KNL*, 24 Aug. 1888.
[258] *Ibid. KNL*, 28 Aug. 1888; *KNL*, 14 Sept. 1888, SLEI:55, fols. 479-80.
[259] *PCD*, 12, 25 Sept. 1888, SLEI:55, fols. 497-8, 635-6. According to *KNL*, 28 Aug. 1888

Sultan Murad of Qunduz threw in his lot with the rebels (Kakar 1971, 149-50; Khafi ii, 176).[260]

Encouraged by his successes, Ishaq Khan dispatched the deposed Afshar ruler of Andkhui, Daulat Beg Khan, to Kabul with a message for 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, suggesting that he leave Kabul before it was too late. The unfortunate envoy was thrown in prison, though a short while later he was released and sent back to Afghan Turkistan accompanied by one of the Amir's confidential agents, presumably to inform Ishaq Khan that he should expect no easy victory.[261]

Despite his chronic ill-health, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan managed to galvanise his government into action. Ishaq Khan's three brothers, along with 360 relatives of men known to be in his service, were put in prison. Included in this purge were Mustufi Muhammad Khan the sons, or *sahibzadas*, of various other amirs of Afghan Turkistan who were living as hostages in Kabul (Kakar 1971, 150-2).[262] In an effort to win public opinion over to his side, the Amir also secured a *fatwa* from the mullahs in Kabul and Jalalabad which declared Ishaq Khan a rebel[263] and accused him of being aligned with Russia, thus giving him the excuse to declare the forthcoming war a *jihad* (Kakar 1971, 150).[264] In fact, as far as Ishaq Khan receiving direct financial or military help from Russia, the opposite was true. Shortly after the Mazar declaration, another envoy from Ishaq Khan arrived at Qarqi and offered to place the province under Russian protection, only to be told

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Ishaq had secured the loyalty of 127 influential men, whilst *KNL*, 24 Aug. 1888 reports that Ishaq had released 4,730 prisoners and exiles. *KNL*, 17 Aug. 1888 says that there were 40,000 Afghan families living in Afghan Turkistan without taking into account the ones the Amir had deported. Later *PCD*, 12 Sept. 1888 gives the figure for deportees as 14,000 (individuals?).

As usual, the numbers of troops under Ishaq's authority vary from source to source. *KNL*, 24 Aug. 1888 reported that 11 infantry and 6 cavalry regiments had defected with their artillery. *PCD*, 12 Sept. 1888 has 6 infantry regiments, 4 cavalry, 4 artillery batteries and 11,000 levies, but *KNL*, 14 Sept. 1888 has 44,000. *KNL*, 17 Aug. 1888 which dates from the first week of the revolt, gives the much lower figure of 7,500 men. Kakar 1971, 152 says the "total military resources," i.e. the number of regular government troops in Afghan Turkistan, Maimana and Qataghan-Badakhshan, totalled 18,700 men with 86 guns. At the battle of Ghaznigak, Ishaq's forces numbered from 20,000 to 24,000 (Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 268). Many of these men, though, were irregulars and not front-line troops. The rest of Ishaq's force was spread throughout the Chahar Wilayat and Qataghan, in order to stave off the advance of government forces from Maimana and Khinjan.

[260] *PCD*, 12 Sept. 1888; *A History of Ishak Khan's Rebellion*, 12 Nov. 1888, SLEI:55, fols. 943-6. He contributed 2 lakh tangas (at 3 tangas to the Kabuli rupee) and promised to send levies.

[261] *KNL*, 26 Oct. 1888.

[262] *KNL*, 21, 24 Aug. 1884.

[263] *PCD*, 9 Sept. 1893, SLEI:72, part I, fols. 63-9.

[264] *KNL*, 28 Aug. 1888; *KNL*, 4 Sept. 1888, SLEI:55, fols. 189-92.

that the Tsar was not willing to support his "risky undertaking" lest Russia be drawn into conflict with Britain (Khalfin, 258-60). Ishaq was thus left to his own devices, to sink or swim as best he could without help from across the river.

Within a matter of days General Ghulam Haidar Khan Orakzai, who had led the campaign against the Ghilzais and hence had experience of Uzbek strategies, since some 20,000 levies from Afghan Turkistan had fought under his banner, was sent from Ghazni to Bamiyan. Three regiments of infantry were dispatched from Kabul "by the short route", presumably across the Salang Pass, to relieve Sardar 'Abdullah Khan Tokhi, who was still holding out in Khinjan, and with orders to join forces with the Ghazni column at Saighan once the siege was lifted (Kakar 1971, 151; Khafi ii, 176-9; Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 265-6).[265] Amongst those troops sent against Ishaq Khan were some seven hundred Uzbek *sowar*s, one thousand Hindus recruited from the local mercantile population of Kabul and a number of Qizilbash regiments.[266]

One problem which threatened to undermine all these efforts was the relative emptiness of the Kabul treasury, which contained only 60,000 Kabuli rupees, hardly sufficient to meet the additional expenses of the war. In order to pay his troops, the Amir ordered twelve lakh of Indian rupees, part of Britain's subsidy which, in modern fiscal terms, was the equivalent of the Afghan National Bank's foreign currency reserves, melted down and converted into the local currency. Since the Kabuli rupee was more debased than the Indian coinage, the Amir was thus able to make the money go a great deal further and satisfy his troops' demands for pay.[267]

Whilst Ishaq Khan was still occupied with subduing Badakhshan, the Amir's troops marched swiftly into the Hazarajat and across the Salang Pass. On 16 August Bamiyan fell to Ghulam Haidar Khan,[268] thus securing the eastern Hazarajat and the access road to Aibak for the Amir. Brigadier Saiyid Shah Khan quickly relieved Khinjan. This fortress lay across the Bamiyan to Baghlan road at the point where the

[265] *KNL*, 14 Aug. 1888.
[266] *KNL*, 28 Aug. 1888.
[267] *Ibid.* They were being melted down at a rate of 10,000 Indian rupees a day. Ishaq Khan had also opened his treasury. *KNL*, 21 Aug. 1888 reports that he had distributed 8 months' pay and given each man 1 tila each in addition: a sizable sum, considering the monthly salary of a sepoy was 8 rupees. *PCD*, 25 Sept. 1888 however, claims that he had raised their pay to Rs 10 *per mensum* with a promise to remit 3 years' revenue to those who joined up.
[268] *History of Ishak Khan's Rebellion*, 1888.

Andarab and Qunduz rivers converged. Thus, the Amir's forces secured an important, strategic foothold in Afghan Turkistan and outflanked General Najm al-Din Khan, the father-in-law of Ishaq Khan, who was holding the outposts of Kahmard and the 'iron fort' of Shash Burja (Kakar 1971, 151).[269] Brigadier Saiyid Shah marched up the Andarab river and on 3 September joined forces with Ghulam Haidar Khan. Together they attacked Shash Burja, which soon surrendered in the face of a fierce artillery bombardment.[270] Three regiments of infantry, which Ishaq Khan had dispatched to assist the defence of Saighan, failed to reach the area in time, probably because they were forced to use a more difficult route now that the Andarab road was in government hands. When news of the fall of the area reached them, they turned back to Baghlan, allowing General Ghulam Haidar to push on through the mountains and into the plains.[271] Najm al-Din Khan and a number of important leaders of the rebellion were captured and sent in chains to Kabul. After a brief and acrimonious interview with the Amir, Najm al-Din and two other rebel leaders were put to death by having boiling oil poured over their bodies (Khafi ii, 177).[272]

The capture of Saighan, Khinjan and the road to Tashqurghan forced the Shaikh 'Ali Hazaras to submit. Fearing the worst, their leaders petitioned the Amir for permission for the whole tribe to emigrate to Persia, but their request was refused. Instead, they were given the choice of forcible relocation near Qandahar or Herat, or expulsion to India.[273]

By the second week of September, Afghan Turkistan was being attacked from three sides but Ishaq Khan, lacking in tactical sense, remained static in Khanabad whilst the rebellion fell apart before his eyes. On 17 September, Ghulam Haidar Khan and Saiyid Shah Khan took Aibak, where they were joined six days later by 'Abdullah Khan Tokhi. In the west, Belcheragh, Kauliyan, Sar-i Pul and Daulatabad had all fallen to forces from Maimana and Herat and Isma'il Khan, Ishaq Khan's son, had retreated to Shibarghan after offering only token resistance (see below; Kakar 1971, 152; Khafi ii, 177-8).[274]

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[269] *Ibid. KNL*, 11 Sept. 1888, SLEI:55, fols. 475-6.
[270] *Ibid. HNL*, 14, 17 Sept. 1888, SLEI:55, fols. 480-81, 722.
[271] *HNL*, 17 Sept. 1888.
[272] *KNL*, 14 Sept. 1888. *HNL*, 27 Sept. 1888, SLEI:55, fols. 753-4 says their eyes were put out.
[273] *KNL*, 21 Sept. 1888, SLEI:55, fols. 533-4.
[274] *KNL*, 18 Sept. 1888, SLEI:55, fol. 529. The report claims Aqcha had also fallen, but Isma'il Khan was still in Shibarghan.

Ishaq Khan, therefore, was caught on the horns of a dilemma. If he sent the bulk of his army south to deal with Ghulam Haidar Khan, he risked losing Shibarghan and being attacked from the rear by Rustam 'Ali Khan and General Ghaus al-Din Khan. The sardar's passivity was to cost him, and the people of Afghan Turkistan, dearly.

Ishaq Khan finally decided to make his stand at Ghaznigak, in a wide valley south of the Tang-i Tashqurghan, the narrow gorge south which, even today, is the eastern gateway to the northern provinces of Afghanistan. On 25 September Ghulam Haidar's forces came within sight of Ishaq's advanced guard, but instead of moving up to support his troops with his presence, Ishaq remained behind in Tashqurghan. More problems followed when the Mir Ataliq of Qunduz, possibly upset at recent raids which Ishaq had ordered on the recalcitrant villages in Qataghan,[275] abandoned him and fled across the Amu Darya (Kakar 1971, 152).

The decisive battle of Ishaq Khan's brief rebellion began at sunrise on 27 September. Even at this late date, however, Ishaq Khan hung back. The previous evening he had received pledges, sealed on the Qur'an, that a substantial number of the Amir's troops were planning to cross the lines and, in order to prevent any defectors being killed by friendly fire, his troops were told to hold their fire until Ghulam Haidar attacked them (Khafi ii, 179-80).[276] Having again surrendered the initiative to the enemy, Ishaq committed a further blunder by locating his headquarters on a hilltop some considerable distance from the main battlefield, thus hampering his communications.

The battle lasted until late into the afternoon[277] and initially went Ishaq's way. Sardar 'Abdullah Khan Tokhi opened the attack for the government forces, but a section of the Balkh army went onto the offensive and completely defeated him. Many of the Amir's troops, including the governor of Badakhshan himself, fled back up the river towards Bamiyan, where they were plundered by the Shaikh 'Ali Hazaras (Kakar 1971, 152).[278] General Ghulam Haidar Khan, however,

[275] *HNL*, 10 Oct. 1888, SLEI:55, fol. 787.

[276] Since it does not seem that these troops defected, we must consider the possibility that this was a deliberate attempt by Ghulam Haidar Khan to deceive Ishaq Khan and lull him into a sense of false security.

[277] "Proclamation by H. H. the Amir of Afghanistan," n.d., 1888, in *Letter from British Agent, Kabul*, 9 Oct. 1888, SLEI:55, fols. 709-10 where the Amir claims the battle lasted until 2.00 a.m., whilst, at the same time, reporting that there was a major attack by Husain Khan at 3.30. Khafi ii, 180-3 implies the main encounter only lasted 3 hours, from about 10 a.m. to early afternoon.

[278] *Ibid. KNL*, 5 Oct. 1888, SLEI:55, fols. 704-6.

hearing of the defeat of one wing of his army, marched to its support. They surprised Ishaq Khan's men looting Abdullah Khan's baggage and soon had them on the run. Abandoning their guns, the Balkh troops fled from the battle towards the narrow gorge south of Tashqurghan, hotly pursued by Ghulam Haidar (Kakar 1971, 152; Khafi ii, 181-4).[279]

Though Ghulam Haidar's suddden attack was a set-back for Ishaq Khan, it certainly did not constitute a defeat for his whole army, the majority of which had been involved with the successful assault on 'Abdullah Khan Tokhi's positions. Indeed, if anything, the balance of the battle was in Ishaq's favour (Kakar 1971, 152-3; Khafi ii, 181-3).[280] However, Ishaq Khan, hearing of the reverse, and believing that his whole army was in retreat, quit the field of battle and fled towards Tashqurghan, leaving what was left of his army to fend for itself (Khafi ii, 183).[281] As news of his departure spread through the ranks, his army fell apart. Muhammad Husain Khan, the overall commander of Ishaq Khan's forces, remained behind and, in an attempt to snatch victory from the jaws of defeat, ordered those troops who had stayed behind to attack. Further fierce fighting took place in which Husain Khan was killed and his men were overwhelmed by Ghulam Haidar Khan (Khafi ii, 182).[282] The outcome of the battle, however, was still in doubt on the government side until the following morning, when it became apparent that the enemy had fled. When the true state of affairs was known, Ghulam Haidar Khan ordered an advance on Tashqurghan, which he occupied a few hours later.[283]

Ishaq Khan avoided capture by a matter of hours. He had stayed overnight in Tashqurghan, during which time he put to death many officials who had remained loyal to Kabul,[284] and then fled to Mazar-i Sharif from where, on 29 September, having abandoned all hope he fled across the Amu Darya to Shirabad (Khafi ii, 184).[285] He eventually made his way to Samarkand and permanent exile (Kakar 1971, 253). Government forces occupied Mazar-i Sharif on 3 October[286] and, with General Rustam 'Ali Khan's army taking Andkhui and

[279] *Ibid.*
[280] 'Abd al-Ra'uf Nafir, *personal communication*, 1985.
[281] Doubtless he was well aware of the terrible death which his father-in-law had suffered and feared that, if captured, he would suffer a similar fate.
[282] *Proclamation by Amir*, 1888.
[283] *Ibid. History of Ishak Khan's Rebellion*, 1888.
[284] *TFJ*, Sept. 1888, SLEI:55, fol. 691.
[285] *KNL*, 12 Oct. 1888, SLEI:55, fols. 711-2 says he fled to Qarqi.
[286] *Ibid.*

advancing on Shibarghan and Aqcha, all resistance to the Amir collapsed. When news of the victory at Ghaznigak reached Kabul, the Amir ordered a 101 gun salute to be fired to celebrate the recapture of Afghan Turkistan and in order to quash rumours that his army had actually been defeated.[287] Later 'Abd al-Rahman Khan caused a *salamnama* to be inscribed on two tablets on either side of the entrance to 'Ali's tomb at the Mazar-i Sharif shrine to commemorate his victory (McChesney 1991, 271).

*Maimana and Ishaq Khan's Rebellion, 1888*

For four years prior to Ishaq Khan's revolt, Muhammad Husain Khan of Maimana and the governor of Afghan Turkistan had been engaged in a bitter struggle for control of what was left of the Mingid Khanate. Angry at the Amir's refusal to cede control over the city-state to him, following the overthrow of Dilawar Khan in 1884, Ishaq Khan had set out to undermine Hussain Khan's position and secure a foothold in the province. Whilst Auliya Khan acted as the Amir's representative in Maimana, however, he made little headway. In 1886, as we have seen above, following the appointment of a new Resident, Ishaq Khan was able to take a more active role in the principality's internal affairs, possibly because the new Political Agent was more susceptible to pressure from Balkh. Hence, in August 1888, when Ishaq Khan held the crucial meeting in Shadyan, Muhammad Husain Khan was obliged to attend, along with his son and heir, Muhammad Sharif Khan, even though Maimana was still, technically, under the authority of Herat.[288]

According to the oral history of 'Abd al-Ra'uf Nafir, Ishaq Khan had reckoned Husain Khan would not support the rebellion and had already devised a contingency plan to dispose of this recalcitrant amir without staining his own hands with the wali's blood. Muzaffar Khan Ming, son of Hukumat Khan (whom Husain Khan had murdered in 1862)[289] had been living in Mazar-i Sharif for a number of years and had been appointed by Ishaq Khan as a commander of the guard.[290] So

[287] *KNL*, 3, 22 Oct. 1888, SLEI:55, fols. 69, 777-8

[288] *NKVT*, 18 Jan. 1889, SLEI:56, fols. 613-5.

[289] Husain Khan was having an affair with Muzaffar Khan's mother at the time he assassinated Hukumat Khan. Hussain Khan had subsequently married this woman. This was doubtless the prime reason why so little love was lost between Muzaffar Khan and Husain Khan, see Chapter 6.

[290] 'Abd al-Ra'uf Nafir, *personal communication*, 1985.

when Husain Khan refused to place his seal on the Qur'an and contradicted Ishaq Khan's claims that the Amir was dead,[291] stating that, even if this were the case, it was Habibullah Khan, and not the governor of Balkh, who was the rightful heir, the wali was thrown into prison[292] and a large sum of money extorted from him.[293] About a week later, Ishaq Khan, having heard of the arrest and subsequent execution of Sharbat Khan by men loyal to Muhammad Sharif Khan Ming, handed Muhammad Husain Khan over to Muzaffar Khan who, in accordance with the custom of the blood feud, was required to avenge his father's murder.[294] Muzaffar Khan called the statutory two witnesses to testify that Husain Khan had, indeed, assassinated Hukumat Khan, and put him to death with his own hands[295] along with the wali's wives and several of his children.[296] Husain Khan Ming's eldest son, Muhammad Sharif Khan, however, narrowly escaped death. He had returned to Maimana shortly before his father's incarceration in order to celebrate his marriage.[297]

When Muhammad Sharif Khan heard of his father's execution,[298] he sent fifty men from Maimana to Mazar-i Sharif to bring the body back and laid it to rest in the graveyard of the Mingid dynasty in the precincts of the Imam Sahib shrine.[299] The Amir, though, could not bring himself to acknowledge that he owed any debt of gratitude to Husain Khan Ming or his family and when news of his death was announced in Kabul he cynically remarked:

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[291] There is some confusion as to when, and whether, Ishaq Khan was led to believe the Amir was dead. Later, following his public assumption of the Amirship, he called for a *jihad* against the Amir, which suggests that the governor of Afghan Turkistan was aware that 'Abd al-Rahman Khan was still alive. It is possible that Ishaq Khan, aware that the Amir was dangerously ill but still living, exploited the rumours of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's death during the Shadyan durbar to convince waverers that the time was ripe to raise the flag of rebellion. Probably the majority of amirs believed the reports of the Amir's demise, with Husain Khan Ming the only one who expressed serious doubt about the reports.

[292] *KNL*, 14 Aug. 1888; Griesbach, *Journeys*, 1888-89, i, fols. 303, ii, fols. 626-7; *PCD*, 25 Sept. 1888; *TFJ*, Aug. 1888; 'Abd al-Ra'uf Nafir, *personal communication*, 1985.

[293] 7,000 rupees; *KM*, 25 Feb. 1889, SLEI:56, fols. 804-6.

[294] *HNL*, 27 Aug. 1888, SLEI:55, fols. 545-7; *NKVT*, 16 April 1889, SLEI:57, fol. 357; 'Abd al-Ra'uf Nafir, *personal communication*, 1895.

[295] 'Abd al-Ra'uf Nafir, *personal communication*, 1985; *HNL*, 15 June 1888 who says Dilawar Khan, another of Hukumat Khan's sons, who put the wali to death.

[296] *KNL*, 14 May 1890, SLEI:60, fol. 495.

[297] *NKVT*, 11 Jan. 1889, SLEI:56, fols. 532-3.

[298] Probably after the defeat of Ishaq Khan, though according to 'Abd al-Ra'uf it was whilst Ishaq Khan was still in power, *HNL*, 25 Oct. 1888, SLEI:55, fols. 1154-6.

[299] 'Abd al-Ra'uf Nafir, *personal communication*, 1985.

> It is a good thing he has been killed. He has received just punishment. If he were sincere, why did he not come direct to me? As he went over to Ishak, he must have gone with a view to enter into an engagement with him, but as they could not agree between themselves, he was slain.[300]

Ishaq Khan had more success in persuading the Afghan officers responsible for the Maimana garrison to join the revolt. General Sharbat Khan, military commander of Sar-i Pul and the Maimana sub-district, along with all the senior officers from Maimana, declared for the governor of Balkh, and placed their seals on the Qur'ans.[301] They were sent back to Sar-i Pul, where they joined forces with Sardar Isma'il Khan Ishaq's son, and marched to the Maimana border-post of Belcheragh.[302] Whilst Isma'il Khan and his troops guarded the frontier, Sharbat Khan continued down the road to Maimana.[303]

The rebels arrived at the gates of Maimana after dusk but they appear to have persuaded the guards to let them in.[304] The General immediately called together Muhammad Sharif Khan Ming and the fifty or so subalterns and junior officers of the Afghan garrison. After reading out a letter from Ishaq Khan, which urged them to accept him as their Amir, he brought out a Qur'an and demanded that the wali's son and the troops affix their seals as a sign of their support for the rebellion.[305] Neither Muhammad Sharif Khan nor the Afghan non-commissioned officers, however, were prepared to submit. Instead, they arrested General Sharbat Khan and a number of the most senior rebel officers. Three mingbashis, probably supporters of the Mingid pretender, Muzaffar Khan, were also detained.

The prisoners were sent in chains to Herat.[306] When the prisoners reached Karukh, one march from Herat, their escort sent a messenger on ahead to inform the governor of that place of the recent events in Maimana and to request instructions about how to proceed. Fearing that the presence of General Sharbat Khan and his followers might

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[300] *NKVT*, 16 April 1889.

[301] After the rebellion had failed, they cut their seals off to avoid reprisals. Their deception was discovered by the Amir and they were executed, *HNL*, 6 Sept. 1888, SLEI:55, fols. 630-1; *HNL*, 21 Feb. 1889, SLEI:56, fols. 1179-80; *NKVT*, 30 Dec. 1889, SLEI:59, fol. 176; Griesbach, *Journeys*, 1888-89, i, fol. 303.

[302] *KNL*, 18 June, 14 Aug. 1888; *TFJ*, Aug. 1888; *PCD*, 16 Aug. 1888; *HNL*, 13, 20 Aug. 1888, SLEI:55, fols. 487-8, 491-2.

[303] *KNL*, 14 Sept. 1888; *HNL*, 23 Aug. 1888, SLEI:55, fols. 479-80, 493; *HNL*, 6 Sept. 1888.

[304] *KNL*, 14 Sept. 1888.

[305] *HNL*, 20 Aug. 1888; *KNL*, 14 Aug. 1888; *NKVT*, 19 March 1889, SLEI:56, fols. 1214-5.

[306] *TFJ*, Aug. 1888; *HNL*, 13, 20, 27 Aug. 1888; *KNL*, 14 Aug. 1888; Griesbach, *Journeys*, 1888-89, i, fol. 303, ii, fols. 626-7. According to *KNL*, 14 Sept. 1888 Sharbat Khan put to death the brother of Faramuz Khan, the Commander-in-Chief of the Herat garrison.

lead to disturbances in the city, the prisoners were beheaded on the spot. The head of the unfortunate General, along with those of five other ringleaders, was sent to Herat from whence it was forwarded to Kabul, where it was displayed publicly in the main bazaar (Khafi ii, 172-3).[307]

The arrest and execution of General Sharbat Khan and his fellow officers left most of the regiments in Maimana officerless and the city without a governor.[308] Some structure of authority in Maimana, both civil and military, was essential, for a number of Maimana's rebel officers had taken control of Belcheragh and Sardar Isma'il Khan, having heard of Sharbat Khan's arrest, had threatened to attack Muhammad Sharif Khan if he did not release the prisoners immediately. The subsequent execution of the rebels, therefore, made an attack on Maimana much more likely. Muhammad Sharif Khan, the eldest surviving son of Husain Khan, therefore assumed the mantle of wali with the consent of the mingbashis and the Afghan garrison. The officerless regiments elected from amongst their number 'Abd al-Qayyum Khan of Wardak as their General and another Afghan from Kohistan to the rank of Brigadier.[309]

Having organised the affairs of the area as best he could, Muhammad Sharif Khan sent a number of senior members of his family, accompanied by two representatives of the Afghan garrison, to Herat to request immediate assistance against Isma'il Khan.[310] Whilst he waited for the Herat army to arrive, he sent out Mullah 'Aziz Khan, commander of the Sunni Hazara and Jamshidi cavalry,[311] and Amir Muhammad Khan, a "reverend, old and noble man"[312] whose five hundred *khassadar*s had remained loyal to the Amir, with some six hundred Aimaq and Uzbek cavalry, to reconnoitre and harass the enemy in Gurziwan and Belcheragh (Khafi ii, 173).[313] During the

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[307] *HNL*, 13 Aug. 1888; *TFJ*, Aug. 1888; *KNL*, 28 Aug. 1888; Griesbach, *Journeys*, 1888-89, i, fol. 303.

[308] The fate of Sardar 'Aziz Khan b. Shams al-Din Khan, who was appointed by Ishaq Khan as Resident in Maimana in 1886, is not given in the sources. It seems likely, however, that he joined the rebellion and was probably amongst the officers who were put to death on the orders of the governor of Herat.

[309] *TFJ*, Aug. 1888; *NKVT*, 18 June 1889; *HNL*, 13, 20 Aug. 1888; *HNL*, 16 Aug. 1888, SLEI:55, fols. 488-9; *HNL*, 6 June 1889, SLEI:57, fol. 1000; Griesbach, *Journeys*, 1888-89, ii, fols. 626-7. 40 officers were elected in this way, one for each officer who had joined Ishaq Khan.

[310] *HNL*, 13, 16 Aug. 1888; *HNL*, 20 Aug. 1888, SLEI:55, fols. 488-9.

[311] *HNL*, 17 Sept. 1888, SLEI:55, fols. 721-2.

[312] Allah Bakhsh, *Memorandum*, 1886.

[313] *HNL*, 17 Sept. 1888.

course of one of these forays, Mullah 'Aziz's men came face-to-face with a rebel force commanded by the officers from Maimana. In the ensuing skirmish, Mullah 'Aziz Khan's men were worsted, losing a number of men, while Haidar Quli Khan, eldest son of Khan Agha Jamshidi who was commander of the Herat cavalry in Maimana, was wounded (Maitland 1891, chart 57).[314] However, Mullah 'Aziz Khan regrouped and launched a counter attack which was so effective that he not only defeated the rebels but seized Belcheragh and forced the enemy to retreat to Qurchi.[315] Following this reverse, Isma'il Khan left this outpost in the charge of the Maimana officers and left for Shibarghan.

The authorities in Herat were slow to realise the danger that threatened Maimana. The first intimation they had that Ishaq Khan had rebelled was when Muhammad Sharif Khan's men brought in General Sharbat Khan in chains, only a few days before Ishaq Khan's public declaration in Mazar-i Sharif. Once it was clear that Sharbat Khan and others were trying to secure support for a revolt in favour of Ishaq Khan, a messenger was sent post-haste to Kabul to inform the Amir of the seriousness of the situation and assuring him that Maimana had remained loyal.[316] On 10 August, the day of Ishaq Khan's proclamation, General Rustam 'Ali Khan, brother of Faramuz Khan, Commander-in-Chief of Herat, left for Maimana accompanied by an escort of 130 men.[317] He arrived nine days later,[318] but even before he reached the city, a number of soldiers from the Afghan garrisons at Andkhui and Daulatabad, as well as some of the rebel troops at Belcheragh, had come to Maimana and either confirmed their allegiance to the Amir, or sued for pardon for their rebellion.[319]

Rustam 'Ali Khan made his headquarters in the house of Tora Khan Mingbashi.[320] One of his first decisions was to appoint the officers who had accompanied him from Herat[321] to command the two to three thousand Afghan troops in the city.[322] The Maimana arsenal

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[314] *Ibid.*

[315] *Ibid. HNL*, 23 Aug, 13 Sept. 1888; *History of Ishak Khan's Rebellion*, 1888; *HNL*, 20 Sept. 1888, SLEI:55 fols. 723-4.

[316] Griesbach, *Journeys*, 1888-89, i, fol. 318.

[317] *HNL*, 9 Aug. 1888, SLEI:55, fol. 486; *HNL*, 13, 20 Aug. 1888.

[318] *HNL*, 13, 23 Aug. 1888.

[319] *HNL*, 23 Aug. 1888.

[320] *HNL*, 1 Oct. 1888, SLEI:55, fols. 787-8.

[321] *HNL*, 23 Aug. 1888.

[322] The exact figure for the loyal troops in the Maimana garrison, as given by 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, was 2,238, *Amir to Viceroy*, 19 March 1889, SLEI:57, fols. 11-15.

and magazine had not been harmed,[323] but Rustam Khan discovered to his dismay that all the caps and cartridges were completely unserviceable. Most of the guns were old muzzle-loaders which were no match for the British breechloaders which Ishaq Khan's men were using.[324] He immediately requisitioned 10,000 bundles of cartridges and 15,000 boxes of caps from Herat. These were sent without delay, along with sixty thousand rupees to ensure that the troops were up-to-date with their pay.[325]

Muhammad Sharif Khan and Rustam 'Ali Khan quickly established a good relationship and visited each other frequently,[326] but Maimana, far from being solidly behind the Amir, was a city divided against itself. Not all of the ordinary soldiers of the garrison had remained loyal and desertions to Gurziwan and Sar-i Pul were a daily occurrence. Astonishingly, three of Ishaq's supporters, Saiyid Nur al-Din Khan, Saiyid "Aruz" and Saiyid Shah Muhammad, all from Pishin, were released from captivity and allowed to take quarters in the Qandahar *sarai* where they carried on a clandestine correspondence with the rebels and encouraged soldiers to defect.[327] One of their visitors was 'General' 'Abd al-Qayyum Khan Wardaki who was disgusted that Rustam 'Ali Khan refused to recognise his new rank and only permitted him to draw the allowances of a *daffardar*.[328] Apart from the worrying level of discontent amongst the troops of the Maimana garrison,[329] there was also a power struggle between Mullah 'Aziz Khan and General Rustam 'Ali Khan, the former disputing the outsider's authority to act as the supreme commander in the area.[330]

The Afghans were not the only ones split down the middle by Ishaq Khan's revolt for there was strong support for the uprising amongst the local population of Maimana. As well as being a popular figure, Ishaq Khan had aligned himself with the claims of the Mingid

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[323] *HNL*, 27 Aug. 1888.

[324] *Ibid. HNL*, 8 Oct. 1888, SLEI:55, fol. 983.

[325] *HNL*, 23, 27 Aug. 1888. *KNL*, 14 Sept. 1888; *HNL*, 30 Aug., 3 Sept. 1888, SLEI:55, fols. 479-80, 629, 547-54. Following the arrest of General Sharbat Khan, the Afghan garrison had forcibly persuaded Muhammad Sharif Khan to disburse a considerable sum in back pay. *NKVT*, 22 Feb. 1889, SLEI:56, fols. 950-1 reports that Ishaq Khan's governor tried, unsuccessfully, to seize 9,000 rupees which Muhammad Sharif Khan had taken from Shadyan to Maimana to pay the troops.

[326] *HNL*, 1 Oct. 1888.

[327] *HNL*, 8 Oct. 1888. The Herat *wakil* reports, incredibly, that they had been released and given government posts in the city.

[328] *Ibid.*

[329] E.g. *HNL*, 1 Oct. 1888.

[330] *HNL*, 13 Sept., 8 Oct. 1888.

Pretender, Muzaffar Khan, who had a number of influential supporters within the province. Hence, those opposed to the succession of Muhammad Sharif Khan, or who had been badly treated during Husain Khan's reign, tended to support the rebellion. The activities of the Muzaffarid clique were, therefore, a cause for considerable concern both to Muhammad Sharif Khan and the authorities in Herat and Kabul.[331] Indeed, Muhammad Sharif Khan's nephew, who had led the Maimana delegation to Herat, expressed marked reluctance to return home, fearing that his life would be in danger.[332] The confused state of affairs led the Amir and others to doubt Maimana's loyalty, which merely fuelled the discontent. The governor of Herat even refused to send Muhammad Sharif Khan the customary robe of investiture, until 'Abd al-Rahman Khan ordered *khalats* to be sent to the new wali and his relative and chief adviser, Mirza 'Abd al-Faiz Khan, in order to retain their loyalty.[333]

The re-appearance of Yazdan Quli Khan muddied the waters even further. This individual had been Dilawar Khan Ming's *sipah salar* until 1884 and since then he had been living in Russian Turkistan, where he had held various minor military appointments. Following the death of Husain Khan, a number of Muzaffar Khan's supporters in Maimana wrote to him secretly and invited him and his Russian allies to come to their aid.[334] Encouraged by this communication and the news of Ishaq Khan's rebellion, Yazdan Quli informed the Russian authorities in Merv that opposition to the Amir was such that, were he to return to Afghan Turkistan, all the Uzbeks would join him and the province would fall without the need of a single Russian soldier ever having to cross the border.[335] A short time later, General Alikhanoff invited the *sipah salar* to Merv, presumably to discuss his plans, which must have received some official approval, since Alikhanoff presented him with a robe of honour and placed him in charge of two hundred Turkman and Uzbek *sowars*.[336]

[331] *HNL*, 13, 17 Sept. 1888.

[332] *HNL*, 30 Aug. 1888.

[333] *HNL*, 13, 30 Aug., 13 Sept., 8 Oct. 1888. Mirza 'Abd al-Faiz Khan was a maternal uncle of Husain Khan.

[334] *TFJ*, Sept. 1888; *HNL*, 27 Aug. 1888.

[335] *KM*, 17 Dec. 1888, SLEI:55, fols. 1392-3. Since this report issued from Kabul, one cannot dismiss the possibility that it was part of the Amir's propaganda war against Ishaq—an attempt to discredit him by suggesting that he was supported by the Russians. However, the Herat *wakil*'s reports, which record Yazdan Quli's movements, confirm that the *sipah salar* tried to interfere in the affairs of the Chahar Wilayat.

[336] *TFJ*, Sept. 1888. *HNL*, 20, 27 Aug. 1888; *HNL*, 24, 27 Sept. 1888, SLEI:55, fols. 751-2, 753-4.

Yazdan Quli rode to the Panjdeh-Daulatabad frontier where he was joined by Alikhanoff,[337] a move which caused "considerable commotion" amongst the *maldar*s and other groups on the Afghan side of the Murghab.[338] Together, they crossed the Afghanistan border, but were stopped after one farsang by a company of *khassadar*s from Bala Murghab. Yazdan Quli claimed he was merely on a tour of inspection and wished to see the fort at Guzar-i Isma'il, but General Ghaus al-Din's men refused to accept his excuses and persuaded him to return to Panjdeh without a fight.[339] When news of this incursion reached Herat, the order detailing General Ghaus al-Din to take charge of the Maimana operations against Ishaq Khan was rescinded and he was forced to remain in Bala Murghab for a few weeks, though he continued to raise levies from the surrounding tribes as well as keeping a close eye on the frontier in case Russia took advantage of the Balkh rebellion to encroach on Afghan territory.[340]

Following this frontier violation, a Russian native spy was sent to Maimana and arrived in Daulatabad about the same time as Lall Khundil Khan Ishaq Khan's brother-in-law. Together, they quickly seduced the local Ersari chiefs and the Afghan garrison into throwing off their allegiance to the Amir.[341] When news of the Daulatabad defection broke in Maimana, Mullah 'Aziz Khan,[342] Haidar Quli Khan Jamshidi and Isma'il Khan with their Aimaq, Sunni Hazara and Uzbek levies rode swiftly to the stronghold, quickly overpowered the rebels and arrested both the rebellious chiefs and the Russian spy.[343] Their prompt action forestalled Yazdan Quli Khan's plot to destabilise the Maimana-Andkhui frontier and he took no further part in the struggle between Rustam 'Ali Khan and Ishaq Khan for control of the Chahar Wilayat.[344]

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[337] *HNL*, 24, 27 Sept. 1888. He went to Qal'a-yi Qambar and Tang-i Sangi. I have not been able to locate these places on any modern map.

[338] *HNL*, 27 Sept. 1888.

[339] *Ibid.*

[340] *HNL*, 17, 24 Sept. 1888; *TFJ*, Sept. 1888.

[341] *HNL*, 27 Aug., 24 Sept. 1888; *History of Ishak Khan's Rebellion*, 1888.

[342] *HNL*, 27 Aug. 1888 says Sarhang Muhammad Khan commanded the troops, but later reports make it clear that Mullah 'Aziz was in charge.

[343] *HNL*, 17, 24 Sept., 1 Oct. 1888.

[344] Instead, Yazdan Quli raided around Gulran where, in an encounter with Afghan border guards, one man was killed, *HNL*, 5 Oct. 1888. There were also some disturbances amongst the Ghilzai and Achakzai *maldar*s around Qal'a-yi Wali who were accused of robbing a courier and a number of other people, which may, or may not, have been linked to events in Afghan Turkistan. The sources are very vague about this incident, *HNL*, 20 Aug. 1, 8 Oct. 1888.

The fear of Russian intervention across the Badghis frontier forced the Herat authorities to order the reinforcements that were marching to Maimana to halt at Bala Murghab.[345] This delay annoyed the Amir who, realising the strategic importance of the Khanate in the battle for Afghan Turkistan, informed the governor of Herat of his displeasure in no uncertain terms.[346] When the troops from Herat failed to arrive, discontent amongst the soldiery in the Maimana garrison increased even more. In particular, their hostility was directed against Rustam 'Ali Khan's imported officer corps. During the later part of August, desertions increased markedly and it was all that Rustam Khan could do to maintain order. Doubts about the loyalty of the Maimana troops forced him to postpone his plans to attack Sar-i Pul and he was forced to rely on local militia forces, to deal with the Daulatabad rebels. Plans to advance against Nazir al-Din at Andkhui were delayed even further when Mullah 'Aziz Khan fell ill.[347] In the end, it was not until the first or second week of September that substantial troops and levies began to arrive at Maimana from Herat and Bala Murghab.

By this time, the Amir had ordered Herat to open up a third front against Ishaq Khan by sending troops from Chakhcharan to Chaharsada and Sar-i Pul with instructions to plunder and put to death all who did not obey his government.[348] The local *malik*s quickly abandoned any thought of rebellion when the Herat soldiers arrived. Chaharsada was soon occupied and the column pushed on across the Tir Band-i Turkistan towards Sar-i Pul.[349] The rebel Maimana officers at Qurchi, faced with government forces advancing up the Shirin Tagab and across the mountains from Chiras, wrote to Rustam 'Ali Khan, tendering their submission. When the General heard this news, he sent three thousand of the regular Herat cavalry, who had recently arrived in Maimana, supported by a thousand Maimana horse, to seize Kauliyan and Qurchi and to attack Lall Khundil Khan, who had taken up a defensive position just outside Sar-i Pul.[350] In order to move quickly, Rustam 'Ali Khan ordered the cavalry to take six hundred infantry with them mounted on the back of the horses. The speed and size of the response surprised the enemy who fled before the oncoming army.

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[345] *HNL*, 1 Oct. 1888.

[346] *Ibid. HNL*, 13, 24 Sept. 1888.

[347] *HNL*, 1 Oct. 1888. *HNL*, 24 Sept. 1888 says Nur al-Din Khan was in charge of Ishaq Khan's forces in Andkhui.

[348] *HNL*, 17 Sept. 1888; *HNL*, 10 Sept. 1888, SLEI:55, fol. 715.

[349] *HNL*, 20, 27 Sept. 1888.

[350] *HNL*, 7 Sept., 1 Oct. 1888; *KNL*, 14 Sept. 1888; *HNL*, 4 Oct. 1888, SLEI:55, fols. 790-1.

In Sar-i Pul proper, the garrison mutinied, imprisoned their officers and handed the town over to Haidar Quli Khan Jamshidi and the Amir's forces.[351] When the news of the fall of Sar-i Pul was broken to Isma'il Khan, he left Shibarghan and retired to Mazar-i Sharif without offering any further resistance. Thus most of the Chahar Wilayat was lost to Ishaq Khan without Isma'il Khan offering the Amir's forces any serious resistance.

Mullah 'Aziz Khan in Daulatabad soon recovered from his bout of illness and was joined by Mirza 'Abd al-Faiz, Muhammad Sharif Khan's chief adviser.[352] Shortly after the fall of Sar-i Pul, the "headman" at Andkhui, possibly a close relative of the deposed Afshar rulers, wrote to Mullah 'Aziz Khan informing him that Nazir Nur al-Din Khan had abandoned his forward position at Aq Guzar, on the Andkhui road, and urged him to ride in haste and secure the region for the Amir.[353] Whether this was an attempt to lure the Daulatabad forces into a trap, or a genuine request for help is uncertain, but Mullah 'Aziz Khan could not resist the opportunity to make further advances into Afghan Turkistan and, in disobedience to specific orders from Rustam 'Ali Khan not to go on the offensive,[354] he marched out at the head of his cavalry, leaving the infantry and his guns behind.[355]

Nazir al-Din, informed of the approach of government forces, decided to set an ambush for them. A small contingent of Turkman cavalry were left behind near Aq Guzar with instructions to flee as soon as they were hard pressed by the enemy in order to draw their pursuers into the trap. Nazir al-Din withdrew the bulk of his forces up the Andkhui road and took up a position across a narrow bridge on the east bank of the Shirin Tagab river, south of Andkhui, where the ground was bisected by numerous irrigation channels and ditches.[356] When Mullah 'Aziz approached Aq Guzar, he found only a handful of Turkmans guarding the place; he attacked and quickly overwhelmed the enemy, who turned and rode for the bridge.[357] 'Aziz Khan gave chase and was drawn into the maze of canals and ditches which made it both difficult and dangerous for his men's horses. Seeing the enemy

[351] *HNL*, 1, 4 Oct. 1888. *HNL*, 15 Oct. 1888; *Mullah Aziz Khan to Alikhanoff*, Sept. 1888, SLEI:55, fols. 1023-5, 787-9. *HNL*, 1 Oct. 1888 gives the size of the rebel forces at Sar-i Pul as 5 companies of *khassadars* and 1,000 *sowars* with 3 large cannon.
[352] *HNL*, 8 Oct. 1888.
[353] *HNL*, 1, 4, 8, 15 Oct. 1888; *HNL*, 25 Oct. 1888, SLEI:55, fols. 1153-4.
[354] *HNL*, 1 Oct. 1888.
[355] *HNL*, 8, 15 Oct. 1888.
[356] Id. They probably took up positions in, or around, Qaramqul or Altibulaq.
[357] Id.

forces fleeing across the river, he gave chase without a thought that he could be riding into a trap. As Mullah 'Aziz and his men crossed the bridge, Nazir al-Din ordered his Turkman infantry, who were concealed behind the ditches, to open fire. Those of 'Aziz Khan's cavalry who had crossed the bridge were either quickly cut down or taken prisoner, whilst those who had not managed to cross, were forced to watch helplessly as their comrades were cut to pieces. Mullah 'Aziz Khan, who had led the charge, had his horse shot from under him, but eventually managed to find another mount. He fought his way back across the bridge and rode as fast as he could back to Daulatabad with Nazir al-Din Khan's cavalry breathing down his neck.[358] The rash attack on Aq Guzar had cost over one hundred men killed or wounded, whilst several score more were taken captive.[359] Mullah 'Aziz not only lost his horse but had to abandon his baggage, his spare horses and other property to the value of 12,000 krans, all of which fell into the hands of the victors.[360]

Mullah 'Aziz's defeat added to the problems of the beleaguered Rustam 'Ali Khan. In spite of the arrival of reinforcements from Herat, the local population and the Maimana soldiery could barely concealed their dislike and contempt for him. By the end of September,[361] the dispute between the General and the locally-elected Maimana 'officers' was almost out of hand. They openly abused and insulted the General, who was unable to restrain or punish them,[362] for they were so influential with their regiments that the soldiers would obey no-one else's orders.[363] A number of officers, including some sardars from Herat, were reported to be plotting to hand him over to Ishaq Khan.[364] When Rustam 'Ali Khan ordered the sons of Haji Mu'min Khan and Haji Dad Khan Barakzai to accompany him to Sar-i Pul, they refused outright.[365]

Realising that Maimana was on the verge of rebellion, Rustam 'Ali Khan did everything in his power to prevent news of the defeat at Aq Guzar from reaching either the Afghan troops or the townsfolk.

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[358] Id. *HNL*, 25 Oct. 1888.

[359] Only about 6 men and a few horses had died in the Aq Guzar encounter, but over 100 were killed at the battle of the bridge, *HNL*, 27 Sept., 6, 25 Oct. 1888.

[360] *HNL*, 1, 25 Oct. 1888.

[361] The battle at Aq Guzar probably took place a few days before Ishaq Khan's defeat at Ghaznigak, as first reports of the reverse appear in, *HNL*, 27 Sept. 1888.

[362] *HNL*, 8, 15 Oct. 1888.

[363] *HNL*, 25 Oct. 1888.

[364] *Ibid.*

[365] *HNL*, 15. Oct. 1888.

Check posts were set up on the Andkhui road and Mullah 'Aziz Khan's men who tried to enter Maimana were sent back to Daulatabad.[366] Mullah 'Aziz was recalled and regular, government troops were sent to replace the local militia on the Andkhui frontier.[367]

Fortunately for Rustam Khan, events in the east saved the day. Reports begun to reach Maimana which spoke of Ghulam Haidar Khan's victory at Kahmard and there were rumours that Ishaq Khan himself had been badly defeated and forced to flee. The day after the Aq Guzar *débâcle*, Rustam 'Ali Khan decided to turn this news to his advantage and ordered the guns of the city to fire a salute in celebration of the Amir's victories, playing up the reports which claimed that Ishaq Khan had been wounded and taken prisoner at Tashqurghan.[368] This deception calmed the "turbulent tendency of the garrison"[369] until, a few days later, General Ghaus al-Din arrived from Bala Murghab at the head of a large force. At about the same time, the first eyewitness report of the battle of Ghaznigak reached Maimana and any thought that the Maimana garrison had of rebelling was quickly forgotten.[370] Even so, it had been touch-and-go. Both Rustam 'Ali Khan and Muhammad Sharif had gone in fear of their lives and were said not to have slept for two nights in anticipation of an "outbreak."[371]

On 29 September news reached Herat of Ishaq Khan's defeat, intelligence which was confirmed two days later by a courier who had come via Sar-i Pul and Maimana. A twenty-one gun salute, the illumination of the city, and other celebrations were ordered.[372] The garrison in Daulatabad was sent to take possession of Andkhui, and search parties were dispatched to the Amu Darya to intercept Ishaq Khan and other leaders of the uprising.[373] Rustam 'Ali Khan marched to Sar-i Pul and thence to Shibarghan, Isma'il Khan having fled from there sometime earlier.[374] Within a week or so of the battle of Ghaznigak, the whole of the western marches of Afghan Turkistan, from Maimana to Aqcha, had fallen to Rustam 'Ali Khan, with hardly a shot being

[366] *HNL*, 8, 15 Oct. 1888.
[367] Id.
[368] *HNL*, 15 Oct. 1888.
[369] *HNL*, 8 Oct. 1888.
[370] *Ibid.* The eyewitness arrived in the first few days of October.
[371] *HNL*, 15 Oct. 1888.
[372] *HNL*, 4, 15 Oct. 1888.
[373] *HNL*, 25 Oct. 1888. Mullah 'Aziz Khan managed to seize "what remained" of the property of the hakim of Andkhui as compensation for the loss of his baggage at Aq Guzar, *HNL*, 5 Dec. 1888, SLEI:59, fol. 129.
[374] *HNL*, 27 Sept., 15, 18, 25 Oct. 1888.

fired. However, despite every attempt to intercept the leaders of the rebellion, Ishaq Khan, his son and many other leaders managed to escape across the Amu Darya, where they were joined by Turkmans and other tribesmen who had supported the uprising.[375]

*Ishaq Khan's Rebellion: An Appraisal*

The important part played by Maimana in the downfall of Ishaq Khan's rebellion has received scant attention from historians (*Gazetteer* (1907) ii, xxvii; Kakar 1971, 151, 153), or has been distorted by Soviet historians for their own doctrinaire purposes (e.g. Khalfin, 260-1). Amir 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, always reluctant to acknowledge the part played by others in his victories, not unexpectedly makes little mention of the contribution made by Husain Khan Ming and his son to the defeat of the rebellion (Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 268-9). Yet Husain Khan's refusal to join the uprising was one of the most significant factors in the failure of Ishaq Khan's bid for the throne, since by doing so he split the rebel forces and tied down a large number of troops in the Sar-i Pul area when they were desperately needed to deal with the Amir's main force which was advancing on Samangan.

Despite overwhelming popular support for the rebellion in Maimana, Muhammad Husain Khan remained true to his oath of alliegance to the Amir, even though he must have known that he risked imprisonment or death at the hands of Ishaq Khan. Why Husain Khan Ming did not join the rebellion, though, remains something of a mystery, since, had Ishaq Khan succeeded, he could have secured a greater measure of autonomy for Maimana. However, it may be that the wali, who was no mean general himelf, realised that Ishaq Khan was no match for the Amir and his well-equipped army. After all, he had already fought one major battle with 'Abd al-Rahman Khan some years earlier and was well aware of the Amir's military prowess. Another factor may have been the proximity of Maimana to Herat and its powerful garrison, which remained loyal to the Amir. Ishaq Khan's support for the Pretender, Muzaffar Khan Ming, and the prolonged campaign by the sardar to overthrow the wali, were undoubtedly further reasons why Muhammad Husain Khan refused to place his seal on Ishaq Khan's Qur'an.

[375] Amongst the refugees were 400 Turkmans from Daulatabad, Shibarghan and Andkhui, who fled with all their flocks and possessions, *HNL*, 25 Oct. 1888.

Historians have been scathing about Ishaq Khan and his abortive rebellion. Kakar (1971, 153), dismisses the sardar and his advisers as "cowardly and incompetent" and lays the blame for the failure of the revolt squarely on Ishaq Khan who, he argues, was "a religious romantic and not a general" (Kakar 1971, 157). This criticism is not a little unfair. After all, there have been many brave, howbeit incompetent, generals, the Charge of the Light Brigade being perhaps one of the most vivid examples of this cocktail of valour and poor planning. True, Ishaq Khan and his generals were no match for 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's battle-hardened warriors, but Kakar seems to have forgotten that Ishaq Khan, only a few weeks earlier, had successfully subdued Badakhshan. Nor should we lose sight of the *rôle* played by Ishaq Khan in securing control of the western marches of Lesser Turkistan for 'Abd al-Rahman Khan in 1880, or his successful campaign against Dilawar Khan Ming of Maimana in 1884.

What does emerge from a study of Ishaq Khan's earlier campaigns, especially the ones of 1880 and 1884, is that Ishaq Khan preferred a 'carrot-and-stick' policy when dealing with his opponents, advancing slowly but inexorably, giving his opponents a chance to submit and to prevent unnecessary bloodshed, a policy which made him so popular as governor of Afghan Turkistan. In direct contrast, and despite public proclamations about tigers and goats drinking water from the same spring, the "leniency, consideration and calmness with which I treat my enemies" and his "mercy, kindness, generosity and justice towards the people of Afghanistan,"[376] 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's twenty-one year reign can best be summed up as 'garrotte-and-stick'. Ishaq Khan evidently preferred to rule by persuasion and diplomacy, rather than crushing everyone and everything that stood in his way. If such a policy is "cowardice" and such an individual a "religious romantic", then the world would be a better place for more 'romantics' and 'cowards'.

The spectacular demise of Ishaq Khan's rebellion within a matter of weeks of the sardar declaring himself Amir, was primarily the consequence of bad organisation and the almost total absence of any plan of campaign. Hindsight also shows that Ishaq Khan made a number of serious errors of judgment at crucial points in the rebellion. Though the sardar acted swiftly to subdue Badakhshan, he failed to

[376] *Translation of a Tract Entitled, Izah ul-Biyan fi Nasihatub Afghan, min hissan Amir-ul Momanin, Amir Abdul Rahman Khan, Wali Afghanistan, Khurasan wa Turkistan*, 2 Sept. 1889, SLEI:58, fols. 387-9.

take full advantage of the Amir's indisposition, and to exploit the disarray his rebellion had created in the Afghan capital. Had he made a decisive move on Kabul at an early point in the uprising, he would have encouraged disaffected Pushtun tribes south of the Hindu Kush to throw off their allegiance. To make matters worse, and despite Ishaq Khan's predilection for resolving conflicts peacefully, in the matter of Maimana, the implacable, personalised hostility which he demonstrated throughout his governorship towards Husain Khan Ming was his undoing. Maimana's refusal to participate in the rebellion meant that Ishaq Khan was constantly looking over his shoulder whilst conducting operations in Badakhshan and Tashqurghan. Finally, Isma'il Khan, Ishaq Khan's son, who was entrusted with organising the defence of the Chahar Wilayat, showed that he had little or no stomach for the fight. As soon as there was the slightest threat to his own personal security, he retreated first to Shibarghan and then back to Mazar-i Sharif, after offering only token resistence to Rustam 'Ali Khan and his Maimana allies.

Ishaq Khan, having failed to move quickly against Kabul, compounded his errors by showing a lack of strategic judgment at the battle of Ghaznigak. His decision to locate his command centre on a hill some distance from the centre of the battle was a fatal mistake, though Ishaq Khan may well have felt justified in choosing a site which gave him a 'bird's-eye' view of the proceedings. By ordering his troops not to start the battle, which was at least partly in expectancy of a substantial number of enemy troops defecting to his cause, he handed the initiative to the enemy, who was able to choose when and where to attack. In mitigation, the Mir Ataliq of Qunduz deserted Ishaq Khan at the last moment, an action which must have cast doubt in his mind about the loyalty of the rest of the Turkistanian troops. Furthermore, due to Isma'il Khan's pusillanimous attitude, on the eve of the battle of Ghaznigak the Amir's forces were rapidly advancing on Shibarghan on two fronts, stretching Ishaq's resources to the limit. Even Ishaq's flight seems to have been due more to the lack of discipline in the ranks, and the problems created by overextended lines of communication, which broke down in the confusion of battle, than to any lack of personal courage on the sardar's part.

Khalfin, whose article on Ishaq Khan's rebellion is one of the few attempts to examine the rebellion in detail, treats the revolt as a case study of Marxist-Leninist dialectic. His primary aim, one feels, is not so much to write a history of the uprising, as to bring Soviet histories

into line with the official view, to vindicate Tsarist policies towards Central Asia and, in particular, to denounce the claims of other Soviet academics that Russia actively supported the revolt, as "factually untrue and politically harmful" (Khalfin, 253, 262). Using highly selective documents from the Uzbekistan State Archives in Tashkent, the majority of his article attempts to prove that, although Ishaq Khan sought help from the Tsar, no assistance, either financial or military, was forthcoming. A case of "the lady doth protest too much, methinks."[377]

When dealing with the reasons for the rebellion and its failure, Khalfin wants the best of both worlds. "During the first stage of the rebellion," he writes, "Ishaq enjoyed the support of the broad masses of the population" (Khalfin, 257) but, at the beginning of August, he claims:

> ... the course of the rebellion was changed, and the popular masses [became] disillusioned with Ishaq because he only sought to seize the throne and did nothing to improve their lot (Khalfin, 260).

Khalfin's evidence for this sudden loss of popular support is the decision by Ishaq Khan to move his army southwards towards Tashqurghan, proof, according to the author, that instead of merely establishing the independence of the "Char-Vilayat" (*sic*) the sardar had changed course, aspiring, instead, to the throne of Afghanistan.

Such an argument, of course, is quite spurious, for Ishaq Khan had had himself proclaimed Amir at Mazar-i Sharif long before his army had moved southwards. Nor is there any evidence to suggest that 'the masses' deserted the sardar's cause because he sought to overthrow 'Abd al-Rahman Khan. Indeed, the prospect of the Amir's downfall and his replacement with a ruler who had demonstrated his willingness to take into consideration the rights of minorities, was probably one of the major reasons why so many people in Afghan Turkistan supported the revolt in the first place.

Khalfin avoids all mention of the arrest and execution of Husain Khan Ming prior to the Mazar declaration, or the fact that Maimana's garrison and the wali remained loyal to the Amir throughout. Instead he invents "a popular rising" in Maimana, provoked, he claims, when Ishaq Khan made unspecified concessions to "the feudal aristocracy ... who saw a threat to themselves in the rising of the masses." The

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[377] *Hamlet*, III, 3.

revolt failed, he argues, because of "the absence of sufficiently powerful anti-feudal forces" and the treachery of feudalists, with Ishaq Khan's military disorganisation and strategic mistakes coming a very poor third place.

Khalfin's thesis is the exact opposite of the truth. Popular support for Ishaq Khan was strong throughout Afghan Turkistan even before the Mazar-i Sharif declaration, and even after Ishaq Khan had been defeated, local sentiment amongst 'the masses' was still strongly sympathetic to the sardar, for his mild rule was in direct contrast to the bloody reign of terror which was the hallmark of Amir 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's government. There was no popular uprising in support of Ishaq Khan in Maimana, although there undoubtedly would have been, were it not for the fact that Husain Khan Ming and Muhammad Sharif Khan, with the help of the garrison's non-commissioned officers and, subsequently, General Rustam 'Ali Khan, managed to contain or suppress any attempt to challenge their authority.

Not that it was to matter in the end, for over the next few years the blood of the loyalist was to flow as freely as that of the rebel as 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, still in the grip of his terrible illness, came north, determined to settle old scores once and for all.

CHAPTER TEN

# MUHAMMAD SHARIF KHAN, 1888-1892

*... sights of woe,*
*Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace*
*And rest can never dwell ...*
(Milton, *Paradise Lost,* book i).

Since our arrival here all the blacksmiths of the city are engaged both night and day in making fetters.[1]

## *'Abd al-Rahman Khan and Afghan Turkistan, 1888-1889*

The rebellion of Ishaq Khan had shaken the government of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan to its foundations. Consequently, the Amir was determined to impose his authority once and for all in Afghan Turkistan and to break the back of all opposition in the region, "so that no-one will aspire to the Amirship in future and that there may be no place where rebellion can be fostered."[2] To ensure that this plan was carried out to the letter, the Amir, though still very poorly, decided to go to Afghan Turkistan and personally supervise the destruction of all real and imagined opponents of his rule.[3] At the same time, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan used the occasion to extract further military and financial support from Britain. The campaign against Ishaq Khan, the Viceroy was informed, had cost two million rupees and a vast amount of munitions had been expended. Within days of receiving this letter, the Indian government ordered the payment of ten lakhs of rupees, the dispatch of one million rounds of Martin-Henry ammunition and ten lakh Snider cartridges as a "free gift" to the Amir. A further 600,000

[1] *NKVT*, 15 Jan. 1889, SLEI:56, fols. 534-5.

[2] *KNL*, 6 Nov. 1888, SLEI:55, fol. 1129. In his 'autobiography' written towards the end of his reign, the Amir gave quite different reasons for going to Afghan Turkistan. They were: to put the country in proper order, to rid the area of "traitors" who had sided with Ishaq Khan, to investigate reports that "a neighbouring power" had encouraged and supported the revolt, and to deal with officers in the army who were reported to be disloyal to the Amir (Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 274).

[3] *KNL*, 16 Oct. 1888, SLEI:55, fols. 777-8; *History of Sirdar Ishak Khan's Rebellion*, 1888.

rupees, being an advance of six months' subsidy, was also handed over.[4]

On 25 October 1888, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan left Kabul accompanied, amongst others, by the British-appointed *wakil* and C. L. Griesbach, formerly of the Afghan Boundary Commission, who had been asked by the Amir to conduct a geological survey of mineral resources in Afghanistan.[5] The Amir's progress north was marked by a trail of blood. The first batch of prisoners, numbering some 250 civilians, officers and ordinary soldiers, arrived in 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's camp at Charikar. Two were immediately blown from guns, one had his nose cut off, whilst fifty others were sentenced to be publicly hanged in the Afghan capital. The remaining prisoners were chained together by their necks in gangs of twenty and imprisoned.[6] From this point onwards, throughout the royal progress, batches of two to three hundred prisoners arrived at the Amir's camp at regular intervals and were dealt with in a similar way.[7]

When he reached Bamiyan, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan vented his wrath on the Shaikh 'Ali Hazaras whose leaders, Mir Ja'far and Dilawar Khan, had fought alongside Najm al-Din Khan at the battle of Shash Burja (Kakar 1971, 154).[8] These leaders of Afghanistan's Isma'ili community had fallen into government hands earlier, along with Ishaq Khan's father-in-law, and had been starved to death in wooden cages suspended from high flagpoles that were set up in the

[4] *Amir to Viceroy*, 10 Oct. 1888; *Foreign Secretary to Deputy Commissioner, Peshawar*, 19 Oct. 1888, SLEI:55, fol. 799. See also *Viceroy to Amir*, 10 Sept. 1889, SLEI:58, fols. 149-51. Despite this sizable military contribution, at the end of his reign, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan publicly accused Britain of being niggardly (Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 274).

[5] Apart from taking photographs (see Chapter 9, n. 5) Griesbach had conducted a preliminary survey on mineral resources in Afghan Turkistan during the period of the Afghan Boundary Commission. His report revealed that there were considerable mineral reserves in the region, particularly coal. He discovered large coal deposits 16-18 miles south of Almar in the cliffs between Payin Guzar and Ziyarat-i Khwaja Dewana. There was also iron ore in the same region. The coal seams continued due east of Payin Guzar. Another deposit was noted near the villages of "Paisna" and Deh-i Surkh in the Astarab valley, 38 miles SW of Sar-i Pul and 6-7 miles below the village of "Paisna."

When Griesbach presented his report to government, the authorities were alarmed at the richness of the coal resources "bordering on the Russian frontier" and decided that "it was not desirable to make Mr Griesbach's report on the geology of Turkistan public for some time at least. The information it contains as to the coal resources of the country ... would be highly valued by the Russian government," *Handwritten note by Edward Neil*, 19 July 1887, preface to "Geological Survey of N. W. Afghanistan," *Afghan Field Notes, 3rd. Series*, C. L. Griesbach, 1887, SLEI:49, fols. 3, 11-35. As far as I can ascertain, this report has never been published.

[6] C. L. Griesbach, *Memorandum on the Disposal of the Turkistan Prisoners by the Amir*, 13 Aug. 1889, SLEI:58, fols. 147-9.

[7] *Ibid.*

[8] *Ibid.* Dilawar Khan was the local ruler of Duab-i Shah Pasand.

*chaman* opposite the British *wakil*'s house in Kabul.[9] A fine of 150,000 rupees,[10] as well as a large number of cattle, was imposed. The tribe was disarmed and sentenced to transportation and dispersal throughout Afghanistan (Kakar 1971, 154).[11] Some were sent to the Tarak and Andar regions, the Taraki Pushtuns being allowed to take over their land,[12] whilst others were sent to Pusht Rud "to till the land"[13] or settled in Logar, Wardak, Koh Daman,[14] Qalat, Herat or Bala Murghab (Kakar 1971, 154). So thorough was this 'ethnic cleansing' that not even the dogs remained behind.[15] However, in his 'official' version of this campaign, the Amir presented a somewhat different view of the event, claiming that he "treated the prisoners very kindly and soon returned them to their homes with kindly admonitions to keep the peace in future and to be loyal subjects" (Sultan Muhammad Khan ii, 278).

By December 1889, the Peshawar newsletter reported that there were between six and seven thousand Shaikh 'Ali Hazaras imprisoned in Kabul.[16] Hundreds, possibly thousands, of Shaikh 'Ali Hazaras died from starvation during the forced march to Kabul, for the old, women and children who collapsed from exhaustion or fell sick on the road, were "massacred," where they fell, by their guards.[17] Others died from a variety of diseases contracted in the fetid Kabul prisons, from the "rigours" of working in slave gangs, or as a result of the appalling conditions in which they were housed.[18] Many of the young women were sold to Muhammadzai sardars.[19] By the end of 1890 the Kabul *wakil* reported that "not a vestige of the Shaikh Ali Hazaras are left."[20]

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[9] *Ibid.*

[10] *KM*, 23 Oct. 1889, SLEI:58, fols. 674-5; Kakar 1971, 154 citing *NKVT* ("British Agent, Mazar"), 24 Sept. 1889, SLEI:58, fols. 537-8, says 50,000.

[11] The sentence of transportation was briefly rescinded following the intercession of the Shaikh 'Ali Hazara women, but was later implemented anyway, *KNL*, 6 Nov. 1888; *KNL*, 20, 29 Nov. 1888, SLEI:55, fols. 1229, 1385.

[12] *KM*, 24 July 1889, SLEI:57, fols. 1241.

[13] *KM*, 9 Nov. 1889, SLEI:58, fols. 855-6; *KM*, 18, 25 Dec. 1889, SLEI:59, fols. 68, 78-9; *KNL*, 11 Oct. 1890, SLEI:61, fol. 727.

[14] *PCD*, 22 Dec. 1890, SLEI:62, fol. 65.

[15] *KNL*, 5 Nov. 1890, SLEI:61, fols. 842-3.

[16] *PCD*, 22 Dec. 1890. cf. *KM*, 25 Dec. 1889; *KNL*, 18 Oct. 1890, SLEI:61, fol. 732. This must cast serious doubt on the claim by Kakar 1971, 162 that the Shaikh 'Ali Hazaras only numbered "about" 3,090 families in 1886.

[17] *KNL*, 5 Nov. 1890; *KNL*, 16, 23 Aug. 1890, SLEI:60, fols. 1363-4, vol. 61, fol. 36

[18] *KNL*, 23 Aug. 1890.

[19] *KNL*, 30 Aug. 1890, SLEI:61, fols. 245, 247.

[20] *KNL*, 5 Nov. 1890.

The Amir finally reached Afghan Turkistan in November and Mazar-i Sharif became the temporary capital of Afghanistan. One of his first actions was to settle the affairs of Maimana. The governor of Herat was ordered to send to Afghan Turkistan the families of ex-officers of the Maimana garrison who had sided with Ishaq Khan.[21] Muhammad Sharif Khan and the son of "Manak Bashi" (mingbashi?) were also called to an audience with the Amir.[22] In January 1889, the new Wali of Maimana, accompanied by a number of his brothers and other senior members of his administration, was admitted to an audience with 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, who welcomed him warmly. The youngest son of Husain Khan was singled out for particular attention, being raised to the status of the Amir's *farzand*; a tutor was appointed and instructions issued for the boy to be brought up as a member of the Amir's own family.[23]

The Amir questioned Husain Khan's sons closely about the events of the last few months and initiated an investigation into the circumstances surrounding the death of their father and Maimana's *rôle* during the rebellion.[24] The enquiry discovered private property belonging to Dilawar Khan Ming's family in the possession of Khwaja Ahmad of Qal'a-yi 'Abd al-Rahman which was promptly seized by the investigators.[25] Four individuals who had been responsible for extracting 7,000 rupees from Husain Khan before he was put to death, were arrested and ordered to repay the sum fourfold,[26] whilst nine soldiers who had guarded the wali before his execution were put to death.[27] However, the *wakil* diaries are vague as to the fate of Muzaffar Khan though it is more than likely that he, along with other members of Dilawar Khan Ming's immediate family, were also put to death.

Despite such public demonstrations of royal favour, the Amir's attitude towards Husain Khan Ming's heirs was far from unequivocal. Shortly after the flight of Ishaq Khan, the Kabul *wakil* reported that 'Abd al-Rahman Khan had determined to "destroy" Maimana for, as the last bastion of Chingizid rule, the Mingid dynasty stood in the

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[21] *HNL*, 13, 20, 27 Dec. 1888, SLEI:56, fols. 175-6, 603-5. Their property had previously been sold by public auction and had to be recalled.

[22] *HNL*, 27 Dec. 1888; *NKVT*, 4 Jan. 1889, SLEI:55, fols. 288-9.

[23] *NKVT*, 11 Jan. 1889; *PCD*, 20 Feb. 1889, SLEI:56, fol. 781. See also *NKVT*, 16 April 1889.

[24] *NKVT*, 18 Jan. 1889; *HNL*, 17 Jan. 1889, SLEI:56, fols. 759-61.

[25] *KM*, 11 Feb. 1889, SLEI:56, fol. 769.

[26] *Sayyid Diwan Muhammad, Munshi of Kabul Wakil*, 25 Feb. 1889; *NKVT*, 22 Feb. 1889.

[27] *NKVT*, 1 March 1889, SLEI:56, fols. 1059-60. Fath Muhammad Khan, governor of Darzab, who had been imprisoned at the same time as Husain Khan Ming, was released, given a dress of honour and sent back to govern the area, *NKVT*, 18 Jan. 1889.

way of the Amir's goal of stripping the amirid rulers of Afghan Turkistan of all but token authority.[28] By Nauroz, Muhammad Sharif Khan's brothers had still not been given permission to leave Mazar-i Sharif,[29] nor had Husain Khan's heirs been confirmed in the government of Maimana. Shortly before the New Year festival, the Amir had remarked, almost casually, that it was "very strange that Maimana did not rise in rebellion."[30] Later, in the presence of Muhammad Husain Khan's sons, he pointedly accused the dead wali of complicity with Ishaq Khan[31] and rumours began to circulate around the court that Muhammad Sharif Khan was to be deposed. Taking his courage in both hands, the heir to the Mingid throne raised the matter of his protracted sojourn in Mazar-i Sharif with the Amir, who refused his request to return home for the festive season.[32] Maimana, he was informed, was in a disturbed state—there had recently been an outbreak of mutiny amongst the Herat troops[33] and the threat of a Russian invasion of the area required the presence of the wali's heirs at the royal court. However, the Amir tried to reassure the anxious amir by promising that he would soon be called to a private audience where the future of Maimana would be discussed in detail.[34]

Undoubtedly one of the main reasons for the detention of Muhammad Sharif Khan and his fellow leaders was that the purges had reached Maimana and the Amir was holding them as hostages to prevent any outbreak of rebellion. Shortly after 'Abd al-Rahman Khan arrived in Afghan Turkistan, he ordered the arrest of the officers of the Maimana garrison, along with a large number of ordinary soldiers. They were brought to Mazar-i Sharif where they were either executed, imprisoned, or had their eyes gouged out,[35] though the officers who had fought at Andkhui were rewarded with robes of honour.[36] Later in the year the Maimana garrison was replaced by a newly-raised regiment; at least one of the regiments was disgraced and others were disbanded.[37]

[28] *KNL*, 6 Nov. 1888.
[29] *NKVT*, 16 April 1889.
[30] *NKVT*, 1 March 1889.
[31] *NKVT*, 16 April 1889; *NKVT*, 23 April 1889, SLEI:57, fol. 507.
[32] *NKVT*, 16 April 1889.
[33] *HNL*, 17 Jan. 1889; *NKVT*, 8 Jan. 1889, SLEI:55, fols. 531-2; *TFJ*, Feb. 1889; *HNL*, 10 Jan., 28 Feb. 1889, SLEI:56, fols. 740, 758-9, 1181-2; *HNL*, 11, 18 April 1889, SLEI:57, fols. 501-3.
[34] *NKVT*, 16 April 1889.
[35] *HNL*, 13 Dec. 1888; *NKVT*, 16, 23 April 1889. *NKVT*, 26 April 1889, SLEI:57, fols. 508-9; Griesbach, *Journeys, 1888-89*, ii, fols. 541, 555.
[36] *HNL*, 21 Feb. 1889.
[37] "Bearing their rifles behind them," *HNL*, 18 July 1889, SLEI:57, fols. 1397-8. See also

Amongst those who suffered in this purge were the forty 'officers' whom the garrison had elected following the arrest of General Sharbat Khan.[38] When they reached Mazar-i Sharif, 'General' 'Abd al-Qayyum Khan Wardaki and the Kohistani 'Brigadier', who had assumed command of the Maimana troops by popular acclaim, were brought before the Amir. However, if they expected to be rewarded for their loyalty and devotion to the throne, they were to be bitterly disappointed. Despite testimony that they had carried out their work efficiently, the Amir refused to confirm their appointments, offering them instead the lowly ranks of *havildar* and *daffadar*[39] respectively. The men, not unnaturally, refused to be demoted to the status of 'other ranks', reminding the Amir that they had served his cause faithfully and could not accept such an arrangement, since they had become used to drawing the salaries of general and brigadier. 'Abd al-Rahman Khan ordered the immediate disgrace of both officers. 'General' 'Abd al-Qayum was condemned to be hung, whilst the 'Brigadier's eyes were burnt out with quicklime.[40]

Nor were the elders and peoples of Maimana exempted from the reign of terror. Following Muhammad Sharif Khan's Nauroz appeal, the Amir ordered the fifty-two amirs and mingbashis who had accompanied the wali to produce accounts of their income and expenditure for the last five years[41] and their property was confiscated until such time as these statements were produced. A further two hundred maliks, arbabs and other headmen were also ordered to present themselves in person to the Amir, and the decree granting Muhammad Sharif Khan and his brothers exemption from such assessments was revoked.[42] The *qazi*, along with all revenue officers of Maimana— appointments which had previously been in the gift of the wali—were unilaterally dismissed by the Amir.[43] Those *aqsaqal*s who showed any signs of discontent with these decisions were treated with utmost

*PCD*, 20 Dec. 1889, SLEI:59, fol. 42; *NKVT*, 25, 28 June, 2 July 1889; *HNL*, 4 July 1889; *List of Regiments in Turkistan*, 30 July 1889; SLEI:57, fols. 1012, 1013-4, 1067-8, 1221-2, 1407-8.

[38] *NKVT*, 19 March 1889; *HNL*, 18 April, 6 June 1889. *HNL*, 25 April, 14 June 1889; *TFJ*, July 1889, SLEI:57, fols. 615-6, 879, 1007-8.

[39] Ranks equal to infantry and cavalry sergeant respectively.

[40] *TFJ*, July 1889; *HNL*, 18 July 1889.

[41] *NKVT*, 11 June 1889, SLEI:57, fol. 877. There are discrepancies in the *wakil* reports about the number of years' revenue that the Amir was demanding from Maimana. *HNL*, 20 June 1889, SLEI:57, fols. 1161-2 has 4 years, but later says 8 years, *HNL*, 29 Aug. 1889, SLEI:58, fols. 199-20. I have preferred the Kabul *wakil*'s account since he was with the Amir in Mazar-i Sharif. The Herat news-writer was merely reporting what he had heard from Maimana or Kabul.

[42] Id. *NKVT*, 10 May 1889, SLEI:57, fols. 627-8.

[43] *NKVT*, 9 July 1889, SLEI:57, fol. 1227.

severity, regardless of whether they had been of service to the crown during the recent rebellion or not. Shah Mardan Qul, whom the Kabul *wakil* calls a mingbashi who had "lately" acquired much authority in Maimana[44] and who was clearly a partisan of the Amir's, was a case in point. The Amir demanded to know why, after the assassination of Husain Khan, he had not sent Muhammad Sharif Khan to Kabul. The mingbashi stoutly defended his actions against the innuendo that the wali and his officials had secretly supported the rebel cause:

> We did what was proper to be done, we kept the troops, who had no officers left, loyal and did not allow them to be tampered with by Ishak. We have done a great service. If we had evacuated Maimena serious mischief would have resulted and Ishak, having all his anxieties about Maimena allayed, would have continued in a firm condition. There was no use taking the son of the wali to Kabul.[45]

The Amir, however, would not listen and informed the unfortunate mingbashi that, since the "proper" thing to have done was to have sent Muhammad Sharif to Kabul, he deserved to die. "Is this a fitting reward for my services?" inquired Shah Mardan, whereupon the Amir agreed to commute his sentence provided he paid two lakh of rupees. Shah Mardan Qul protested that he did not possess property equivalent to such a huge sum, offering instead to try and raise a ransom of 12,000 rupees from his followers. The Amir, though, was in no mood for such bargaining and had the mingbashi and another "greybeard" put to death.[46]

A further instance of "special cruelty" was the treatment meted out to three prominent Uzbek rebels from Maimana who had fled to Merv. 'Abd al-Rahman Khan wrote to them, inviting them to return to Afghan Turkistan and promised that they would be treated well. Taking the Amir at his word, the exiles returned to Maimana where they were immediately arrested. One was blown from a gun in his home city, the other was publicly hanged at Kham-i Ab and his corpse left to rot on the gallows.[47]

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[44] *Ibid.* His name does not appear amongst the lists of mingbashis recorded by the Boundary Commission in 1885/6.

[45] *Ibid.*

[46] *Ibid.* See also the case of the *arbab* of Maimana who was brought under guard to Mazar in November 1889. He claimed that he had been one of those who had put Sharbat Khan to death and even had the General's arms and gun in his possession. Instead of being rewarded he, and seven other arbabs, were told to pay seven years' arrears of revenue, *NKVT*, 29 Nov. 1889, SLEI:58, fol. 1000.

[47] *NKVT*, 9 July 1889; *TFJ*, July 1889. See also *NKVT*, 19 July 1889, SLEI:57, fols. 123-4.

The promised *durbar* about the future of Maimana took place on 23 April 1889 in an atmosphere of fear and terror as the Amir's repressions began to be felt throughout Afghan Turkistan. Muhammad Sharif Khan and his elders were informed that the "new arrangements" required a number of the chief men and their families being sent as hostages to Kabul. The elders were required to place their seals on declarations of loyalty which made no attempt to conceal the Amir's suspicion of the wali:

> We, the tribes and people of Maimana swear by the Quran, the One God and His Holy Prophet, that we shall ever remain loyal and devoted to Amir Abdur Rahman Khan our King and Master and shall serve him even at the risk and sacrifice of our lives, property and children. We shall even remain the enemies of his enemies and shall never join or support anyone whether he be a Mahommedzai or anyone else who happens to rise against him or tries to wage war against him. If we ever find out that our Wali, Mahommed Sharif, is meditating evil designs, etc. against the said Amir, we shall at once report the matter to the said Amir and hand over to him the wali if possible.[48]

Muhammad Sharif Khan was also required to sign a similar document.

Even though the wali had been confirmed in his position,[49] the Amir's suspicion of both the heir to the Mingid principality and his entourage was in no way abated and they were still not permitted to return home, though at the end of April two of Husain Khan Ming's sons were allowed to leave before the fast month of Ramazan arrived, in order to supervise the affairs of the region which had been left in the hands of "the chief of the night watchmen."[50] The continued detention of the wali led to disturbances in Maimana, where it was reported that Muhammad Sharif Khan and the other *aqsaqal*s had been imprisoned, and a number of people packed their bags and fled across the border.[51] This discontent was exacerbated when the government revenue figures for Afghan Turkistan were made public towards the end of Ramazan. The Maimana elders had submitted a statement to the effect that payments to the Afghan treasury, before deducting their

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[48] *NKVT*, 23 April 1889. See also *NKVT*, 30 April, 3 May 1889, SLEI:57, fols. 510, 565.

[49] *HNL*, 23 May 1889, SLEI:57, fols. 815-6; I have discounted the report of *PCD*, 17 April 1889, SLEI:56, fol. 1235 which says a certain Saiyid Hasan Khan, governor of Maimana under Sher 'Ali Khan, had been released from prison and summoned to Afghan Turkistan amidst rumours that he was to be appointed as governor. The *NKVT* series makes no mention of this individual.

[50] *NKVT*, 7, 19 May 1889, SLEI:57, fols. 565-7, 627-8.

[51] *NKVT*, 9 July 1889.

expenses, amounted to 600,00 tangas and 40,000 kharwars of grain.[52] The Amir, however, was "displeased" with these accounts and ordered Muhammad Sharif Khan to pay nine lakh tangas "which used to be given during the time of Naib Muhammad Alam."[53] The wali declared that he had no knowledge of the situation during that period, informing the Amir that his father had realised a total revenue of 600,000 tangas of which 300,000 had been given to government, 250,000 for the wali's expenses and 50,000 remitted to his subjects.[54] Though these figures tally very closely with those given by Merk and Maitland (see Chapter 9), the Amir refused to accept such a low figure, dismissed the wali's excuses and informed Muhamad Sharif Khan Maimana's account would be settled on the basis of the revenues realised by Na'ib 'Alam Khan.[55]

The examination of Maimana's accounts was part of a wholesale fiscal review ordered by 'Abd al-Rahman Khan on his arrival in Mazar-i Sharif, for Kabul had received no revenues from the province during the governorship of Ishaq Khan. In May 1889, the Amir announced heavy fines and revenue demands.[56] These included an assessment of 450,000 tangas on the account of Tashqurghan; 800,000 against Shibarghan, Andkhui and Aqcha (collectively?);[57] Sangcharak, 250,000, and Mazar-i Sharif, 150,000 tangas. Individuals, such as pirs, saiyids, mullahs and other religious personages had their exemptions revoked and heavy assessments made against them. One shaikh, a certain Pir Nakhshi, was fined the vast sum of 50,000 tangas.[58] For the first time, religious endowments*(auqaf)* and benefices were made subject to liability (Kakar 1971, 156), something which Ishaq Khan had resolutely refused to consider even when ordered by the Amir. The Ansaris of the 'Alid shrine at Mazar, the largest holder of waqf properties in Lesser Turkistan, were ordered to prove their entitlement to government allowances by producing the original *waqfnamas*, "sealed by the Moghul kings."[59] Those who failed to do so were

[52] *NKVT*, 10 May 1889.

[53] *NKVT*, 25 June 1889.

[54] *Ibid.* Presumably this last item was *waqf* payments.

[55] *Ibid.* Kakar, 1971, 156 is wrong when he claims that Maimana was exempt from the demands for backpayment of revenue.

[56] *NKVT*, 28 May 1889, SLEI:57, fol. 699. *KM*, 6 July 1889, SLEI:57, fol. 1073 reports that money realised from fines in Kabul was sent to Mazar-i Sharif for the Amir's disposal.

[57] *Ibid.* However, *NKVT*, 24 Sept. 1889 says that Aqcha, Shibarghan, Qataghan and Badakhshan had been held liable for 20 lakh rupees (60-65 lakh tangas) each.

[58] *Ibid.*

[59] *NKVT*, 15 Jan. 1889; *NKVT*, 18 Oct. 1889, SLEI:58, fols. 668-9. Presumably the *wakil* is referring to the original *Timurid* certifiicate of endowment which appointed the Ansaris as guard-

thrown out of office, had their property confiscated and were jailed or executed.[60] The fines and requisitions from just one *firman* totalled 4,850,000 tangas. At the same time the Amir's officials, such as the Kotwal of Kabul, were ordered to realise vast sums from individual prisoners from Afghan Turkistan who were incarcerated in Kabul.[61]

Throughout the summer, Muhammad Sharif Khan was kept in Mazar and rumours began to reach Maimana that the wali was a prisoner in all but name.[62] Though the Amir continued to reassure Muhammad Sharif Khan that he would soon be allowed to return home, the Mingid prince was increasingly disillusioned at his treatment and was reported to have complained that it was better to live in Kabul than to return to Maimana stripped of any real power and where he would be an object of ridicule.[63] In early August, the Amir publicly snubbed Muhammad Sharif Khan by not presenting him with the customary 'Id presents and refused him permission to send any seasonable gifts to his brother, who was acting in his behalf at Maimana.[64] A few days later, however, following reports of serious disturbances amongst the garrison in Maimana, the Amir's attitude to the wali suddenly became much more friendly.[65]

The trouble in Maimana had arisen as a consequence of rivalry between the various regiments who had been sent to relieve the Maimana garrison. Even before the troops left Mazar-i Sharif there had been signs of discontent. The Amir had ordered Brigadier Rahmat Khan, a Sulaimankhel Pushtun, and three Kabul regiments, to provide the backbone of the new garrison.[66] When the soldiers were informed of the decision, they complained that they had not been paid for several months and grumbled that, instead of being rewarded for three years' hard service, the Amir was sending them to a remote station where they would be neglected. "It was a curse," they were reported to have said, "that we performed good service."[67] Meanwhile, the troops

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ians of the 'Alid shrine, rather than the descendents of Zahir al-Din Babur.

[60] E.g. *NKVT*, 8 Jan. 1889; *KM*, 26 June 1889, SLEI:57, fols. 955-7; *Warburton to Durand*, 21 July 1889, SLEI:58, fols. 145-7.

[61] 1,300,000 rupees from 75 prisoners (an average of Rs. 17,000 per person) on one list, 1,400,000 rupees from others on another list. Their families and tribes were made liable for the payment of these fines, *KM*, 8 June 1889, SLEI:57, fol. 821.

[62] *NKVT*, 9 July 1889.

[63] *Ibid.*

[64] *NKVT*, 2 July 1889; *NKVT*, 13 Aug. 1889, SLEI:58, fols. 103-4.

[65] *NKVT*, 12 Aug. 1889, SLEI:58, fols. 171-2; *NKVT*, 13 Aug. 1889; *HNL*, 18 July 1889.

[66] *HNL*, 18 July 1889. *NKVT*, 14 June 1889; *HNL*, 1 Aug. 1889, SLEI:57, fol. 879, vol. 58, fols. 97-8.

[67] *NKVT*, 14, 28 June 1889; *TFJ*, July 1889. *HNL*, 8 Aug., 3 Oct. 1889, SLEI:58, fols. 99-100,

already stationed in Maimana expressed their dissatisfaction with the Amir's decision to take the responsibility for the region out of the hands of Herat[68] by refusing to obey the order to return. Instead, they demanded to know what had happened to their officers, who had been called to Mazar-i Sharif.[69] They began to clamour, too, for a settlement of their overdue salaries.[70] Surprisingly, when they finally arrived in Mazar-i Sharif a number of the soldiers, at least, were well received and some of their demands were met by the Amir.[71] But when the Kabul regiments were eventually persuaded to leave, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan refused to appear for their marching-off parade. This was probably because the Amir was afraid of assassination attempts, for in December 1888 one of the Herat troops had opened fire on the Amir during inspection and the bullet had only just missed its target (Sultan Muhammad Khan ii, 273-4; S. E. Wheeler, 157).[72]

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[68] *HNL*, 30 May 1889, SLEI:57, fols. 816-7.

[69] *HNL*, 6 June 1889.

[70] *Ibid. TFJ*, July 1889; *HNL*, 13 June, 22 Aug. 1889, SLEI:57, fols. 1001-2, vol. 58, fols. 245-6. They were not paid and had to sell most of their things to satisfy their creditors before they left. Some had been forced to subsist by hiring themselves out to local people as reapers.

[71] The exact number of soldiers from the Maimana regiments who were honoured differs from one report to another. *NKVT*, 23 Aug. 1889, SLEI:58, fols. 172-3 says the Amir entertained men from the regiments which had come from Maimana, and implies that it was only their officers and a number of sepoys whom he wished to promote. *NKVT*, 12 Aug. 1889 mentions that the Amir had ordered 3 regiments from Maimana to appear before him and that he was to feast them, cf. *HNL*, 3 Oct. 1889. *KM*, 6 Aug. 1889, SLEI:57, fols. 1433-4 reports the arrival of 600 men of one of the Maimana regiments, along with their wives, at Takhtapul, but says others were on their way.

The feast took place on 21 August, the Afghan and Turkic troops being segregated in separate rooms, which would imply that men from more than one regiment were present. The Amir singled out the "Turki" *sowar*s, probably followers of Mullah 'Aziz Khan, saying that, "Turkistan was subdued by them." He promoted some of them to non-commissioned officers and raised their salaries. However, it was not all sweetness and light. The Amir announced that he was disbanding the Turkic regiment(s) and ordered all the sepoys to dispose of their cattle and sheep or have them sold at public auction, *NKVT*, 12, 23 Aug. 1889; *NKVT*, 8 Oct. 1889, SLEI:58, fols. 623-4. The sons of those killed at Andkhui, presumably the casualties of the Aq Guzar *débâcle*, were also given state pensions, *NKVT*, 16 July 1889, SLEI:57, fol. 1231. See also *NKVT*, 20 Sept. 1889, SLEI:58, fols. 534-5 which reports the subsequent arrest of a number of non-commissioned officers and other ranks from the Maimana regiments.

[72] *NKVT*, 28 Dec. 1889, SLEI:56, fols. 258-60. It was the custom for troops to appear on parade with all live ammunition removed. However, one soldier in the Herat regiment managed to have a live round in his gun and fired at the Amir, who was being carried in a chair because his illness prevented him from walking any distance. The bullet missed the Amir by inches, hit the chair and ricocheted into the thigh of one of his page boys. The would-be assassin was dragged before the throne and cut to pieces before the Amir. In his biography, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan claimed that he had called out that the would-be assassin should not be executed immediately, but was ignored. The Amir believed that the bullet had passed through him but, because of a charm he had been given by a "holy man" when he was a child, he remained uninjured (Sultan Muhammad Khan ii, 273-4).

When the Kabul regiments reached Maimana, a violent dispute broke out between the Arbil and Chaharyari regiments, over who should occupy the barracks. The Chaharyari, who had arrived first and taken over the accommodation, refused to quit when ordered to do so by the officers of the Arbil regiment. Instead, they opened fire, killing a number and wounding about a hundred members of the rival troop.[73] The fighting created panic in the city, for it was rumoured that the Kabul troops had been ordered to plunder the bazaars. Shop-keepers put up their shutters, whilst many others, having locked up their houses and possessions, fled northwards to seek the relative safety of Russian Turkistan, only to be turned back by the border guards.[74] With the newly-arrived regiments completely out of hand, and their officers unable to restore order, a number of local elders and Uzbek officials sent the Ishan of Maimana,[75] with a Qur'an in his hands, to mediate,[76] whilst the Afghan hakim of Andkhui persuaded the panic-stricken refugees to return, after reassuring them that their wali had not been imprisoned.[77]

The violence and disorder amongst the Kabul regiments perturbed the Amir greatly. Muhammad Sharif Khan was told to send one or two trusted men post-haste to Maimana to report on the situation[78] and a message was sent to Herat for a contingent of cavalry to proceed to the area with all speed.[79] A number of individuals who had led the mutiny were eventually arrested and sent to Mazar-i Sharif.[80] The

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[73] *NKVT*, 12 Aug. 1889. *NKVT*, 16, 30 Aug. 1889, SLEI:58, fols. 104-5, 265-6.

[74] Id.

[75] Probably 'Abd al-Qadir Khan Kohistani, whose daughter had recently married the Amir, *NKVT*, 10 May 1889.

[76] *NKVT*, 12, 13, 16 Aug. 1889.

[77] *NKVT*, 12 Aug. 1889.

[78] *NKVT*, 16 Aug. 1889. They were accompanied by two or three of the most senior members of a tribe from Kashgar, in Chinese Turkistan, who were to act as spies. This clan, numbering some 50,000 families, claimed to have originally come from Afghanistan. Some while before, the authorities in Chinese Turkistan had ordered them to acknowledge their suzerainty but they had refused, informing them that their Amir was 'Abd al-Rahman Khan. They were granted leave to send representatives to Afghanistan to ascertain whether the Amir would recognise them as citizens of that country and arrived in Mazar-i Sharif in the summer of 1889. Their Khan and the other elders were given into the care of Muhammad Sharif Khan who entertained them every evening at government expense. It turned out, however, that these tribesmen were very well off and spent large sums of money during their visit. Nothing is said about their ethnic origins, but the fact that Muhammad Sharif Khan was given the responsibility of *meh-mandar*, would suggest that they were either Uzbeks or Uyghurs, *NKVT*, 13, 16, 23 Aug. 1889. A number of Arab tribesmen had also crossed the Amu Darya from Bukhara, intending to settle in Maimana and Herat but were sent, instead, to Kabul, *NKVT*, 19 July 1889.

[79] *HNL*, 29 Aug. 1889.

[80] *NKVT*, 13 Aug. 1889.

Amir, still chronically ill and unable to move his arms or legs, appears to have feared that the disturbances in Maimana were a harbinger of a general uprising, for there were rumours from the Chahar Wilayat that Isma'il Khan, son of Ishaq Khan, had returned to Afghanistan to continue the struggle.[81] On 13 August, the Amir, unwilling or unable to trust his own soldiers, turned to the son of his faithful ally, Husain Khan Ming, in the hope that he could restore order in the region. Muhammad Sharif Khan was summoned to an audience and received assurances that he would be sent back to his homeland as the new wali.[82] Just over a week later, the wali was again brought before the Amir, this time in a public assembly, where he was presented with a *sanad* of investiture, valuable robes of honour and a bejewelled sword belt.[83] "In future," the Amir informed him, "you will have sole authority. After your arrival the General [Ghaus al-Din Khan] shall have no authority whatever."[84] However, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan refused to re-instate the deposed *qazi* of Maimana, whom he alleged to be "an unworthy person" and informed Sharif Khan that he must appoint another person in his stead.[85] The imprisoned mufti of Maimana had better fortune, for the Amir promised to have him released and sent on later.

The price demanded from Muhammad Sharif Khan for official recognition as wali, was high. All the surviving sons of Husain Khan were to stay with the Amir, and the wali's brother, who had gone to Maimana previously to supervise his family's affairs in the absence of Muhammad Sharif Khan, was to be sent back to Mazar-i Sharif to join the hostages. In all, over one hundred families of the wali's dependents were to be sent to Kabul,[86] whilst twelve members of his immediate family were required to undergo the humiliation of a daily roll-call.[87] Muhammad Sharif Khan was ordered to surrender his chief

[81] *HNL*, 22 Aug. 1889.

[82] *NKVT*, 12, 13 Aug. 1889.

[83] *NKVT*, 23 Aug. 1889. The wali was given a valuable *khalat* by one of the Amir's wives, possibly the daughter of Hakim Khan of Shibarghan who, according to some reports, had recently arrived in Mazar-i Sharif, *NKVT*, 21 June 1889, SLEI:57, fols. 1007-8; though *NKVT*, 25 June 1889 says that she had decided to stay in Kabul since she could not afford the lakhs of rupees that would have to be spent in buying gifts for her relatives and fellow-countrymen.

[84] *NKVT*, 23 Aug. 1889.

[85] *Ibid.* But see *NKVT*, 16 July 1889 where the *qazi* requested the Amir to reinstate him, but his petition was rejected, *NKVT*, 23 July 1889, SLEI:57, fol. 1287 says that a judge and a *mufti* from Kabul were sent to Maimana instead.

[86] *NKVT*, 10 Oct. 1889, SLEI:58, fol. 605.

[87] *NKVT*, 12 Aug. 1889. However, *NKVT*, 23 Aug. 1889 says that the brother in Maimana was permitted to remain until the Amir went to Herat, when he would collect him and take him to

*munshi* and another of his senior advisers, who, the Amir claimed, were "mischievous" individuals.[88] When this request was refused, the Amir had them imprisoned anyway.[89] In addition, Maimana's revenue accounts for the last eight years were to be submitted for retrospective taxation.[90] The wali was to present a weekly report, along with a list of judicial decisions and sentences that had been made by the chief *qazi*. Nor was the promise, that Muhammad Sharif Khan would be allowed absolute authority, fulfilled. Not only was General Ghaus al-Din Khan left in charge of the province's finances, he was made responsible for the administration of the district as well, whilst Brigadier Rahmat Khan commanded the affairs of the Maimana garrison.[91] Muhammad Sharif Khan, furthermore, had to make suitable arrangements to facilitate the movement of the postal service (*dhak*) between Herat and Mazar-i Sharif. Finally, on 23 August 1889, some eight months after his arrival in Mazar-i Sharif and almost a year to the day since his father's death, Muhammad Sharif Khan, accompanied by a number of his servants, left Mazar-i Sharif for Maimana via the Dasht road.[92]

### *The 'Turkistan Atrocities',[93] 1888-1892*

No history of Lesser Turkistan would be complete without a chronicle of the suffering inflicted on the people of the province following the failure of Ishaq Khan's rebellion, for stories of that fearful time, handed down from generation to generation, are still very much alive in the memories of the people of the province. Nor can one claim to understand modern Afghanistan without taking into account the atrocities which took place at that time, for the roots of the racial and ethnic hatred which have surfaced in the last few years, are grounded in this period. Yet, to even attempt to write about those dark days of

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Kabul. See also, *HNL*, 26 Sept. 1889, SLEI:58, fols. 661-2.

[88] *NKVT*, 23 Aug. 1889.

[89] *Ibid.* Presumably this munshi is the same person who is mentioned in, *NKVT*, 14 May 1890, SLEI:60, fol. 495. If so, he was condemned to death but his sentence was later commuted to imprisonment. He was released in May 1890.

[90] *HNL*, 8 Aug. 1889; *NKVT*, 29 Nov. 1889.

[91] *NKVT*, 30 Aug. 1889; *HNL*, 24 Oct. 1889; cf. *NKVT*, 28 June 1889.

[92] *NKVT*, 23, 30 Aug. 1889. Presumably this means he went the shorter but more difficult route via the Dasht-i Laiyla rather than through Andkhui.

[93] A phrase used by British officials to describe the events of 1889-90 in Afghan Turkistan, see *Turkistan Atrocities, the Amir's Reply, or Translation of a Letter from His Highness the Amir to His Excellency the Viceroy*, 30 Sept. 1889 (4 Safar, 1307), SLEI:58, fols. 387-90.

1888-1891, is to risk the accusation of racial or political bias, so sensitive is the subject in Afghanistan. Indeed, there are many who believe that one should 'let sleeping dogs lie'.

The trouble, of course, is that the 'problem' is neither dead, nor will it lie down, for underlying the present strife in that country is the heritage of cultural and ethnic repression which, despite Western historians' attempts to claim otherwise, is by far the most important legacy of the reign of Amir 'Abd al-Rahman Khan. In order to properly understand the present, it is vital to examine the past, warts and all. Certainly, if Afghanistan is to survive as a nation-state and not end up as the Yugoslavia of Central Asia, all sides in the present crisis, sooner or later, will have to face up to these issues and expiate this terrible legacy by being prepared to forgive and be forgiven.

It is not only Afghans, however, who must come to terms with this unsavoury era in their history. Western scholars, who have chosen to skirt around the uncomfortable issue of the Amir's atrocities, must start to treat official British histories, and other publications on Afghanistan written during the colonial period, far more critically. This particularly applies to 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's Amirship, since much of the 'public domain' material published during and after his reign was heavily censored by the British authorities and written by individuals who played an important part in creating or implementing government policy. As such, these works are at the least biased and at the worst, propaganda designed to justify or exonerate Britain's policy in Central Asia and to portray 'our' ally, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, in the very best light possible.

Historians, both Afghan and Western, have either chosen to avoid the unpleasant facts of the "Reign of Terror"[94] or made passing reference to the repressions which took place throughout the reign of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, preferring, instead, to concentrate on the 'reforms' which the 'Founder of Modern Afghanistan' introduced. The Turkistan reprisals and their effect, therefore, have hardly been discussed by western scholars, who certainly do not take them into account when it comes to assessing the Amir's reign in the development of modern Afghanistan. Kakar (1971) devotes a few paragraphs to the subject at the end of his chapter on Ishaq Khan's rebellion, but relies far too

[94] *Warburton to Viceroy*, 21 July 1889; Roberts, *Memorandum*, 22 May 1885 both of whom use this expression, the former specifically in regard to events in Afghan Turkistan following the defeat of Ishaq Khan and the latter as a more general description of the whole of the Amir's reign.

heavily on unreliable official figures for the number of those imprisoned and executed. Little is said about how these individuals met their deaths, of the suffering and conditions endured by the prisoners, or the economic and demographic side-effects which resulted from the Amir's policy. In the case of the Hazara uprisings (1891-1893), however, Kakar is more forthcoming and, to his credit, tackles the issues of atrocities committed against the Shi'i community in Afghanistan.

Kakar, basing his statistics on the Amir's own words to Sardar 'Ataullah Khan, the Kabul *wakil*, says that by late 1890, one thousand persons had been put to death and 5,400 imprisoned for their part in Ishaq Khan's rebellion (Kakar 1971, 155).[95] In mitigation of these figures, however, Kakar erroneously claims that "people with no influence were pardoned" (Kakar 1971, 155). This figure of one thousand executions was the one the Amir used a year earlier in response to a letter from the Viceroy of India, who had expressed concern at persistent reports of atrocities being committed by Britain's friend and ally in Afghan Turkistan. As such, no reliance can be placed on this statistic, which was designed to allay British anxieties at a time when Anglo-Afghan relations were under considerable strain. Griesbach, a far more objective primary source, claimed, in early 1889, that the number of "recent" executions (i.e. since the Amir had arrived in Afghhan Turkistan) numbered between 400 and 500 individuals,[96] whilst Martin (p. 157), who lived in Kabul during the later years of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, states that during the Amir's twenty-one year reign, 100,000 people had been judicially executed—an average of just under 5,000 persons a year. When one examines in detail the weekly intelligence reports of the British native news-writers which were sent from Kabul, Mazar-i Sharif, Herat and Qandahar during this period; the secret, unpublished memoranda on the atrocities written by Griesbach and Colonel Warburton;[97] the private papers of Lilias Hamilton, and, to a certain extent, her unpublished novel, *The Power that Walks in Darkness*,[98] which was based on her own eye-witness

[95] *PCD*, 6 Sept. 1890, SLEI:61, fol. 231.

[96] Griesbach, *Turkistan Prisoners*, 1889; consisting of 450 officers of Ishaq's army and the remainder, civilians "who had assisted Ishak."

[97] *Ibid.*; *Warburton to Durand*, 21 July 1889.

[98] WIHML:PP/HAM/A.21; IOLR:MSS Eur. C.375. Written *c.* 1900 after her return to England. She also wrote a similar 'novel' based on the subsequent war with the Hazaras which was eventually published under the title, *A Vizier's Daughter, Tales of the Hazara War* (London 1900). Hamilton was the Amir's doctor for a number of years in the 1890s. Her unpublished notes and papers are in the Archives of the Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine

experiences of the 'Reign of Terror' in Kabul, there is overwhelming evidence to support the belief that the death toll ran into many thousands.

We have seen how the reprisals began even before the victory at Ghaznigak, with the execution of Ishaq Khan's father-in-law, Najm al-Din Khan, Dilawar Khan of Duab and other Hazara leaders. By late September 1888, the Kabul *wakil* reported seventy relatives and servants of Ishaq Khan were already in prison in Kabul.[99] As he marched to Mazar-i Sharif with the Amir, Griesbach records that "hundreds" of prisoners from Afghan Turkistan, mainly officers and soldiers captured at Ghaznigak, began to arrive at the Amir's camp.[100] By the time 'Abd al-Rahman Khan left Bamiyan, these numbers had been swelled by thousands of dispossessed and displaced Shaikh 'Ali Hazaras, many of whom either died or were slaughtered, during their long march into exile. Groups of prisoners, chained together by their necks, were forwarded to Kabul "by relays" of 2-300 a time, in gangs of twenty. When Griesbach finally left Mazar-i Sharif in the middle of 1889, most of the officers and *havildar*s in Ishaq's army had been arrested and sent to the Afghan capital for disposal, for the Amir was superstitious and did not want to put them to death near the sacred tomb of 'Ali. Even so, during the winter of 1888/89, Griesbach records that between eighty and one hundred were put to death in the shrine city alone.[101]

By the turn of the new Christian year the 'Reign of Terror' was in full swing and had been extended beyond the confines of officers and soldiers, mainly Pushtuns, who had joined in the rebellion. Over four hundred people were in prison in Afghan Turkistan alone.[102] In his newsletter of 15 January 1889, the Kabul *wakil*, who was with the Amir in Mazar-i Sharif throughout the period in question, wrote that "since our arrival here all the blacksmiths of the city are engaged night and day in making fetters".[103] In March alone, 4-500 prisoners were sent to Kabul, including 350 officers who had served in Ishaq Khan's army.[104] At the end of May the Herat news-writer claimed that 8,000 prisoners had already arrived in Kabul,[105] though a short while

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(PP/HAM). See also, Lee 1991a, 219-220, 226ff.

[99] *KNL*, 21 Sept. 1888.

[100] Griesbach, *Turkistan Prisoners*, 1889.

[101] *Ibid.*

[102] *Ibid. NKVT*, 8 Jan. 1889.

[103] *NKVT*, 15 Jan. 1889.

[104] *PCD*, 17 April 1889.

later the Kabul *munshi* reported there were only 5,400 prisoners in the city's jails.[106] The stream of condemned, however, continued to flow on relentlessly throughout the spring and summer of 1889. On a single May day 156 persons—men, women and children—reached Kabul from Afghan Turkistan.[107] At the end of June, on an average day, twenty to thirty persons were still arriving in the capital. Occasionally, these groups numbered between 150 and 250 persons.[108]

Throughout the late autumn and winter of 1889/90 hundreds of people continued to be arrested and sent, in chains, to the Afghan capital. These included leading Uzbeks from Maimana and Andkhui, elders from Shignan, Dahan-i Ghuri and Baghlan, a further group of Shaikh 'Ali Hazaras and members of Ishaq Khan's army.[109] At the beginning of 1890, the Peshawar diary claimed that, in addition to those languishing in the Kabul jails, 1,980 partisans of Ishaq Khan were confined in Mazar-i Sharif.[110] Shortly before, on 25 December 1889, the Kotwal of Kabul had presented Habibullah, the heir apparent who was in charge of Kabul during his father's absence, with two lists of prisoners in his care. Each list was "about three yards long."[111]

With the Kabul jails overflowing the Amir sent the condemned to Qandahar.[112] At the end of May 1890, the Kabul *wakil* recorded that 5,400 prisoners in Afghan Turkistan "were being sent" to Kabul, 1,200 to Qandahar and 500 to Herat.[113] They were followed by a further 700 persons, including relatives of Ishaq Khan and inhabitants of Tashqurghan, and Badakhshan.[114] Later, this figure was revised upwards. According to first-hand information, up to August 1890 no fewer than 14,000 people were in jail in Kabul alone.[115] By the end of 1891, this number had been swelled by at least two thousand more detainees.[116] The actual prison population was certainly much higher

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[105] *HNL*, 23 May 1889.
[106] *KM*, 22 June 1889, SLEI:57, fols. 895-6; see also, Griesbach, *Turkistan Prisoners*, 1889; *NKVT*, 4 June 1889, SLEI:57, fols. 809-11.
[107] *KM*, 22 May 1889, SLEI:57, fols. 622-3.
[108] *KM*, 3,13,17, 19 July 1889, SLEI:57, fols. 1081-9, 1155-6, 1156-7, 1233.
[109] *NKVT*, 8, 10, 18 Oct. 1889; *KM*, 9 Nov., 18 Dec. 1889. *NKVT*, 2 Aug. 1889, SLEI:57, fols. 1404-5; *NKVT*, 26 Oct. 1889, SLEI:58, fols. 667-9; *KM*, 5 Oct. 1889, SLEI:59, fol. 68.
[110] *PCD*, 15 Jan. 1890, SLEI:59, fol. 151.
[111] *KM*, 25 Dec. 1889.
[112] *QNL*, 18 May 1890; *NKVT*, 30 May 1890; *QNL*, 1 June 1890, SLEI:60, fols. 685, 769, 783.
[113] *NKVT*, 30 May 1890.
[114] *KM*, 2 July 1890, SLEI:60, fol. 937. They were followed by their families.
[115] *KNL*, 30 Aug. 1890. See also *KM*, 12 June 1889, SLEI:57, fols. 822-4 which says that "thousands" of prisoners were quartered all over Kabul.
[116] *PCD*, 8 Jan. 1891, SLEI:62, fol. 297.

than these statistics would suggest, since the figures probably only took account of male heads of households and ignored their dependents, mostly wives and children, who were imprisoned with them.[117] Nor does it include hundreds of other innocent individuals, who had been arrested and detained indefinitely whilst paying compassionate visits to their relatives.[118] By the spring of 1897, the Peshawar Agency gave the population of the Kabul gaols alone as 18,000 persons.[119]

As far as the number of people who were executed as a direct result of the repression in Afghan Turkistan, the figure is probably nearer ten thousand than one thousand. Though the Kabul *wakil* gives no estimates for those put to death, the weekly diaries make frequent reference to individuals, or groups of people, who suffered particularly cruel deaths. Over a twenty-one month period, from September 1888 to May 1891, the Kabul and Mazar diaries record the execution of nearly seven hundred individuals (see Table, below). This number, however, is the tip of a very large iceberg, for so many people were being put to death that it was impossible to record each individual tragedy. As early as January 1889, the Kabul news-writer wrote from Mazar-i Sharif that "every house is in mourning."[120]

On 28 October 1888, whilst in Charikar, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan condemned over fifty people to death in one day.[121] During the winter and spring of 1888/9, Griesbach records that he personally knew of between eighty and one hundred persons who had been put to death at Mazar-i Sharif alone. "Many more" had been executed in other places.[122] By the middle of June 1889, the Kabul *munshi* claimed that every night ten prisoners were being put to death in a plain behind the Bala Hisar fort, whilst others were disposed of below the Siya Sang hills. On the night of 19 June alone, eight prisoners, Uzbeks, Pushtuns and other races, were cut to pieces by the Kotwal's sepoys and a further thirty-one persons were also sentenced to death.[123] In the same month, Griesbach, passing through Kabul on his way back to India, discovered that "a large number" of prisoners had already been killed and "the rest were to follow."[124] Every day, with the exception of

[117] *KM*, 18 May 1889, SLEI:57, fols. 621-2; *KM*, 2 July 1890, SLEI:60 fol. 937; Griesbach, *Turkistan Prisoners*, 1889.
[118] *KM*, 8 Feb. 1890, SLEI:59, fol. 583.
[119] *PCD*, 9 April 1897, SLEI:91, no. 479, n. pag.
[120] *NKVT*, 8 Jan. 1889.
[121] Griesbach, *Turkistan Prisoners*, 1889.
[122] *Ibid.*
[123] *KM*, 26 June 1889.
[124] Griesbach, *Turkistan Prisoners*, 1889.

Thursday and Friday, thirty executions were taking place in the Afghan capital.[125] In his report of 29 June 1889, the *munshi* recorded that a further thirty people had been executed in the killing fields behind the Bala Hisar.[126] During the two days which followed, four prisoners, officers in the Balkh army, were executed and the eyes of twelve saiyids from Kunar were put out.[127] Throughout July, executions at the notorious Zakariya' Sarai prison were running at a rate of four to five a day.[128] In the same month, Shah Mardan Quli Mingbashi of Maimana was also put to death (see above).[129] On 22 August, 103 prisoners from Afghan Turkistan were put out of their misery on the derelict site of Cavagnari's residence and their remains thrown into a mass grave.[130] A week later, fifteen more joined them in eternity.[131]

So the bloodshed continued throughout the autumn and winter of 1889. In Herat, a number of officials, who had advised Ishaq Khan, were stoned to death,[132] followed, a short while later, by a number of cavalry and other officers from Afghan Turkistan who met their end in the Afghan capital.[133] On 10 October 1889, some of the Maimana *arbab*s, who had been sent to Kabul as hostages for Muhammad Sharif Khan's good behaviour, were executed.[134] Ten days later, over twenty more Turkistan prisoners were strangled.[135] At the end of the year the Peshawar diaries, possibly on the basis of information provided by Griesbach, reported that the Amir was holding a *durbar* three times a week, during which he condemned as many as twenty people to a variety of terrible deaths.[136] In the spring of 1890, seventeen writers, "men of importance" in Afghan Turkistan, were executed by the Amir's direct orders.[137] Shortly before 'Abd al-Rahman Khan returned to Kabul, 86 prisoners were condemned to be hanged or strangled. During the first week of June 1890, four to five persons

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[125] *Ibid*,

[126] *KM*, 29 June 1889, SLEI:57, fols. 1017-8. See also *Warburton to Durand*, 21 July 1889 who says that the executions took place at a place called "Jubba" below the fort. The bodies were buried in the same location.

[127] *KM*, 3 July 1889.

[128] *KM*, 10 July 1889, SLEI:57, fols. 1074-5; *KM*, 17 July 1889.

[129] *NKVT*, 9 July 1889; *NKVT*, 12 July 1889, SLEI:57, fols. 1229-30

[130] *KM*, 24 Aug. 1889, SLEI:58, fols. 113-4.

[131] *KM*, 31 Aug. 1889, SLEI:59, fols. 177-9.

[132] *NKVT*, 27 Sept. 1889, SLEI:58, fols. 539-40.

[133] *NKVT*, 10 Sept. 1889; *KM*, 2 Oct. 1889, SLEI:58, fols. 178-9, 544-5; *KM*, 5 Oct. 1889.

[134] *NKVT*, 10 Oct. 1889.

[135] *KM*, 26 Oct. 1889, SLEI:58, fol. 667.

[136] *PCD*, 15 Jan. 1890.

[137] *HNL*, 20 March 1890, SLEI:59, fols. 1256-6.

each night were said to be suffering the supreme penalty.[138] In August, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, once again in the grip of his terrible sickness (Lee 1991a, 215-6),[139] returned to Kabul, but though he released some prisoners, mostly women who were placed on bail,[140] the killings continued throughout the winter of 1890/91 as he dealt with cases which had been deferred until his arrival.[141]

TABLE OF RECORDED EXECUTIONS AND IMPRISONMENTS, 1888-1891

| *date* | *origin* | *war zone* | *no. killed* | *method* | *no. jailed* | *punishment* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 09/88 | Barakzai | Saighan | 1 | boiling oil | | |
| 09/88 | Barakzai | Saighan | 1 | bayonetted | | |
| 09/88 | Afghan | Turkistan | - | - | 70 | |
| 10/88 | Afg/Turk | Turkistan | 2 | blown away | | |
| 10/88 | Afg/Turk | Turkistan | 50 | hung | 200 | |
| 1888/9 | Afghan | Turkistan | 21 | executed | | |
| 1888/9 | not given | Turkistan | 9 | exposure | | |
| 1888/9 | not given | Turkistan | 7 | crucified/disembowelled | | |
| 1888/9 | not given | Turkistan | several | boiling oil | | |
| 1888/9 | Afghan | Turkistan | 1 | mouth slit | | |
| 1888/9 | Afghan | Turkistan | 2 | executed | | |
| 03/89 | Afghan? | Maimana | 9 | shot | | |
| 04/89 | Afg/Uz | Maimana | 90 | n.a. | 20 | blinded |
| 06/89 | various | not given | - | - | 140 | blinded |
| 06/89 | various | Turkistan | - | - | 30 | |
| 06/89 | various | not given | 60 | various methods | | |
| 06/89 | Afghan | Turkistan | 10 | dismembered/blown away | | |
| 06/89 | Turks | Turkistan | 8 | cut to pieces | | |
| 06/89 | Af/Turk | Turkistan | 30 | executed | 150 | |
| 06/89 | Afghan | Turkistan | 10 | hung/quartered | | |
| 06/89 | not given | Turkistan | 3 | hung/blown away | 70 | |
| 07/89 | Kunari | Turkistan | - | - | 12 | blinded;life |
| 07/89 | Turks | Turkistan | 7 | executed | | |
| 07/89 | not given | Khanabad | - | - | 50 | |
| 07/89 | not given | Turkistan | - | - | 50 | |
| 07/89 | not given | Turkistan | - | - | 250 | |
| 07/89 | Uzbek | Maimana | 2 | executed | | |
| 07/89 | Uzbek | Tashqurghan | - | - | 30 | fined |
| 07/89 | Shaikh 'Ali | Hazarajat | - | - | 250 | |
| 07/89 | Uzbek | Turkistan | - | - | 60 | |
| 07/89 | Shaikh 'Ali | Hazarajat | - | - | 500 | exile |
| 07/89 | Ansaris | Mazar | 120 | sawn in two | - | - |
| 08/89 | various | Turkistan | - | - | 400 | exile |
| 08/89 | various | Turkistan | 191 | executed | - | - |
| 09/89 | Kabuli | Turkistan | - | - | 4 | fined |
| 09/89 | not given | Turkistan | 2 | suffocated | - | - |
| 09/89 | Tajiks? | Afshar | 18 | executed | 7 | |
| 09/89 | Uzbek | 4 Wilayat | - | - | 6 | |
| 09/89 | Afghan | Maimana | - | - | 175 | disgrace |
| 09/89 | Afghan | Turkistan | 6 | executed | - | - |

[138] *KM*, 7 June 1890, SLEI:60, fol. 778.

[139] *PCD*, 21 Jan. 1891, SLEI:62, fols. 601-3; *KNL*, 6 June 1891, SLEI:63, fols. 637-8

[140] *KNL*, 2 Aug., 20 Sept. 1890, 9 May 1891, SLEI:60, fol. 1305, vol. 61, fol. 509, vol. 63, fol. 297.

[141] *KNL*, 2 Aug., 20 Sept. 1890. *KNL*, 4, 11 Oct. 1890, SLEI:61, fols. 707, 727.

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 10/89 | Turks | Andkhui | - | - | 4 | |
| 10/89 | Uzbek | 4 Wilayat | - | - | 20 | fined |
| 10/89 | Uzbek | Maimana | - | - | 50 | exile |
| 10/89 | Turk | Turkistan | 25 | strangled | - | - |
| 11/89 | Afghan | Kunar | - | - | 3 | blinded |
| 11/89 | Shaikh 'Ali | Hazarajat | - | - | 40 | exile |
| 11/89 | Afghan | Turkistan | 1 | executed | - | - |
| 12/89 | Uzbek | Darra Yusuf | 1 | executed | - | - |
| 12/89 | various | Turkistan | - | - | 175 | |
| 12/89 | Shaikh 'Ali | Hazarajat | - | | 120 | exile |
| 12/89 | Afghan? | Maimana | - | - | 5 | |
| 12/89 | Uzbeks | Sar-i Pul | - | - | 8 | |
| 12/89 | Afghan? | Maimana | - | - | 7 | |
| 12/89 | various | Turkistan | 24 | blown from gun | - | - |
| 12/89 | various | Turkistan | 20 | hung/quartered | - | - |
| 12/89 | various | Turkistan | 2 | disembowelled/dragged behind horses | | |
| 01/90 | various | Turkistan | - | - | 70 | |
| 03/90 | Afghan | Turkistan | - | - | 30 | disgrace |
| 03/90 | "writers" | Turkistan | 17 | executed | - | - |
| 05/90 | various | Turkistan | 5 | hung | - | - |
| 06/90 | various | Badakhshan | - | - | 700 | exile |
| 10/90 | various | Turkistan | 10 | executed | - | - |
| 10/90 | "mirs" | Turkistan | 4 | executed | - | - |
| 05/91 | various | Turkistan | - | - | 26 | |

total = 678 known executions; 3,772 recorded imprisonments or punishments

sources: *NKVT, KM, HNL, PCD,* Griesbach 1889, *Warburton* 1889.

Underlying these grim statistics was an even more grisly figure. Many hundreds of people were executed in secret in order to avoid revenge, or angering their clans (Martin, 190-1).

Hundreds of other prisoners never lived to die on the gallows, for epidemics of typhoid, cholera or other infectious diseases swept through the filthy and insanitary jails and carried hundreds of prisoners into eternity (Martin, 146, 302-3).[142] Others expired in the hands of the Amir's torturers.[143] It has already been noted how, during the forced relocations of the Shaikh 'Ali Hazaras and other tribes, the sick, exhausted and aged were often slaughtered or left to die at the side of the road by their guards. Many detainees died of poison deliberately placed in their food by the Kotwal of Kabul, acting under direct orders from the Amir.[144] In July of 1889, the Kabul *munshi* reported that thirty to forty internees were being disposed of in this way every week.[145]

[142] *KM,* 2 July 1890.
[143] *NKVT,* 13, 17 Sept. 1889, SLEI:58, fols. 430-1, 533.
[144] *KM,* 24 July 1889, 2 July 1890; *KM,* 25 June 1890, SLEI:60, fol. 937.
[145] *KM,* 24 July 1889.

Amongst those who probably met their end in this manner was Ishan Uraq, the Gauhari pir who had been the mainspring of Lesser Turkistan's resistance to Afghanisation for over forty years.[146] 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, realising that the sudden disappearance of the ishan might lead to more trouble from the people of Afghan Turkistan, who regarded Ishan Uraq with great veneration, eventually released the body to his family, who buried it beside his brother, Ishan Sudur, at Darwaza-yi Qabadiyan in Mazar-i Sharif (Plate VIII).[147]

To add to the horror of those days, and in direct violation of the *shari'a* law, the Amir seemed to take delight in thinking up "the most

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[146] Saiyid Mohai al-Din Gauhari, *interview*, Mazar-i Sharif, 4 April 1993. The *wakil* diaries are silent about the fate of Ishan Uraq, though *KNL*, Sept. 1877, SLEI:17, fols. 169-84 refers to a certain "Mirza Khan son of Aishan ul-Mulk," and *PCD*, 22 Oct. 1878 mentions Uraq's heirs were still alive. Peacocke, 324 records that two sons of Uraq were living at "Suingh Khoka" near Balkh in 1885. According to the family's oral history, Saiyid Mirza Khan b. Ishan Uraq was the second son of the ishan who died at Sang-i Nawishta, Ghazni. The third son, Saiyid 'Osman Khan, was killed during the 'Turkistan Atrocities' of 1888-90. He is buried in the famous *Ashiqan wa Arifan* cemetery in Kabul. Only two of Saiyid 'Osman Khan's sons survived the 'Reign of Terror', Ishan Uraq's firstborn having been put to death by 'Abd al-Rahman Khan following the siege of Minglik in 1868. Colonel Saiyid 'Omar Khan, the second, but eldest surviving son (b. *c.* 1876), and his younger brother, Saiyid Muhammad Sadiq Gauhari (b. *c.* 1885), were taken to the Afghan capital when the Amir returned to Kabul in 1890. They remained in exile for 14 years. Eventually 'Omar Khan found employment with Amir Habibullah who allowed him to return and made him commander of forces in Afghan Turkistan. One of his sons and two grandsons are alive today. Saiyid Yahya b. 'Omar Khan represented Daulatabad of Balkh at the *Loya Jirga* during the reign of Zahir Shah. Qazi Saiyid Daud Haidar b. Saiyid Hafiz (d. *c.* 1953) b. Saiyid 'Omar Khan is Head of the Court of Appeal, whilst the younger grandchild, Haji 'Abd al-Wahab, lives in the village of Sewanchi near Daulatabad (Balkh). Saiyid Muhammad Sadiq Gauhari became a famous theologian, calligrapher, poet and proponent of Greek herbal (*yunani*) medicine. His youngest son, Qari Sahib Jamal al-Din Gauhari served with the Harakat-i Islami during the recent *jihad* and was killed in action at Daulatabad. The third son, Mohai al-Din Gauhari, an antique dealer in Kabul's 'Chicken Street', was imprisoned in Pul-i Charkhi by President Najibullah. On his release, he moved back to Mazar and has a shop opposite the *mukhabarat*, or telecommunications office, in Mazar-i Sharif. In all, four members of Ishan Uraq's family were killed fighting for various *mujahidin* groups in Northern Afghanistan; Saiyid Mohai al-Din Gauhari, *interview*, Mazar-i Sharif, April 1993.

[147] Saiyid Mohai al-Din Gauhari, *interview*, April 1993. The grave lies opposite the Gauhari family home. According to Uraq's descendants, the body of the shaikh was wrapped in leather and preserved in this way for forty days in Qal'a-yi Murad Beg, in Parwan. The spot is today marked by a *qadamgah* called Ziyarat-i Ishan-i Balkhi. The coffin was finally handed over to his clan members and taken north for burial. The original mausoleum constructed over the ishan's grave is no longer standing, the *gunbad*, or domed chamber, having collapsed some years ago. The inscribed tombstone which was erected to commemorate the ishan's deeds, was removed by Gul Muhammad Mohmand, governor of Afghan Turkistan under Nadir Shah. This latter individual is frequently accused of having destroyed much cultural material that had emotive significance for the local population of the province, including numerous monuments and valuable manuscripts. More recently, under Babrak Karmal, the graveyard which had grown up around Ishan Uraq's tomb was levelled, ostensibly to make room for a school, though no construction ever took place. Today, the tomb stands in splendid isolation in its own ground in the back streets of Mazar-i Sharif.

inhuman and fiendish"[148] methods of execution which, to European minds, evoke memories of the Spanish Inquisition. Najm al-Din, along with many others in the course of the next two years, died after having boiling oil poured over him.[149] Others were blown from the muzzles of field guns,[150] suspended in cages and left to starve,[151] hung upside down from gallows, systematically dismembered or disembowelled, and their carcasses thrown to the dogs.[152] Some were strangled, suffocated, or had their throats cut.[153]

In his official report submitted to the Viceroy, Griesbach singled out a number of executions "of specially atrocious nature."[154] On two occasions during the winter of 1888/9 a number of prisoners were lashed to the posts outside the Amir's residence in Mazar-i Sharif and left to die of exposure. One man lived for four days and would have been forced to endure the torture longer had not a sentry, at the risk of his own life, taken pity on the wretch and strangled him. Another rebel was tied to the gate post close to the Amir's *durbar* during a snowstorm and had buckets of cold water dashed over him.[155] Seven others were crucified on a wall and disembowelled. Another case of "special note" was that of an old man whose two sons, nephew and womenfolk had fled with Ishaq Khan to Bukhara. The remaining members of his family were detained and the old man brought to the Amir's court, where his mouth was slit open in front of the assembled dignitaries. He died a few hours later.[156]

Colonel Warburton's report confirms many of the grisly details of Griesbach and the Kabul *wakil* and *munshi*'s reports. However, he singles out the fate of 120 *mujawar*s of Mazar-i Sharif, presumably

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[148] Griesbach, *Turkistan Prisoners*, 1889.

[149] *Ibid.* Both Griesbach and the Kabul *wakil* give detailed, eye-witness accounts of this method of torture and execution. According to *KNL*, 19-25 Oct. 1893, SLEI:68, fol. 1893 there were two methods used in the *dagh* (boiling) torture, which usually went hand-in-hand with the *fana*, or wedge-and-post. In the first, the victim was tied down, naked, on the ground and boiling oil was sprinkled over his exposed flesh. On other occasions, flour was kneaded into a paste and plastered around the prisoner's head and hot oil was poured through a small aperture into the hardened mould, so that the face of the unfortunate sufferer was immersed in the boiling substance. According to Griesbach's report, the Amir's *farashbashi* presided in person over some of these *dagh* executions, cf. *KNL*, 14 Sept. 1888; *NKVT*, 8 Feb. 1889.

[150] Griesbach, *Turkistan Prisoners*, 1889; *KM*, 22 June 1889.

[151] Griesbach, *Turkistan Prisoners*, 1889.

[152] *KM*, 15, 22, 29 June, 3, 6, 10 July 1889; *Warburton to Durand*, 21 July 1889; *KNL*, 17 Sept. 1890, SLEI:61, fol. 313.

[153] *KM*, 26 June, 17 July, 26 Oct. 1889; *NKVT*, 10 Sept. 1889.

[154] Griesbach, *Turkistan Prisoners*, 1889.

[155] See *NKVT*, 4 Jan 1889 for confirmation of this report.

[156] *Ibid.*

the *mutawalli* of the 'Alid shrine and other members of the Ansari clan, who were condemned for having prayed for the success of Ishaq Khan. They were brought to Kabul, where they were led out to the Murad Khana gallows, located in the Qizilbash quarter of the old city, near to the Amir's stables, in groups of twenty-five at a time. They were tied down with ropes between two planks of wood and divided in two by a saw, whilst "thousands" of residents looked on.[157]

Even more frightful was the fact that women and children became victims of the Amir's anger, for many female relatives of prisoners were condemned to jail along with their menfolk. There were notable examples of women and young girls being tortured, or subjected to other forms of misuse. Perhaps the most horrific example singled out by Griesbach was the case of a fifteen year old girl who was condemned to the *fana*, or "wedge and post" torture. Both her feet were lashed tightly together by ropes to a split peg driven into the earth. A wedge of wood was then hammered down the slit with a wooden mallet, forcing the ropes deeper and deeper into the feet until they were crushed. For five days the girl endured this excruciating agony and, when she was finally released, both her ankles and feet were so crushed that she could not walk again (Gray, 268-9).[158] Other women who suffered at the Amir's hands included the wives of Sarhang Muhammad Beg, who were severely tortured to force them to divulge the whereabouts of their husband's treasure.[159]

"Thousands" of well-connected women from Turkistan who observed strict *purdah*, were sent to Kabul along with their babies and young children, where they were housed in the Zakariya' Khana Sarai; a building in the Murad Khana bazaar; the home of Sardar Muhammad 'Omar Khan; or in Dehmazang.[160] As the jails overflowed with prisoners, many women were forced to live in the open under canvas.[161] Unmarried girls and women of particular beauty, were

[157] *Warburton to Durand*, 21 July 1889. This, in spite of the fact that the Amir had married one of the daughters of the ishans of the 'Alid shrine. In January 1890, she appealed to 'Abd al-Rahman Khan for redress against the extortions of her brothers and male relatives who had denied her the house and an annuity of 20,000 rupees which she had inherited some 46 years before, *NKVT*, 26 March 1889, 27 Jan. 1890; *KNL*, 17 Dec. 1890.

[158] Griesbach, *Turkistan Prisoners*, 1889; *KNL*, 19-25 Oct. 1893. *Fana* was usually followed by the *dagh* (see above).

[159] *NKVT*, 2 Dec. 1889.

[160] *NKVT*, 19 July 1889; Griesbach, *Turkistan Prisoners*, 1889; *KM*, 18 May, 12, 26 June, 13 July, 7 Aug., 4 Sept. 1889, and many subsequent references in *KM & NKVT*.

[161] *KM*, 20 July 1889, SLEI:57, fol. 1237. In July 1889 construction began on another prison at Butkhak. Needless to say, it was the prisoners who were put to work building it, *KM*, 24 July 1889.

deliberately segregated from the womenfolk by Parwana Khan, Kotwal of Kabul, and sent to the Pari Khana. Here they were kept at government expense, fed well with *pilau* and other "dainties" and presented with "rich cloth." Leading members of the administration came to the prison daily, selected one or two women and had "illicit intercourse" with them.[162] By June 1889, some ten months after the first batch of women prisoners arrived in the Afghan capital, the Kabul *munshi* reported that four to five women a day were giving birth as a result of this institutionalised rape.[163] Some of these unfortunate women were forced to abort their babies, whilst others, ashamed at giving birth to illegitimate children, buried their new-born infants alive.[164]

One of the most terrible punishments that the Amir inflicted on his enemies was to condemn them to life imprisonment in the Siya Chah, the notorious dungeon in the Bala Hisar, which was the twin of the Black Hole of Bukhara in which Conolly and Stoddard were incarcerated prior to their execution. Excavated in the rock on which Kabul's ancient fortress was built, the well shaft opened out to a pit 20 to 25 feet in diameter. The condemned men were lowered into this living hell, where the decomposed bodies of prisoners who had given up the ghost lay rotting on the floor. The unfortunate victims sank deep into the unspeakable vermin-ridden filth, where they were fed once a day on a starvation diet by means of a basket lowered down from above. Most people sentenced to this living death quickly went mad, ending their own lives by dashing their heads against the walls (Martin, 149-50).[165] How many died in this pit is impossible to tell. However, when Amir Habibullah succeeded to the throne and ordered the release of the prisoners in the Black Hole, only three persons were found to be left alive (Martin, 150).

Prison conditions were as bad as they could be. The jails were merely large private houses, often belonging to members of the administration, or converted sarais which had had their windows barred and padlocks placed on the door (Martin, 146). As a consequence, the sanitary arrangements were completely inadequate for the demands of many hundreds of people. The rooms were never cleaned and vermin of every description thrived.[166] So overcrowded were the cells that

[162] *KM*, 12 June 1889.
[163] *Ibid.*
[164] *Ibid.* For treatment of women prisoners see *KM*, 18 May 1889.
[165] *Warburton to Durand*, 21 July 1889 who says there were actually two Siya Chahs in Kabul.
[166] *KM*, 2 July 1890.

internees had to sleep in turns. Many preferred to stay awake rather than lie down in the filth.[167] If this were not enough, people sentenced to mutilation or aputation of one, or more, limb, frequently had their sentences carried out in their cells or in the courtyard in full view and hearing of other prisoners.[168] Martin, who devotes two chapters of his book to the Amir's 'Reign of Terror' (Chapters X, XI), claims that no attempt was made to clear away the gruesome debris. "Limbs .... are left lying about, together with dismembered bodies of those dead," he records; "the whole place reeks of decomposing flesh" (Martin, 302-3). According to his estimates, between 70% and 80% of the prison population died from typhus or other infectious diseases (Martin, 146). Following serious disturbances, in which a large number of detainees attempted to break out of the Zakariya' Khana-jail, the prisoners were obliged to wear special clothing, consisting of yellow trousers, with blue coats and caps.[169] "If the truth about the Kabul prisons were generally known," wrote Martin at the end of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's reign, "other countries would probably unite in insisting on such barbarities being stopped" (Martin, 302-3).

Given the terrible catalogue of atrocities, it would be easy to fall into the trap of believing that the 'Reign of Terror' was endorsed by every member of the Muhammadzai family and the Amir's administration. This was far from the case, for the *wakil* diaries reveal that, in secret, many senior members of the government and, indeed, the Amir's own household, tried as best they could to mitigate the suffering of the prisoners and reduce the more unjust or cruel punishments the Amir had meted out. In the autumn of 1889, following the birth of a son to one of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's wives, the princess made the most of the opportunity to petition successfully for the release of a number of prisoners.[170] In March 1891, the mother of Habibullah took

[167] *Ibid. KM*, 24 July 1889.

[168] The Zakariya' Sarai, which was probably the most notorious place of incarceration, had a square, four-walled building in the compound, probably the 'quadrangle' of open ground of the sarai. In the afternoon, prisoners were taken there and put to death. During the night, their bodies were put into sacks and thrown into the ditch outside the walls, *KM*, 17 July 1889.

[169] *KM*, 19 June 1889. Only 50 soldiers guarded the inhabitants of this prison and the inmates planned a large-scale break out. Informers, however, forewarned the Kotwal of the plot and 140 of the ringleaders had their eyes gouged out. Amongst those condemned to this punishment were five saiyids, possibly ishans from the Mazar-i Sharif shrine. Even so, the uprising was only put down with difficulty. Most of the occupants of this jail were from Afghan Turkistan and included a large number of women and children, see also *KM*, 12 June, 17 July 1889; *KM*, 9 July 1890, SLEI:60, fols. 999-1000. In December 1889 the prison caught fire, though whether this was deliberate is not said, *KM*, 25 Dec. 1889.

[170] *PCD*, 26 Oct. 1889, SLEI:58, fol. 645. The *farashbashi*, who was in charge of executions in

it on herself to order the release of certain prisoners. She also complained to her husband that he had so denuded the country of civil servants (*mirzas*) that there were hardly any left to run the administration.[171]

Habibullah too, ostensibly left in charge of the affairs of Kabul during his father's absence in Mazar-i Sharif, tried to moderate or quash sentences imposed on the Turkistan captives, and instituted proper, judicial enquiries about the guilt, or otherwise, of prisoners sent to the Afghan capital from Mazar-i Sharif. His enquiries frequently revealed that the condemned were innocent of the charges laid against them.[172] The heir apparent's concern to lessen the blow that had fallen on his people, led to a number of disagreements between himself and the Kotwal of Kabul, Parwana Khan, a trusted servant of the Amir and who arguably wielded more power than Habibullah.[173] News of Habibullah's proceedings inevitably reached the ears of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, who sternly rebuked his son for being so soft, ordering him not to interfere any further in such matters, but merely to carry out the orders issuing from Mazar-i Sharif without hesitation or question (Lee 1991a, 217-8).[174] Habibullah had little choice, for even his exalted position did not exempt him from the Amir's wrath and retribution. Indeed, a few years later, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan was to publicly humiliate his son by ordering his arrest during a banquet he was holding for a number of leading members of the Muhammadzai clan. His hands bound behind his back, the future King of Afghanistan was dragged before the Amir who rained abuse and invective on him. He escaped the Siya Chah by the skin of his teeth but was ordered to spend the remainder of the night in prison (Lee 1991a, 221-3).[175] It is not surprising, therefore, that members of the government and royal household were unable to intervene more than they did, for the angel of death which stalked

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Mazar-i Sharif, tried to moderate some of the Amir's excesses, but was rebuked, *NKVT*, 13 Sept. 1889.

[171] *KNL*, 14 March 1891, SLEI:62, fols. 963-5.

[172] *KM*, 8 Feb. 1890; *PCD*, 23 Oct. 1895, SLEI:83, no. 4192, n. pag.

[173] *KM*, 12 June 1889; *TFJ*, Jan. 1890, SLEI:59, fol. 435. Whilst he was in the north, the Amir had placed the administration of Kabul in the hands of a committee of four chaired by Habibullah Khan and on which Parwana KHan served. However, the Amir trusted Parwana Khan so much that the Kotwal acted independently of Habibullah, reporting direct to the Amir. He was a kafir slave who had been with 'Abd al-Rahman Khan during his exile in Samarkand (Kakar, 1971, 75).

[174] *Warburton to Durand*, 21 July 1889. *KNL*, 13 Aug. 1890, 28 Feb. 1891, SLEI:60, fol. 1341, vol. 62, fol. 917.

[175] *KNL*, 15 Aug. 1896, SLEI:88, no. 2543, n. pag.

Afghanistan during those terrible days made no distinction between the Hebrew slave or firstborn of Pharaoh's household.

Nor is it correct to claim that the 'Turkistan Atrocities' were directed against one particular racial or social group and Kakar (1971, 155) is wrong when he claims, on the basis of a single report from the British *wakil*,[176] that "people of no influence were pardoned." The Amir's wrath not only fell indiscriminately on all whom he deemed might present a challenge to his supreme authority, but on the tribes and clans which these amirs and khans governed. It is true that 'Abd al-Rahman Khan made a particular point of eradicating certain elements of Afghan Turkistan's hierarchy. One of his first actions was to virtually exterminate Afghan officers who had served in Ishaq Khan's army, many of whom had previously served under Sher 'Ali Khan and Dost Muhammad Khan (see above and, Kakar 1971, 155). The purge of the army was extended to whole regiments, from officer to sepoy. Though the disbanding of regiments which had fought for Ishaq Khan might be justifiable in the interests of national security, the Amir did not stop there. Even regiments that had stayed loyal to Kabul during the revolt were broken up and their officers often killed or imprisoned. Amongst the indigenous peoples of Afghan Turkistan, the Amir's hand fell heaviest on the upholders of the 'Ancient Supremacy,' that is, the elders and tribal leaders who owned much of the land and property of the area. Whether they had supported Ishaq Khan or not was irrelevant, as Shah Mardan Quli Mingbashi, 'General' 'Abd al-Qayyum Khan, members of the Maimana garrison, and many others who had fought for the Amir, discovered to their cost.

As the list given above reveals, the reprisals encompassed every ethnic group. Amongst those who were put to death were Afghans from different tribes, including Barakzai and Muhammadzai sardars such as Najm al-Din Khan. A case of particular poignancy occurred in July 1889, when an unnamed elder of the Durrani tribe, who had carried the Amir on his shoulders when he was a child, called on 'Abd al-Rahman Khan to enquire why his government allowance had been stopped. Instead of receiving the *rish safed* with due honour, the Amir publicly humiliated the old man and disowned him in the most gross and offensive manner possible amongst Muslims. "I do not know you," the Amir informed him, "from what pig tribe are you?"[177]

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[176] Quoting as his source, *NKVT*, 4 Jan. 1889.
[177] *NKVT*, 19 July 1889.

The *wakil* and *munshi* diaries record the execution or imprisonment of many Turkmans, Uzbeks, Tajiks and Shaikh 'Ali Hazaras. During the same period, numbers of kafirs, people from the Kunar valley and from Kohistan (presumably from around Charikar) were also put to death. Hundreds of shaikhs, saiyids, pirs, mullahs and ishans, including over one hundred from the shrine of Shah-i Mardan at Mazar-i Sharif alone, were either put to death or incarcerated for long periods in the Kabul jails. Nor was the Amir's vengeance merely confined to male heads of house. The wives and children of offenders were imprisoned in the most appalling conditions, whilst the flower of Turkistan's womanhood were forced to endure the indignities of the Pari Khana. The customary immunity from execution or torture extended to womenfolk was waived. We have already noted how Griesbach and the Kabul *wakil* made a particular point of recording cases of particular brutality where women and young girls were left to suffer under the tender care of the Amir's inquisitors.

The effect of these purges was devastating and makes nonsense of the Amir's claim that he was "reducing a disorderly people to a state of new order"[178] and that the ends, therefore, justified the means. Hundreds of experienced officers and battle-hardened men, who had formed the backbone of the Afghan military establishment which had evolved over the previous fifty years, were either put to death, imprisoned or disgraced, thus weakening even further Afghanistan's ability to defend itself against Russian aggression, which was, ironically, the very reason why Britain continued to support the Amir's government.[179] Nor did the Amir's iron hand eradicate the spirit of rebellion, or make the area any more secure. Indeed, he merely increased the population's disgust and abhorrence towards him, which had been the main cause for the rebellion of Ishaq Khan. Far from the volcano becoming extinct, it merely fell dormant, awaiting the day when it would break out with even greater vehemence and destructive force.[180]

The destruction of the political and feudal leaders of Lesser Turkistan, who were the upholders, *par excellence*, of the Chingizid 'Ancient Supremacy', went hand in hand with the seizures of the accumulated wealth of this indigenous aristocracy. The systematic

[178] *Amir to Viceroy*, 30 Sept. 1889. Cf. Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 217-8.

[179] *PCD*, 21 Aug. 1890, SLEI:60, fol. 1369 which states that the Amir had left only 4,500 troops in Afghan Turkistan when he returned to Kabul. The Amir, however, told the Viceroy he had 15,725 troops in the area, *Amir to Viceroy*, 19 March 1889.

[180] *KM*, 17 July 1889; *HNL*, 15 Aug. 1889, SLEI:58, fols. 243-4.

way in which this was done suggests strongly that the Amir pursued a deliberate 'scorched earth' strategy, which was designed to reduce to penury an area which had always been rich in human, agricultural and other resources. Impoverishment meant that Afghan Turkistan was forced into economic and political dependence on Kabul, thus making it that much harder, logistically, for the province to sustain any protracted challenge against central government.

The Amir was ruthless. Those condemned to death, imprisonment, or exile had not just their portable property and cash confiscated, but also their houses, shops, land and stock.[181] Thousands were condemned to an impoverished exile in Kabul[182] and at least 12,000 Uzbek families were forcibly resettled in Kabul and Jalalabad (Kakar 1971, 115).[183] Others, unable to make ends meet and fearing that they, too, would soon be arrested, took their lives in their hands and fled to Persia or Russian Turkistan to join thousands of refugees who had managed to escape from the 'Reign of Terror'.[184] Those people who remained behind in Afghan Turkistan were forced to work on the construction of the new 'Star Fort' at Dehdadi, or on other government projects.[185] By the spring of 1890, so many people had either died, been imprisoned, or exiled, or fled, that the *munshi* in Kabul wrote that the province was, "nearly depopulated."[186] This, however, suited the Amir, who expanded his policy of 'Afghanisation' by compelling large numbers of Pushtun tribes from Jalalabad, Laghman and

[181] E.g. *NKVT*, 28 May 1889; *KM*, 8 June 1889. *KM*, 1 June 1889, SLEI:57, fol. 693; *NKVT*, 13 June 1890, SLEI:60, fol. 870.

[182] "I shall have one headman for every tribe in the district and remove all the rest of their relatives to the capital, in the same manner as I have done with the Mir of Maimana," *Amir to Firozkohi Chiefs*, *NKVT*, 23 May 1890, SLEI:60, fol. 689.

[183] *PCD*, 20 Sept. 1890, SLEI:61, fols. 411-2; *KNL*, 6-9 Jan. 1894, SLEI:73, fol. 527. See also, C. E. Yate, *Fortifications and Troops of Herat*, 1893.

[184] *NKVT*, 1 Jan. 1890; *HNL*, 25 Jan. 1890; *NKVT*, 3 Feb. 1890, SLEI:59, fols. 806-7, 840; *TFJ*, April 1890; *KM*, 16 April 1890; *NKVT*, 3 April 1890, SLEI:60, fol. 12, 157-8, 161-2; *PCD*, 21 Sept. 1896, SLEI:88, no. 2665, n. pag.; *KNL*, 16 Oct. 1891.

[185] *NKVT*, 14 May 1889 (enclosure includes a ground plan of the Dehdadi fortress) & 20 Feb. 1890; *KNL*, 24 Sept. 1890, 6 June 1891; *HNL*, 13 March 1890; *HNL*, 17 July 1890, SLEI:60, fols. 133-4. The Amir had planned to build a chain of 40 forts across Lesser Turkistan to protect his northern border, but claimed he did not have sufficient money (Kakar 1971, 155; Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 274), though what happened to the lakhs of rupees exacted from the local population in fines, exactions and confiscations, remains a mystery. Griesbach suggested instead that the Amir concentrate his efforts on fortifying Maimana and Daulatabad and in building a bridge over the Murghab to connect Herat and Maimana, Griesbach, *Journeys*, 1888-89, ii, 403; Kakar, 1971, 155. In the end the Amir contented himself with building the huge 'star' fort of Dehdadi.

[186] *KM*, 16 April 1890.

Qandahar to move north, where the vacant and vacated land was divided amongst them (Kakar 1971, 133).[187]

Bereft of the traditional financial structures on which the local agricultural and mercantile economies relied, the whole province was plunged into a severe economic decline as a result of the Amir's policy. Using the excuse of Russian troop movements and the presence of Ishaq Khan and other refugees in Bukhara, Afghanistan's border with Russia was closed, thus forcibly redirecting the trade of Balkh province through Herat, Qandahar and Kabul and placing the merchants and traders of the region at a severe disadvantage.[188] The movement of people within, to and from Afghan Turkistan was severely restricted[189] and curfews were rigorously enforced in border towns such as Maimana.[190] Shops were sequestered,[191] the most lucrative products, such as karakul skins, pistachios, raisins, grain, sheep and cattle, were nationalised and monopolies in individual commodities sold off to the highest bidder. Whilst the local people were unable to pay the extortionate prices demanded by the franchise holders for these commodities, the same monopolists were in a position to buy local produce at rock bottom prices.[192] When the Amir returned to Kabul, he took with him twelve thousand of the region's famous horses for use by his cavalry and artillery.[193]

As a consequence of such measures trade, both internal and external, went into a severe slump. At the end of 1889, exports to Russia, which were the mainstay of the mercantile economy of Lesser Turkistan, amounted to less than half of the total for the previous year. By

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[187] *NKVT*, 1 July 1890. *PCD*, 11 April 1890, SLEI:60, 1245-6; *HNL*, 17 Aug. 1893, SLEI:72, part 1, fol. 193.

[188] *HNL*, 21 Feb., 15 Aug. 1889; *KM*, 31 Aug. 1889; *NKVT*, 3 Feb. 1890. *Kamaroff to Ghaus-ud-Din*, 9 Nov. 1888, SLEI:55, fol. 1386; *NKVT*, 19 Feb. 1889, SLEI:56, fols. 949-50; *HNL*, 31 Oct. 1889, SLEI:58, fol. 983. *QNL*, 21 Dec. 1889; *NKVT*, 9 Jan 1890, SLEI:59, fols. 179, 529, et al.

[189] *KM*, 31 Aug. 1889; *NKVT*, 3 April 1890.

[190] *HNL*, 6 Nov. 1890, SLEI:61, fol. 972.

[191] *NKVT*, 18 Oct. 1889; *KNL*, 27 Sept. 1890, SLEI:61, fol. 513.

[192] *NKVT*, 3 April 1890; *TFJ*, April 1890. *NKVT*, 24 Feb. 1890, SLEI:59, fols. 1034-5; *TFJ*, May 1890, SLEI:60, fol. 431. See also *Afghanistan, Establishment by Amir of a Monopoly of the Sale of Fruit, etc.*, 13 June 1893; *Commissioner, Peshawar, to Chief Secr., Punjab*, 30 Sept. 1890; *Deputy Commissioner, Peshawar to Commissioner, Peshawar*, 17, 20 Sept. 1892, SLEI:70, fols. 455-62, 463-6; *Memorandum and Papers Regarding the Creation of Trade Monopolies by the Amir of Afghanistan, 1894-1895*, 16 Oct. 1895, SLEI:83, no. 202 (Frontier), n. pag.; *Amir to Foreign Secretary*, 17 Nov. 1895, SLEI:84, no. 18 (Frontier), n. pag. This, of course, increased smuggling and consequently meant a loss of revenue for the Afghan government, see *HNL*, 28 Nov. 1891, SLEI:64, fol. 1694.

[193] *PCD*, 20 Sept. 1890.

1892 exports had declined from nearly four million rubles in 1888 to a mere eight hundred thousand. In 1896, Russian sources reported that trade with Afghanistan was "virtually at a standstill." It was only after the death of the Amir, in 1901, that any significant change occurred, but by then the damage had been done (Gregorian, 146, 196 & n. 64 p. 453-5).[194] Many shop keepers went bankrupt[195] and thousands of ordinary people were condemned to impoverishment and ruin.[196] Forced to pay swingeing fines, and retrospective taxes for the past twelve to fifteen years,[197] and preyed upon by the Amir's tax collectors, who expropriated money and goods in vast sums from a population that dared not answer back,[198] local people were reduced to selling their daughters for eight rupees each.[199] To add to the misery, epidemics of fever raged through the province, culminating, in the summer of 1892, in a devastating plague of cholera, which swept thousands of people into eternity.[200]

### *The 'Turkistan Atrocities' and Anglo-Afghan Relations*

News of what was happening in Afghan Turkistan began to filter through to India via the trade route by the end of 1888. In Calcutta, the weekly reports from Mirza 'Ataullah Khan, the British agent, and Saiyid Diwan Muhammad, the agency *munshi* who had stayed behind to monitor events in Kabul, were increasingly occupied with grisly accounts of the atrocities and executions in Mazar-i Sharif and the Afghan capital. Yet for several months neither the Viceroy nor the India Office was prepared to give much credence to the evidence of their own employees. Undoubtedly, racial stereotyping by the British administration, who believed that all Indians exaggerated, played an

[194] See also, *PCD*, 22 Dec. 1890 which reports that trade in Afghan Turkistan was "very dull .. through the tyrannical rule of His Highness." Kakar 1979, 214 is wrong when he claims that, after the Amir lifted the sanctions following the occupation of Panjdeh in 1885, trade increased.

[195] *HNL*, 1 Jan. 1891, SLEI:62, fol. 689; *HNL*, 29 Aug. 1895, SLEI:83, no. 3955, n. pag.

[196] *HNL*, 15 Aug. 1889; *NKVT*, 28 May, 24 Sept. 1889; *KM*, 16 April 1890. *PCD*, 23 Jan. 1894, SLEI:73, fol. 505.

[197] *HNL*, 15 Aug. 1889; *PCD*, 26 Dec. 1893, SLEI:73, fol. 191; *NKVT*, 18, 29 April 1890, SLEI:60, fols. 323-4, 485 gives the example of Hazrat Imam on one of the Hazhda Nahr canals. The Amir had ordered the irrigation channels in the region to be cleaned, a praiseworthy project, but he used forced labour, which removed people from cultivating the existing land. He had also ordered all the inhabitants of the village to pay 15 years arrears in revenue and then arrested the *arbab*. Consequently, this once prosperous place was reduced to a mere 100 families.

[198] E.g. *NKVT*, 24 Sept. 1889; *NKVT*, 8 Nov. 1889, SLEI:58, fols. 850-1.

[199] *PCD*, 10 Sept. 1892, SLEI:67, fol. 1185; *PCD*, 26 Dec. 1893.

[200] *PCD*, 10 Sept. 1892. *HNL*, 7 Nov. 1889, SLEI:58, fol. 989; *HNL*, 1 Sept. 1892; *PCD*, 10 Oct., 8 Nov. 1892, SLEI:68, fols. 47, 347, 635.

important part in this. The Political and Secret Department, too, often criticised the quality of intelligence provided by the Kabul agency, though reports issuing from Peshawar (*PCD* series), filed by British officers, prove to be a far less trustworthy source for the historian than the Kabul diaries. Undoubtedly one of the main factors which prevented any early or effective action against the Amir was that Britain was unwilling to admit to the stark reality that their foremost ally and the defender of the Indian frontier had inaugurated a reign of terror unprecedented in the history of Afghanistan. Instead, officials took comfort in the belief that 'Ataullah Khan and his subordinates always took "the gloomiest views of the Amir's position and character" (quoted, Kakar 1971, 214), an attitude which, regrettably, even Kakar, who studied the India Office's Political and Secret files, endorsed by accusing 'Ataullah Khan of "bias" and looking on the "dark side of events" (Kakar 1971, 214).

Sheer disbelief, combined with an inability to accept that Britain's policy had led to the support of a tyrannical and despotic ruler, meant that official condemnation of the atrocities was postponed. Britain, after all, had invested heavily in 'Abd al-Rahman Khan and did not wish to antagonise the ruler who was the lynch-pin of the frontier policy. Annually, Calcutta sent 1,850,000 Indian rupees up the Khyber "as a personal favour"[201] to shore up the Amir and when, following the defeat of Ishaq Khan, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan had requested more money, ammunition and guns, Britain had responded with alacrity, sending several more lakh of rupees and two million rounds of ammunition to resupply the Afghan army.[202] By September 1889, according to official government figures, the Amir had received during the previous nine years a total of 144 lakh rupees, 74 field guns with ammunition, 25,000 breach loading and 11,500 muzzle loading rifles, as well as several million rounds of ammunition.[203]

Later, Lord Lansdowne, the Viceroy during this period, informed the Secretary of State for India that nothing had been done to condemn the atrocities, because he wished to confirm the reports of the Kabul agency "beyond doubt" and on the basis of "trustworthy evidence,"[204] that is, intelligence supplied by British, rather than native,

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[201] *Lansdowne to Viscount Cross*, 4 Feb. 1891, SLEI:62, fols. 597-600

[202] *Amir to Viceroy*, 10 Oct. 1888; *Foreign Secr. to Deputy Commission, Peshawar*, 19 Oct. 1888.

[203] *Viceroy to Amir*, 10 Sept. 1889.

[204] *Viceroy to Viscount Cross*, Simla, 16 Sept. 1889, SLEI:58, fols. 141-2.

officers. The truth of the matter was that England needed the Amir more than the Amir needed England.[205]

By the winter of 1888 a new Viceroy, the Marquis of Lansdowne [1888-1894] had arrived in India. He was an unashamed supporter of the notion of a 'Scientific Frontier' in Central Asia, which, with some modifications, was a reworking of the 'Forward Policy' of previous generations. This theory required the swift occupation of Qandahar, Ghazni and Kabul in the event of any Russian advance south. Implicit in the concept was the need to further consolidate Afghanistan's boundaries, particularly that on the Oxus, and to establish a much greater degree of British authority over the Pushtun tribes in the North West Frontier, Chitral, Swat and Baluchistan (Kakar 1971, 109-110; Gregorian, 152-3). Though the Viceroy was quite prepared to implement this policy, even at the risk of alienating the Amir of Afghanistan, it was hoped that Britain could persuade 'Abd al-Rahman Khan to actively support the plan by making it worth his while both financially, politically and militarily. The desire to win the agreement of the Amir for the 'Scientific Frontier' overrode all other considerations, including humanitarian ones, with disastrous consequences for the people he ruled.

Hence, in the winter of 1888/9, the administration in Calcutta was far more concerned with the reports issuing from Mazar-i Sharif that Russia had rushed 20,000 additional troops to the frontier with Afghanistan,[206] than with the stories of atrocities. The Amir's vociferous denunciations of Russia who, he alleged, had materially supported Ishaq Khan, angered the Tsar, who informed Britain that the presence of the Amir in Afghan Turkistan and his violent abuse of his country threatened the security of the region and could lead to armed intervention by Russia across the Amu Darya.[207] The situation continued to deteriorate as each side began to accuse the other of border

[205] The remarks of Lord Morley, Secretary of State for India on Anglo-Afghan relations, graphhically illustrate the ironies of the whole of British Central Asian policy during the reign of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan:

> We are bound to defend the Amir's country, yet are forbidden to take a single step for defence within its borders, or to send a single officer to reconnoitre the best means for its defence ...; we give the Amir an annual subsidy ..., yet are not allowed to place a European agent at his capital ...; even our advice is resented.... Evidently so singular a position is only tolerated or upheld for peculiarly strong reasons, arising from the belief in the minds of Afghan and British rulers equally that each of them requires and receives some valuable considerations from the other (quoted Hall, 23).

[206] *TFJ*, Feb. 1889; *PCD*, 31 May 1889, SLEI:57, fol. 643; 8,000 at Charjui, 12,000 at Qarqi.

[207] *TFJ*, Feb. 1889; *Viceroy to Amir*, 27 Feb. 1889.

violations and rumours spread that Russia was trying to pressurise the Amir into ceding Maimana.[208] As tension mounted, the Viceroy wrote to 'Abd al-Rahman Khan urging him to refrain from using "provocative language" which could lead to "a collision" with Russian forces[209] and at the same time alluding to the reports about the Amir's methods of dealing with the rebels. Such punishments, if they proved to be true, were "abhorrent to civilisation" and 'Abd al-Rahman Khan was urged to be more selective in choosing people to suffer such punishments. The letter, however, was hardly unequivocal in condemning the methods used by the Amir to dispose of political opponents and even gave some encouragement to the reign of terror:

> Severe measures may have been necessary in order to punish those whose complicity in the revolt can be clearly established ... under the above circumstances energetic action on your Highness' part was most necessary.[210]

Throughout the spring of 1889, Britain's primary concern remained the issue of the Oxus frontier. On 1 April 1889, the Viceroy wrote once more to 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, ressurrecting the thorny question of British officers being stationed in Afghan Turkistan. The Amir, however, rejected the request on the grounds that some of his subjects were 'fanatics' and would not understand the presence of the English on Afghan soil.[211] This reply was not at all to the Viceroy's liking and relations became strained. This was exacerbated by the dispute with Afghanistan about the railway line which was currently being extended up to the Afghan border at Chaman and which the Amir claimed was "like pushing a knife into my vitals" (quoted Gregorian, 154; Kakar 1971, 109-11). Since the railway extension was a vital component of the 'Scientific Frontier' plan, requiring at least the tacit agreement of the Amir, the fate of a few thousand Pushtuns, Hazaras, Uzbeks, etc. was not deemed sufficiently important to risk any further breakdown in relations between the two countries.

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[208] *Kamaroff to Ghaus-ud-Din*, 9 Nov. 1889; *HNL*, 13 Dec. 1888, 18 April 1889; *Viceroy to Amir*, 27 Feb. 1889.

[209] *Viceroy to Amir*, 17 Feb. 1889.

[210] *Ibid.* Earlier, the Viceroy had written to the Amir in more severe terms about the repression of the Ghilzais (Kakar 1971, 131). Kakar, *loc. cit.* quotes selectively from this letter, ignoring the comment published above. Nor does Kakar make any reference to the Viceroy's subsequent, more detailed, letter to the Amir following the receipt of Griesbach and Warburton's report.

[211] *Viceroy to Amir*, 1 April 1889, SLEI:56, fol. 1127; *Amir to Viceroy*, 24 April 1889, SLEI:57, fols. 615-6.

The administration in India was eventually forced to act in the matter only after receiving anxious letters from the India Office in London.[212] "Alarming"[213] accounts of atrocities in Afghan Turkistan had been sent to St. Petersburg by Russian officials on the other side of the Amu Darya and the British Ambassador had been informed of the Tsar's concern at the situation. Queen Victoria, having read these dispatches, added her voice, expressing distress at the way in which Britain's ally was apparently behaving. The British government, embarrassed and concerned that there would be a public outcry,[214] requested immediate clarification of the situation from the Viceroy.

On 3 July 1889 the Kabul *munshi* was ordered to report on the situation in Kabul and to provide concrete evidence that his claims about atrocities were not exaggerated or based on bazaar rumour.[215] In response, Saiyid Diwan Muhammad put up a spirited defence of his reports. The descriptions of beheadings, quarterings, dismemberments, hangings and various other tortures and executions were based on the evidence of his own eyes and ears. A mere eight hundred paces from the agency house, on the *chaman* opposite his front door, the Amir's officials had erected gallows and other instruments of death. Here, prisoners were daily put to death in the most horrible manner. "The agency servants," he wrote, "go and witness [the executions] ... I have also seen the same." Accounts of strangulation and blinding of prisoners were based on the evidence of "reliable eye-witnesses" and, before any report of atrocities was filed, every endeavour was made to confirm the facts of the case by enquiries from three or four reliable sources.[216] A few days after submitting his reply, he informed Calcutta that the situation was so bad and the people of Afghanistan so "disgusted" with their ruler, that they were urging Britain to intervene.[217] Indeed, the Afghans laid the blame for their suffering at the door of the English, for was it not they who were shoring up the Amir's government by copious subsidies? Was it not British rifles and bullets which were being used to shed their blood (Martin, 303)?

Despite all his protestations, the Kabul *munshi*'s report was not believed. Instead, Griesbach, who was on his way back to India from

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[212] *Viceroy to Viscount Cross*, 16 Sept. 1889; *Viceroy to Amir*, 10 Sept. 1889.
[213] *Viceroy to Amir*, 10 Sept. 1889.
[214] *Viceroy to Viscount Cross*, 16 Sept. 1889.
[215] "Sayyid Diwan Muhammad to Foreign Department," Kabul, 13 July 1889, *Reply to Letter from Foreign Department to the Kabul Munshi*, 3 July 1889, SLEI:58, fol. 145.
[216] *Ibid.*
[217] *KM*, 17 July 1889.

Mazar-i Sharif where he had been on official business at the Amir's court,[218] and Colonel Warburton in Peshawar, were asked to submit their opinions on the truth, or otherwise, of the reported atrocities. When their memoranda arrived in Calcutta, any lingering hopes that the 'Reign of Terror' was a figment of 'Ataullah Khan's imagination, or could be dismissed as 'oriental exaggeration' were dashed. Griesbach, who had been forced to witness "the most frightful scenes" of the "most inhuman and fiendish" kind, was in no mood to spare his superiors sensibilities and presented them with detailed and gruesome descriptions of how prisoners had been condemned to slow and agonising deaths by exposure, *fana* and *dagh*, disembowelling, hanging and quartering. His report confirmed, even in the small detail, the testimony of Mirza 'Ataullah Khan, and strongly supported the truth of the Kabul *munshi*'s claim that executions were taking place in the parade ground across the street from his house and all they needed to do was to look out of their windows to have a grandstand view of the fate of the condemned.[219]

Warburton's letter was no less damning in its indictment of the Amir's 'Reign of Terror'. Included in those who had perished were all those who had helped the Afghan Boundary Commission demarcate the Badghis frontier. Many people, he wrote, had been "swept out of the way" during the first eight years of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's reign but until recently executions had been done in utmost secrecy. However,

> ... ever since the revolt of Ishak and the Amir's arrival in Turkistan, things have changed. The prisoners are now sent out of this world in such numbers and with such publicly brutal measures that the news could hardly be credited were it not told by men who were eyewitnesses of the scenes they were relating and who were in no way biased by any enmity against the Amir.[220]

He singled out eight particularly brutal methods of punishments. These included being condemned for life to the Siya Chah and the

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[218] See above. Griesbach, *Journeys*, 1888-89 is the unpublished account of his travels in northern Afghanistan. Though incomplete (the typescript manuscript made by his daughter, Hilda, for the India Office ends abruptly on 6 July 1889) this diary remains an important, primary, source for the history of Afghan Turkistan after the downfall of Sardar Ishaq Khan. According to Hilda Griesbach's handlist and correspondence with the India Office in 1922, she also surrendered the autograph copy of her father's journal, though this manuscript does not appear in the catalogue of the India Office P&S collection. An edition of this journal is being prepared for publication by Dr. D. Baland of the Sorbonne.

[219] Griesbach, *Turkistan Prisoners*, 1889.

[220] *Warburton to Durand*, 21 July 1889.

sawing in two of the ishans and *mujawar*s of Mazar-i Sharif at the public execution grounds at Murad Khana.[221]

The evidence of the two British officers proved, beyond the shadow of a doubt, that the accounts of 'Ataullah Khan and Saiyid Muhammad Diwan were true, and in the middle of September the Viceroy informed the India Office:

> The grave nature of these reports ... unfortunately leaves no room for doubt that a very large number of the Amir's subjects who were suspected of being implicated in the Turkistan rebellion have been, and are being, treated in the most cruel and barbarous way.[222]

A letter was drafted to the Amir which the Secretary of State for India claimed constituted "a grave warning ... that these atrocities are calculated to produce a bad impression,"[223] and which London saw as marking "a turning point in our relations with the Amir ... his reception of it will be looked for with keen interest."[224]

In fact, even after receiving such reports, the Viceroy sought every opportunity to excuse the Amir's conduct. Though admonishing 'Abd al-Rahman Khan to "deal more mercifully to these misguided men,"[225] Lansdowne opened his letter by addressing the Afghan ruler as, "my honoured and valued friend," the irony of which was not lost on at least one person in the India Office. Filed opposite Griesbach's report on the 'Turkistan Atrocities' in the Political and Secret Department's annual files, an official drew a pencilled line from Lansdowne's salutation to the point on the opposite page, where Griesbach graphically and chillingly describes how a fifteen year old girl was irrecoverably crippled as a result of five days of the *fana* torture.[226] The Amir's attention was drawn to the reports reaching India and Britain which spoke of how "great cruelties have been perpetrated upon your subjects, if not by your orders, by those of persons professing to act as your agents."[227]

> I wish to point out to Your Highness, that such actions as these are calculated to produce a bad impression not only upon the Government of India, but upon

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[221] *Ibid.*

[222] *Viceroy to Viscount Cross*, Simla, 16 Sept. 1889.

[223] *Viscount Cross to Viceroy*, 17 Oct. 1889, *HC*:L/P&S/3/297, fols. 915-7.

[224] *Draft Memorandum ... on Atrocities perpetrated in Turkistan and Kabul under the Amir's Orders*, 16 Sept. 1889, *HC*:L/P&S/3/297, fols. 913-98.

[225] *Viceroy to Amir*, 10 Sept. 1889.

[226] Griesbach, *Turkistan Prisoners*, 1889.

[227] *Viceroy to Amir*, 10 Sept. 1889.

> the Government and people of England. These practices are abhorrent to the ideals of civilized nations. They have long been abandoned by the great powers of Europe, and it would be regarded as a just reproach to England, could it be said she supported actively, and encouraged by her good-will and practical assistance, a ruler by whom such things were habitually done.[228]

Lansdowne conceded that it was necessary to be "severe as well as just" and that Britain ought not to judge Afghanistan by the standards "which prevail in countries more advanced than that of which your Highness is chief" but argued that it was possible to deal with the rebels "without barbarities as shocking to contemplate as those about which I am writing."[229] The Viceroy also took issue with the Amir because he had "rudely"[230] refused to provide information about the size and disposition of his forces in Afghanistan, primarily because of the tension which existed between the two countries over the issue of the Chaman railway. The Viceroy, however, assured the Afghan ruler that "the government of India will cheerfully act up to the assurances which have more than once been given you" and hinted that, were it not for British financial and military support the Amir would not be in power anyway.[231] In conclusion, Lord Lansdowne warned the Amir:

> I cannot help fearing that if Your Highness should persist in treating in a spirit so hostile, requests as reasonable as that which you have just refused, and if it should be impossible for me to contradict the above reports as to the cruelties which you are alleged to have inflicted on your subjects, you will alienate from yourself the good-will of those who most desire to befriend and assist you.[232]

When 'Abd al-Rahman Khan received this communication he was said to have become "very angry" and spent most of that night thinking about his reply.[233] On 30 September, he finally penned a strong and unabashed defence of his policy which contained not the slightest hint of regret, nor any promise of reform or moderation of his style of government (cf. Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 272).

> During the reign of Peter the Great ... were not lakhs of people put to death, and launched into oblivion ..., so that the state of order of the territories and troops of the said power has reached such a degree that the whole world is trembling before their awful strength and grandeur? ..... My work is like that of those

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[228] *Ibid.*
[229] *Ibid.*
[230] *Viscount Cross to Viceroy*, 17 Oct. 1889.
[231] *Ibid.*
[232] *Ibid.*
[233] *'Turkistan Atrocities' the Amir's Reply*, 11 Nov. 1889.

> times, and so I am reducing the disorderly people to a state of new order.... This finding fault with me ... is out of place.[234]

The deportations, executions, blindings and suchlike, he argued, were necessary for the welfare of the government, in order to prevent people communicating with Russia and to punish them for other "improper deeds." He rejected, too, the Viceroy's suggestion that it was the English who had placed him on the throne of Afghanistan; this had been done with the consent of tribal elders at Charikar in 1880 and coins had been struck in his name before General Roberts had extended official recognition to him.[235]

Despite the curtness of the Amir's reply and his refusal to accept even such a mild rebuke, British officials, having dutifully remonstrated with 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, consoled themselves with the belief that the Amir's reply was "unexpectedly temperate in tone."[236] The India Office was informed that the Afghan ruler was "indifferent" to opinion in Europe "so long as he retains the friendship of Her Majesty's Government" and rather than risk a complete breakdown in the special relationship, no further action was taken. A few months later, Viscount Cross was assured that "His Highness has partially desisted from his cruelties," even though "cases of barbarous punishment and of imprisonment under conditions of cruel severity are still not infrequent."[237] In fact, the 'Reign of Terror', far from abating, had, if anything, increased in its severity.

It was not until 1892, during the Hazara campaign, that the moral dilemma raised by Britain's support of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan was once again forced onto the British government's agenda, and only then because the Persian government had threatened to invade Afghanistan in order to protect the Shi'i community in Herat. A memorandum on the "unsatisfactory state of relations with the Amir of Afghanistan" addressed to Viscount Cross from the Foreign Department concluded:

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[234] *Amir to Viceroy*, 30 Sept. 1889. The reference to Peter the Great is a significant, but overlooked, factor in determining the Amir's policy, for this Tsar was 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's lifelong hero and role model. During the 'Turkistan Atrocities' he sent for copies of the histories of this monarch and of Charles XII of Russia, which apparently were available at Herat, *HNL*, 28 Nov. 1889, SLEI:59, fols. 54-5; Lilias Hamilton, *Stories of my Life in Cabul*, WIHML:PP/HAM/A19.

[235] *Amir to Viceroy*, 30 Sept. 1889. See the comment in Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 272.

[236] *'Turkistan Atrocities', the Amir's Reply*, 11 Nov. 1889.

[237] *Foreign Dept. to Viscount Cross*, 7 Jan. 1890, SLEI:59, fol. 1.

> A review of the manner in which His Highness has conducted himself since we placed him on the throne would be incomplete without some reference to his systematic oppression and cruelty. He has done his utmost, by establishing numerous monopolies in his own interests and by his inordinately heavy taxation, to ruin the trade of his country and arouse the hostility of his subjects, who have more than once been driven to rebel against him, and many of whom have migrated. With the exception of his uncle, Muhammad Yusuf Khan, he has killed, or banished, almost every man of rank and influence in the country. The punishments which he has been in the habit of inflicting upon those who fell under his displeasure have been of the most barbarous and inhuman nature. His wholesale executions and the horrible methods in which they are often carried out, have made him greatly feared in Afghanistan; but they are a disgrace to his name.... We have been obliged to warn His Highness that, unless he ceases to inflict these atrocious punishments, he cannot expect to retain our friendship; but we fear the warning has had little effect; and we confess that we find it difficult at times, to justify to ourselves our actions in supporting upon the throne of Afghanistan, for political reasons, a ruler so bloody and implacable.[238]

Once again, the overriding "political reasons" remained the issues pertaining to the 'Scientific Frontier', a fact openly recognised the following year in correspondence which arose from the establishment of Afghan government monopolies over certain commodities and which had caused further tension between Kabul and Calcutta.

> Just now when we have our Russian negotiations to hand, it would be impolitic to move strongly in this matter [of the monopolies], but at a more favourable time I should be disposed to let the Amir understand that these most unfriendly proceedings are incompatible with the relations existing with him. It seems almost absurd to pay a subsidy to a ruler whose whole object seems to be to injure us.[239]

Though Britain did delay the dispatch of certain war materials, which hampered the Hazara campaign (Kakar 1971, 110), the Viceroy's pusillanimous attitude towards the 'Reign of Terror' continued. As with Felix the more "convenient season" never presented itself.[240]

The arrival of Sir Mortimer Durand, Foreign Secretary to the Government of India, in Kabul in the autumn of 1893, was the consummation of months of discussion about the frontier issue. Under

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[238] *Foreign Dept. to Viscount Cross*, 16 Aug. 1892, SLEI:67, fols. 385-408.

[239] *Afghanistan: Establishment by Amir of a Monopoly*, 13 June 1893.

[240] Acts 24:25 (Authorised Version). See also *Lansdowne to Cross*, 4 Feb. 1891, a memorandum written in response to alarming reports from Dr. Gray that the Amir was about to die. Whilst discussing the possible successor to the Amir, the Viceroy admits that Afghanistan had "only at rare intervals been held together by a single ruler ... the inconvenience of a divided Afghanistan would ... be so great to us... that we ought ... to use every effort to prevent Abdur Rahman Khan's kingdom falling asunder after his death."

agreements signed on 12 November 1893, the Amir "wishing to show his friendship to the British government and his readiness to accept their advice in matters affecting his relations with Foreign Powers" (Kakar 1971, *Appendix* IX, 285) ceded to Russia control of Afghan territory north of the Amu Darya, in exchange for land south of the river which was part of the Russian administration. More controversially, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan relinquished Afghanistan's claim to influence over the tribes of the North-West Frontier, thereby indirectly surrendering to Britain greater political and economic power over the tribes (Fraser-Tytler, 169; Gregorian, 158-9; Kakar 1971, 111-3 & *Appendix* X).

Once again, the supreme importance attached to this border treaty by the Indian administration, meant that ethical considerations, or concern for the fate of what was left of the population of Afghanistan, were matters of very little import. In his report on the Kabul discussion, Durand explained that, although he raised "the matter of [the Amir's] barbarities" he "did not press him," for 'Abd al-Rahman Khan was "unapproachable" when the subject was raised and "was determined to evade all discussion," usually by changing the subject and talking interminably about another, completely unrelated, matter.[241]

> He says the Afghans are not Englishmen, which is quite true, and that he must make examples or he will have disorder all over the country. He regards any remonstrance on this subject as an interference with his internal affairs and resents them accordingly.... He knows what our views are, and probably pays some attention to them, but he will make no promises.[242]

In mitigation, Durand blandly remarked that he had been assured by the British *wakil* and Mr. Pyne, the British engineer who was working in Kabul (see Gregorian, 142-3), that "barbarous punishments on a large scale have much decreased." Yet, in the very same place, Durand contradicts himself by recounting the horrific death by starvation of Rustam 'Ali Khan, the general who had played an important part in holding Maimana for 'Abd al-Rahman Khan during Ishaq Khan's rebellion,[243] as well as descriptions of continuing deportation, executions and enforced exile of Hazaras and Pushtuns.[244] For, after all, the central dilemma of Durand's mission was that the issue of human

[241] Sir M. Durand, *Report on a Recent Mission to Kabul*, 20 Dec. 1893, SLEI:73, fol. 15.
[242] *Ibid.*
[243] He was arrested in September 1893, *KNL*, 16-18 Sept. 1893, SLEI:72, part 2, fols. 373-4.
[244] *Ibid.*

rights and his strategic mandate, were essentially incompatible. The following year Durand touched on this inconsistency in a private letter to Lilias Hamilton, explaining that he "tried to advance the interests of [the Amir's] country because I believe he is at heart our friend and that his interests and ours are, in the main, identical."[245]

Turning a blind eye to what was happening in Afghanistan appears to have been very much the norm during Lansdowne's period of government. Since the Viceroy, in particular, was not willing to risk his frontier strategy by forcing the issue of the Amir's 'barbarities', the administration resorted to a policy of 'double-think,'[246] convincing themselves that things were getting better, even though all the evidence pointed in the opposite direction; for when it came to the suppression of the Hazaras, which was at its height during Durand's visit, the punishment was even more severe than that which fell on Afghan Turkistan.[247] As late as 1898, the Secretary of State, in a remarkably candid note, admitted that:

> We must, I suppose, drift on during the life of the present Amir ... I do not ... propose any action, but I note that with this dispatch ends all chance of any review of the Amir's conduct.... As for reasons of policy we have chosen to overlook the circulation of the jehad books, and regard the Amir's conduct as not calling for protest with the risks attendant thereupon, it is wise perhaps to let sleeping dogs lie, but it may be noted that while we have not protested we have never committed ourselves to expressions of approval and we can revert to late incidents if the future makes that cause expedient.[248]

The debate about the Amir's atrocities was conducted behind firmly closed doors and neither the reports of Griesbach, Warburton, the Kabul agency, nor Lansdowne's correspondence with Kabul or London were ever made public. Neither was Parliament informed about the true state of affairs in Afghanistan. In July 1890, Mr Bradlaugh, the Member of Parliament for Northampton, asked the Under-Secretary of State for India in the House, "whether any and what communication has been recently addressed by the Viceroy to the Amir of Afghanistan relating to the treatment of some of the Amir's subjects."

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[245] *Durand to Hamilton*, 15 Oct. 1894, WIHML:PP/HAM/A1.

[246] A similar schizophrenia is detectable in Lilias Hamilton's papers and lectures on her time in Afghanistan, see WIHML:PP/HAM/A series.

[247] Cf. *Viceroy to Amir*, 19 Oct. 1892, SLEI:68, part i, fol. 335 where the Persian government had made representations to the Viceroy that the Shi'is of Afghanistan were "threatened with a general massacre."

[248] Handwritten note prefacing, *Arrangements for Checking the Imports into India and Exports into Afghanistan*, etc., 2 June 1898, SLEI:103, no. 609.

The Under-Secretary, in reply, merely confirmed that "certain communications have taken place" but refused to lay any papers on the table, remarking that "it would not be in the public interest" (*Hansard*, 1890 Session). Durand's comments in his official report, relating to 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's atrocities were suppressed by the Viceroy, who realised publication "could not fail to have a most injurious effect upon our relations with the Amir."[249] Had such correspondence been made public, juxtaposed with Griesbach and Warburton's memoranda, there would have been such a public outcry that the government would have been forced to either abandon its support for 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, or march its troops into Afghanistan and place another candidate on the Durrani throne (see Martin, 302-3). Indeed, the British government would probably have been brought down.

The failure of Lord Lansdowne and the British administration as a whole to take a stern line with the Amir over the 'Reign of Terror', encouraged 'Abd al-Rahman Khan to believe that, provided he looked after Britain's wider interests in Central Asia, he was free to do what he pleased within his own borders. Consequently, the carnage and atrocities continued unabated. The Amir, however, sought to justify his style of government through a series of pamphlets, tracts and decrees which were displayed in public places throughout Afghanistan. Though these declarations were in Persian, it would seem from their contents that they were written more with a foreign audience in mind, particularly Britain and Russia. In these declarations the Amir set out to portray himself as the great reformer who had freed the country from oppression, bloodshed and tyranny.

> I was quite right and correct and the leniency,[250] consideration and calmness with which I treated my enemies and offenders of the State were exemplary ... All faithful Muhammadans generally and the Afghan tribes especially should consider a ruler in my person a great blessing to them .... My mercy, kindness, generosity and justice towards the people of Afghanistan overweigh those of former kings and rulers.[251]

Both Britain and Russia were singled out for criticism,[252] but the Amir directed his strongest invective against the religious establishment

[249] *Viceroy to Earl of Kimberley*, 3 Jan. 1893, SLEI:73, fol. 3.
[250] In the India Office LIbray's English translation of this tract, the word 'leniency' has been underlined and a red exclamation mark written in the margin.
[251] *'Abd al-Rahman Khan, Izah ul-Bayan*, 2 Sept. 1889.
[252] *Ibid.* Cf. Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 272.

whom he compared to "robbers and wolves in the shape of bullocks" whose only aim was to have "large turbans on their heads." The old feudal aristocracy he describes as, "assassins, robbers and plunderers."[253] In contrast, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan proclaimed himself as the Afghan Messiah. He was "one whose word was endowed with the efficacy of Christ ... sent by God" to lift "the burden of sorrows that was crushing" his subjects.[254]

Although Britain's pusillanimous attitude was an important factor in the escalation of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's violent government this does not fully explain why the Amir resorted to such terrible methods. After all, previous Amirs of Afghanistan had faced similar rebellions, but once victorious had pacified the region in question without resort to a reign of terror. Indeed, on numerous occasions they had shown singular restraint in dealing with a defeated foe. 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's own justification that he was reducing the country to "a state of new order"[255] does not stand up to close scrutiny, a fact admitted, howbeit in private, even by senior members of the British government and administration, despite their public declarations that the Amir was the saviour of India. As I have argued in another place (Lee 1991a), one of the most significant factors was the state of the Amir's physical and mental health. Publicly, it was widely known that the Amir suffered from gout, a belief which has been reiterated uncritically by Western and Afghan scholars ever since. However, a close examination of the Kabul *wakil* diaries reveals that the Afghan ruler actually suffered from a far more acute and debilitating disease which became increasingly chronic during the twenty-one years of his reign. The evidence is also clinically confirmed and supported by three British doctors who personally examined the Afghan ruler in the 1880s and 1890s. Drs Gray and Lilias Hamilton, tended the Amir during a number of his attacks and recorded the symptoms in their diaries and notes, whilst Surgeon-Major Roe was detailed to examine 'Abd al-Rahman Khan during his visit to India in the spring of 1885.[256]

The list of the physical symptoms from which 'Abd al-Rahman Khan suffered is both long and alarming. Apart from acute pain and swelling in the joints of his arms and legs, he frequently suffered

[253] Ibid. Cf. Sultan Muhammad Khan i, 217-8.

[254] *Translation of a Pamphlet by Amir Abdur Rahman Khan*, 30 Aug. 1893, SLEI:73, fol. 427. Cf. Hamilton, *The Late Ameer, Abdul Rahman Khan*; *The Ameer as a Mohammadan*; *The Ameer as Judge*, WIHML:PP/HAM/A23-24; Lee 1991a, 228-9.

[255] *Amir to Viceroy*, 30 Sept. 1889.

[256] Roe, *Memorandum on State of Health of Amir*, March 1885.

from acute pains in his stomach, head and behind the eyes; creeping paralysis of feet, legs, hands and arms; swelling of glands; high fever; burning sensations; lung infection; high blood pressure and pulse rate; paralysis of the respiratory muscles leading to difficulties in breathing and swallowing; insomnia; epileptiform seizures which rendered him completely unconscious for prolonged periods of time; violent facial contortions; burning sensations in the ears; nystagmus, or rapid movement of the eyes; excessive garrulity; incontinence and acute pain in the kidneys which was sometimes followed by "blood," or blood-like substances, in the urine (Lee 1991a). Surgeon-Major Roe, on the basis of his examination of the Amir at the time of the Panjdeh Crisis in 1885, informed his superiors that the Amir was suffering from "chronic kidney disease of old standing ... which ... seems progressive."[257]

The clinical evidence, furthermore, strongly suggests that the disease was eating into the Amir's mind. From at least 1885, and certainly from the time of Ishaq Khan's rebellion in the autumn of 1888, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan showed clear evidence of suffering from mania, paranoia and even schizophrenia (Lee 1991a, 225ff.). In diagnostic and clinical terms, such a catalogue of physical and psychological symptoms cannot be attributed to gout, instead they are indicative of a much more acute and dangerous disease. Without doubt, the Amir did suffer from chronic nephritis. In addition, there is every likelihood that he was also afflicted with one of more of the following chronic illnesses: *glomerulnephritis*; *hepatic cirrhosis* with *portal-systemic encephalopathy*; *syphilis*, and/or *acute*, or *mixed, porphyria* (Lee 1991a, 230-3).[258]

Each of these illnesses, as well as producing the most exquisite physical suffering, leads to a progressive deterioration in the mental and psychological state of the patient until he is finally plunged into a semi-permanent state of insanity. Both Drs. Gray and Hamilton were quick to realise, once they had seen at first hand 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's true state of health, that the Amir was far more ill than they had been led to believe prior to their arrival in Afghanistan. However, they were only able to prescribe panaceas to relieve some of the more virulent physical symptoms, for medical science had not progressed

[257] *Ibid.*

[258] Based on an opinion provided by Dr. Geraint James of the Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine.

to such an extent that it could offer any hope of cure or even a proper diagnosis of his condition (Lee 1991a, 216-7, 219-20).

The extremes of cruelty that 'Abd al-Rahman Khan inflicted on his people must, therefore, be attributed, in a very large part, to the action of these diseases not just on the Amir's body but upon his mental powers and faculties. Indeed, there is very strong evidence linking the most savage atrocities of his reign with the most acute and chronic attacks of 'gout' (Lee 1991a, 225-6). In similar circumstances, during the eighteenth century, the British king, George III, was declared insane, confined, and a Regent appointed to supervise the affairs of the Crown. Yet, when, in the following century, the ruler of Afghanistan showed very similar symptoms (Lee 1991a, 233-7), the British, in the form of the Secretary of State for India and the Viceroy, not only took no action, but continued to support and encourage 'Abd al-Rahman Khan as the lynch-pin of their Central Asian policy.

*The Chaharsada Revolt, 1890-1891*

If, as 'Abd al-Rahman Khan claimed in his letter to the Viceroy, the repressions in Afghan Turkistan would ensure that there would never be any further uprisings in the region, his policy of pacification was soon in tatters. There were outbreaks of mutiny amongst the Afghan troops in Maimana and other garrison towns of Afghan Turkistan,[259] followed by a series of revolts amongst the Shi'i Hazaras and the Aimaqs of the upper Murghab. Penetration of Badghis by Russian native agents continued, as they gathered intelligence about the friable state of Afghanistan's north-western defences. Russian officers, too, were wont to make occasional forays across the frontier, claiming, when they were challenged, that they had accidentally crossed the border in pursuit of game.[260]

In the Murghab and the Chahar Wilayat, the general discontent expressed itself in a series of uprisings which was to culminate in the rebellion of Muhammad Sharif Khan Ming of Maimana in 1892. The trouble began amongst the Firozkohi Aimaqs of Chaharsada, a region which had, until quite recently, been considered a feudatory of the Ming dynasty, but which was now under the authority of the Afghan governor at Sar-i Pul. The roots of the rebellion can probably be

[259] E.g., *HNL*, 8 Jan. 1891, SLEI:62, fol. 789;*TFJ*, April 1891, SLEI:63, fol. 115.

[260] *NKVT*, 2 Jan. 1890, SLEI:59, fols. 525-6; *NKVT*, 16 May 1890; *HNL*, 22 May, 24 July 1890, SLEI:60, fols. 548, 787-8, 1335-6.

traced to the Nauroz festival, in March 1890, when a number of headmen from the district went to Mazar-i Sharif to pay their respects to the Amir. Instead of receiving them hospitably, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan detained, then executed, four of the most senior leaders.[261] Those who survived were ordered to return to their mountain stronghold, along with a government revenue officer, a "clerk" (*munshi*?) and an escort of twenty Afghan *khassadar*s, with instructions to collect one thousand sheep from the region as tax.[262] Once they arrived in Chaharsada the Amir's officials forced the population to provide accommodation for them and dispersed themselves amongst local households. The unilateral action of these government officials angered the inhabitants and at midnight the Amir's officials and their escort were killed by their hosts.[263]

When news of the massacre reached Maimana, General Ghaus al-Din Khan ordered one of his regiments to march to the area and a further three hundred regular troops were sent into the region from Takhtapul.[264] The Firozkohis, meanwhile, gathered in considerable numbers[265] to oppose their advance in a valley of difficult access on their border with Maimana and opened negotiations with the commander of the government forces.[266] Any peaceful solution to the problem, however, was swept away when the Aimaqs heard the Amir's peace conditions. The Firozkohis were required to hand over all their guns and swords, to return all the property that had been seized from the murdered officials, to pay blood money for their deaths and abandon their mountain existence and live in the plains "with other people."[267] These demands were tantamount to the break-up and disintegration of the whole community and, not unnaturally, were rejected. The Amir then ordered troops from Herat, Bamiyan, Maimana and Sar-i Pul to march into the region.[268]

The plan was for the column from Herat to attack from Chakhcharan, splitting the Aimaq army and drawing the enemy forces towards

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[261] *NKVT*, 29 April 1890; *HNL*, 8 May 1890, SLEI:60, fols. 679. *TFJ*, May 1890 reports, wrongly, that the Aimaqs had refused to hand these men over to the government for punishment.

[262] *HNL*, 8 May 1890; *NKVT*, 13 June 1890. *TFJ*, May 1890 says there were 100 levies and 40 Herat *sowar*s who had been sent to collect the revenues and seize the headman.

[263] *HNL*, 8 May 1890; *NKVT*, 29 April 1890.

[264] *NKVT*, 29 April, 16 May 1890. *NKVT*, 20 May 1890, SLEI:60, fol. 548.

[265] *NKVT*, 29 April 1890 says there were 10,000 families.

[266] *Ibid. HNL*, 5 June 1890, SLEI:60, fol. 928.

[267] *HNL*, 29 May 1890, SLEI:60, fols. 788-9.

[268] *NKVT*, 29 April 1890; *HNL*, 29 May 1890.

the Hari Rud, thus allowing the Balkh troops to march unopposed into Chaharsada and Chiras from the north. However, Brigadier-General Ahad Khan, who was in charge of the Herat column, quickly ran into trouble. The main rebel force had strongly entrenched itself in the Khuda Nadida pass, barring his line of advance into the mountains. The Firozkohis had also been joined by a number of their fellow-tribesmen from the Chakhcharan district under the leadership of Malik Mirza and Malik Sharif.[269] Ahad Khan's first encounter was with a group of two hundred or so Firozkohi families, who were under the protection of another local amir, a certain Malik "Godai," who lived on the lower slopes of the hills to the north of Chakhcharan. Even though this *malik* had remained loyal to the Amir,[270] Ahad Khan "suspected" him and his followers of being secretly in league with the rebels and ordered his men onto the offensive. The Herat troops, confident that their superior fire power would sweep away the enemy, attacked across an open field of fire and were badly mauled by the Aimaq who had retreated to their entrenchments as soon as the government force had charged.[271] As a consequence of this foolhardy action, Ahad Khan's losses amounted to some fifty or sixty men, including Haidar Quli Khan, son of Khan Agha Jamshidi.[272]

Though the numbers involved in the encounter were relatively few, the battle had been long and bitter and Ahad Khan was forced to retire and send to Herat for more ammunition. He ordered his men to build proper defences and emplacements for their field guns and tried to reassure his superiors that he expected to defeat the rebels in his next attack.[273] When, a few days later, they went onto the offensive again, the Herat troops were better prepared and, aided by squabbling amongst the different clan leaders of the Firozkohi, the Herat force overwhelmed the rebel positions, killing or capturing most of their headmen.[274] Thousands of head of sheep, a large number of the Firozkohi womenfolk, and some five hundred slaves, fell into his hands.[275] Despite this set-back, the Aimaqs continued to hold out, retreating to their third line of defence, the inaccessible stronghold of Bai Sangar, where they had sufficient food and water to last until the winter and

[269] *NKVT*, 6 June 1890; *HNL*, 5 June, 14 Aug. 1890; *HNL*, 21 May 1891, SLEI:63, fol. 661.
[270] *HNL*, 3 July 1890, SLEI:60, fol. 1247; *HNL*, 14 Aug. 1890.
[271] *HNL*, 5 June 1890; *NKVT*, 6 June 1890; *HNL*, 19 June 1890, SLEI:60, fol. 1243.
[272] *HNL*, 19 June 1890.
[273] *HNL*, 5 June 1890.
[274] *HNL*, 12 June 1890, SLEI:60, fols. 928-9; *HNL*, 14 Aug. 1890; *NKVT*, 13 June 1890.
[275] *NKVT*, 13 June 1890; *HNL*, 14 Aug. 1890; *HNL*, 10 July 1890, SLEI:60, fol. 1249.

were well out of range of the Afghan guns.[276] Exactly how this fortress finally fell is not clear, but it would seem that the four columns, which had been marching to Chaharsada from different directions, finally seized the Firozkohi's capital at Chiras and then combined together in an assault on this last stronghold. We do know, however, that the capture of the fortress cost the government forces dearly and they revenged themselves by putting most of the defenders to the sword.[277]

The fall of the Bai Sangar fortress broke the back of the uprising for, though some pockets of resistance remained, they quickly either surrendered or were overwhelmed.[278] Malik Mirza and Malik Sharif managed to escape, but shortly afterwards Malik Mirza returned to the region, where he was captured, sent to Herat and blown from a gun on 18 May 1891.[279] The population was systematically disarmed, the tribe broken up and forcibly resettled in Herat, Qunduz and other locations around Mazar-i Sharif.[280] At least three thousand Firozkohis from Chaharsada, both men and women, were put to work on the construction of the Dehdadi fortress, leaving their children to beg in the streets.[281] Garrisons of troops from Maimana and Herat were stationed at Qal'a-yi Gauhar and "Puzza-i-Luch," a place on the border with Herat,[282] and post houses, where fast horses could be housed, were built on the Maimana to Chaharsada roads.[283] At least a further one thousand prisoners were sent heavily chained to Kabul, being paraded through the streets of the major towns of Afghan Turkistan en route. When they finally reached the Afghan capital most of them were put to death.[284] Other Firozkohis from Chakhcharan, who had come to Herat to pay their respects to the governor and pledge their support for the Amir, were imprisoned and forced to live in the plains around the city.[285] Many of the captured rebel leaders, including Malik 'Godai', were tortured and subjected to ritual, public humiliation. Their faces were blackened, their beards plucked out and on several

[276] *HNL*, 14 Aug. 1890.
[277] *HNL*, 10 July 1890; *NKVT*, 13 June 1890; *HNL*, 26 June 1890, SLEI:60, fol. 1245.
[278] *HNL*, 16 Oct. 1890, SLEI:61, fol. 855.
[279] *HNL*, 21 May 1891.
[280] *HNL*, 6 Nov. 1890. *HNL*, 1 Oct. 1891; *PCD*, 8 Oct. 1891, SLEI:64, fols. 851, 861.
[281] *KNL*, 24 Sept. 1890.
[282] *HNL*, 25 Sept., 9 Oct. 1890, SLEI:61, fols. 739, 853.
[283] *HNL*, 15 Jan. 1891, SLEI:62, fol. 767.
[284] *HNL*, 17, 24 July 1890. *HNL*, 7, 30 Aug. 1890; *NKVT*, 13 Sept. 1890, SLEI:61, fols. 202-3, 245-6, 311.
[285] *HNL*, 21 May 1891; *HNL*, 7 May 1891, SLEI:63, fol. 661.

occasions they were severely beaten. When, finally, they too reached the Afghan capital, they were blown from guns.[286]

*The Russian Invasion of Qal'a-yi Nau, 1890-1892*

The Firozkohi rebellion was the harbinger of far more serious trouble in Badghis. In the autumn of 1890, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan returned to Kabul, leaving the government of Afghan Turkistan in the hands of Nazr Muhammad Sarwar Khan b. Muhammad Husain Khan, a Muhammadzai sardar,[287] but almost as soon as the Amir had returned to his capital, his governor fell severely ill. Not only did he suffer from temporary loss of eyesight and hearing, he was reported to have become "melancholy mad" "maniac," " imbecile" and "insane" (Lee 1991a, 235).[288] The Amir, who was himself at that time in the grip of another virulent attack of sickness, which Dr. Gray predicted would lead to his death (Gray, 388-9, 407; Lee 1991a, 216-8),[289] ordered his governor to be brought to Kabul, but he had to be carried on a bed and to travel at night, since his skin had become highly sensitive to the sun.[290] It was not until the middle of January that he was fit enough to return to Balkh.[291]

The crisis provoked by the near-fatal sicknesses of the Amir and the governor of Afghan Turkistan weakened the Afghan government even further and provided more encouragement to the discontented. In the spring of the following year, 'Abd al-Qudus Khan, accompanied by ten thousand men, was sent to Bamiyan to collect revenues and was so heavy-handed that he precipitated a general uprising amongst the Hazaras, which was to last for three years (Kakar 1971, 164-5). The Amir, though faced with another regional challenge to his authority, played on sectarian and religious divisions by having the Shi'i community, whether Hazara, Qizilbash or Herati, declared *kafirs*, thus justifying a religious war which was eventually to lead to thousands of Hazaras being massacred and to the break-up of their

[286] *HNL*, 3 July 1890.

[287] Some reports give him the title of *Shahghasi*, others refer to him by the Turkic title, *Ishik Aqasi*, or Deputy-Governor of Balkh, *NKVT*, 6 June 1890; *KNL*, 2 Aug. 1890; *PCD*, 21 Aug. 1891. *PCD*, 11 Aug. 1890, SLEI:60, fol. 1345. He was the father-in-law of Prince Habibullah (Gray, 109).

[288] *KNL*, 2 Aug. 1890; *PCD*, 21 Aug., 20 Sept. 1890. *QNL*, 21 Sept. 1890; *HNL*, 2 Oct. 1890, SLEI:61, fols. 703, 790.

[289] *KNL*, 11 Oct. 1890; *KNL*, 31 Jan. 1891, SLEI:62, fols. 693-4.

[290] *KNL*, 10 Sept. 1890, SLEI:61, fol. 308.

[291] *PCD*, 8, 21 Jan. 1891.

tribes (Kakar 1971, 159-180). In Herat, which had a large Shi'i minority, all followers of the sect were dismissed from the civil service, their property was plundered and Sunni *imam*s and rites imposed on their mosques.[292] 'Abd al-Rahman Khan issued a number of virulently anti-Shi'i tracts and *farman*s which condemned their beliefs whilst urging them to convert to Sunnism. Apart from the deaths and exactions which followed the Hazaras' defeat, a number of other Shi'is were stoned to death for blasphemy.[293]

The Amir's persecution of the Hazaras and Qizilbash brought Persia, where Shi'ism was the official faith, to the verge of war with Afghanistan. Thousands of Shi'is from Herat and the Hazarajat fled to Khurasan seeking sanctuary from what was tantamount to genocide (Kakar 1971, 166, 169, 173-5). Persia accused the British of being the "friends of the Amir and not of the Afghan people"[294] whilst the governor of Khurasan informed English officials that the Afghans,

> ... looked to England to free them of Abdur Rahman Khan and would accept almost anyone whom the British government chose to nominate, or, indeed, any reasonable Afghan who might present himself.[295]

Eventually, at the end of April 1893, the *mujtahid*s in Mashhad issued a *fatwa* declaring war on the Sunnis of Afghanistan, though the Shah never actually sent any troops across the border. The Viceroy was obliged to write again to the Amir urging restraint in dealing with rebels and the Amir replied in the same, uncompromising tones which he had used when rebuffing earlier criticism of the 'Turkistan Atrocities'. Britain, having paid lip service to the cause of human rights, once more conveniently did not pursue the issue any further (Kakar 1971, 179).

The Hazara uprising led to the Amir demanding even more from Afghan Turkistan in respect of thousands of additional levies, pack horses and supplies, particularly wheat (cf. Kakar 1971, 165).[296]

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[292] *HNL*, 8, 22 Sept. 1892, SLEI:68, fols. 48-50, 195-6.

[293] *HNL*, 22 Sept. 1892.

[294] *TFJ*, Sept. 1892, SLEI:68, fols. 55-6.

[295] *Ibid.* Indeed, Ney Elias, who was told this by the government, wrote to Calcutta advocating the removal of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan.

[296] *PCD*, 8 Oct. 1891, 10 Sept. 1892. *PCD*, 8 Jan., 23 Feb. 1892; *KNL*, 6-9 Feb., 20-23 Feb. 1892, SLEI:65, fols. 171, 719, 749, 959; *PCD*, 22 Aug. 1892, SLEI:67, fol. 513, *et al.* The extent of the suffering these demands caused is recorded by *PCD*, 9 July 1892, SLEI:66, fol. 1579. Lesser Turkistan was required to provide 24,000 levies "at once" for the Hazara campaign, each family of eight persons was expected to furnish two men for service as well as pay Rs 20 towards their expenses.

Already economically crippled by the weight of retrospective tax assessments, fines, property confiscations and the unofficial exactions of the Amir's rapacious officials, many people found it impossible to meet these additional demands, even though they knew terrible punishment awaited them if they failed to provide their stated quotas. It is no wonder, therefore, that the leaders of the region, as well as the persecuted Hazaras, sought the intervention of foreign powers as the only means of salvation and began secret correspondences with the Russian military governor of Panjdeh.[297]

In the early weeks of 1892 'Omar(?) Khan, Hakim of Andkhui (though his family hailed from Maimana), refused outright to supply the government of Afghan Turkistan with any more levies or supplies and publicly tore up a letter from Ghulam Haidar Khan Orakzai, the Commander-in-Chief of Mazar-i Sharif.[298] Though the threat of rebellion implied in this action was nipped in the bud by the swift arrest and blinding of the hakim,[299] clandestine correspondence and trade between Maimana and Russian Turkistan continued unchecked. A few weeks later, a dispute between Russia and Afghanistan broke out over ferry tolls on the Amu Darya and officers from Maimana had to be sent to the region, presumably north of Andkhui, to sort the matter out.[300] Shortly after, reports reached Kabul that Sardar Ishaq Khan had left Samarkand, ostensibly for a hunting trip. Suspecting that his cousin was planning to return to Afghanistan with Russian connivance, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan ordered reinforcements to the Amu Darya in case the sardar tried to cross the border.[301] It was subsequently reported that Ishaq Khan had visited the border towns of Qarqi and Charjui and was planning to try to make his way into Afghan Turkistan.[302]

Meanwhile, across the Badghis border, Yazdan Quli Khan, ex-*sipah salar* of Maimana, began to intrigue with the chiefs of the Sunni Hazaras of Qal'a-yi Nau, hoping to induce them to migrate to Panjdeh.[303] The reason for the discontent in the area was, once again,

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[297] *HNL*, 14 May 1891, SLEI:63, fols. 632-3; "Summary of Central Asian News," *Curzon Papers*, MSS Eur. F.111, no. 297.

[298] *PCD*, 23 Feb., 22 Aug. 1892; *KNL*, 6-9 Feb. 1892.

[299] *KNL*, 6-8 April 1892, SLEI:66, fol. 215. The family were fined 9,000 rupees.

[300] *PCD*, 22 March 1892, SLEI:66, fol. 85.

[301] *KNL*, 25-27 May 1892, SLEI:66, fols. 1109-10; *PCD*, 9 July 1892.

[302] Id.

[303] *HNL*, 12 May 1892, SLEI:66, fol. 1273. The growing tension on the Russian-Afghan border was not helped when the Amir received a map of Central Asia, published by W. & A. K. Johnstone and dated 1885, which showed Afghanistan divided by a west-east line into Russian and

the exactions of the local Afghan official, a certain Qadir Husain. Qazi Mirza Shukur, the tribal leader of the Qal'a-yi Nau Hazaras had complained to Herat about their governor and, in response, an agent was sent to the area with orders to bring the chief men of Qal'a-yi Nau to the Amir in Kabul. Fearing that they would never return from the Afghan capital, twenty-five leading men, including Qazi Mirza Shukur, took up the offer of sanctuary extended by Yazdan Quli Khan and fled to Panjdeh, where they placed themselves and their tribe under Russian protection.[304] Fearing a general uprising amongst the Aimaqs, General Ghaus al-Din Khan called up reinforcements to Maimana, but was still gathering his strength when, on 21 May, Qazi Mirza Shukur accompanied by three hundred Cossacks and Turkman *sowar*s under the command of Lieutenant Tarnovsky, crossed the border, attacked Qal'a-yi Nau and forced Qadir Khan to flee.[305] At about the same time, Russian officers forcibly opened the Afghan border for a number of their Turkman subjects who had been refused entry by Afghan frontier guards.[306] Fearing these attacks were the beginning of a full scale Russian invasion, the Afghan garrison at Marichaq abandoned their positions and fled to Bala Murghab, where they sent an urgent message to General Ghaus al-Din Khan asking for reinforcements.[307]

Qazi Shukur re-entered his capital in triumph and helped himself to a great deal of government property. Lt. Tarnovsky, meanwhile, encouraged by the area's general disaffection with the Amir's rule and elated by his success, proclaimed Qal'a-yi Nau and Badghis part of Russian territory and sent a jubilant telegram to St. Petersburg announcing that "he had captured an Afghan city".[308] The Russian ensign, however, had acted without orders from his superiors, or so St.

British Protectorates, with an "Indo-Russian Railway" drawn on it linking Panjdeh with Quetta via Herat and Qandahar. The arrival of this map, coming as it did when relations with Russia were strained, caused "consternation" and a flurry of correspondence between Kabul and India. It was later revealed that the map was not an official document but had been drawn by a certain Mr. Mason, a correspondent, who was subsequently sent to a lunatic asylum, *Durand to Amir*, 11 May 1892, SLEI:66, fol. 651.

[304] *HNL*, 12, 26 May 1892; *TFJ*, June 1892, SLEI:66, fols. 1273, 1303, 1316-7.

[305] *HNL*, 26 May 1892; *TFJ*, June 1892; *HNL*, 16 June 1892, SLEI:66, fol. 1589; *List of Claims against Russian Frontier Officials*, n.d. (1893), SLEI:72, part 3, fols. 691-2; *TFJ*, July 1892, SLEI:75, fol. 989; *Howard to M. de Giers*, May 18 (30) 1892; *Howard to Marquis of Salisbury*, 31 May, 16 & 27 June 1892, FO/539/57 nos. 71, 95, 96 pp. 86, 99, 100.

[306] *TFJ*, June 1892.

[307] *Ghaus-ud-Din to Commander-in-Chief, Herat*, n.d., (1892), SLEI:66, fol. 1694. They were severely reprimanded for leaving their posts but, once again, the action of these troops indicated the fragility of British policy in promoting the Amir as the defender of the Indian frontier.

[308] *Howard to Salisbury*, June 16 1892; *HNL*, 26 May 1892.

Petersburg claimed, and his victory was short-lived. The Russian government, fearing an international crisis with Britain, disowned Tarnovsky's action as that of a "madman"[309] and ordered him back to Panjdeh. When he returned, the governor of Panjdeh was publicly disgraced and Lieutenant Tarnovsky court-martialled and "broken."[310] Qazi Mirza Shukur and other leading men from Qal'a-yi Nau fled to Russia or Persia, whilst those who were unfortunate enough to fall into the hands of the Amir received no quarter and were exterminated. As in previous cases of rebellions amongst the hill tribes, the Sunni Hazaras were forced out of their mountain fastness and settled at "Pandeh Kaj," between Qal'a-yi Nau and Kushk, an area devoid of water.[311]

*The Rebellion of Muhammad Sharif Khan, 1892-1893*

By the late spring of 1892, the Afghan government was in deep trouble. As well as the the Qal'a-yi Nau crisis, the rebellion in the Hazarajat has escalated. In March, a government army in Uruzgan had been annihilated by Hazara tribesmen and their victory had precipitated a general uprising throughout the whole of the Hazarajat (Kakar 1971, 164-5).

Both events seemed to provide some encouragement to those, such as Muhammad Sharif Khan of Maimana, who yearned to be free from the yoke of Kabul, as well as to dissident elements within the Afghan army. Unfortunately, the Kabul diaries do not record a great deal about the events in Maimana between 1889 and 1892, but, at the beginning of 1892, Maimana was reported to be "thoroughly disloyal" and awaiting the arrival of the Russians to liberate it (*Gazetteer* (1907) ii, 221).[312] In the middle of February, amidst rumours about the imminent return of Ishaq Khan to Afghan Turkistan and a Russian invasion, some of the Herat *sowar*s in the Maimana garrison who were residents of Obeh and "Karteh," deserted, and the cavalry had to be sent out to round them up.[313] When, about a month later, news broke

[309] *Howard to Salisbury*, 16 June 1892; *Chichkine to Howard*, 20 Mai (1 Juin) 1892, FO/539/57 no. 73, p. 87.

[310] *Howard to Salisbury*, 16 June 1892; *HNL*, 16 June 1892; *TFJ*, July 1892

[311] Id. *HNL*, 18, 25 Aug. 1892, SLEI:67, fols. 698, 1174-5; *HNL*, 20 Oct. 1892, SLEI:68, fol. 517. I have been unable to locate this place on any map.

[312] *TFJ*, Feb. 1892, SLEI:65, fol. 763.

[313] *HNL*, 18 Feb. 1892, SLEI:65, fol. 1163; *PCD*, 9 July 1892; *HNL*, 28 July 1892, SLEI:67, fols. 538-9. There was also a report that emissaries of Aiyub Khan had passed through Mashhad with letters for people in Herat and Maimana, informing them that the son of Sher 'Ali Khan

of the brief Russian occupation of Qal'a-yi Nau, it spread like wildfire throughout the Chahar Wilayat and General Ghaus al-Din ordered the defences of Maimana to be strengthened.[314] As far as the Afghan government was concerned, however, the most dangerous 'enemy' was within the city walls. Encouraged by the Russian occupation of Qal'a-yi Nau and the Amir's defeat in Uruzgan, Muhammad Sharif Khan decided that the time was ripe to mount one final challenge to Afghan sovereignty over his country.[315]

The opportunity for rebellion soon presented itself. In order to deal with the Hazara rebellion, and the Uruzgan uprising in particular, Brigadier Rahmat Khan and his regiment of regular infantry in Maimana were ordered to march to Yakolang, in the eastern Hazarajat. Five thousand tribal levies, under the personal command of Muhammad Sharif Khan, were ordered to join the Afghan commander.[316] On the morning of 'Id al-Azha (6 July)[317] the combined Afghan and Uzbek force left the town and proceeded to Belcheragh where they stayed for three days in order to celebrate the festival of the sacrifice, during which time the wali, who for the first time during his brief reign found himself at the head of a large army of his own men, decided that the time was ripe for rebellion.

On 10 July 1892,[318] having secured the support of his tribal levies with the help of Ishan Qul Khan,[319] who seems to have had considerable influence over the Uzbek troops, Muhammad Sharif Khan wrote to General Ghaus al-Din Khan asking him to come to Belcheragh requesting he come to Belcheragh in order to clarify certain of his orders for the Hazara campaign. The General, however, hearing rumours that there was a plot to assassinate him, sent his superintendent of the granary, Kamran Khan, instead. When he arrived at the border town, Muhammad Sharif Khan seized the unfortunate ambassador and put him to death, whereupon the Uzbek levies attacked and put to flight Rahmat Khan's Afghan troops (*Gazetteer* (1907) ii, 221-2).[320]

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was planning to escape from India and come to the area, *TFJ*, Aug. 1892, SLEI:67, fols. 694-8.

[314] *HNL*, 19 May, 30 June 1892, SLEI:66, fols. 1095-6; vol. 67, fol. 176.

[315] *HNL*, 21, 28 July 1892; *Amir to Sardar Abdullah Khan*, n.d. (1892), SLEI:67, fols. 527, 528-9, 767-8.

[316] *HNL*, 28 July 1892; *HNL*, 16 June 1892, SLEI:66, fol. 1589; *Amir to Abdullah Khan*, 1892.

[317] *HNL*, 28 July 1892 on the basis of a letter from General Ghaus al-Din in Maimana; *Amir to Abdullah Khan*, 1892 says the wali left on 13 Zu'l-Hijja (8 July).

[318] *HNL*, 28 July 1892; *Amir to Abdullah Khan*, 1892.

[319] *KNL*, 19-25 Oct. 1892, SLEI:68, fols. 455-7. He was put to death after the failure of the uprising.

[320] *HNL*, 21, 28 July 1892.

Following this success, Muhammad Sharif Khan set out to attack General Ghaus al-Din Khan in Maimana, doubtless hoping that news of his rebellion would lead to a popular uprising. However, the Afghan commander, hearing what had happened, acted swiftly to prevent any disturbances in the city by setting a strong guard around the Maimana arsenal and closing the city gates.[321] A loyal (Sunni?) Hazara regiment was sent straightaway up the Belcheragh road, probably to secure the river crossing at Khesht Pul. Once Ghaus al-Din was sure that Maimana itself was not going to rise, he marched out in person at the head of his regular troops to confront the rebel army, who were no match for the Afghans, armed, as they were, with British breech-loading rifles and artillery, and the Uzbek levies were soon put to flight.[322]

Following the defeat in the Shirin Tagab, Muhammad Sharif Khan made his way across the mountains to the Qaisar district where thousands of local people rallied to his banner.[323] However, the Afghan troops in the area again attacked and defeated the Uzbek militia was soon dispersed. Muhammad Sharif Khan, encouraged by letters he had received from the Russian governor at Panjdeh, fled with several hundred followers to the border, being attacked *en route* by several hundred men sent against him by the Pushtun *maldar*s of Bala Murghab.[324] Despite all these difficulties, the wali and a hundred or so close followers managed to make their way to Panjdeh via the desert, where they were joined by several thousand more people from the Maimana area, many of whom had abandonded their homes to avoid the inevitable reprisals.[325]

The rebellion threw the whole of Maimana and Badghis into turmoil and did nothing to reassure Britain about Russian intentions in the region, for the Maimana uprising had come close on the heels of the Qal'a-yi Nau occupation. By early August 1892, all traffic through Badghis had ground to a halt due to the uprising and the plundering of a number of caravans by the rebels and Ghilzai colonists.[326] General Ghaus al-Din, despite his victory, was tied down in Gurziwan and the Chaharsada area, for the Firozkohis, under the leadership of

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[321] *HNL*, 28 July 1892; *Amir to Abdullah Khan*, 1892.
[322] Id.; *Amir to Viceroy*, 18 Aug. 1892, SLEI:67, fol. 681.
[323] *HNL*, 28 July 1892.
[324] *Amir to Abdullah Khan*, 1892; *Amir to Viceroy*, 18 Aug. 1892; *HNL*, 28 July 1892.
[325] *Amir to Abdullah Khan*, 1892; *Amir to Viceroy*, 18 Aug. 1892; *TFJ*, Aug. 1892. *Mazaroff to Ghaus-ud-Din*, 29 July 1892, SLEI:67, fol. 681; *QNL*, 21 April 1893, SLEI:70, fols. 595-6.
[326] *TFJ*, Aug. 1892; *HNL*, 8 Sept. 1892. *HNL*, 11, 25 Aug. 1892, SLEI:67, fols. 760-1, 1174-5.

Malik Sharif and helped by Muhammad Sharif Khan, a retainer of the wali of Maimana, had joined the rebellion, attacked Gurziwan, killed the Afghan governor and commenced plundering.[327]

As the rebellion took hold, with reports of trouble as far afield as Andkhui, Takhtapul and Mazar-i Sharif,[328] Ghulam Haidar Khan, who was already *en route* to the Hazarajat, was ordered to turn back and to set out for Maimana via Sar-i Pul by forced march.[329] Abu Talib Khan, Hakim of Aqcha, accompanied by six hundred *sowars*, was sent to Maimana to take over the civil affairs of the region[330] and contingents from the garrisons in Chaharsada and Herat were rushed to the Badghis frontier.[331] Meanwhile, in Kabul, Shir 'Ali Khan, Muhammad Amin Khan and four other, younger, brothers of Muhammad Sharif Khan, as well as three of the wali's sisters, were imprisoned.[332] Ghaus al-Din Khan, for his part, was rebuked by the Amir for neglecting the administration of Maimana, though the General had had his hands more than full trying to deal with simultaneous rebellions in Badghis, Qal'a-yi Nau, Kohistan and Maimana.[333]

The arrival of Muhammad Sharif Khan in Panjdeh gave the Maimana uprising an international dimension and was a further embarrassment to the Russian government which had recently been obliged to disown the previous governor and Lt. Tarnovsky for their incautious attack on Qal'a-yi Nau. On his arrival, the wali was required to register all his retainers and, although the governor offered to entertain the refugees at state expense, Muhammad Sharif Khan refused the offer—or so he was later to claim.[334] Though the Russians appear to have shown little objection to receiving the wali's party, they became more concerned when Muhammad Sharif Khan informed them that as many as eight thousand more people were expected to arrive to claim

[327] *HNL*, 11, 18, 22 Aug. 1892; *HNL*, 4 Aug., 15 Sept. 1892, SLEI:67, fol. 759, vol. 68, fol. 193.

[328] *TFJ*, Aug. 1892; *HNL*, 28 July, 11 Aug. 1892.

[329] *Amir to Abdullah Khan*, 1892; *Confidential News Report on Hazara Insurrection, Appendix* to *KNL*, 21-24 May 1892; *QNL*, 4 June 1892, SLEI:66, fols. 1103-5, 1341; *KNL*, 23-26, 27-29 July 1982, SLEI:67, fols. 317, 415.

[330] *HNL*, 25 Aug. 1892.

[331] *HNL*, 25 Aug., 1 Sept. 1892.

[332] *KNL*, 23-26 July 1892. A son of the "Sharif-i Harem" of Maimana, who was a sergeant of a regiment of Turki *sowars* in Kabul, was commended for his father's part in helping General Ghaus al-Din Khan in dealing with the uprising. According to this report, a proclamation regarding the Maimana crisis was displayed publicly in the Kotwal's office, though the contents of this missal are not given.

[333] *HNL*, 25 Aug. 1892.

[334] *QNL*, 21 April 1893. He claimed he had not wanted to rebel, but had been forced to do so by his soldiers.

asylum on the grounds that they were fleeing from enforced conscription.[335] The Russians had insufficient spare land to settle such a great number of refugees, even if they wished to give them sanctuary and risk another confrontation with the Amir and Britain. Consequently, orders were issued to the frontier guards to persuade the refugees to return and, if they were unwilling to go voluntarily, they were to be turned back "under the forces of guns and spears."[336] A letter was sent from the commander of the Panjdeh cavalry to Ghaus al-Din Khan to inform him of this decision, which the general forwarded to the Amir. At the same time the Russian authorities in St. Petersburg informed Britain of the situation and requested the intervention of Her Majesty's government to halt further migration, and to intervene to prevent the "constant oppression and maltreatment" of the people of Afghan Turkistan (*Gazetteer* (1907) ii, 221-2).[337]

Not unexpectedly, the British government believed that the Maimana rebellion had been partly, if not wholly, engineered by the Russians and demanded that the Tsar's officials on the other side of the Badghis border should demonstrate how genuine their intentions were for a peaceful settlement by returning the refugees to Afghan territory.[338] The Amir, when informed of the Russian complaint, rejected the suggestion that the refugees were trying to escape conscription, though many of the original followers of Muhammad Sharif Khan were undoubtedly pressed into service for the Hazara campaign. Instead, he condemned them as rebels and informed the Viceroy that, in his opinion, the rising was instigated by the Russians.[339] General Ghaus al-Din, in replying to Mazaroff's letter, added his own brand of invective against the refugees, calling them "devilish people," who "owing to their own evil acts, and because they are not firm in their faith and religion" had rebelled.[340]

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[335] *Mazaroff to Ghaus-ud-Din*, 29 July 1892; *Viceroy to Amir*, 18 Aug. 1892, SLEI:67, fol. 681.
[336] *Mazaroff to Ghaus-ud-Din*, 29 July 1892.
[337] *HNL*, 1 Sept. 1892; *Amir to Viceroy*, 18, 23 Aug. 1892; *Mazaroff to Ghaus-ud-Din*, 29 July 1892. The quotation is from a subsequent letter from the garrison commander in Qarqi to the governor of Afghan Turkistan, which was written in direct response to the Amir's accusation that Russia had instigated the revolt, *PCD*, 10 Oct. 1892.
[338] *Viceroy to Earl of Kimberley*, 21 Sept. 1892, SLEI:67, fols. 1159-60.
[339] *Amir to Viceroy*, 30 Aug. 1892, SLEI:67, fol. 1161.
[340] *Ghaus-ud-Din to Mazaroff*, 29 July 1892. He mentions that, the previous year, the people had entered into an agreement with the Afghan government and forwarded a copy of the treaty to his Russian counterpart.

Muhammad Sharif Khan was caught on the horns of a dilemma. Having, like the Qal'a-i Nau Hazaras, been encouraged to rebel by Russian officers at Panjdeh, he found that they were now putting pressure on him and his people to return to Afghanistan, where the combined forces of the Herat and Maimana garrisons were waiting to swoop on any rebel that crossed the border. In the end, it seems that the situation became so intolerable that the wali quit Panjdeh, determining to risk everything in a final stand against the Afghans.[341] Some four thousand Uzbeks apparently accompanied him as he marched back into Maimana—the majority of them doubtless consisting of refugees who had been refused entry at the Russian border.[342]

The wali managed to make his way into the Qaisar region, where many hundreds of volunteers flocked to his banner and, at first, Muhammad Sharif Khan was encouraged by a number of successes. Sometime in August he seized a consignment of ammunition and guns, which were being sent from Bala Murghab to Maimana[343] and followed up this success by putting to flight a number of Herat *sowars*.[344] These minor victories, however, flattered only to deceive. Within a week or so after re-crossing the Afghan border, Muhammad Sharif Khan came face-to-face with the Afghan army on the Almar to Qaisar road and, in what appears to have been a very one-sided affair, the wali's force was cut to pieces.[345]

The wali managed to escape the massacre and fled back across the frontier, followed by the remnants of the Maimana rebels, but though Muhammad Sharif Khan was allowed to go to Panjdeh, many of his followers were turned back by the Russian border guards and were left to take their chance with the Afghans, who had begun mopping-up operations in the region. Many fell into government hands and were sent in chains to Kabul where they were either condemned to death, life imprisonment, or expelled to Peshawar. Genuine refugees, as opposed to fleeing militia, however, seem to have been treated less harshly by Ghaus al-Din.[346] The remaining Uzbek levies in Maimana were disarmed[347] and a number of minor government officials

[341] *HNL*, 25 Aug. 1892, which talks of the wali as having "returned." *HNL*, 18 Aug. 1892; *Amir to Abdullah Khan*, 1892 mentions a fourth battle some time after the first three encounters.
[342] *HNL*, 25 Aug., 15 Sept. 1892.
[343] *HNL*, 8 Sept. 1892.
[344] *HNL*, 29 Sept. 1892, SLEI:68, fol. 461.
[345] *Amir to Abdullah Khan*, 1892; *HNL*, 18, 25 Aug., 29 Sept. 1892.
[346] *HNL*, 15 Sept. 1892; *KNL*, 27-29 July, 19-25 Oct. 1892.
[347] *KNL*, 19-23 Oct. 1892.

dismissed, or punished, for showing a reluctance to support the Amir's forces during the uprising. Amongst those who lost their posts were the governor of Bala Murghab, who had removed all his property to Herat during the troubles,[348] some *sowars* who had deserted,[349] and a number of Khans of the colonists in Maimana and Daulatabad, probably Ghilzais, who had abandoned their homes.[350]

The return of Muhammad Sharif Khan was yet further embarrassment for Russia and, on the direct "advice" of General Kuropatkin, the last Mingid ruler of Maimana wrote to the son of Mirza 'Omar of Qal'a-yi Nau, grandson of the *Hazrat* of Karukh,[351] requesting that the shaikh act as a mediator on his behalf with the authorities in Herat and to convey to the Afghan governor a letter of apology and regret at the recent uprising.[352] Somewhat surprisingly, given the fate which had overtaken previous rebels, Muhammad Sharif Khan received a conciliatory reply, which must have included assurances that he would not be put to death if he gave himself up. About a month later he crossed the border and went to Maimana where he surrendered to General Ghaus al-Din. Meanwhile, the Amir appointed an Afghan, Muhammad Sarwar Khan, as the new civil governor of the district.[353] The wali was ordered to prepare to be sent to the Amir in Kabul, a journey which, even before his return to Afghanistan, he undoubtedly knew meant permanent exile and prolongued imprisonment. Yet despite his status as a rebel, the authorities in Maimana allowed him to remain at large and granted the wali sufficient time to assemble his property and family for the melancholy march to the Afghan capital.[354]

On 1 December 1892, Muhammad Sharif Khan arrived in Herat,[355] where he was accommodated in furnished apartments in the Chahar Bagh at government expense.[356] He was followed, the next day, by his

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[348] *HNL*, 27 Oct. 1892, SLEI:68, fol. 709.

[349] *KNL*, 15-18 Oct. 1892, SLEI:68, fols. 418-9.

[350] *HNL*, 20 Oct. 1892.

[351] His father, the son of the Hazrat, died in August 1893 and 'Omar Khan became the new *khalifa*, *HNL*, 31 Aug. 1893, SLEI:72, part 2, fol. 379; *HNL*, 2 July 1896, SLEI:88, no. 2320, n. pag.; *HNL*, 29 Sept. 1898, SLEI:109, no. 1098, n. pag.

[352] *HNL*, 13 Oct. 1892, SLEI:68, fol. 515.

[353] *HNL*, 13 Oct. 1892; *HNL*, 27 Oct., 17 Nov. 1892, SLEI:68, fols. 709, 1042-3. The new civil governor had been an exile with the Amir in Samarkand.

[354] *HNL*, 27 Oct. 1892; *HNL*, 20 Oct. 1892. *HNL*, 10 Nov. 1892, SLEI:68, fols. 1041-2. The *sipah salar* of Herat, however, urged the governor to put the wali in chains to prevent any attempt to escape.

[355] *HNL*, 1, 8 Dec. 1892, SLEI:69, fols. 50-1, 461-2.

[356] Id. *HNL*, 17 Nov. 1892, SLEI:68, fols. 1042-3. The Amir wrote to the authorities in Herat,

family and sixty camel loads of baggage.[357] While they wintered in Herat, orders came from the Amir to treat the Maimana party more harshly and for Muhammad Sharif Khan to be placed in chains. These orders, however, were not carried out, though there were complaints that their conditions had worsened now that they were no longer in their own country.[358] On 14 March 1893, Muhammad Sharif Khan set out for Kabul, unmanacled, but with an escort of cavalry and *sowars*.[359] He finally reached Kabul on 31 May 1893[360] and a few days later his case was brought before the Amir. The wali was condemned to "remain in the house of Naib Salar Parwana Khan for the remainder of his life as a prisoner" where he was to be allowed only dried food during the day and "soup" in the evening.[361] He was separated from the rest of his family, who were accommodated in Tara Khel, and all his property and a number of his horses were confiscated.[362] His belongings were later sold at public auction, along with the possessions of other members of his family and entourage.[363] In September, the conditions of Muhammad Sharif Khan's confinement were made more strict. He was removed from the Na'ib Kotwal's house, sent to one of the sarai prisons, amidst rumours that the Amir planned to have him secretly put to death, and his daily government allocation of meat was stopped.[364] Nothing much more is known about his subsequent life as a prisoner of the Amir, or his ultimate fate, though we do know that he was still alive in November 1897[365] and it may well be that he survived until after the death of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan in 1901.

As for other members of his party, they were not so fortunate, if this word can be applied to people condemned to life imprisonment during the reign of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan. Astan Qul Khan, one of

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saying he would have preferred the wali to have gone via Afghan Turkistan.

[357] Id. Members of his entourage included Mirza 'Abd al-Faiz Khan and Sartip Awaz Badal Khan.

[358] *HNL*, 15 Dec. 1892, 12 Jan., 23, 26 Feb. 1893, SLEI:69, fols. 463-4, 733-4, 1438, vol. 70, fols. 161-2. A list had been made of all his property and, though he was allowed to use it on the road, he was forbidden to sell any of it.

[359] *HNL*, 2, 16 March 1893, SLEI:70, fols. 163, 241.

[360] *KNL*, 31 May-2 June 1893, SLEI:70, fol. 1339. They had stayed for some days in Qandahar and had been seen by C. E. Yate as he journeyed through the country to Herat (C. E. Yate 1900, 97); see also *QNL*, 21 April 1893; *QNL*, 12 May 1893, SLEI:70, fol. 1330.

[361] *KNL*, 3-6 June, 2-5 Sept. 1893, SLEI:70, fol. 1517, vol. 72, part 2, fol. 173.

[362] Id.

[363] *KNL*, 26-29 Aug. 1893, SLEI:72, part I, fols. 55-7.

[364] *KNL*, 2-5 Sept. 1893; *KNL*, 3-5 March 1894, SLEI:73, fol. 1431.

[365] *PCD*. 23 Nov. 1897, SLEI:98, no. 1241.

the wali's senior advisers, and Mirza 'Abd al-Faiz Khan, a relative of Muhammad Sharif Khan, were handed over to 'Abd al-Rahman, brother of Kamran Khan, Ghaus al-Din Khan's official whose assassination at Belcheragh had been one of the first acts of the rebellion. Both men were put to death with the sword[366] and their property given to Kamran Khan's family.[367] Twenty-five other prisoners from Maimana were sentenced to a period of a year's imprisonment[368] and many others either ended their lives in an Afghan jail or were exiled, or fled, to a third country.

[366] *KNL*, 3-6 June 1893; *HNL*, 20 July 1893, SLEI:71, fol. 1239. In March 1894 the daughter of the wali was taken from prison and given to Mullah "Monim," the head of the labourers, *KNL*, 10-13 March 1894, SLEI:74, fol. 115. A few weeks later the *maliks* of Gurziwan ("Guzran") were released and allowed to leave for their homeland. They included Qazi Gul Muhammad Khan, Saiyid Ahmad Khan, Muhammad Ullah Khan and Bakhsh Ullah Khan, *KNL*, 2-4 May 1894, SLEI:74, fol. 756.

[367] *KNL*, 3-6 June 1893.

[368] *Ibid.*

## CHAPTER ELEVEN

## AFTERMATH, 1892-1901

*Think, in this battered caravanserai*
*Whose doorways are alternate night and day,*
*How sultan after sultan with his pomp*
*Abode his hour or two, and went his way.*
(Fitzgerald, *The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam* (1859), st. 15)

The arrest of Muhammad Sharif Khan signalled the end of Mingid rule in Maimana and from this point onwards Afghan governors assumed full responsibility for civil affairs, backed up by a sizeable military presence. The wali's downfall thus marks the end of the 'Ancient Supremacy', for Maimana was the last Chingizid amirate of Balkh to be fully incorporated into Afghanistan. The downfall of Muhammad Sharif Khan, however, did not end resistance to Afghan domination and, for a while at least, Sultan Muhammad Khan, the wali's son, aided by the Firozkohi amir, Malik Sharif, carried on the battle from his base in the mountains and valleys of Gurziwan. The two amirs harassed Afghan garrisons as far north as Sar-i Pul[1] until, at the end of August 1892, they were defeated by General Ghaus al-Din.[2] Following this set-back, Sultan Muhammad went to Andkhui where, apparently, he tried to persuade Sardar Ishaq Khan to come to his help.[3] Rumours that the sardar was planning to return to Afghan Turkistan, led to further fighting between government troops and local people around Andkhui.[4] The intervention of Russian officials, who ordered Ishaq Khan not to interfere, ended the disturbances, and the uprising was nipped in the bud. Sultan Muhammad, along with a number of followers, requested, and was granted, asylum in Qarqi.[5]

Malik Sharif Firozkohi, however, remained at large in the hill country of Gurziwan and, although he was not strong enough to risk confronting the Afghan army in the open field, he did cause

[1] *HNL*, 11 Aug. 1892.
[2] *HNL*, 25 Aug., 1 Sept. 1892.
[3] *HNL*, 13 Oct. 1892.
[4] *Ibid. HNL*, 27 Oct. 1892.
[5] *HNL*, 27 Oct., 17 Nov. 1892; *PCD*, 10 Oct. 1892.

considerable trouble by guerrilla raids against government outposts, eluding all efforts by General Ahad Khan and others to capture him.[6] However, in late September, Sharif Khan's nephew, and a number of other members of his family, fell into the hands of the Herat troops,[7] but in the following spring, joined by other Firozkohis from the Chakhcharan district, Sharif Khan renewed his campaign with increased violence.[8] He continued to raid caravans and attack government outposts for a further twelve months until finally, in January 1894, he was captured, taken to Mazar-i Sharif and executed.[9]

Meanwhile, the rule of the new governor of Maimana, Muhammad Sarwar Khan, was highly unpopular and it was reported that he was treating his subjects harshly.[10] This resulted, in the winter of 1892/3, in a number of disturbances in the province and several leading men were arrested and brought to Kabul.[11] Other disaffected persons apparently made a secret journey to Merv, where they were well received by Russian officials.[12] In the spring there was trouble with the remnants of the Sunni Hazaras of Qal'a-yi Nau, who refused to come down from their mountain stronghold and be resettled near Herat. Though some of the Aimaq managed to escape across the border to Panjdeh, the region remained unsettled until well into 1895.[13]

On the wider political field, 1893 saw the Durand mission to Kabul and the demarcation of the remaining part of the northern frontier, as well as the notorious agreement on the division of tribal territory in the south. As far as Badghis was concerned, the Panjdeh frontier continued to be violated by both sides and C. E. Yate, now a colonel, the architect of the 'Afghanisation' policies of the mid 1880s, was sent to sort the matter out.[14] By the end of 1893 the suppression of the Hazaras had been completed and the Amir, having successfully concluded one religious war against the Shi'is, turned his attention to the

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[6] *HNL*, 27 Oct., 17 Nov. 1892; *HNL*, 3 , 24 Nov. 1892, SLEI:68, fols. 710-1, vol 69, fol. 49.

[7] *HNL*, 20 Oct., 24 Nov. 1892.

[8] *HNL*, 11 May, 8 June 1893, SLEI:70, fols. 1527, 1823.

[9] *HNL*, 25 May, 5 Oct. 1893, 15 Feb. 1894, SLEI:70, fol. 1605, vol. 72, part 2, fols. 1261-2, vol. 73, fol. 1443.

[10] *HNL*, 15 Dec. 1892.

[11] *KNL*, 25-28 Feb. 1893, SLEI:69, fol. 1351.

[12] *TFJ*, March 1893, SLEI:70, fol. 109.

[13] *HNL*, 2 March 1893, SLEI:70, fol. 163; *HNL*, 29 April, 17 Aug. 1893. *HNL*, 20 July 1893, SLEI:71. fols. 1239; *HNL*, 19 Oct. 1893, SLEI:72, part 4, fols. 1376-7; *HNL*, 7 Dec. 1893, 25 Jan. 1984, SLEI:73, fols. 351-2, 827; *HNL*, 14, 28 March 1895, SLEI:79, nos. 1700, 1975, n. pag.; *HNL*, 25 April, 9 May 1895, SLEI:80, nos. 2451, 2531, n. pag.

[14] *List of Claims against Russian Frontier Officials*, 1893; *Findings of Col. C.E. Yate regarding the ... Violation of Afghan Frontier*, 1 Aug. 1893, SLEI:72, part 3, fols. 699-70.

subjugation of the pagan tribes of Kafiristan (Kakar 1971, 181-209). As with the Hazara campaign, the people of Afghan Turkistan were required to provide levies, supplies and pack animals beyond their means.[15] These exactions produced more serious unrest, particularly in Gurziwan and Maimana. Following the suppression of these disturbances, there was another round of arrests, deportations and executions.[16] The threat of Ishaq Khan's return also continued to hang over the Amir and during the last years of his reign he dealt severely with anyone in Afghan Turkistan found corresponding with the sardar.[17]

For the ordinary people of the province, the last years of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's reign were a constant battle for survival. Scarcity, famine and poverty were by now a way of life,[18] for the Amir's ill-conceived nationalisation of the main cash crops, his attempt to stop trade with Russia, combined with ever-increasing taxation[19] and the all-pervading atmosphere of uncertainty and fear, stifled all mercantile initiative. Prices of grain and other commodities soared beyond the reach of ordinary people, trade ground to a standstill and hard cash was increasingly difficult to come by.[20]

As if this were not enough, many government officials continued to enrich themselves at the expense of those they ruled, even though they risked imprisonment or death if the Amir found out. In 1895 Sardar Muhammad Sarwar Khan, the governor of Maimana, was finally called to account, recalled to Kabul and imprisoned on a charge of embezzlement.[21] In the same year Sardar Muhammad 'Aziz Khan, governor of Balkh,[22] the Afghan *mustufi* of Turkistan,[23] Yasin Khan,

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[15] *KNL*, 21-24 April, 19-22 May 1894, SLEI:74, fols. 647, 1201

[16] *KNL*, 31 March-3 April, 7-10, 18-20 April, 28 April-1 May, 12-15, 16-19 May, 31 May-2 June 1894; *HNL*, 29 March 1894, SLEI:74, fols. 331, 517, 533, 755, 974, 1199, 1894, 641.

[17] *TFJ*, July 1894; *HNL*, 7 June 1894, SLEI:75, fol. 655; *TFJ*, Dec. 1894, SLEI:78, fol. 115. *PCD*, 5 July 1895; *TFJ*, July 1895, SLEI:81, nos. 2283, 3099, n. pag.; *PCD*, 7 Aug. 1896; *KNL*, 19 Sept. 1896, SLEI:88, no. 2795, n. pag.; *TFJ*, Oct. 1899, SLEI:118, fol. 4.

[18] *PCD*, 23 Jan. 1894. *HNL*, 1 Feb. 1894, SLEI:73, fols. 1227-8; *HNL*, 15 March 1894, SLEI:74, fol. 458; *PCD*, 24 May 1894, SLEI:77, fol. 99; *HNL*, 23 May, 18 July 1895, SLEI:81, nos. 2785, 3422, n. pag.; *PCD*, 26 Nov. 1895, SLEI:83, no. 4411, n. pag.; *HNL*, 1 Sept. 1898, SLEI:109, no. 1075.

[19] *PCD*, 24 May 1894; *HNL*, 29 Aug. 1895. *HNL*, 26 July 1894, SLEI:76, fol. 109; *TFJ*, Sept. 1895, SLEI:82, fol. 316; *HNL*, 9 Dec. 1897, SLEI:100, no. 302.

[20] *PCD*, 24 May 1894; *HNL*, 23 May, 18 July 1895. *HNL*, 26 July 1894, SLEI:76, fol. 109; *TFJ*, Sept. 1895, SLEI:82, fols. 315-20; *TFJ*, Oct. 1895, SLEI:83, no. 190 (Frontier), n. pag.; *PCD*, 27 April 1896, SLEI:86, no. 1224, n. pag.; *HNL*, 8 June 1898, SLEI:106, no. 806, n. pag.

[21] *PCD*, 24 June 1895, SLEI:80, no. 2705, n. pag.; *PCD*, 24 July 1896, SLEI:87, no. 2091, n. pag.

[22] *TFJ*, June 1895, SLEI:80, no. 2700, n. pag.

[23] *PCD*, 20 Aug. 1895, SLEI:81, no. 3423, n. pag.

governor of Qal'a-yi Nau[24] and Abu Bakr Khan of Chakhcharan,[25] to mention but some of the Amir's more senior officials in the area, were removed from office because of their extortions and tyrannical behaviour.[26]

To add to the misery in Afghan Turkistan, plagues and sickness swept through the region. In 1896, fever was reported to be raging in Maimana, Merv and Panjdeh,[27] which probably carried off Yazdan Quli Khan, Dilawar Khan Ming's *sipah salar*, as well as many others. He had been a thorn in the Afghan flesh for over a decade and his death marked the breaking of one more link between Maimana and the Ming dynasty.[28] The following year the plague, which was decimating the Indian subcontinent, reached Turkistan and the border with Russia was sealed in a vain attempt to stop the sickness spreading.[29] It was followed, in the summer of 1900, by epidemics of cholera and diphtheria, which counted amongst its victims the then governor of Maimana.[30] There were also natural disasters, including an earthquake in 1894,[31] a plague of young locusts three years later,[32] and the failure of the spring rains the year after.[33]

By 1896 large areas of the province had been severely depopulated and vast tracts of once-fertile land lay neglected and uncultivated. The Amir responded by trying to revive the policy of Afghanisation, but the whole country had, to one extent or another, been similarly depleted and there was very little enthusiasm from the Pushtun tribes for a scheme which, in their eyes, was already discredited.[34] 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, determined to try and solve the problem which, by and large, was of his own making, resorted to force. Whole villages in Nangahar,[35] Khost[36] and in the Ghilzai country[37] were levelled and the occupants obliged to emigrate beyond the Hindu Kush. Individuals

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[24] *TFJ*, June 1895; *HNL*, 9 May 1895.
[25] *HNL*, 3 June, 1 July 1897, SLEI:93, no. 749, vol. 94, no. 864, n. pag.
[26] Cf. *PCD*, 11 Aug. 1897, SLEI:95, no. 996; *TFJ*, Oct. 1897, SLEI:97, no. 1117, n. pag., where the Amir is reported to have made "sweeping" changes.
[27] *HNL*, 2 April 1896, SLEI:86, no. 1225, n. pag.
[28] *TFJ*, May 1896.
[29] *PCD*, 20 April 1897, SLEI:91, no. 479.
[30] *HNL*, 6 Sept., 8, 15 Nov. 1900, SLEI:128, nos. 1207, 1345, 1361, n. pag.
[31] *HNL*, 8 Feb. 1894, SLEI:73, fols. 1228-9.
[32] *HNL*, 8 July 1897, SLEI:94, no. 890, n. pag.
[33] *HNL*, 8 June 1898.
[34] *PCD*, 10, 28 May 1897, SLEI:92, nos. 538, 603, n. pag.
[35] *PCD*, 28 May 1897; *KNL*, 7 Aug. 1897, SLEI:94, no. 888, n. pag.
[36] *KNL*, 7 Aug. 1897.
[37] *PCD*, 8 Feb. 1896, SLEI:84, no. 473, n. pag.

and families condemned to banishment in India, had their sentences changed to one of internal exile in Afghan Turkistan.[38] The economic chaos in Badghis and Balkh, however, was such that there were no supplies of food for the new wave of immigrants and many of the colonists crossed into Russia or Persia, where they joined thousands of their fellow-tribesmen and other refugees who had already managed to make good their escape.[39] By the end of 1896, so serious was the exodus, that the Amir deployed cavalry along the whole of the northern frontier to try and intercept the fugitives[40] whilst, at the same time, offering an amnesty to exiles across the frontier.[41] Not surprisingly, the Amir was only partially successful in persuading the refugees to risk returning to Afghanistan.[42]

During the last few years of his reign, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan was more dead than alive. In the winter of 1896 he had suffered another, serious attack of illness. By February 1897, he was "very ill"[43] and from this point onwards, to his final hour, the Amir, and his government, hardly functioned at all. In July 1900 he withdrew to Paghman and, expecting to die any day, exacted an oath of loyalty to the heir apparent, Habibullah, from senior members of his government. In the end, he eked out a further twelve agonising months. For fourteen days prior to his final hour, his sufferings were terrible as he died from the feet upwards. The stench from his rotting, gangrenous feet and legs was so apalling that no-one was able to stay in his sick chamber for more than a few minutes. Finally, on 2 October 1901, the Amir assembled his family and officials, obliged them to reaffirm their loyalty to his successor and died the same night. He was buried in Kabul, amidst strict security precautions, in the mausoleum he himself had commissioned some years earlier. Controversy, however, continued to follow him after death. Several attempts were made by opponents to snatch the body and feed it to the dogs and the Amir's tomb itself was three times set on fire by unknown hands (Martin, 126).

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[38] *PCD*, 27 July 1897, SLEI:94, no. 845, n. pag.

[39] *HNL*, 2, 16 May 1895, SLEI:80, nos. 2451, 2531, n. pag.; *HNL*, 20 Feb. 1896, SLEI:85, no. 804, n. pag.; *PCD*, 21 Sept. 1896; *PCD*, 9 Dec. 1896, SLEI:89, no. 3376, n. pag.; *PCD*, 25 May 1897, SLEI:104, no. 634, n. pag.; *PCD*, 24 July 1898, SLEI:106, no. 822, n. pag.; *Viceroy to Amir*, 11 May 1899, SLEI:114, no. 681, n. pag.

[40] *PCD*, 25 Aug. 1896, SLEI:88, no. 2544, n. pag.; *HNL*, 10 Dec. 1896; *PCD*, 9 Jan., 22 Feb. 1897, SLEI:90, nos. 151, 565, n. pag.; *Viceroy to Amir*, 11 May 1898; *PCD*, 24 July 1898.

[41] *PCD*, 9 Dec. 1896.

[42] *PCD*, 15 Jan. 1900, SLEI:119, no. 258, n. pag.

[43] *QNL*, 25 Feb. 1898, SLEI:102, no. 444, n. pag.

So passed away the man whom the British referred to as 'The Iron Amir', leaving behind a cowed and impoverished nation, unified in name only. Despite the British government's occasionally acrimonious dispute with the Amir about who had placed him on the throne, and the Afghan ruler's unpredictable personality, by the time of Ishaq Khan's rebellion, Britain's Central Asian policy was synonymous with the survival of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan's government. Had not 'Abd al-Rahman Khan had regular, and copious, infusions of military equipment and financial aid from Britain, it is certain that he would never have survived for over two decades as Amir of Afghanistan. In return for this investment, Britain achieved what she set out to do when, in the 1830s, she began to seek an understanding with the Amirs of Kabul, namely, the establishment of a friendly, and highly dependent, power between the Indus and the Amu Darya. The pursuit of this Alexandrine chimera, however, was a sanguinary one, both for Britain and the peoples whose destiny she sought to control. In the process of engineering a 'Scientific Frontier', the last vestiges of Chingizid sovereignty were systematically eradicated and the social and political structures which had been the foundation of that society, were broken up and scattered to the four winds. The inevitable culmination of this policy was to come later, in 1921, when the last representative of the 'Ancient Supremacy,' the Manghit Khan of Bukhara, Mir 'Alim Khan, was deposed by the Bolsheviks.

The overthrow of Muhammad Sharif Khan of Maimana marked the demise of more than two hundred and fifty years of Mingid rule which had begun in the heyday of Chingizid rule, under Nazr Muhammad Khan. In the end, its downfall was brought about by the expansion of European powers, who saw themselves as treading in the footsteps of Alexander the Great and were consequently blinkered to actual historical realities by a Euro-centric classical world view. The Durranis, partly as a consequence of their kingdom's geographical location and partly because of British frontier dogmatism, prospered politically from the 'Great Game'. Though they lost control of Kashmir and Peshawar, they were able to console themselves with the conquest of the fertile and prosperous province of Balkh, and the Chingizid supremacy was swept aside. In the process, they were able to settle old scores with the amirs of Balkh and the Manghits of Bukhara.

Apart from the decade of the 'Basmachi' uprising, during the reigns of Aminullah Khan and Nadir Khan earlier this century, it was to be almost a hundred years before the Balkh appanage was once more governed by local people. Even then, this only came about following the demise of first the British and, subsequently, the Russo-Soviet Empire, both of whom had different reasons for seeing Chingizid supremacy in Central Asia swept away. Today, as this work goes to press, the wheel has come full circle and the indigenous populations of Central Asia have begun to reassert their right to self-determination. Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan are independent whilst, south of the Amu Darya, Balkh, under the designation of 'Wilayat-i Shamal-i Afghanistan', is governed, if not actually ruled, by General Rashid Dostam, an Uzbek from Shibarghan. Maimana is in the hands of another Uzbek, Rasul Pahlawan of Shirin Tagab and a number of General Dostam's most senior advisers are direct descendants of one or other of the Chingizid amirs of the Balkh appanage. Amongst such individuals are members who trace their ancestry to Mizrab Khan Ming, Muhammad Husain Khan Ming, Muhammad Sharif Khan Ming, 'Abd al-Baqi Mingbashi, or Dilawar Khan Ming, whilst the Gauhari ishans, of whom Ishan Uraq was, arguably, the most famous, still play an important role in the political, educational and religious life of the area.

Over the last fourteen years of bitter war, the whole political and ethnic balance of Afghanistan has swung, probably irrecoverably, in favour of the 'minorities', as a result of the mass exodus of refugees and the loss of all but a token central government. The withdrawal of Soviet forces and the fall of Najibullah merely exacerbated this trend towards decentralisation by finally exposing to the world the cracks which Britain, Russia and the Amirs of Afghanistan had tried so hard to paper over. Every day that the present civil war rages, the likelihood that the country will revert to the days when Kabul, Herat, Qandahar, Balkh, Badakhshan and Ghor-Hazarajat were ruled by separate amirs, is increased. Not that this tendency is to be frowned upon *per se*, though Western politicians, commentators and even scholars seem to regard the break down of central authority as entirely undesirable. Yet any attempt at reimposing the kind of *status quo* which obtained under the Durranis, and Muhammadzai Amirate in particular, is a prescription for even further bloodshed, for recentralisation in Afghanistan could only 'succeed' by resuscitating the discredited, imperial solution, namely a foreign power supporting one ethnic or

religious faction with arms and money in order to 'unify' the country by the suppression or even the extermination or explusion, all others powerful enough to present a challenge to their authority.

Regrettably, the policies pursued by Russian, Western, Iranian and Pakistani politicians during the period of the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan have merely been variations on the old and now discredited 'Great Game' theme. It is not surprising, therefore, that the uncritical support of supposedly 'tame', ideological or ethnic factions, whether Khalqi, Parchami, or one or other of the Islamising *mujahidin* parties, by the various superpowers, has merely accelerated decentralisation, fuelled ethnic a religious conflict and seemingly unending cycle of bloodshed. Before European powers began to meddle in Central Asia, the Chingizid and Mughal dynasties of Central Asia and the Indian sub-continent demonstrated that it was possible to govern a multi-racial state, provided that there was a measure of, what the West would call, devolution. Indeed, underlying both the Chingizid and Pushtun tribal systems is a strong tradition of autonomy and federalism, which could form the basis for a settlement of the present crisis. Indeed, if Afghanistan is to continue as a distinct and separate political entity, the only long-term solution is the creation of a kind of Central Asian Switzerland.

The alternative is not merely the continuation of the present bloodshed, but rather a spilling over of the Afghanistan crisis into a regional conflict, which would have far greater consequences than the present conflict in the former Yugoslavia. For, despite the claim of British officials at the height of the imperial period, Afghanistan's present borders, like so many other colonial frontiers, are neither 'natural' nor 'scientific'. The territory they encompass consists, historically, of parts of a number of formerly independent, and mutually-hostile, territories. In the south, the Pushtun tribes remain uncomfortably divided by the Durand Line, in the north-east, the former amirate of Badakhshan lies half in Afghanistan, half in Tajikistan, with the former now supporting a secessionist movement in the latter, whilst the Amu Darya river, once the vein which ran through the centre of the ancient Turco-Tajik *bloc*, is now a barrier which divided Uzbek from Uzbek, Turkman from Turkman and Tajik from Tajik. With Pakistan's support for the most radical *mujahidin* parties, the presence of a very large number of Pushtu-speaking refugees in the North-West Frontier who have decided not to return, and the unresolved 'problem' of the status of Tribal Territory, there are

already signs that the Afghanistan civil war has developed into a wider conflict which may well lead to a revival of the Pushtunistan issue and threaten the very existence of Pakistan. North of the Hindu Kush, attacks by bands of revolutionary Islamicists across the Amu Darya and the presence of over one hundred thousand Tajik refugees, has already created a serious political and ideological crisis in Tajikistan. Iran's support of the Shi'i Hazaras, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and, more recently, Turkey's alignment with General Dostam and the fact that all the *de facto* amirates are forced to rely heavily on imports from adjacent countries of even the most basic commodities, as well as munitions, make the break-up, or dismemberment, of Afghanistan not merely a possibility, but a serious probability.

For over one and a half centuries, Britain, in particular, sought to mould Central Asia in its own image. In the process, she was indirectly responsible for the untold suffering and agony which was inflicted on all races and peoples in Central Asia. In the short term, her goals were achieved with the imposition of a "hard and bitter peace,"[44] in which the overriding consideration was British self-interest and not the rights and aspirations of the peoples of Afghanistan. Such an iron-clad calm could only exist as long as an external power was prepared to underwrite the Amirs, and provide the Afghan ruler with the necessary war *matériel* to suppress, or contain, others whose legitimate rights the imperial authority was determined to ignore. It is no wonder, therefore, in an age which has seen the demise, or at least the decline, of 'Old World' colonialism, that the water which the imperial pump forced to flow uphill, has flooded back into its ancient bedwith such devastating consequences. As the Dari proverb says: "Where the river has once flowed, it will flow again." One can only hope and pray that, in the process, no more innocent lives will be swept away by the raging torrent.

[44] John F. Kennedy, *Inaugural Presidential Address*, 20 Jan. 1961.

APPENDIX I

## GLOSSARY OF ANGLO-INDIAN, PERSIAN AND TURKIC TECHNICAL TERMS

*ābī:* irrigated land.
*abjad:* numerological system where letters of the Persian alphabet are given numerical values.
*ākhūn[zāda]:* preacher, theologian, orator.
*amīr:* commander, Chingizid ruler of an *iqtā'* [*q.v.*]. (N.B. When used with capital letter in text, it refers to the Durrani/Muhamadzai rulers of Afghanistan).
*āqsāqāl:* Uzbek or Turkman elder, lit. 'white-beard'.
*arbāb:* (pl. of *rab*); lit. 'masters', but in Afghanistan, village elders, petty governors.
*arg:* citadel, fort.
*'arzbēgī:* high official in Chingizid government to whom all petitions were presented.
*Asaf al-Daula:* title held by the Prince-Regent of Khurasan in the first half of the last century.
*atabēgī:* guardian, lord; a high government official in the Chingizid government.
*atāliq:* high civil official under Chingizid system of government.
*aulīya':* (pl. of *walī*); saints, intercessors.
*badal:* system of blood revenge under the Pushtun code of honour.
*band:* dam; barrage; mountain range.
*barakat:* supernatural power or authority associated with relics, shrines or mystics; 'charisma'.
*bēglarbēgī:* title of by Uzbek rulers of Sar-i Pul in nineteenth century.
*bī (bēg):* landlord, merchant. Under the Chingizids, a title equivalent to the Afghan, *khān* [*q.v.*].
*chaman:* field, military parade ground, battle ground.
*chūl:* sand, lœss duneland specific to the northern foothills of the Tir Band-i Turkistan.
*crore:* 10,000,000 (usually rupees), equivalent to 100 lakh [*q.v.*].
*dahbāshī:* a decurion, or commander of 10 in Mongol/Uzbek military system.
*dārūgha:* law enforcement officer; garrison commander.

*Dārūgha-yi 'Adālat:* Chief Judicial Officer; Ombudsman.
*daffardar:* sergeant of irregular horse.
*dak:* courier, post officer.
*dīwān:* government office, a government official.
*dīwānbēgī:* high government official usually in charge of the revenue affairs of amirid states.
*Dīwān-i 'Alā:* Prime Minister, *wazīr* [*q.v.*].
*dīwān-i khās:* Privy Council chamber.
*dīwān-i 'ām:* public audience hall, especially under Mughals.
*durbar:* public audience held by Muhammadzai Amirs, the Viceroy of India or Indian native ruler.
*fāna wa dāgh:* twin torture by wedge and boiling oil.
*farangī:* alien, foreigner, infidel (lit. 'a Frank').
*farash bāshī:* government official under Muhammadzais.
*farmān:* a royal decree, authority.
*farsang:* linear measurement roughly equivalent to three miles (4.82 km.).
*fārsīwān:* ethnic group in Afghanistan whose first language is Persian.
*farzand:* (lit. 'son'); used as an honorific title by various rulers of Central Asia.
*fatwa:* legal opinion, decision, made on basis of Islamic law, by a *muftī* [*q.v.*](or Shī'ī *mujtahid* [*q.v.*]).
*ghāzī:* a title assumed by those who have fought in a religious war, or *jihād*, against idolaters.
*ghee:* clarified butter used in cooking.
*ghulām:* a slave.
*hajj:* pilgrimage, especially to the Ka'aba in Mecca.
*hājī:* A person who has performed the Meccan pilgrimage.
*hākim:* provincial governor, commander.
*hakīm:* doctor (herbalist), learned, wise, prudent man; philosopher.
*hammām:* Turkish bath.
*havildar:* sergeant of infantry in the Indian army; a cavalryman.
*hazāra:* a unit of 1,000 men in Chingizid army; a Turco-Mongolian ethnic group of central Afghanistan.
*Hazrat:* an honorific title (lit. presence, majesty, dignity) used in Islam in association with the prophets and, in Sūfism, with *pīrs* [*q.v.*], *īshāns* [*q.v.*] and *walīs* [*q.v.*].
*howdah:* ornamental canopy used to carry passengers on elephants.
*hukumat-i 'ala:* provincial division or district under Ahmad Shāh Durranī
*'Īd:* religious festival, feast.

*'Īd al-Fitr:* (also known in Afghanistan as *'Id-i Ramazān*), the feast which celebrates the end of the fast, commencing on 1 Shawwal [*q.v.*].
*'Īd al-Azhā* (also known in Afghanistan as *'Id-i Qurbān*), the feast of sacrifice which commemorates Ībrāhīm's (Abraham's) willingness to sacrifice his son. Commences on 10 Zu'l-Hijja.
*imām:* prayer leader in mosque; title used by Shī'ī [*q.v.*]successors to Muhammad and 'Alī b. Abī Tālib.
*iqtā'* (pl. *ailāt*)*:* a fief or territorial grant held by an *amīr* [*q.v.*] under the Chingizids.
*īshān* (pronounced as, *ēshān*' in Afghanistan)*:* a *saiyid* [*q.v.*], or Arab descendant of Muhammad, often also a *pīr* [*q.v.*] in Naqshbandī Sūfism.
*Ismā'īlī:* a branch of Shī'īsm, divided into several sub-sects, which recognises Muhammad, son of Ismā'īl b. Imām Ja'far al-Sādiq and his heirs, as the true *Imām* [*q.v.*].
*jagir:* the revenue assigned to an individual from government estate(s).
*janissary:* personal, hereditary household guard of the Ottoman Sultans of Turkey; by association, any royal household guards.
*jarīb:* a measurement of land equivalent to approximately half an acre.
*jemadar:* a native officer equivalent, in the India army, to lieutenant.
*jezailchī:* rifleman.
*jihād:* holy war; Islamic crusade against non-believers.
*jiziya:* religious tribute, capitation tax imposed on non-believers (strictly the *Ahl-i Kitāb*, or 'People of the Book') under Islamic law.
*Jumādā I:* fifth month of the Islamic religious calendar.
*Jumādā II:* sixth month of the Islamic religious calendar.
*kāfir:* pagan; idol worshipper; atheist.
*kamarband:* waistband, belt, sash, girdle.
*karamāt:* wonder, sign, miracle, of a lesser degree than *mu'jiza* [*q.v.*], performed by mystics and saints.
*khadām:* (pl. of *khādim*) government ministers; servants.
*khāk bād:* dust storm.
*khalat:* robe of honour and/or investiture.
*khalīfa:* vicegerent, formerly supreme head of Islamic community (Caliph); leader of a Sūfī Order.
*Khān:* title of the Chingizid supreme ruler; Afghan tribal leader.
*Khān Hazrat:* title of ruler of Khiva in the last century.
*khānaqā:* meeting house for performance of Sūfī ritual, or *zikr* [*q.v.*].

*kārēz:* subterranean canal commonly used in irrigation in Afghanistan and Iran.
*khūshbēgī:* senior official in Chingizid govenmental system responsible for taxation and security.
*khirqa:* cloak, robe, mantle, especially worn by prophets or *shaikhs* [*q.v.*].
*khutba:* the Friday prayer sermon, preceding salāt prayers, in which the sovereign's name is mentioned.
*kotwal:* magistrate; judge; mayor.
*kufr:* blasphemy.
*lalmī:* dryland farming.
*loya jirga:* assembly of elders or khāns which, under the Pushtun code, elects the *amīr* [*q.v.*].
*madrasa:* Qur'anic theological college.
*mahdī:* title of the end-time prophet, descendent of Muhammad, who will fill the world with justice and equity.
*malang:* a religious mystic, often with heterodox or extreme Sūfī tendencies; a shrine attendant.
*māldār:* wealthy merchant; a term used to describe Pushtun semi-nomadic tribes of Afghanistan.
*mālik:* landowner, local ruler.
*manzil:* rest house or overnight stopping place for caravans.
*masjid:* A local mosque.
*masjid-i jamī':* congregational, or 'cathedral', mosque of a city or town.
*mazār:* a shrine, grave, sepulchre to which Muslims make pilgrimage.
*mihrāb:* the niche in the mosque which indicates the direction of the *qibla* [*q.v.*].
*mingbāshī:* commander of 1,000 men; centurion.
*mīr:* shortened form of *amīr* [*q.v.*] and *mīrzā* [*q.v.*]; used by Afghans to denote a native ruler of a district, or sub-district, in Turkistan.
*Mīr Wāli :* title of the ruler of Khulm in 18th and 19th centuries.
*mīrzā:* prince (especially of Timurid line); a scholar, scribe.
*muftī:* legalist qualified to issue a *fatwa* [*q.v.*], or religious decree.
*Muharram:* first month of the Muslim religious calendar of special significance to Shī'īs [*q.v.*] as the first 10 days commemorate the death of Husain b. 'Alī b. Abī Tālib at Karbala'.
*mujāhid* (pl. *mujahidin*)*:* one who fights in a holy war, or *jihād* [*q.v.*].
*mujāwar:* guardian of a tomb, shrine.
*mujtahid:* high-ranking Shī'ī legalist.
*mu'jiza:* highest form of miracle performed exclusively by prophets to authenticate their calling.

*munshī:* scribe.
*murīd:* disciple, follower, of a Sūfī *pīr* [*q.v.*].
*murshīd:* spiritual guide, *pīr* [*q.v.*].
*mustufī:* Islamic legalist.
*mut'a:* temporary marriage, marriage of pleasure.
*mutawallī:* chief trustee or administrator of *waqf* [*q.v.*] foundation.
*nā'īb:* deputy, viceroy.
*nadīm:* adviser.
*nahr:* large canal.
*naqīb:* high office associated with the court, usually held by an Islamic legalist.
*naurōz:* Zoroastrian New Year celebrated at spring equinox (21 March) in Central Asia and Persia.
*nazr:* votive offering.
*nazarana:* offering, either in cash or kind, presented to a high official or to a *pīr* [*q.v.*].
*Nizām al-Mulk:* honorific title bestowed by ruler on his *wazīr* [*q.v.*] or other high officials.
*Nizām al-Daula:* honorific title bestowed by ruler on a high official.
*ōnbāshī:* commander of 100; centurion.
*pādshāh:* king, sovereign, monarch.
*pādshāhī:* the system of centralised, absolute monarchy, particularly under the Safawids and Qājār Persian dynasties.
*pīr:* spiritual guide, a descendant of a Sūfī saint, a teacher of a *tarīqa* [*q.v.*].
*pōstīn:* sheep-skin coat traditional worn in Afghanistan.
*purda:* seclusion, or veiling, of women.
*Qa'alkhān:* heir apparent to Chingizid throne.
*qadamga:* a shrine commemorating a miracle (*karamāt*) [*q.v.*] or visitation by a prophet or saint.
*qalandar:* wandering ascetic who has abandoned the world to pursue a life of contemplation.
*qanāt:* an underground canal system used for irrigation.
*qariyā:* village, hamlet.
*qāzī:* religious judge.
*qaum:* tribe, clan, extended family group.
*qishlāq:* village, hamlet.
*qizilbāsh:* (lit., 'red cap'); crack Turco-Mongolian troops of the Persian army; a term of abused used by Sunnis in Afghanistan and Turkey in respect of Persians generally; the urbanised Shī'īs of Kabul.
*quriltāi:* general assembly of Chingizid tribes.

*Rabī' I:* third month of Muslim religious calendar.
*Rabī' II:* fourth month of Muslim religious calendar.
*rāhdārī:* road pass, or passport which exempts the traveller from tolls and taxation.
*Ramazān:* ninth month of the Muslim religious calendar during which Muslims fast from dawn to dusk.
*rīsh safēd:* tribal elder.
*ryot:* peasant or cultivator, especially in India.
*Sadr-i 'Azam:* Prime Minister.
*Safar:* second month of the Muslim religious calendar.
*Sāhib-i Ikhtiyār:* collector of taxes.
*saiyid:* descendant of Muhammad through his daughter, Fātima.
*sanad:* certificate, or deed, of appointment; permit; official mandate; official authority.
*sarai:* an inn or lodgings; palace.
*sardār:* title used by male members of the Barakzai and Sadozai clan; a military commander; general.
*sha'bān:* eighth month of Muslim religious calendar.
*shāh:* king, sovereign, especially in Persia.
*shāhzāda:* prince.
*shaikh:* leader of a Sūfī Order; shrine guardian; a term applied to any important religious figure.
*Shaikh al-Islām:* high religious and judicial office.
*sharī'a:* The corpus of Islamic law.
*sharīf:* (lit. 'holy') a term applied to important shrines or holders of high religious office.
*Shawwāl:* tenth month of Muslim religious calendar.
*Shī'ī:* large and varied religious division of Islam which recognises 'Alī b. Abī Tālib as the legitimate Caliph following Muhammad's death.
*silsila:* genealogy, particularly the line of transmission of the mystical teaching of a *shaikh* [*q.v.*] or *pīr* [*q.v.*]
*sipāh sālār:* Commander in Chief of an army; general.
*sowar:* Anglo-Indian, irregular horse; cavalry.
*subedar:* native infantry officer, equivalent to rank of captain.
*sūfī:* member of one, or other, of the mystic Orders of Islam.
*sultān:* prince; male member of Chingizid line.
*sunnī:* the largest denomination of Islam which bases itself on the *sunna*, or customs and traditions of Muhammad and his Companions. They reject Shī'ī claims that 'Alī b. Abī Tālib was the first Caliph.
*tepa:* mound, hill.
*tarīqa:* teaching and practices of individual Sūfī Orders.

*tekke:* monastery, or religious retreat, of certain Sūfī Orders.
*'ulamā:* legalists who decide questions of religious, constitutional or personal law on the basis of the *sunna.*
*ūlūs* (pl. *ūlūsāt*)*:* tribal unit.
*wakīl:* ambassador; government agent; commissioner; deputy.
*walī:* 'guardian', intermediary; title for individuals who are said to have been granted the power of intercession with Allah.
*wālī:* regent; under the Durranis, governor.
*waqf:* bequests (of land, shops, etc.) the revenues of which are devoted to the support of religious institutions such as shrines and mosques.
*waqfnāma:* the *waqf* [*q.v.*] deed, or charter, listing the various donations and their revenues.
*Wazīr:* Deputy.
*wilāyat:* province, technically ruled by a *wālī* [*q.v.*]; a district, county or country.
*yāsā, yāsān:* Chingizid legal code.
*yurt:* originally the territory ruled by an *amīr* [*q.v.*] or *sultān* [*q.v.*] under the Chingizids; in modern usage, the beehive tent (*üī*) of semi-nomadic groups in Turkistan.
*zakāt:* Muslim obligatory alms tax.
*zanāna:* women's quarters of house or palace forbidden to all men outside of the immediate family; a 'harem'.
*ziyārat:* a pilgrimage to a shrine (*mazār*) [*q.v.*] and the rituals associated with it; in the vernacular, it is synonymous with *mazār.*
*Zu'l-Hijja:* twelfth month of Muslim religious calendar.
*Zu'l-Qa'da:* eleventh month of Muslim religious calendar.

## APPENDIX II

## UNITS OF CURRENCY, DISTANCE, WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

There was very little standardisation of weights or measures in Central Asian during the eighteenth and nineteenth century. The Kabuli *kharwar* or *ser* not being a universal standard in 'Afghanistan' until much later. Even today, different standards of weights and measures are used. The Mazar *kharwar*, for example, is twice the weight of the Kabuli *kharwar*. Indeed, anyone who has lived in Afghanistan will have got used to having everything from fruit, vegetables and dried goods, to wood and coal, weighed out on home-made pan scales using stones, unidentifiable car parts, etc. Bulk items, e. g. bricks, straw, etc., are still sold by the ass or horse load, rather than by weight or number.

Distances tended to be measured by the time taken to accomplish a journey rather than by any system of standardised measures. When a linear system was used, it was far from precise since it often referred either to how far a camel (or a horse or donkey) travelled in a day, or the distance between *manzil*s or *sarai*s. The following tables therefore, must be treated as only an approximate guide. Where possible, I have included comparisons with Afghanistan's modern, standarised, system and the European metric units.

### *i. Weights*

*kharwar*: lit. "ass load"; traditionally two-thirds of a *shuturwar*, (camel load) = 560 lbs (254 kg) (McChesney 1991, 200-1).
Modern (Kabuli) *kharwar* = 80 seers; 1248 lbs; 566.0928 kg (Glassman 1976, 346).

*mann, maund*: 427.5 lbs; 193.914 kg.
Qunduz (1838): 1 *mann*= 8 Kabuli *ser*; 115 lbs 3 oz.
Mazar (1885): 1 *mann* = 4 *maunds* 20 *seer* according to the British Indian standardised system, or about 368 lbs; 166.92 kg (Gazetteer (1895) ii)

*pau*: Modern (Kabuli) = 0.975 lbs; 442.26 g.

*ser* : Modern (Kabuli) = 16 pau; 15.60 lbs; 7.076 kg.

*ii. Linear measurements*

*farsang*: roughly equivalent to 3 miles; 4.82 km.
*gaz*: a variable unit, measuring anything between 28 and 50 ins.; 71.12- 127 cm.
*jarib*: In Afghan Turkistan *c.*1885, 1 jarib = 0.5 acre; 2,420 sq. yards; 2,025 sq. m.
Modern Afghanistan: 1 jarib = 2 hectares; 4.94 acres.

*iii. Currency Units and Exchange Rates*

During the last century, several currencies were in common use in Afghanistan and Central Asia. This was particularly so in Balkh and the Chahar Wila¦yat where Bukharan, Indian, Persian, Russian and British India coinage circulated freely in an open market. There were no fixed exchange rates and the conversion values of the currencies fluctuated wildly in response to economic or political conditions. As the century ran its course both the Afghan and other native currencies tended to become more and more debased and, consequently, were devalued against the 'hard' European currencies (*viz.* the Russian rouble and the Indian silver rupee) and against each other. Consequently, it is impossible to give fixed exchange rates for any of the local coinage for the India rupee or against another, native currency which are valid for the whole period discussed in this work. For example, in the 1830s, 1 Kabuli rupee was equivalent to 1 Bukharan *tila* but by 1885, 1 Kabuli rupee was only worth $\frac{1}{6}$th *tila*.

Where necessary footnotes have been added in the relevant place(s) in chapters giving the exchange rates for the specific period in question. The information below should, therefore, be regarded as a general guide only:

*crore*: 10 million (usually rupees) in India. In Persia, one *kurur* equalled 500,000 currency units.
*lakh*(A.I., *lak*): 100,000 (usually rupees).
*qran* (A.I. *kran*); colloquially in Afghanistan, *qeran*: silver coin equivalent to $\frac{1}{10}$th. of *toman*.

*rupee*: A silver coin used in both India and, in the last century, as the official currency of Afghanistan. The Kabuli rupee was more debased than its Indian counterpart: e.g. in 1838 in Qunduz it was one eighth alloy.

*tanga*: approximately one twentieth of a Bukharan *tila*.

*tila*: A gold coin of Bukhara valued at anything between between 4½ to 7 Indian silver rupees.

*toman*: Persian gold coin.

*Exchange Rates in Qunduz, c. 1838:*

1 *tila* = 4½ India (Company) rupees
1 Indian rupee = 5 *tanga*s
1 Kabuli rupee = 26 *pul*
15 Kabuli rupees = 9 Indian rupees
(*source*, Dr. P.B. Lord)

*Exchange Rates in Afghan Turkistan, c. 1885:*

3 *tanga*s = 2 *qran/qeran*s/1 Kabuli rupee
20 *tanga*s = 1 Bukharan *tila*
2.5 *qran*s =1 English (Indian) rupee
20 *qran*s = 5 gold roubles
(*source*, Gazetteer (1895) ii).

APPENDIX III

## AMIRID RULERS OF THE CHAHAR WILAYAT

### i. *Afshars of Andkhui*

| | |
|---|---|
| *c.*1730/31-1736 | 'Ali Mardan Khan (for Nadir Shah Afshar) |
| *c.*1736-1790 | Sulaiman Sultan |
| 1750/1 | Mukhless Khan |
| *c.*1790-1812 | Rahmatullah Khan |
| 1812-*c.* 1830 | Yulduz Khan |
| *c.*1830-1835 | 'Abd al-'Aziz Khan |
| *c.*1835-1844 | Shah Wali Khan |
| 1844-1845 | Ghazanfar Khan |
| 1845 | Sufi Khan |
| 1845-1847 | Ghazanfar Khan |
| 1847 | Sufi Khan |
| 1847-1869 | Ghazanfar Khan |
| 1869-*c.*1880 | Daulat Beg Khan |

### ii. *Beglarbegis of Sar-i Pul*

| | |
|---|---|
| *c.*1731-1800 | Under Maimana |
| *c.*1800-1814 | Zu'l-Faqar Sher Khan (for Mingids of Maimana) |
| *c.*1814-1840 | Zu'l-Faqar Sher Khan (independent) |
| 1840-1851 | Mahmud Khan |
| *c.*1851-1862 | Qilij Khan |
| 1861-1862 | Afghan military government |
| 1862-1864 | Muhammad Khan |
| 1864-1866 | Afghan governor(s) |
| 1866(?)-1875 | Muhammad Khan (1867 temporarily under Hakim Khan of Shibarghan) |

*iii. Hakims of Shibarghan*

| | |
|---|---|
| *fl.* 1747-1757 | Izbasar (for Bukhara) |
| *c.*1757-1800 | Daulat Khan |
| *c.*1800-1820 | Erich Khan |
| *c.*1820-1829 | Manwar Khan |
| *c.*1829-1851 | Rustam Khan |
| 1846 | Husain Khan(?) |
| 1851-1855 | Hakim Khan, Nizam al-Daula |
| 1854 (Aug) | Mir Wali of Khulm (briefly, for Bukhara) |
| 1855-1859 | Sardar Wali Muhammad Khan, Barakzai (Afghan military governor) |
| 1859-1875 | Hakim Khan (with Afghan Resident) |

*iv. Mingids of Maimana*

| | |
|---|---|
| 1612-30/1653-6?? | Ataliq Uraz Bi Ming b. Baruti Bi |
| [*lacuna*] | |
| *c.* 1731(?)-1772 | Haji Bi Khan |
| 1772-*c.*1795 | Jan Khan |
| 1795 | Eldest son of Jan Khan (unnamed) |
| 1795-1804 | Muhammad Rahim Khan |
| 1804-1814 | Ataliq Ahmad Quli Khan |
| 1814-1830 | 'Ali Yar Khan |
| 1830 | Persian Regent |
| 1830-1831 | 'Abd al-Mu'min Khan |
| 1831-1845 | Mizrab Khan |
| 1845-1848 | Hukumat Khan & Sher Muhammad Khan |
| 1848-1862 | Hukumat Khan |
| 1862-1876 | Muhammad Husain Khan |
| Mar. 1876-Sept. 1877 | Ghulam Muhammad Reza Khan (Afghan governor) |
| Sept. 1877-Nov. 1877 | Munshi Muhammad Husain Khan (Afghan governor) |
| Nov. 1877-Feb. 1879 | General Muhammad Akbar Khan (Afghan governor) |
| Feb. 1879-May 1879 | Muhammad Husain Khan |
| May 1879-Nov.1879 | Sardar 'Abdullah Jan Khan Nasiri (Afghan governor) |

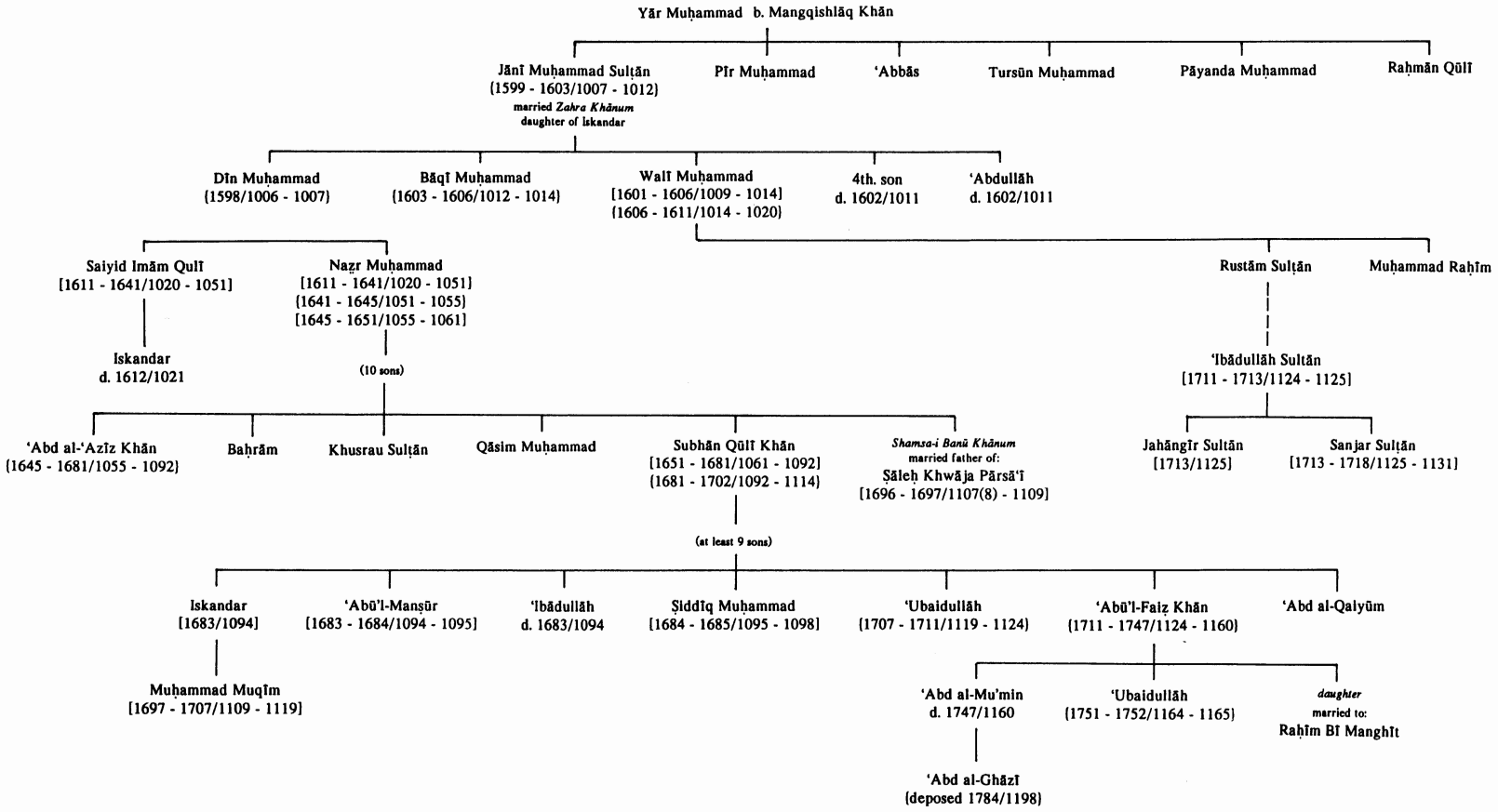
| | |
|---|---|
| Dec. 1879-Feb. 1880 | Civil war between Dilawar Khan and Mir Husain Khan |
| Feb. 1880-May 1884 | Dilawar Khan |
| 1884-1888 | Muhammad Husain Khan (with Afghan Resident) |
| [1888/9 | rebellion of Sardar Ishaq Khan; Maimana under Herat] |
| 1889-1892 | Muhammad Sharif Khan (with Afghan Resident) |

APPENDIX IV

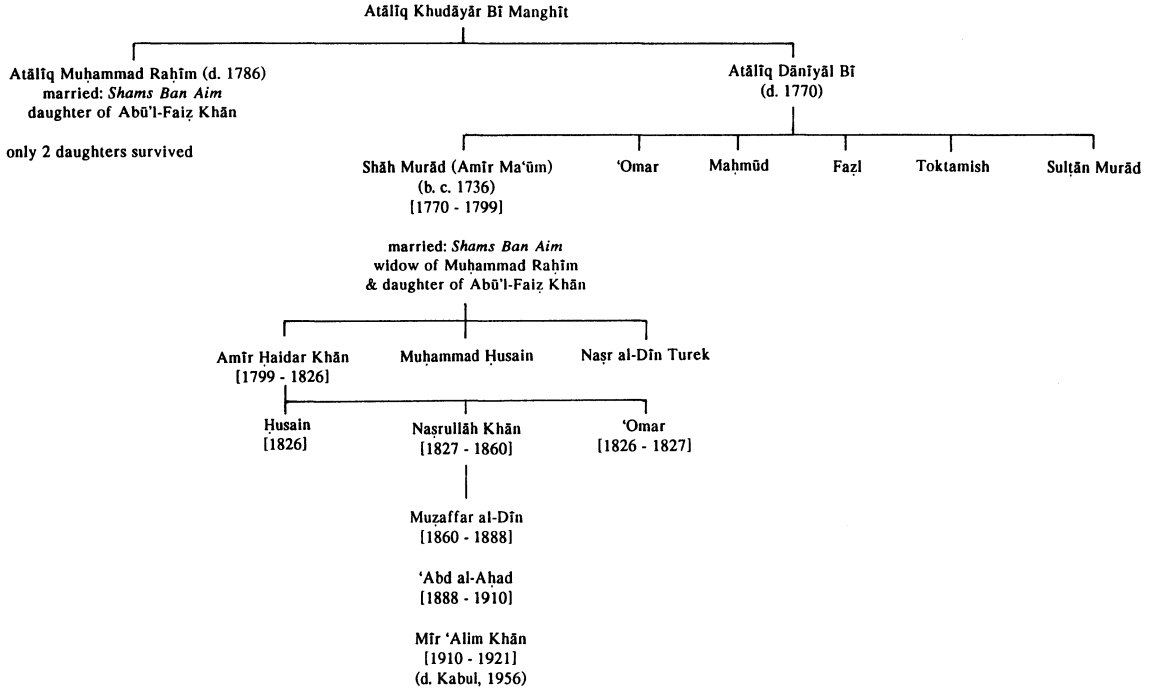
GENEALOGIES OF THE CHINGIZID AND AMIRID DYNASTIES OF BALKH

i. Tuqay-Timurids of Bukhara and Balkh (p. 616)
ii. Manghits (Haidarids) of Bukhara (p. 617)
iii. Afshars of Andkhui (p. 618)
iv. *Beglarbegi*s of Sar-i Pul (p. 619)
v. *Hakim*s of Shibarghan (p. 620)
vi. Mingids of Maimana (p. 621, 622, 623)
vii. The Gauhari *Ishan*s of Qarshi and Balkh (p. 624)
viii. Qataghanids (Qunduz and Khulm) (p. 625)

# IV, i TUQĀY-TĪMŪRIDS (ASTRAKHĀNIDS) OF BUKHĀRA AND BALKH



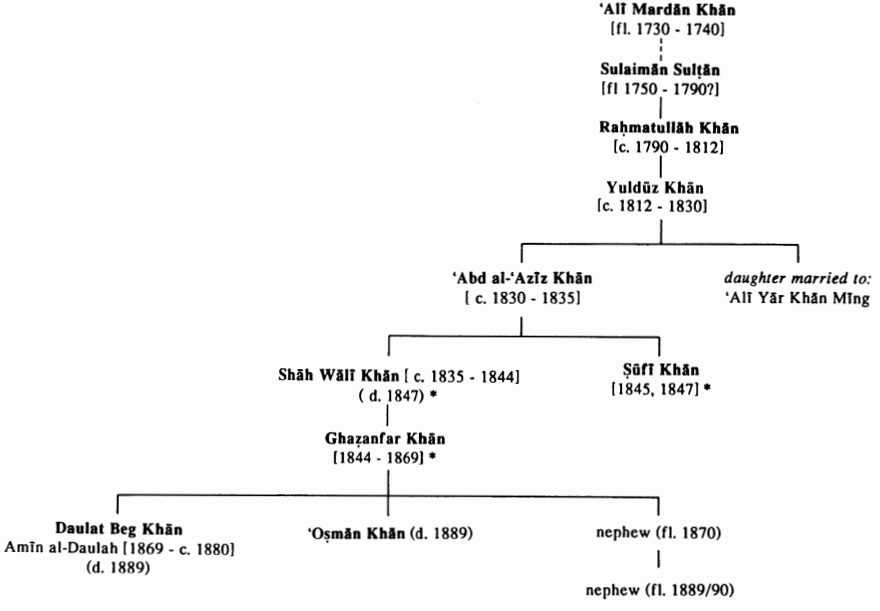
# IV, ii MANGHĪTS (ḤAIDARIDS) OF BUKHĀRA



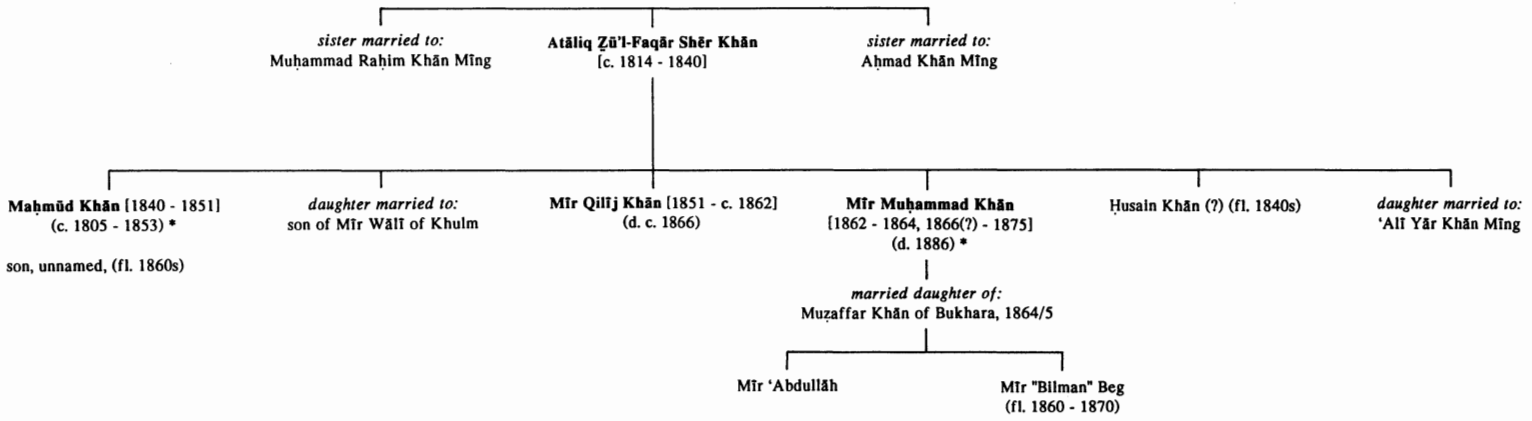
# IV, iii AFSHĀRS OF ANDKHŪĪ, c. 1730-1880

**KEY**: Appendix IV, charts iii-viii

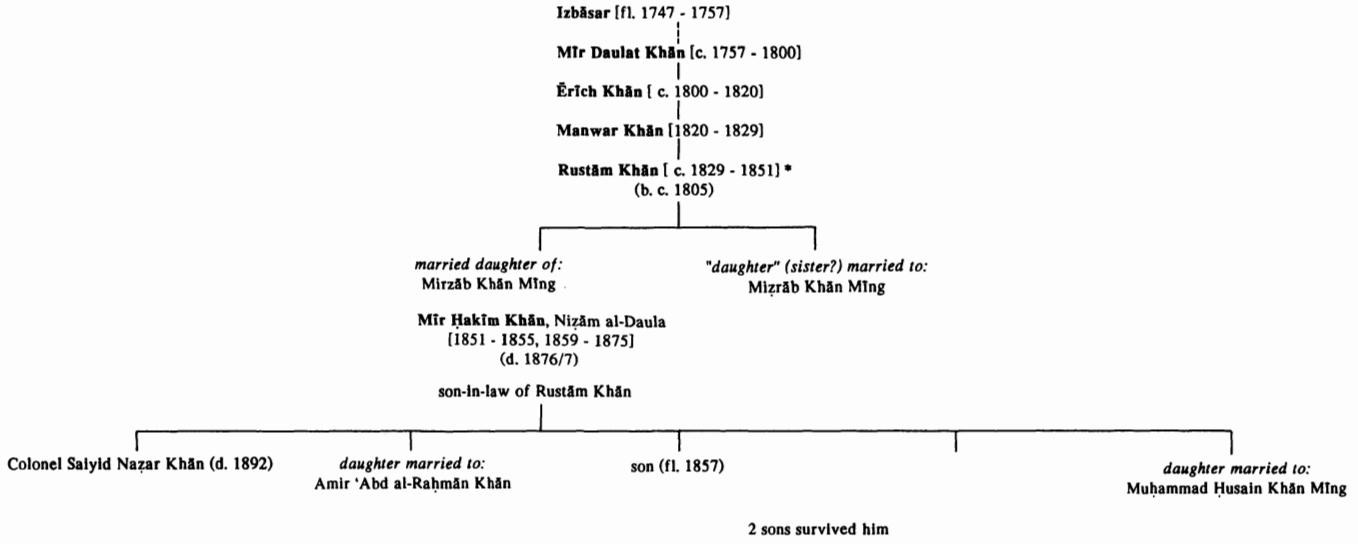
[ ] = length of reign(s)
( ) = born/died
* = executed
# = poisoned/assassinated
c. = circa
b. = born
d. = died
R. = regent
fl. = (*floruit*) flourished (followed by date)
- female members of families are indicated by italics
- rulers in bold
- dates are AD. dates: where Hijra dates are used, AD dates invariably appear first thus, AD/AH.



# IV, iv BEGLARBEGĪS OF SAR-I PUL, c. 1814-1875

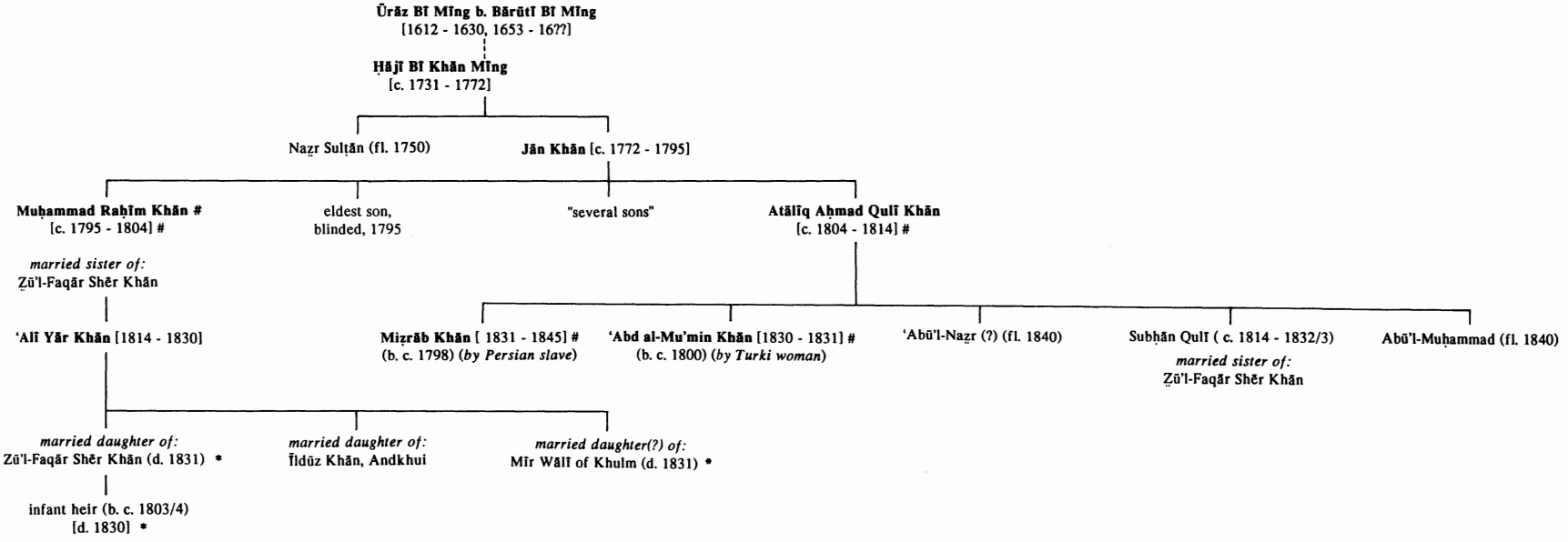


# IV, v ḤĀKIMS OF SHIBARGHAN, c. 1747-1875



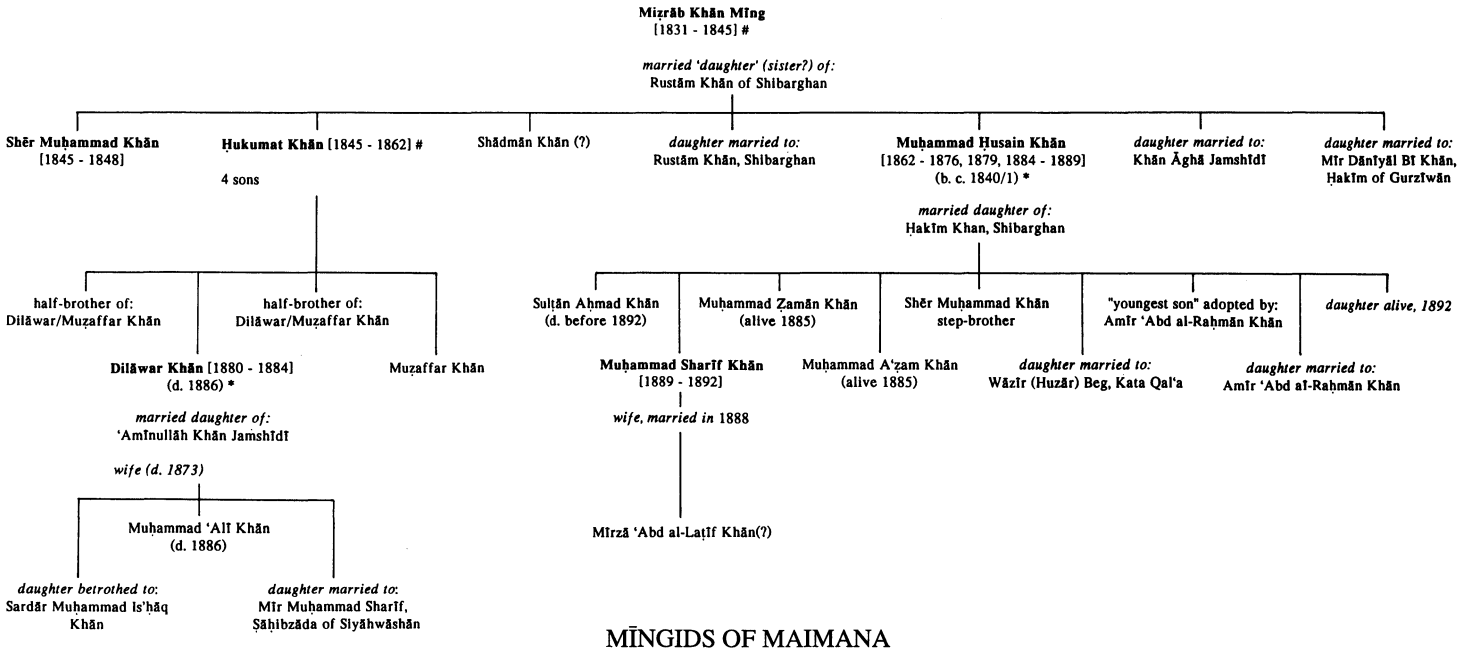
# IV, vi MĪNGIDS OF MAIMANA, c. 1731-1892

a



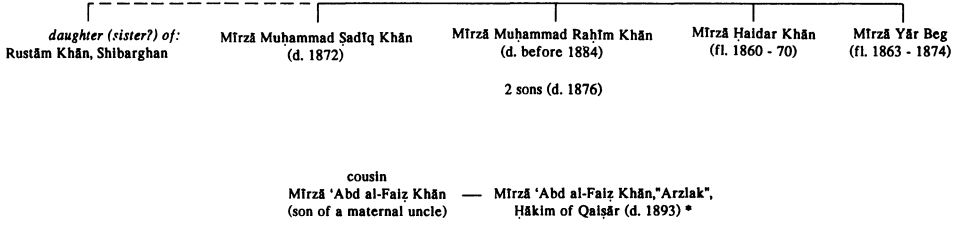
# MĪNGIDS OF MAIMANA

b

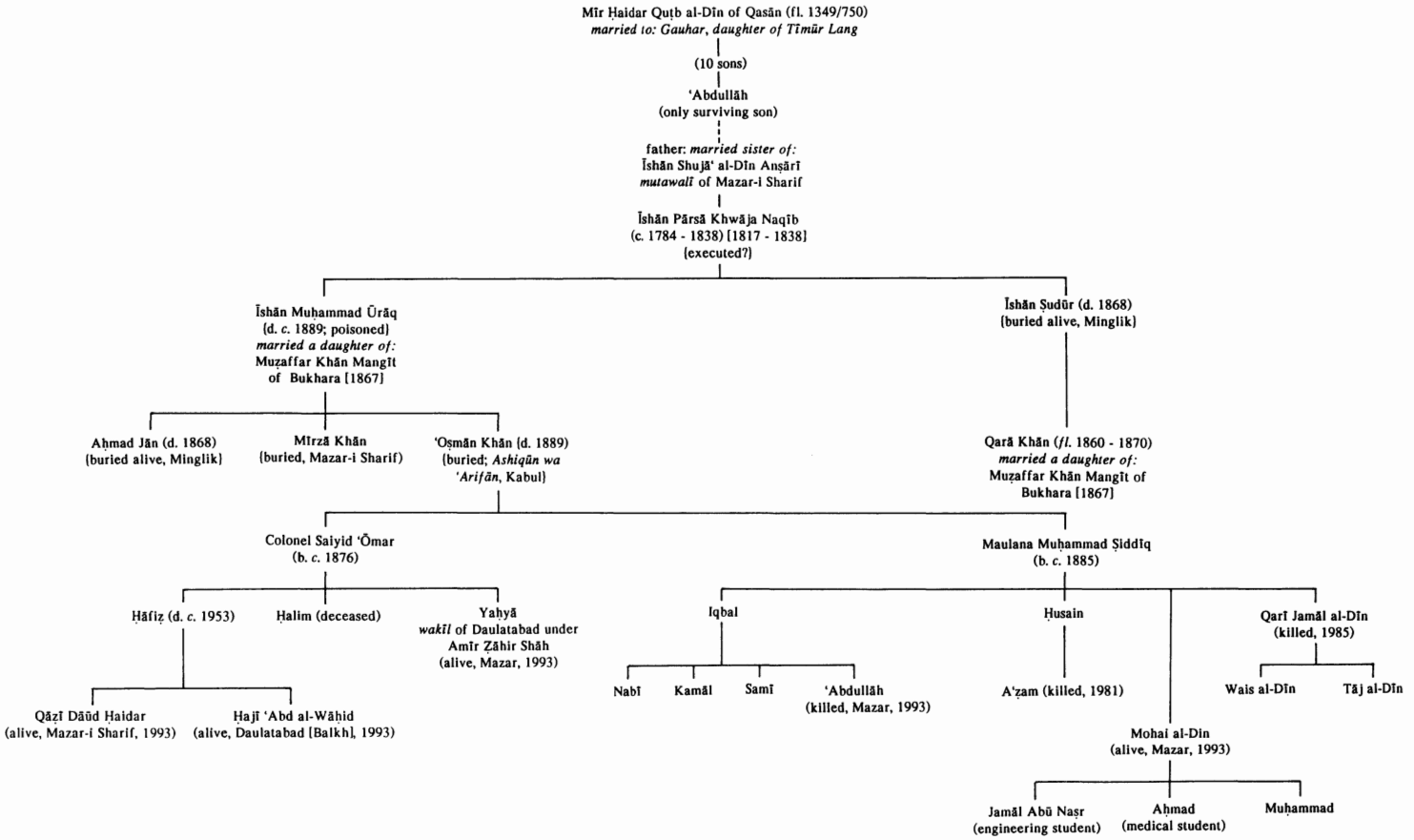



# MĪNGIDS OF MAIMANA

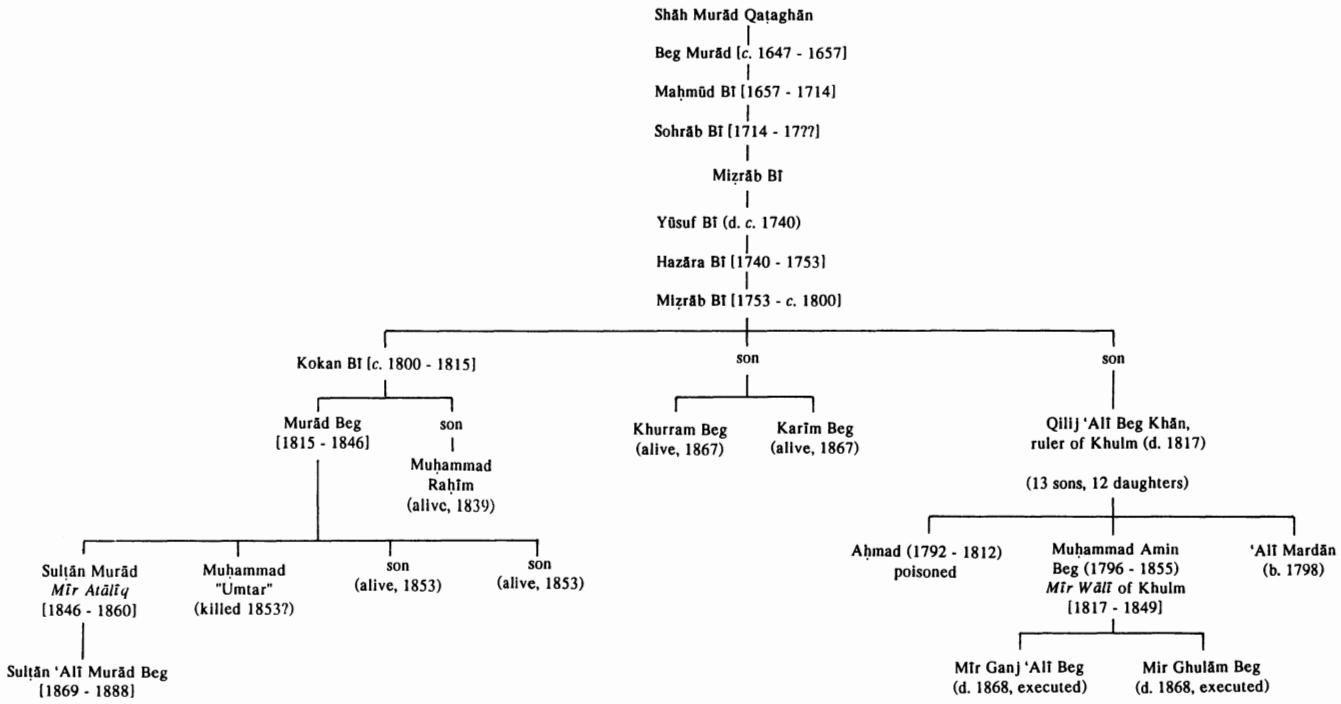
c



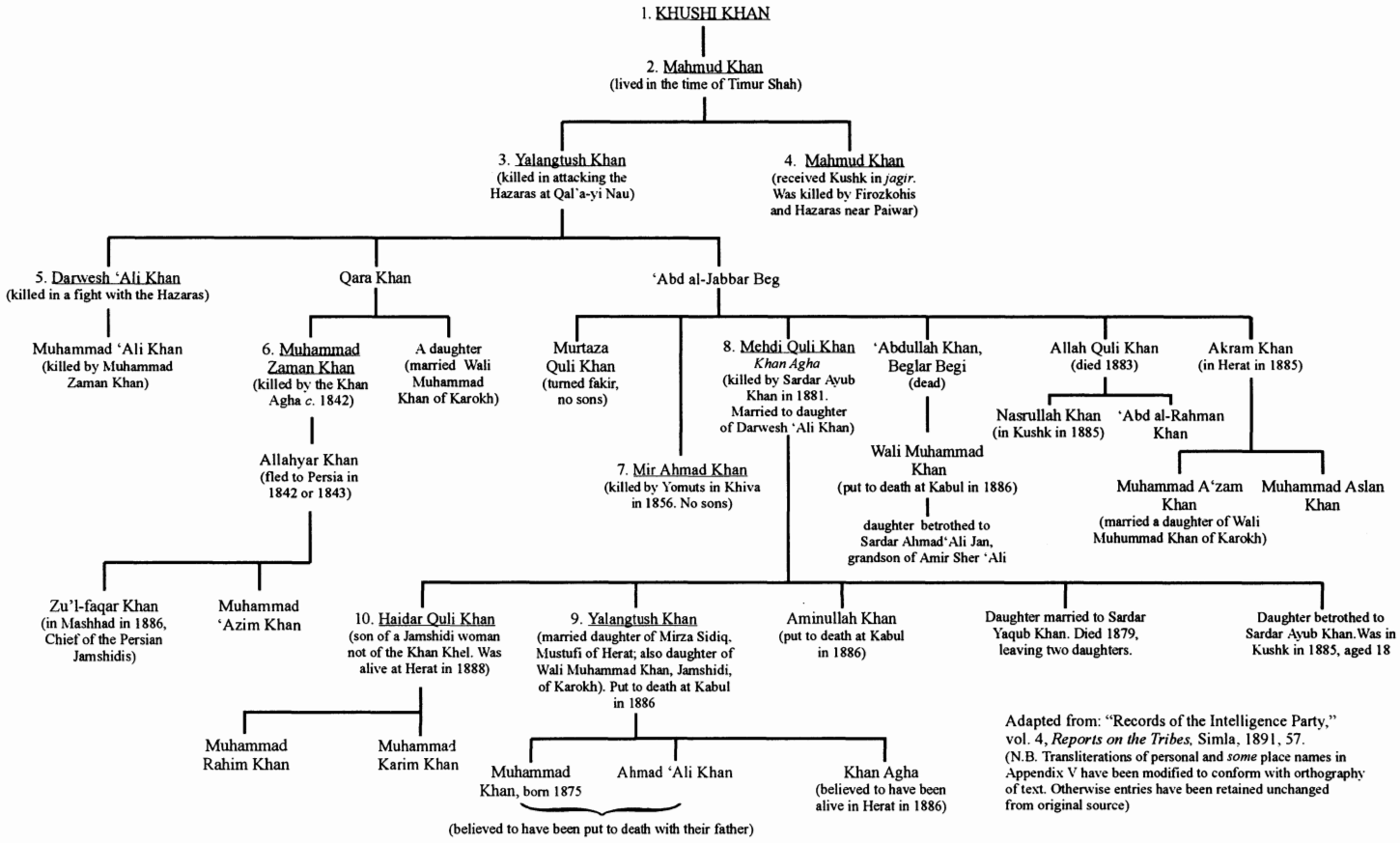
## IV, vii THE GAUHARĪ ĪSHĀNS OF QARSHĪ AND BALKH
(members of the clan are usually referred to as Saiyid...Gauharī)



# IV, viii QAṬAGHANIDS (QUNDUZ AND KHULM)

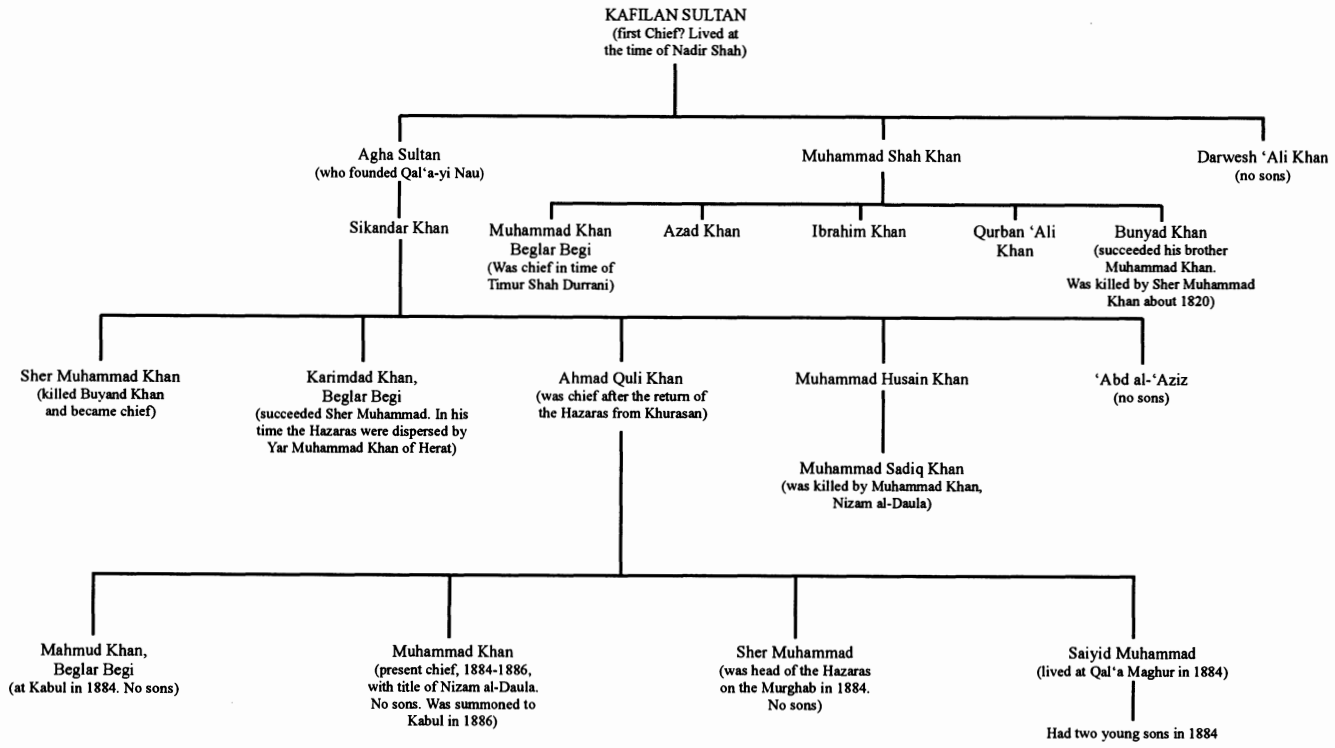


# APPENDIX V.i: GENEALOGY OF THE JAMSHIDI CHIEFS




Adapted from: "Records of the Intelligence Party," vol. 4, *Reports on the Tribes,* Simla, 1891, 57.
(N.B. Transliterations of personal and *some* place names in Appendix V have been modified to conform with orthography of text. Otherwise entries have been retained unchanged from original source)

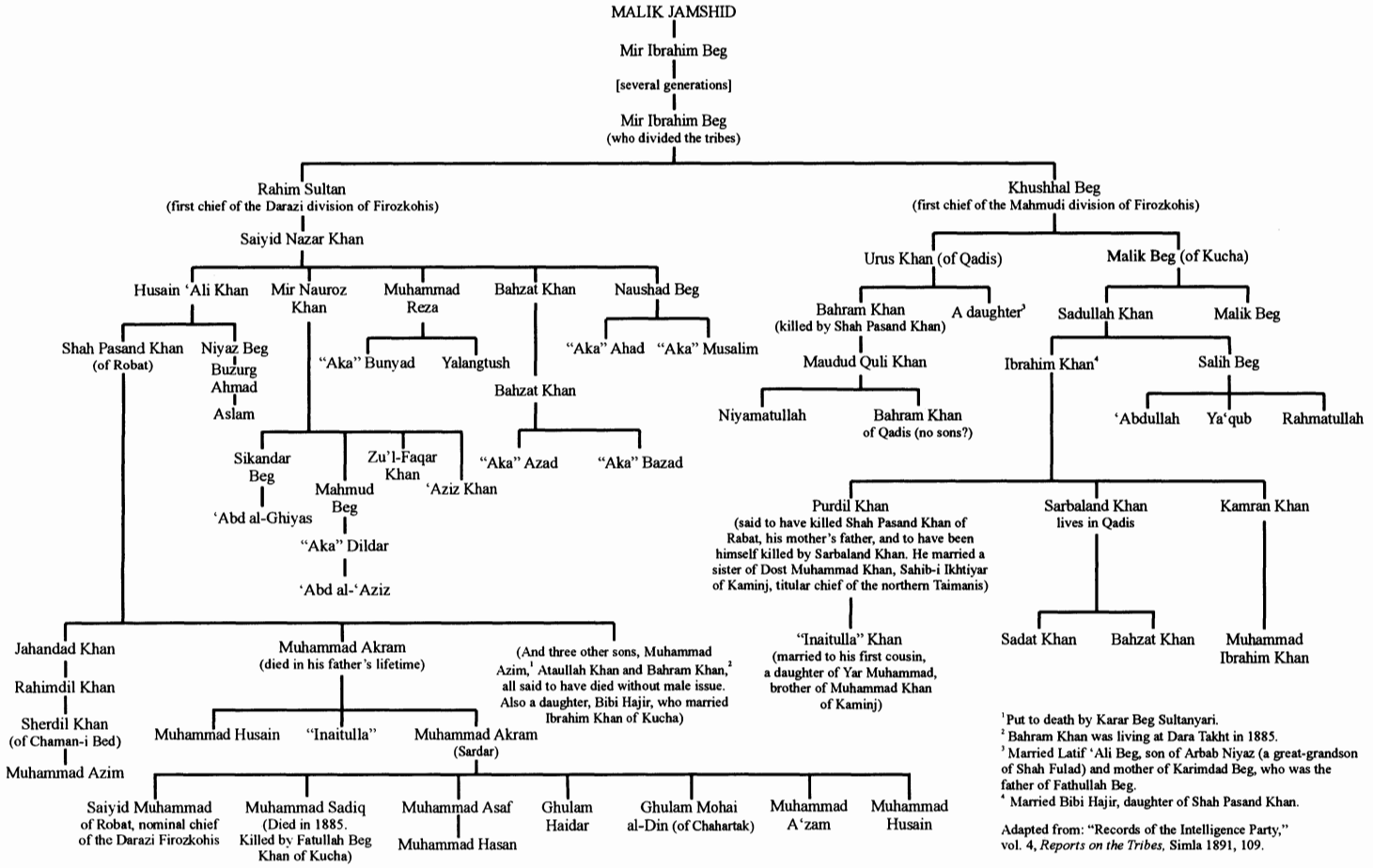
## APPENDIX V.ii: GENEALOGY Of THE QAL'A-YI NAU HAZARA CHIEFS




Adapted from: "Records of the Intelligence Party," vol. 4, *Reports on the Tribes*, Simla 1891, 87.

# APPENDIX V.iii: GENEALOGY OF THE FIROZKOHI CHIEFS

Genealogy no. 1

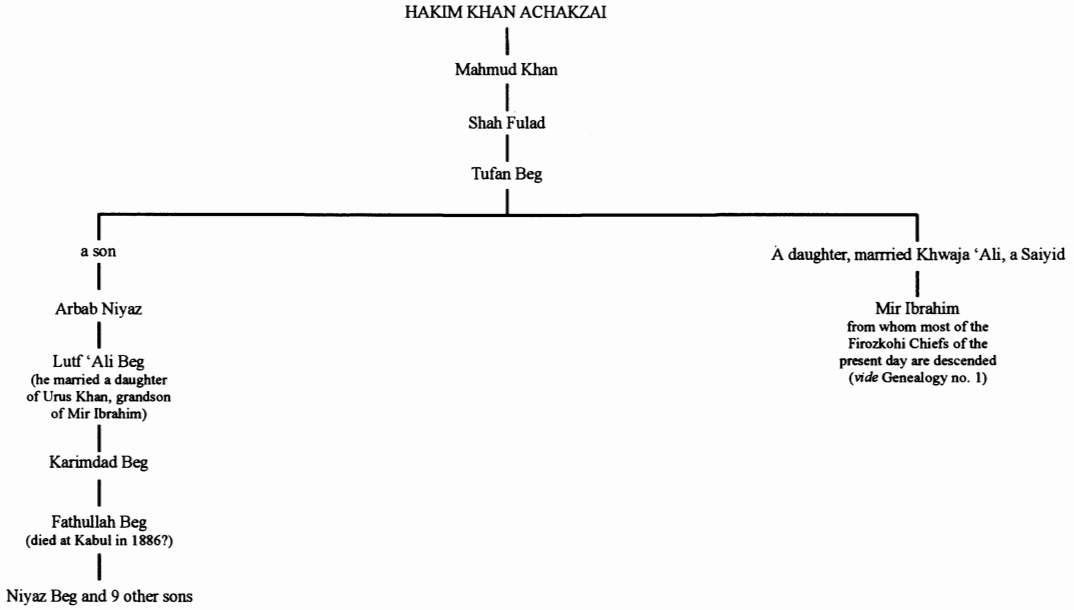



[1] Put to death by Karar Beg Sultanyari.
[2] Bahram Khan was living at Dara Takht in 1885.
[3] Married Latif 'Ali Beg, son of Arbab Niyaz (a great-grandson of Shah Fulad) and mother of Karimdad Beg, who was the father of Fathullah Beg.
[4] Married Bibi Hajir, daughter of Shah Pasand Khan.

Adapted from: "Records of the Intelligence Party," vol. 4, *Reports on the Tribes*, Simla 1891, 109.

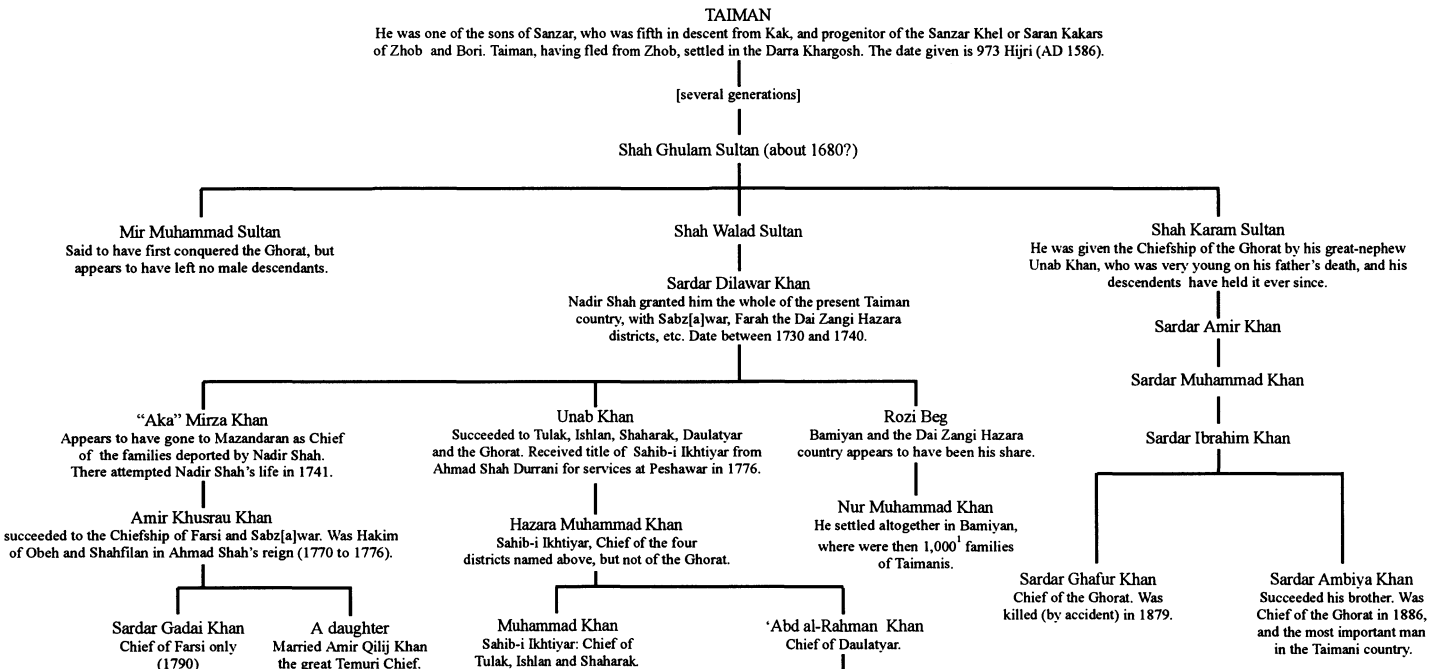
## APPENDIX V.iii: GENEALOGY OF THE FIROZKOHI CHIEFS

Genealogy no. 2




Adapted from: "Records of the Intelligence Party," vol. 4, *Reports on the Tribes*, Simla 1891, 111.

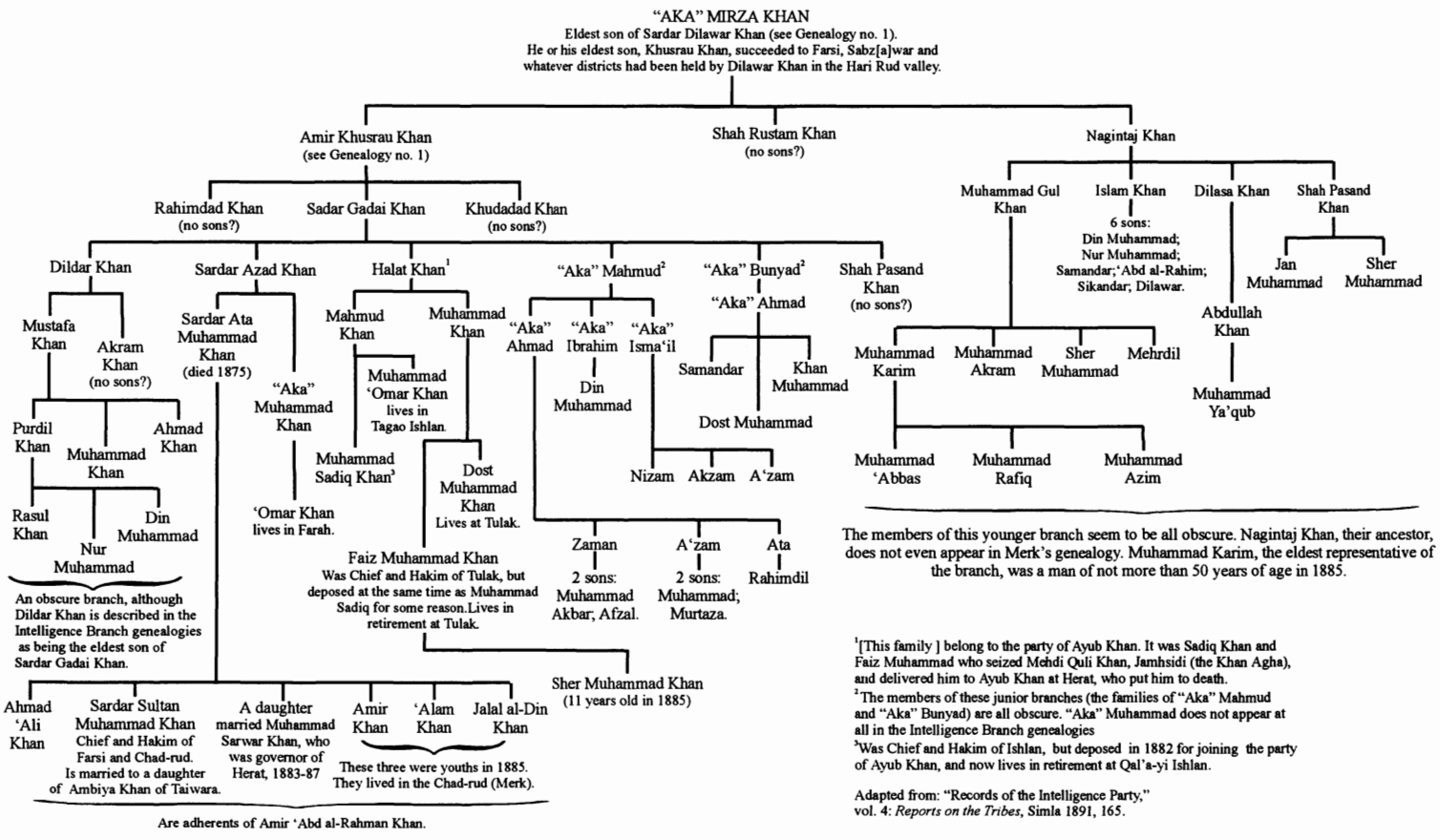
## APPENDIX V.iv: GENEALOGY OF THE TAIMANI CHIEFS
### Genealogy no. 1: General




[1]Or possibly 4,000. The original is very difficult to read at this point.

Adapted from: "Records of the Intelligence Party," vol. 4, *Reports on the Tribes*, Simla 1891, 163.

# APPENDIX V. iv: GENEALOGY OF THE TAIMANI CHIEFS
## Genealogy no. 2: The Elder (Farsi) Branch




The members of this younger branch seem to be all obscure. Nagintaj Khan, their ancestor, does not even appear in Merk's genealogy. Muhammad Karim, the eldest representative of the branch, was a man of not more than 50 years of age in 1885.

[1][This family ] belong to the party of Ayub Khan. It was Sadiq Khan and Faiz Muhammad who seized Mehdi Quli Khan, Jamhsidi (the Khan Agha), and delivered him to Ayub Khan at Herat, who put him to death.

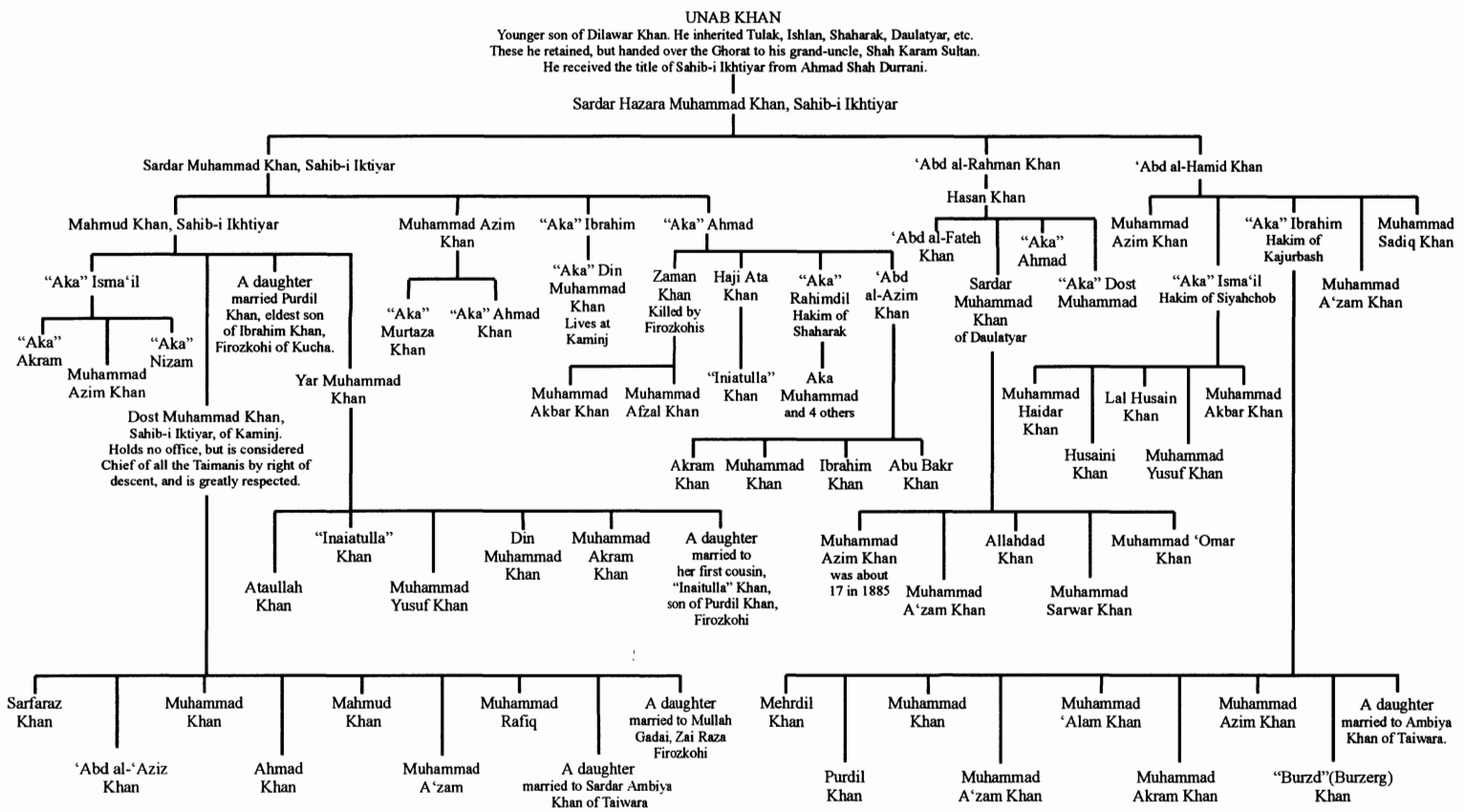
[2]The members of these junior branches (the families of "Aka" Mahmud and "Aka" Bunyad) are all obscure. "Aka" Muhammad does not appear at all in the Intelligence Branch genealogies

[3]Was Chief and Hakim of Ishlan, but deposed in 1882 for joining the party of Ayub Khan, and now lives in retirement at Qal'a-yi Ishlan.

Adapted from: "Records of the Intelligence Party," vol. 4: *Reports on the Tribes*, Simla 1891, 165.

# APPENDIX V.iv: GENEALOGY OF THE TAIMANI CHIEFS

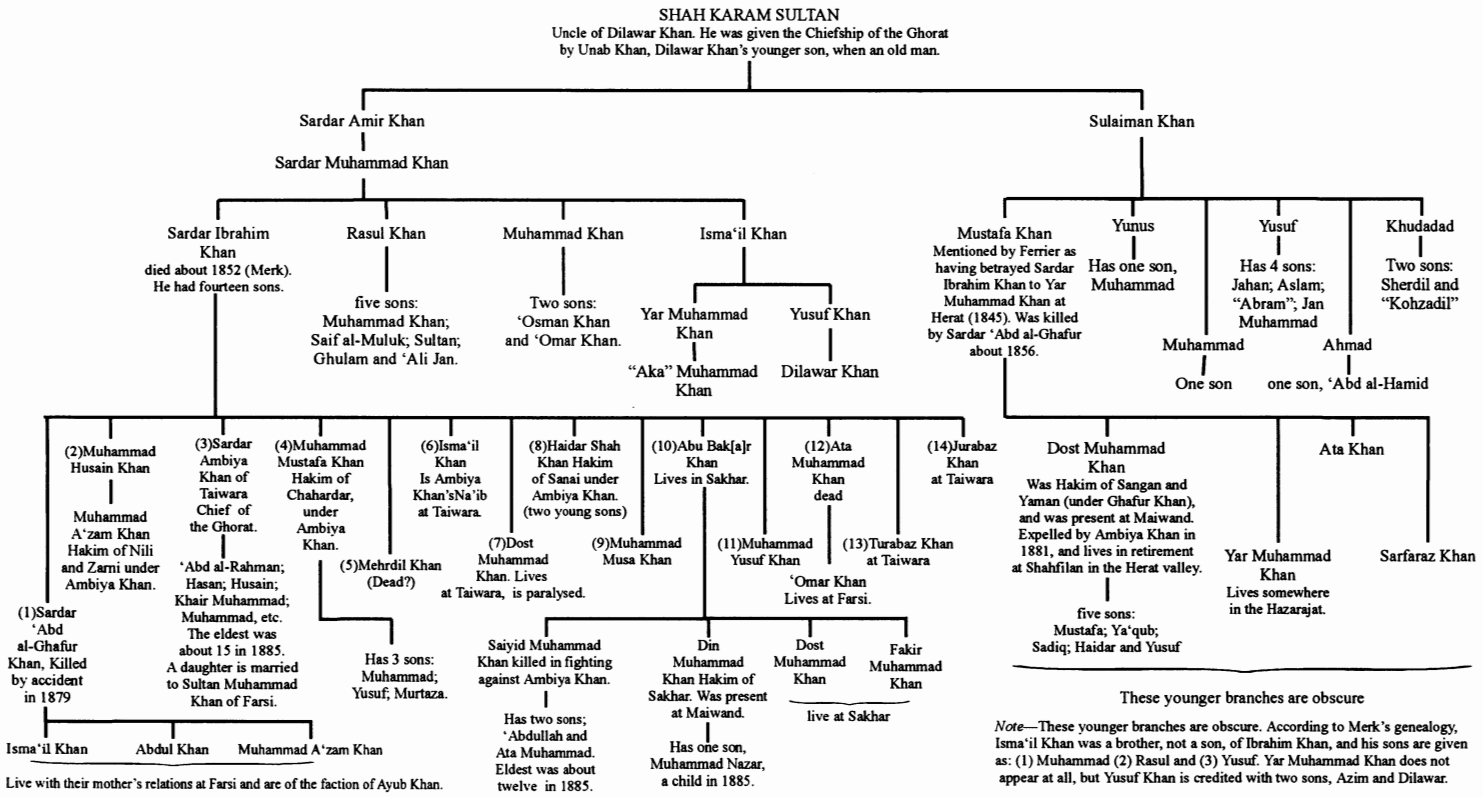
## Genealogy no. 3: The Younger (Shaharak) Branch




Adapted from: "Records of the Intelligence Party," vol. 4, Reports on the Tribes, Simla 1891, 167.

# APPENDIX V.iv: GENEALOGY OF THE TAIMANI CHIEFS

Genealogy no. 4: The Ghorat (youngest) Branch




*Note*—These younger branches are obscure. According to Merk's genealogy, Isma'il Khan was a brother, not a son, of Ibrahim Khan, and his sons are given as: (1) Muhammad (2) Rasul and (3) Yusuf. Yar Muhammad Khan does not appear at all, but Yusuf Khan is credited with two sons, Azim and Dilawar.

*Note*—Sardar 'Abd al-Ghafur Khan was the eldest son of Ibrahim Khan by a wife of the Farsi branch. He, together with Abu "Bakar" (10), and Ata Muhammad (12), belonged to the party of Ayub Khan.Their sons are still opposed to Ambiya Khan. Abu "Bakar's" family are maintained in Sakhar as a sort of counterpoise to Ambiya Khan.

*Note*—Muhammad Mustafa Khan (4), Isma'il Khan (6), and Dost Muhammad Khan (7), are full brothers of Ambiya Khan, their mother having been a relative of Samandar Khan Zuri of Nezgan. Ambiya Khan has married (a) a daughter of "Aka" Isma'il of Siyahchob; (b) a daughter of Dost Muhammad Khan, Sahib-i Ikhtiyar, of Kaminj.

Adapted from: "Records of the Intelligence Party," vol. 4: *Reports on the Tribes,* Simla 1891, 169.

APPENDIX VI

## THE DURRANI (ABDALI) AMIRS OF AFGHANISTAN, 1747-1901

| | |
|---|---|
| 1747-1773 | Ahmad Shah |
| 1775-1793 | Timur Shah |
| 1793-1800 | Zaman Shah |
| 1800-1803 | Mahmud Shah |
| 1803-1809 | Shah Shuja' al-Mulk |
| 1809-1817 | Mahmud Shah (second reign) |
| 1817-1822 | Muhammad 'Azam Khan |
| 1822-1826 | Habibullah Khan |
| 1826-1839 | Dost Muhammad Khan |
| 1839-1842 | Shah Shuja' al- Mulk |
| 1841-1842 | (Regent) Zaman Khan |
| 1842-1863 | Dost Muhammad Khan |
| 1863-1866 | Sher 'Ali Khan |
| 1866-1867 | Muhammad Afzal Khan |
| 1867-1868 | Muhammad Az'am Khan |
| 1868-1879 | Sher 'Ali Khan |
| 1879 | Ya'qub Khan |
| 1880-1901 | 'Abd al-Rahman Khan |

*Sadozai Amirs of Herat, 1817-1863*

| | |
|---|---|
| 1817-1829 | Mahmud Khan |
| 1829-1841 | Kamran Mirza |
| 1841-1851 | Wazir Yar Muhammad Khan |
| 1851-1855 | Saiyid Muhammad Khan |
| 1855 | Muhammad Yusuf Khan |
| 1855 | 'Isa Khan |
| [1856 | Persian occupation] |
| 1857-1863 | Sultan Ahmad Khan Barakzai |
| 1863 onwards | Under Kabul |

## APPENDIX VII

## AFGHAN GOVERNORS OF BALKH *c.* 1780-1895

| | |
|---|---|
| *c.* 1780-1793 | Unnamed Afghan governors |
| *fl.* 1793 | Muhammad Khan Siya Mansur |
| 1809-1817 | Sardar Najibullah Khan Surkhani |
| [1817-1837/8 | Ishan Parsa Khwaja Naqib Gauhari of Qasan] |
| [1837/8-1840 | 'Abd al-Jabbar Bi] |
| [1840-1850 | Ishan Saiyid Muhammad Uraq Gauhari] |
| 1850-1852 | Sardar Muhammad Akram Khan |
| 1852-1864 | Sardar Muhammad Afzal Khan |
| 1864-1865 | Sardar Fath Muhammad Khan |
| 1865-1867 | Sardar Faiz Muhammad Khan |
| 1867-1868 | Beglarbegi Mir Muhammad Khan of Sar-i pul |
| 1868-1876 | Sardar Na'ib Muhammad 'Alam Khan |
| 1876-1878 | Shahghasi Sherdil Loynab Khan |
| 1878-1879 | Shahghasi Khushdil Loynab Khan |
| 1879-1880 | General Ghulam Haidar Khan Wardaki |
| 1880-1888 | Sardar Muhammad Ishaq Khan |
| 1888-1890 | Amir 'Abd al-Rahman Khan (direct rule) |
| 1890-1892 | Sardar Nazr Muhammad Sarwar Khan |
| 1892-1895 | Sardar 'Abd al-'Aziz Khan |

[ ] = Ruler appointed by, and ruling in name of, the Manghits of Bukhara (names and dates in italics).

APPENDIX VIII

## AFGHAN RESIDENTS AND GOVERNORS OF MAIMANA, 1884-1892

*Afghan Political Residents*

| | |
|---|---|
| 1884-1886 | Sardar Auliya Khan Barakzai |
| 1886-1888 | Sardar 'Aziz Khan b. Shams al-Din Khan |
| 1888-1889 | Rustam 'Ali Khan (military governor) |
| 1889-1892 | General Ghaus al-Din Khan (military governor) |

*Afghan Governors*

| | |
|---|---|
| 1892-1896 | Sardar Muhammad Sarwar Khan |
| 1896-1899 | 'Abd al-Rahim Akhunzada Kohistani |
| 1899-1902 | Sardar Saleh Muhammad Khan |

## APPENDIX IX

## OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCE , THE 'TURKISTAN ATROCITIES'

*i. Translation of a letter from SAYYID DIWAN MUHAMMAD, Munshi to the British Agency at Kabul to the address of the Native Attacheé, Foreign Office, Kabul, 13 July 1889, L/P&S/7/58, fol. 145.*

[after compliments] ... I beg to say that I have received your letter, dated 3rd July 1889, saying that in some of my diaries, it is mentioned that the Turkistan prisoners are subjected to much oppression, and that they are put to death with great cruelty; thus some of them have their eyes gouged out; some are strangled and beheaded; some are buried after being cut to pieces; others bayonetted to death, &c; that therefore it is enquired whether these reports are in accordance with reports of reliable persons, or mere bazar gossip.

All those who were beheaded and put to death by being cut to pieces were so treated under the gallows which is erected at a spot opposite the Agency building and about 800 paces from it. The Agency servants used to go to witness these executions, and they have seen them with their own eyes. I have also see the same.

As regards those who were put to death by being strangled and those whose eyes were gouged out, I heard these reports from respectable persons, and I have mentioned them after making careful enquiries of reliable persons, who had personally witnessed these executions and operations.

Without ascertaining facts from three or four sources, I do not write these reports. I take all possible precaution to verify reports which seem doubtful or uncertain. I never write bazar gossip or reports given by common people, because reports of common people are, in the majority of instances, false, and only in few instances correct.

This is Afghanistan; there are such foolish and groundless reports circulated among the common people and in the bazars, that they are beyond one's imagination and sober thoughts.

It would be wrong to write bazar gossip, because it is not reliable. Whatever news is received from respectable men, is further tested, and is then communicated.

ii. *Colonel R. Warburton, Political Officer in the Khyber, to Sir H.M. Durand, K.C.I.E, C.S.I.*, 21st July 1889 (Confidential), L/P&S/7/58, fols145-147

I have received your letter of the 17th July, and hasten to reply to it at once. For a very long time news has reached me at frequent intervals of the executions carried out by Amir Abdur Rahman Khan both at Kabul as well as Herat, but these circumstances I never entered in my diary, as there was no good to be gained in mentioning such matters in a document that had to pass through so many hands and become known to so many people. It is an open secret that, after our Afghan Boundary Commission returned from Kabul to India and Kazi Sad-ud-Din got back to Herat, all the people who had come to our officers whilst in that province, or who had shown any attention to, or received any favours from, our people, were all swept out of the way. The murder of Yalantush Khan, the Jamshedi Chief, and his brother Aminulla Khan, who were secured on a slight excuse, hurried to Kabul and slain there, was a very bad case indeed, since these men suffered for having stood by Yate and his party at Panjdeh, when the Afghan soldiery were routed by the Russians, and conducted their charge in safety towards Killa-iMaur.

The executions carried out by the Amir in former years, numerous and bad enough as they were, were conducted with a certain amount of secrecy and desire to put a shadow over these matters. Only the worst and most dangerous characters were put to death publicly, whilst the others were secretly despatched, and reports circulated that they had died in prison. The public knew what had really occurred, and made no further comments on them. But ever since the revolt of Sardar Muhammad Ishak Khan, and the arrival of Abdur Rahman Khan in Afghan Turkistan, affairs have changed, and the prisoners are now sent out of this world in such numbers, and with such publicly brutal measures, that the news could hardly be credited, were it not told by men who were eye-witnesses of the scenes they were relating,

and who were in no way biassed (*sic*) by any enmity against the Amir, or friendship for Ishak Khan or the sufferers, in spreading mischievous reports against the ruler of Afghanistan.

When the Amir arrived at Mazar-i-Sharif, he managed in time to secure a list of the names of those chiefs, maliks, officers and soldiers of his Turkistan army, who had salaamed to Sardar Muhammad Ishak Khan, joined their fortunes with his, and had fought against Ghulam Hyder Khan, Orakzai. Those who could escape across the Oxus did so, but a large number could not, and they remained behind at their homes, trusting that in the crowd they might escape observation. A box was also discovered in Sardar Muhammad Ishak Khan's house at Mazar-i-Sharif, which disclosed the names and agreements made by a large number of Chiefs, who had promised to support Ishak Khan, and letters which incriminated others. In Afghanistan, he who is in correspondence with any opponent or enemy of the Amir knows what his fate will be, if he is captured by any of the Afghan officials and brought before their master. Captives and prisoners were made on all sides, and large numbers of men were put to death in Mazar-i Sharif, and no one was to be spared whose name figured in the above list.

Lately the Turkistan prisoners have been despatched in large batches to Kabul, gangs of them arriving there twice or three times a week. Sardar Habibulla Khan being too fond of releasing prisoners, has been directed by the Amir not to interfere with these for the future, and the punishment has been entrusted to the hands of Parwana Khan and Mir Sultan Naib of the Kabul Kotwali. There are several ways in vogue at Kabul of getting rid of these captives:-

(i) Certain men are led out at night, and their throats cut at the graveyard name "Jubba" below the Bala Hissar, and their bodies buried in that cemetery.

(ii) Another batch are treated in the same way within the Bala Hissar, but their bodies are thrown into the Siah-Chah within that fortress.

(iii) Others are interred alive in a second well also called Siah-Chah and inside the Bala Hissar, and there left to perish from hunger.

(iv) Certain men are hanged at night on gallows erected near Siah-Sang.

(v) Those that are blown away from guns, meet their death on the Chaman, two hundred paces from the Peshawar Gate of Kabul City.

(vi) Others who are ordered to be hanged during the day, are executed on the gallows erected close to the Amir's stables, facing Mahalla Murad Khani in the Kizilbash quarter.
(viii) The soldiery, who had saluted Ishak Khan, and were brought down captives to Kabul, were suspended alive by their feet in batches near the gallows facing Murad Khani and hacked to pieces by swords.
(viii) A gang of 120 Mujawars of the Ziarat at Mazar-i-Sharif had prayed that Ishak Khan might become Amir of Afghanistan. These were all secured and sent down to Kabul. These unfortunates were taken out in parties of 25 at a time, placed between two planks which were tied with ropes at either end, and then divided in two by a saw. This scene was also carried out at the spot mentioned in VI and VII.

The events noted in VII and VIII were usually carried out at 8 A.M. in the morning, in the presence of thousands of residents of Kabul, and of the hamlets outside, who cared to come and witness the dreadful spectacle. There was no attempt made to keep these executions secret, or to debar people from coming and becoming spectators. A man who is now in my verandah witnessed these scenes for the 25 days he was at Kabul, except that the unfortunate Mujawirs (sic) were finished off in five days. Five others from this locality, who were also in Kabul, testify to the same. But these facts are substantiated by numbers of people who have come down from Kabul from various places and with different kafilas. All testify to the reign of terror which the present Amir has been enacting with such open barbarity at that city. Subtracting even to the utmost on account of exaggerations, there remains enough to horrify most people as to what is going on now and has been carried out at Kabul for some time past.

P.S. The executions mentioned in I, II, III, of course no one knows about, as they are not public exhibitions.

iii. *Memorandum on the disposal of the Turkistan Prisoners by the Amir*, C. L. Griesbach, 13th August 1889, L/P&S/58, fols 147-149.

The first batch of rebel prisoners, which reached Kabul after the outbreak of the revolution in Turkistan last year, consisted of the men who were taken at Shashburja in the Karmard valley. Amongst them were Najm-ud-Din Khan (the father-in-law of Ishak Khan), Dilawar Khan (Chief of Doab-i-Shah Pasand), and several others, besides a number of Khassadars. The principal prisoners were all cruelly tortured in Kabul to extort confessions. They seemed to have little to

reveal, however, and their properties were for the time beyond the Amir's reach. The two persons named, with a few others, were then sentenced to be publicly starved to death, and wooden cages suspended from high flagstaffs, were erected for them on the Chaman opposite the British Agent's house. After these arrangements were repeatedly blown down by successive storms, the Amir altered their sentence into one of hanging, which was carried out, excepting with regard to Dilawar Khan. This man, after having been carried along as a prisoner during our march over the Hindu Kush in the autumn of 1888, was speared to death at Doab-i-Mekhzari-17th. November.

The next batch of prisoners from Turkistan reached the Amir's camp at Charikar on the 28th October of last year. They consisted of some 250 men and officers, and, amongst the latter, some civilians, hakims and others. They were immediately disposed of by the Amir. Two were there and then blown from guns; one had his nose cut off; 50 were ordered to be hanged in Kabul, and the rest to be kept in chains during the Amir's pleasure.

When the Amir reached Mazar-i-Sharif (26th December 1888), the officers and havildars of the rebel army, who were up to then under surveillance in Takhtapul, were at once put into irons and divided amongst the officials and body servants of the Amir, whose duties are to keep and examine prisoners.

Those amongst the prisoners who were suspected of possessing property fared the worst. They were nightly tortured, often in the most inhuman and fiendish manner.

The Amir mentioned to me on several occasions that the total number of men, who would have to be put to death for participation in Ishak's rebellion, would not exceed a thousand; that is, about 450 officers of regiments, and the remainder either civil officers, who allowed themselves to be taken, or villagers, who had assisted Ishak with supplies or money.

Eventually, I believe that number was somewhat increased by various men, against whom charges were found of being in debt to the former Government of Amir Sher Ali Khan. Many of those, who could not pay up, were detained in prison, and even tortured, but I do not believe any of them were executed.

Some 80 or 100 men were killed in Mazar-i-Sharif during the last winter and spring to my certain knowledge, but stories reached me of many more men who were secretly put to death, as is the general custom in Afghanistan.

The Amir intended that other places should share in the benefits of the deterrent examples afforded by such spectacles, and accordingly some few prisoners were sent to Tashkurghan and Khanabad to be executed in those cities.

Amongst the executions carried out in Mazar were some of specially atrocious nature.

I have seen four men on two occasions lashed to posts outside the Amir's Palace, where, exposed to the severest frosts and snowstorms, they were left to die by slow degrees. One of these men lived in this manner more than four days, and his tortures would not have ended even then, if a man on sentry duty had not taken pity on him and strangled him.

Another rebel prisoner was tied to a gate-post close to the Darbar, and whilst a withering snowstorm was raging, was being dashed with buckets full of water. He died in a few hours.

The most frightful scenes could always be seen in the Farashbashi's place, close to the Darbar. On one occasion seven men were nailed to the wall at that place; all the unfortunates were disembowelled.

On another occasion I noticed a number of naked men pegged down to the ground in the Farashbashi's enclosure; that functionary, with his assistants, was busy sprinkling the poor fellows with boiling oil by means of a broom dipped into the boiling liquid which stood in a large cauldron over a fire close by. Of course all these men must have died.

Amongst the cases which came to my special notice is that of the unfortunate family who formerly owned the house which I occupied in Mazar. The family consisted of an old man, his two sons, and nephew, with their haramserais. One of the sons had fled with Ishak to Bokhara, but the rest were all taken prisoners. The Amir ordered the old man's mouth to be cut open, which was done in Durbar: the victim died in a couple of hours. The remaining son and nephew, after being tortured, were sent to Kabul to be executed there. Several of their women were frightfully tortured to extract from them confessions as to property. One of them, a young girl of 15 years of age, was tortured for five days until her ankle and legs were completely crushed. What happened to them later on I do not know.

Finally, the Amir decided to send the remaining prisoners to Kabul. It is said that he was warned that a great misfortune would befall him, if he continued his executions near the sacred tomb of Ali.

The prisoners were forwarded in relays of from 2 to 300 at a time, being chained together by their necks in gangs of 20. When I left Mazar-i-Sharif on the 22 June of this year, most of the officers and havildars of Ishak's army had been forwarded to Kabul.

But there remained still a large number of Khawanins, Khassadars and rebellious villagers in confinement, all of whom, I was told, would have to march to Kabul.

The women and children, many hundreds of them, belonging to these prisoners, have also been sent to Kabul within the last few months. I was told they were to be kept in prison till bailed out in heavy sums by their friends.

There are already thousands of such unfortunate women in the various prisons in Kabul, all of whom have to undergo the most atrocious treatment possible to imagine.

When passing through Kabul I found that large numbers of prisoners had already been killed off there by the Amir's orders, and that the rest were to follow.

I understand that every day some 30 men were executed. Two were blown from guns, four were suspended from the gallows by their feet, and then gradually cut to pieces, and the rest were killed in the usual manner in the Bala Hissar by cutting their throats.

Thursdays and Fridays no executions take place.

The process of cutting to pieces of prisoners is performed on the drill ground overlooked by the windows of the British Agent's house in the Murad Khani, now occupied by Colonel Ata-ulla Khan's Persian Munshi and his party.

Some few rebel officers have been killed in Kabul lately by a still more fiendish process. One amongst them, a Colonel of one of Ishak's regiments, was disembowelled in front of the ark, and he remained alive in this dreadful condition for more than three days, conscious to the last.

I have not been a witness to these recent Kabul executions, and, in fact, during my last stay there of four days, no executions took place. But both the party living at the British Agency and other trustworthy informants vouch for the accuracy of these statements.

The Afghan Agent at Simla, General Amir Ahmed Khan, estimates the number of men recently executed at Kabul at about 4 to 500.

iv. *His Excellency the Viceroy and Governor-General of India to His Highness the Amir of Afghanistan and its Dependencies,* Simla, 10th. September 1889, L/P&S/5/58, fols 149-151 [extract only].

My Honoured and Valued Friend
There is a matter in regard to which I feel constrained to address you without loss of time. The relations between the Government of Her Majesty and Your Highness render it necessary that mutual confidence should prevail between Your Highness and the Representative of Her Majesty in India, and that I should give you timely advice with regard to any occurrences which might have the effect of diminishing my power of being of use to Your Highness.

The matter of which I speak is this. During the past spring the Russian Press contained frequent references to the severity with which Your Highness was punishing those of your subjects who had taken up arms against you under Sardar Ishak Khan. Not only was this the case, but the Russian officials on the frontier sent home to their Government alarming telegrams on the subject, and the matter was brought to the notice of the British Ambassador at St. Petersburg. I did not address Your Highness at the time, as I hoped that after Your Highness had made a few examples, and felt the stability of your rule was restored, you would be disposed to deal more mercifully with these misguided men. In this hope, however, I have been disappointed; for during the past few months I have continued to receive reports from many quarters that great cruelties have been perpetrated upon your subjects, if not by your orders, by those of persons professing to act as your agents, and so regarded by the public. In some cases offenders have been, it is said, put to death by slow torments, under which they have lingered for many days before death ended their sufferings. In other cases prisoners have, I am told,. been confined or sent from one part of Your Highness' dominions to another, under conditions which caused many of them to succumb to the rigour of their treatment. It has recently been stated that, in one instance, a large number of captives, imprisoned in Kabul, who were believed to be meditating an attempt to escape from prison, had their eyes put out. This is alleged to have been done under orders from Your Highnesss' son, Sardar Habibulla Khan, to whom you had entrusted the administration of affairs at Kabul during your absence.

I wish to point out to Your Highness that such actions as these are calculated to produce a bad impression, not only upon the

Government of India, but upon the Government and people of England. These practices are abhorrent to the ideas of civilized nations. They have long been abandoned by the great Powers of Europe, and it would be regarded as a just reproach to England, could it be said that she supported actively and encouraged by her good-will and practical assistance a Ruler by whom such things were habitually done.

Already the reports of these occurrences have reached the ears of the Government of the Queen, and inquiries have been addressed to me in regard to them. I trust Your Highness will be able to assure me that the statements of which I have spoken have been exaggerated, or that, if some of your subordinates have been guilty of such conduct, you will discourage it in future.

Your Highness will not misunderstand me in regard to this matter. I am well aware that it may be necessary for the Ruler of Afghanistan to be, at times, severe, as well as just, and I am ready to admit that we should not measure events occurring in Afghanistan by the standards which prevail in countries more advances than that of which Your Highness is the chief. Again, I can well understand that, after the recent revolt in Turkistan, it should have been necessary to punish in an exemplary manner those who were implicated in it. But this could have been done without barbarities as shocking to contemplate as those about which I am writing.

It is necessary that Your Highness should be extremely careful to do nothing which might alienate from you the good-will of the British people, or which might enable those who are ill-disposed to Your Highness to say that your conduct was such as to render you unworthy of the friendship of a humane and enlightened Nation....

v *Translation of a letter from His Highness the Amir of Afghanistan and its Dependencies to the address of His Excellency the Viceroy*, 4th Safar 1703 (30th. September 1889, L/P&S/7/58 fols 511-514 [extract only].

... When I reached Turkistan, I considered it necessary to punish those men who had been implicated in this affair [i.e. Ishaq Khan's rebellion] and who deserved punishment, because it is highly necessary for a Government to mete out timely punishment. This is particularly so in the dominions of Afghanistan.

During the reign of Peter the Great who introduced a new form of Government, were not lakhs of people put to death, and launched into oblivion (literally, placed their feet from the circle of existence into

the land of oblivion), so that the state of order of the territories and troops of the said power has reached such a degree that the whole world is trembling before their awful strength and grandeur? The high officials of the Russian Government should call to minds the times of their former Emperors, during whose mismanagement uproar and mischief were in existence; and have they now forgotten the mischief and disturbances of those times that they find fault with me? My work is like that of old times, and so I am reducing the disorderly people to a state of new order. If I were to treat lightly the evil which is created by mischievous people in Afghanistan, and were not to call them to account, how is it possible for the country to be reduced to a state of order? This finding fault with me (literally, this finger of objection), which interested people are doing or have done is out of place. I now explain the real cause in a thorough manner. All the pains taken during the past nine years to secure friends for themselves, and thus to clear the road, have been lost to the Afghan people.

The mischievous breaches I have efficiently closed up, and at the outset of their designs and thoughts, I have raised a new wall and a strong barrier. They must therefore give rise to, and spread, alarming reports. What they have said or will say is owing to the pain they feel in their hearts, but I cannot help introducing good administration in my territory. There is no necessity for Your Excellency being disappointed in the matter.

As regard those whom I have expelled from this place and whom I sent to other directions, I have considered their deportation from the frontier, as contributing to the welfare of my Government and country; because if they had remained here they would not have refrained for a moment from sending news to the Russian Government and to those persons, who having perpetrated severe crimes have fled and taken refuge in Russian territory; and they would have kept sending information to them. On this account I have sent them away from the frontier; and the chief official and the troops, whom I shall place on the frontier, will, by the help of God, be no source of anxiety. Those who were blinded have not been made so without cause. In addition to their rebellion they have perpetrated other improper deeds, for which it was necessary to punish them in this manner; the object of putting out their eyes was to convey a lesson to the evil minded people of Afghanistan ....

... I beg to say, firstly, that my proceedings will be approved by the European Powers, at a time when I should become a double tongued

and double faced person. What concern have I with the people of Europe, whether they speak evil or good of me so long as I entertain perpetual friendship with the Illustrious British Government with whom I have entered into an engagement of friendship and unity? Secondly,—at the time when the tribesmen of Afghanistan wrote and sent to me letter at Khanabad, requesting me to come, and before I had entered Kabul, they had struck the rupee coin in my name as Amir, at Charikar, and the good people of Afghanistan wished me for their Ruler and King....

... I am personally unable to consent to anything which is distasteful to the people of Afghanistan.... I have alone borne, up to this day, the burden of friendship, and have made the lives of the servants and good people of Afghanistan a shield to the arrows of calamity of an enemy like the Russian Government, and I have been daily keeping the Afghan people ready for what I have intimated. Therefore in such times it is not necessary to listen to false rumours and lying informers, because the informers of the Russian Government want to again create bad feeling between the British Government and the people of Afghanistan; but so far as my endeavours go, God willing, they shall not be able to do so. But I expect the high officials of the Illustrious British Government not to listen to the writing of interested people. May the remaining days of Your Excellency's honour and glory continue permanent!

APPENDIX X

KEY TO FOOOTNOTED RECORDS IN THE INDIA OFFICE LIBRARY

*i Annual and Departmental Files, Collections and Series*

| | |
|---|---|
| BSP | *Bengal Secret Proceedings* |
| CPC | *Calendar of Persian Correspondence* |
| ESL | *Enclosures and Secret Letters from India* (L/P&S/5) |
| HC | *Home Correspondence* (L/P&S/3) |
| H. Misc. | *Home Miscellaneous* |
| P | *Proceedings Series* |
| P:BSC | *Proceedings: Bengal Secret Consultations* |
| P:IFPC | *Proceedings: India, Foreign & Political Consultations* |
| P&S | *Political and Secret Department Annual Files and Records* (L/P&S series) |
| MEIR | *Miscellaneous East India Company Records* (L/P&S/19) [e.g. MEIR:A/17] |
| MIL | *Military Department Records* (L/MIL/17 mainly) |
| MSS Eur. | *European Manuscripts* |
| PSDL | *Political & Secret Department Library* (L/P&S/20) [e. g. PSDL:A/27C] |
| PSM | *Political and Secret Memoranda* (L/P&S/18) |
| SLEI | *Secret Letters and Enclosures from India* (L/P&S/7) |
| SLEP | *Secret Letters and Enclosures from Persia* (L/P&S/9) |
| V | *Official Publications* |
| W, X | *Map Collections* |
| [black]/[red] | refers to the coloured tags found in early volumes of L/P&S/5 and L/P&S/7 series.<br>[black]: Dispatches from the Governor-General<br>[red]: Dispatches from The President in Council |

*ii Key to abbreviations of news letters, etc. in Political and Secret Department Files(alphebetically, by country/region).*

AFGHANISTAN

Kabul

| | |
|---|---|
| *ACI* | *Abstract of Cabul Intelligence* |
| *ACN* | *Abstract of the Cabul News(-letter)* |
| *ACNC* | *Abstract contents of (a) News(-letter) from Cabul* |
| *ADCV* | *Abstract from Diary of the Cabo(u)l Vakeel* |
| *ANC* | *Abstract of (a) News(-letter) from Cabul* |
| *ATCN* | *Abstract Translation of the Cabo(u)l News(-letter)* |
| *ATNC* | *Abstract Translation of (a) News(-letter) from Cabul* |
| *CD* | *Cabul Diary (for latter part of century see, KD)* |
| *CI* | *Cabul Intelligence* |
| *CMD* | *Cabul Moonshee Diary* |
| *CN* | *Cabul News(-letter)* |
| *CNP* | *Cabul News received at Peshawar* |
| *CVD* | *Cabul Vakeel's Diary* |
| *DBEK* | *Diary of the British Embassy, Kabul* |
| *DCV* | *Diary of the Cabo(u)l Vakil* |
| *DKA* | *Diary of the Kabul Agent* |
| *ECC* | *Extract(s) from Cabul Correspondence* |
| *ECD* | *Extract(s) from Cabul Diary* |
| *ECMD* | *Extract(s) from Cabul Moonshee's Diary* |
| *ECN* | *Extract(s) from the Cabul News(-letter)* |
| *ECVD* | *Extract(s) from Cabul Vakil's Diary* |
| *EDCV* | *Extract(s) from the Diary of the Cabul Vakil* |
| *EDCVM* | *Extract(s) from the Diary of the Cabul Vakeel's Moonshee* |
| *EDMCC* | *Extract(s) from the Diary of the Moonshee at the Cabul Court* |
| *EDMGD* | *Extract(s) from the Diary of Monshee Gopal Dass* |
| *EDOVC* | *Extract(s) from the Diary of the Officiating Vakil at Cabul* |
| *EJVC* | *Extract(s) from the Journal of the Vakeel at Cabul* |
| *EOCN* | *Extract(s) from the Ordinary Cabul News* |
| *IC* | *Intelligence from Cabul* |
| *ICI* | *Items of Cabul Intelligence* |

| | |
|---|---|
| *ICN* | *Items of Cabul News* |
| *IIC* | *Items of Intelligence from Cabul* |
| *KD* | *Kabul Diary* |
| *KM* | *Kabul Munshi: Letter from Sayyid Diwan Mohamed, Munshi of British Agency in Kabul* |
| *KNL* | *Kabul News(-letter), or, Extract(s) from (translation of) a Letter from Lt. Col. Afzal Khan (or his successors).* |
| *LCM* | *Letter from the Cabul Munshee* |
| *NC* | *News Letter from Cabul* |
| *NKVT* | *News-letters from Kabul Vakil with the Amir in Turkistan (1888-1890 only)* |
| *ONC* | *Ordinary News(-letter) from Cabo(u)l* |
| *TCI* | *Translation of Cabul Intelligence* |
| *TCN* | *Translation of Cabul News(-lettter)* |
| *TEDCV* | *Translation of an Extract from the Diary of the Caboul Vakil* |
| *TIC* | *Translation of Intelligence from Cabul* |
| *TLCV* | *Translation of a Letter from the Cabul Vakil* |
| *TNC* | *Translation of a News(-letter) from Cabul* |
| *TPLRC* | *Translation of a Persian Letter received from Cabul* |

Bala Murghab

| | |
|---|---|
| *BMNL* | *Bala Murghab News-letter/News-letter from Haji Mohamed Hussain at Bala Murghab and Panjdeh* |

Herat

| | |
|---|---|
| *ELH* | *Extract(s) of/from a Letter from Herat* |
| *HC* | *Herat Correspondent* |
| *HN* | *Herat News* |
| *HNL* | *Herat News Letter/(Absract) Translation of a letter from Mirza Muhammad Takki Khan/Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, news-writers at Herat* |
| *LH* | *Letter from Herat* |
| *THL* | *Translation of Herat Letter* |
| *THN* | *Translation of (a) Herat News(-letter)* |
| *TLH* | *Translation of a Letter from Herat* |

Jalalabad

| | |
|---|---|
| *AIJ* | *Abstract of Intelligence from Jallalabad* |
| *EJN* | *Extract(s) from Jallalabad News(-letter)* |
| *NGAJ* | *(Confidential) News-letter from the Goverment Agent at Jallalabad* |

Qandahar

[N.B. Qandahar is usually transliterated as Candahar or Kandahar in the IOL records. To distinguish between newsletters from the Kabul and 'Kandahar', Cabul and 'Candahar' wakils, the Qandahar series have been prefaced by 'Q']

| | |
|---|---|
| *ATNLQ* | *Abstract Translation of a News-letter from Kandahar* |
| *DQM* | *Diary of the Kandahar Mission* |
| *DQR* | *Diary of the Kandahar Residency* |
| *DSAR* | *Diary of the S. Afghanistan Residency* |
| *JSAFF* | *Journal of the Southern Afghanistan Field Force* |
| *QD* | *Kandahar Diary* |
| *QN* | *Kandahar News* |
| *QNL* | *Kandahar News-letter/(Abstract) Translation of a Letter from Mir Hashim Khan (from 1880)* |
| *TLNQ* | *Translation of a Letter from the News-writer at Kandahar* |
| *TQN* | *Translation of Kandahar News(-letter)* |

PERSIA (mainly L/P&S/9)

Tehran/general

| | |
|---|---|
| *PWD* | *Persia Weekly Diary* |

Mashhad

| | |
|---|---|
| *AM* | *Agent at (in) Meshed* |
| *ELAM* | *Extract(s) of a letter from the Agent at Meshed* |
| *ELCM* | *Extract(s) of Letter from a Correspondent in Meshed* |
| *ELM* | *Extract(s) of a Letter from Meshed* |
| *ELMA* | *Extract(s) of a Letter from the Meshed Agent* |

*ELPCM* *Extract(s) of a Letter from a Private Correspondent at Meshed*
*LAM* *Letter from the Agent at Meshed*
*MA* *Meshed Agent*
*MANL* *Meshed Agent's News-letter*
*MNL* *Meshed News-letter*
*TELMA* *Translation of Extract(s) of a Letter from the Meshed Agent*
*TLAM* *Translation of a Letter from the Agent at Meshed*
*TLMA* *Translation of a Letter from the Meshed Agent*
*TLMV* *Translation of a Letter from the Meshed Vakeel*

Sarrakhs

*SC* *Sarrakhs Correspondent (1885 on)*

TURKISTAN AND CENTRAL ASIA

General

*ICAN* *Items of Central Asian News*

Ashkhabad

*ANL* *Translation of a (News-) Letter from Syud Hakim (or others), the Amir's official at Ashkhabad to the address of His Highness the Amir of Afghanistan, etc.*

Merv

(MV is used to distinguish these records from those of the Mashhad agent)
*MVC* *(Translation of a Letter) from the (a) Merve Correspondent*
*MVCN* *Merv Confidential News-letter/Confidential News(-letter) from Merve*
*MVNL* *Merve News-letter (Ibrahim Beg, etc.)*
*TLMV* *Translation of a Letter from Merve*

## INDIA

(North West Frontier, Peshawar, Baluchistan, Punjab, etc.)

| | |
|---|---|
| *DIKNL* | *Dera Ismail Khan News-letter/(Confidential) News-letter from Dera Ismail Khan* |
| *GD* | *Gilgit Diary* |
| *KPD* | *Khyber Political Diary* |
| *LD* | *Lahore Diary* |
| *NLGAP* | *(Confidential) News-letter from the Government Agent at Peshawar* |
| *PCD* | *Peshawar Confidential Diary* |
| *PGR(LPD)* | *Punjab Government Records; Lahore Political Diaries (with individual volume number)* |
| *PI* | *Punjab Intelligence/Abstract of Intelligence from the Punjab* |
| *PPD* | *Peshawar Political Diary/Political Diary of ... (containing Intelligence from Cabul)* |
| *TFJ* | *Trans-Frontier Journal, or Journal of Political Events on the W. & N. W. Frontier* |

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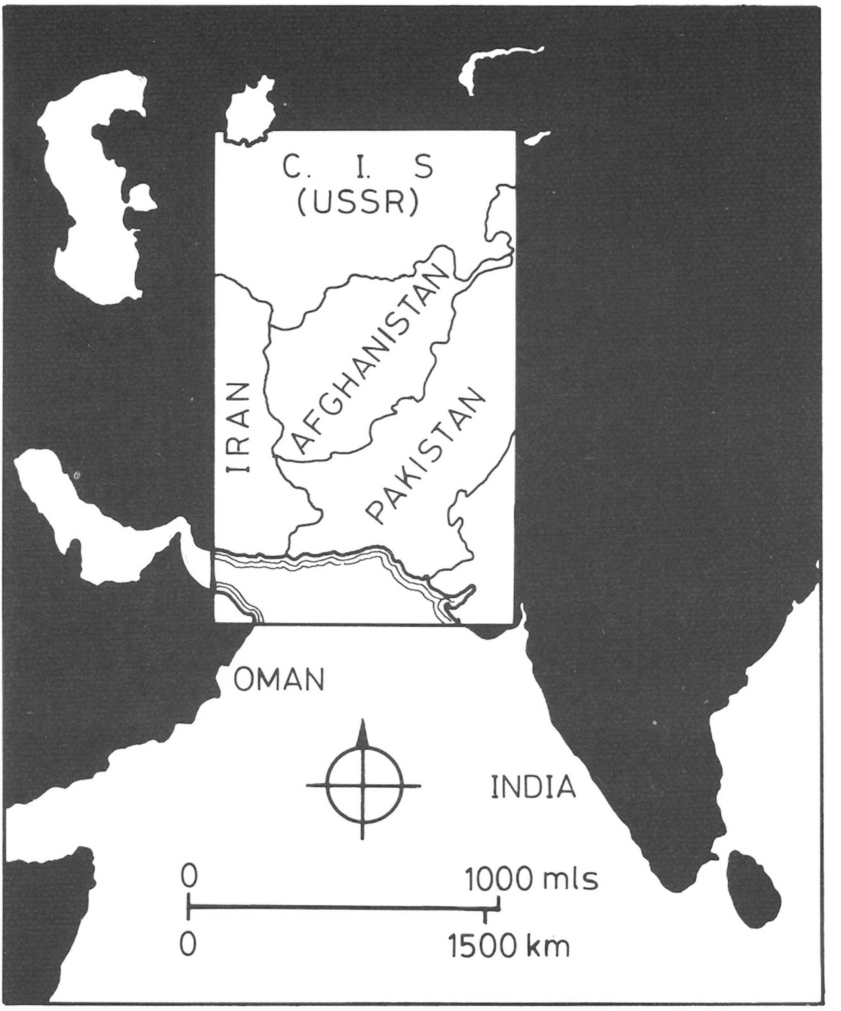
# MAPS



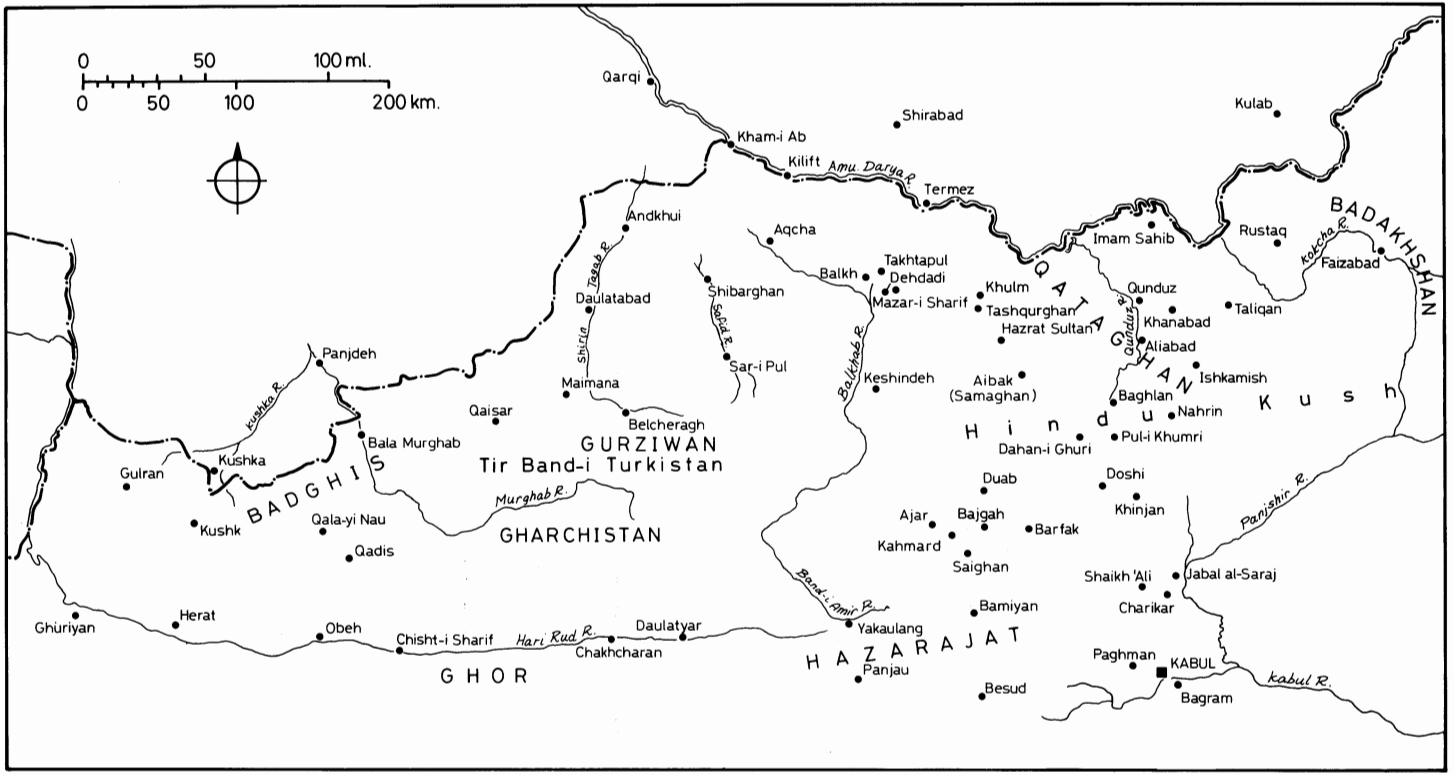

Map 1. Central Asia



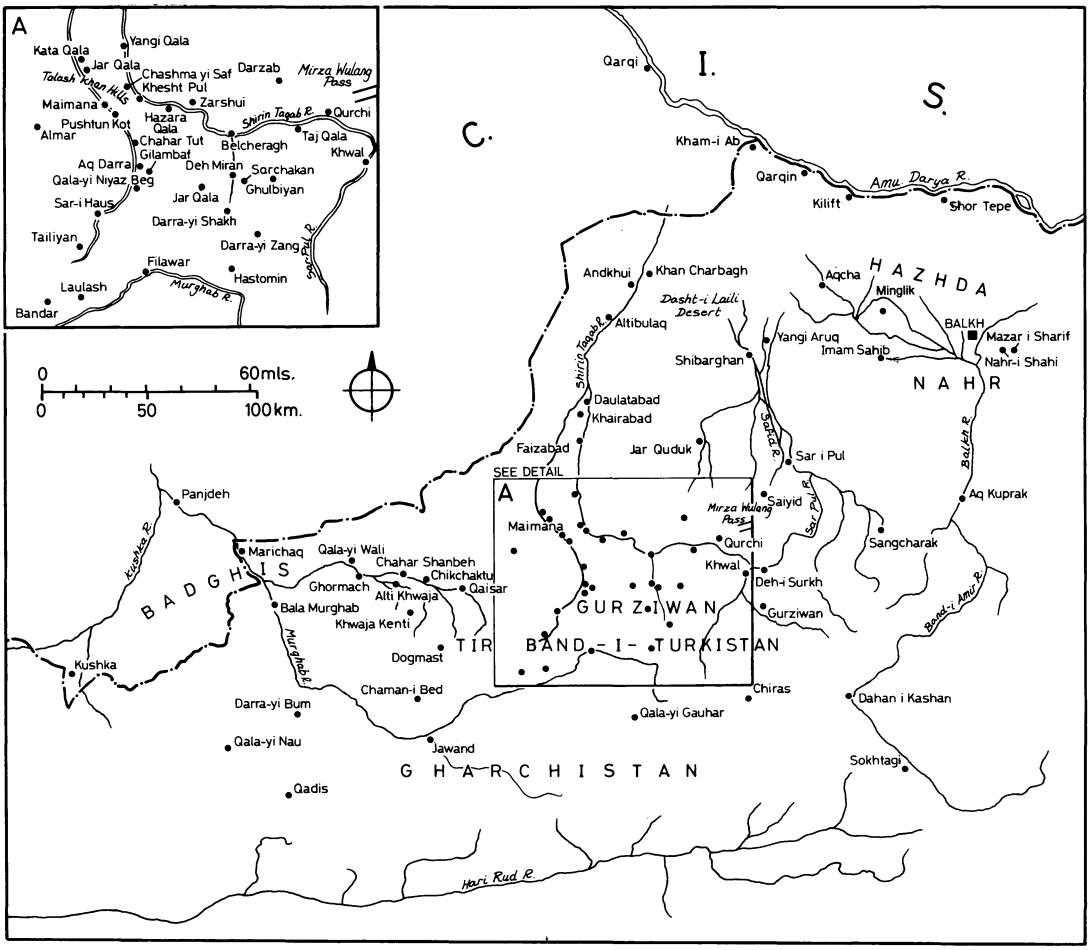

Map 2. Afghanistan and Surrounding Countries



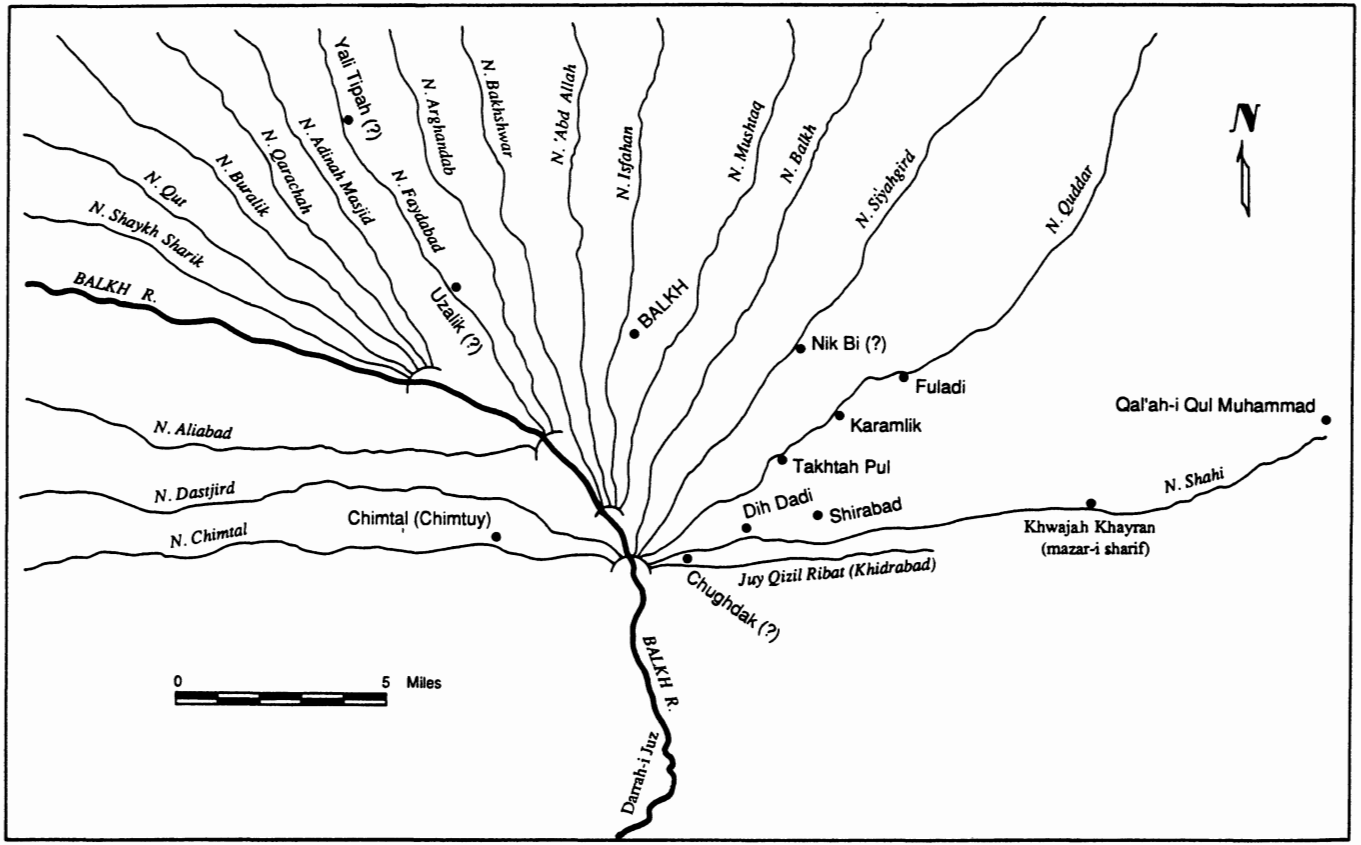

Map 3. Afghanistan



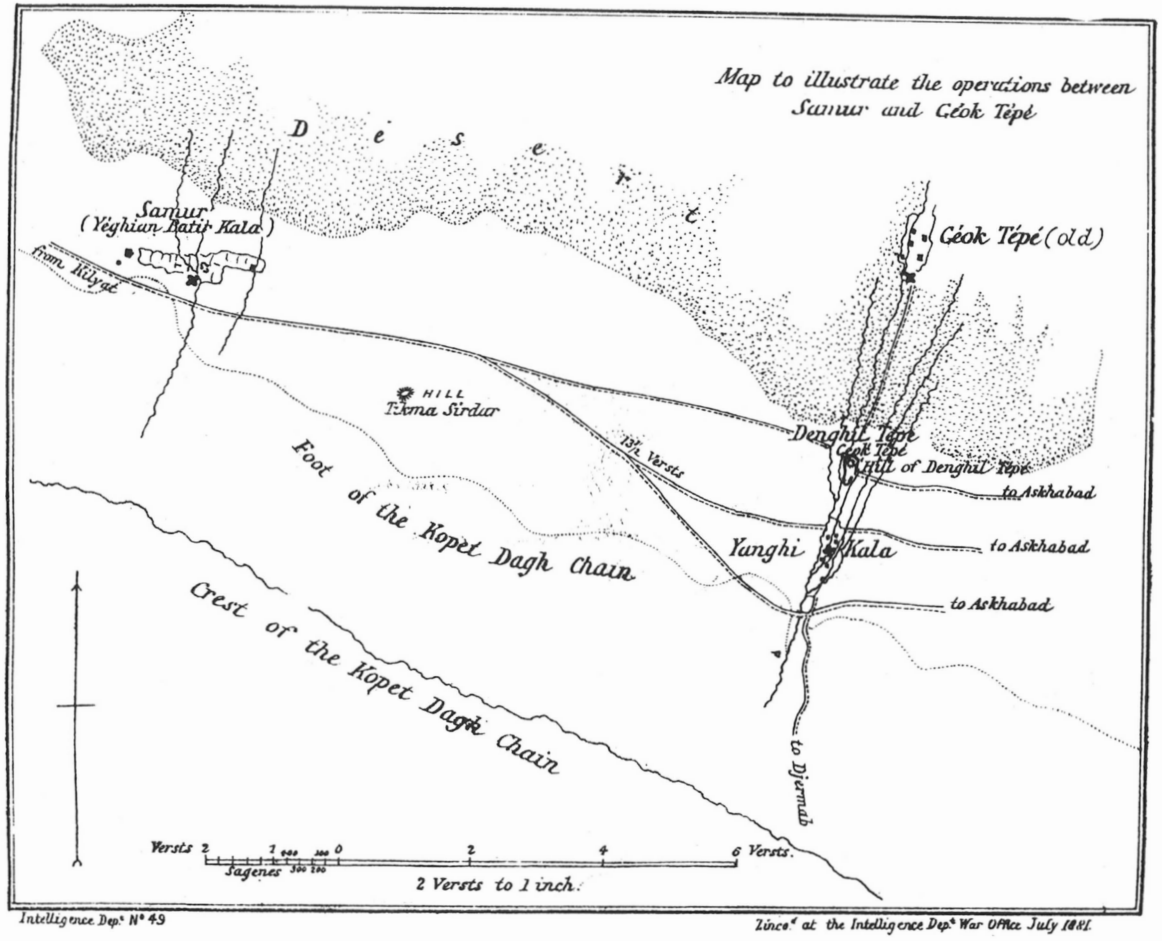

Map 4. Balkh and lesser Turkistan



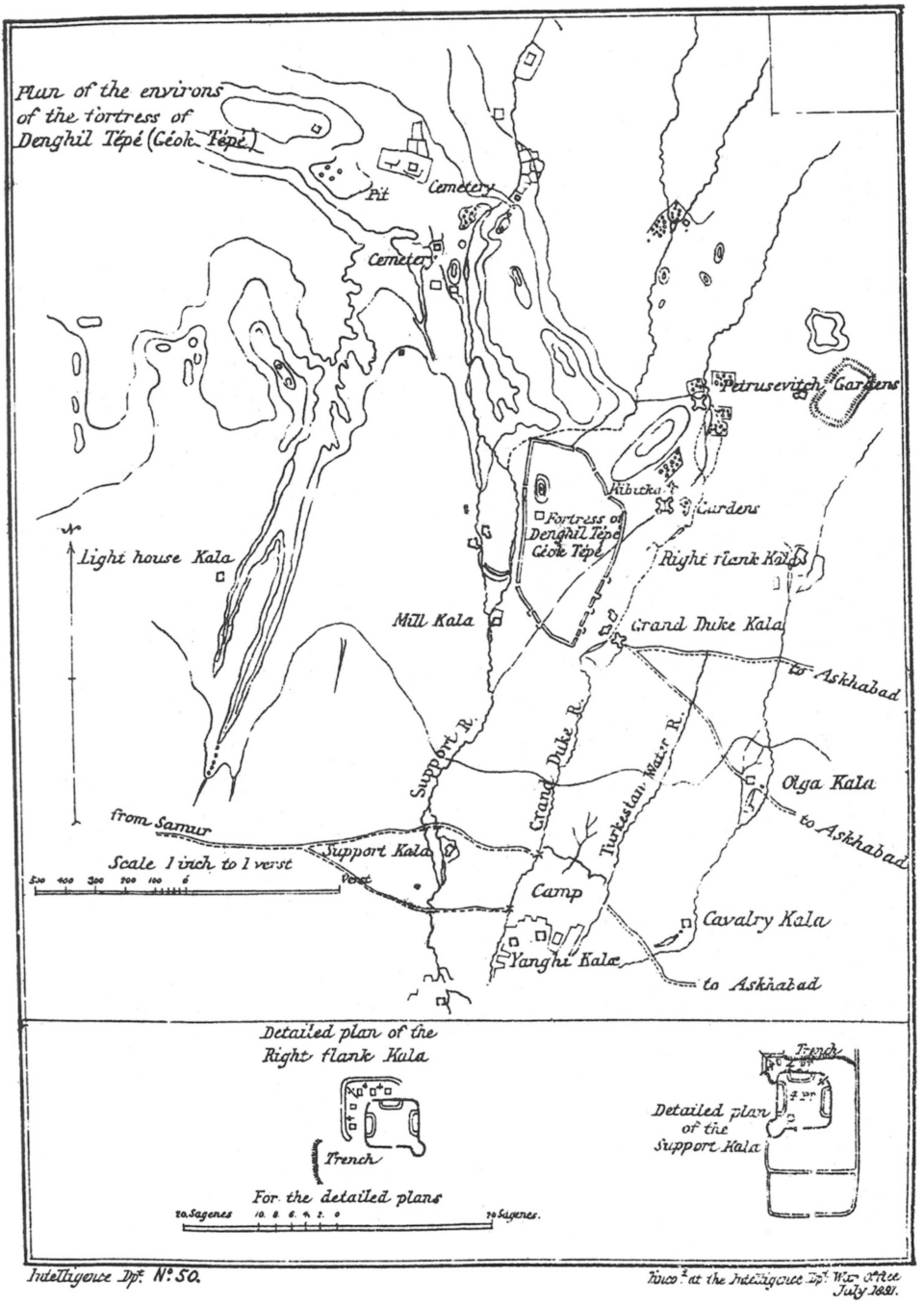

Map 5. Maimana and the Chahar Wilayat



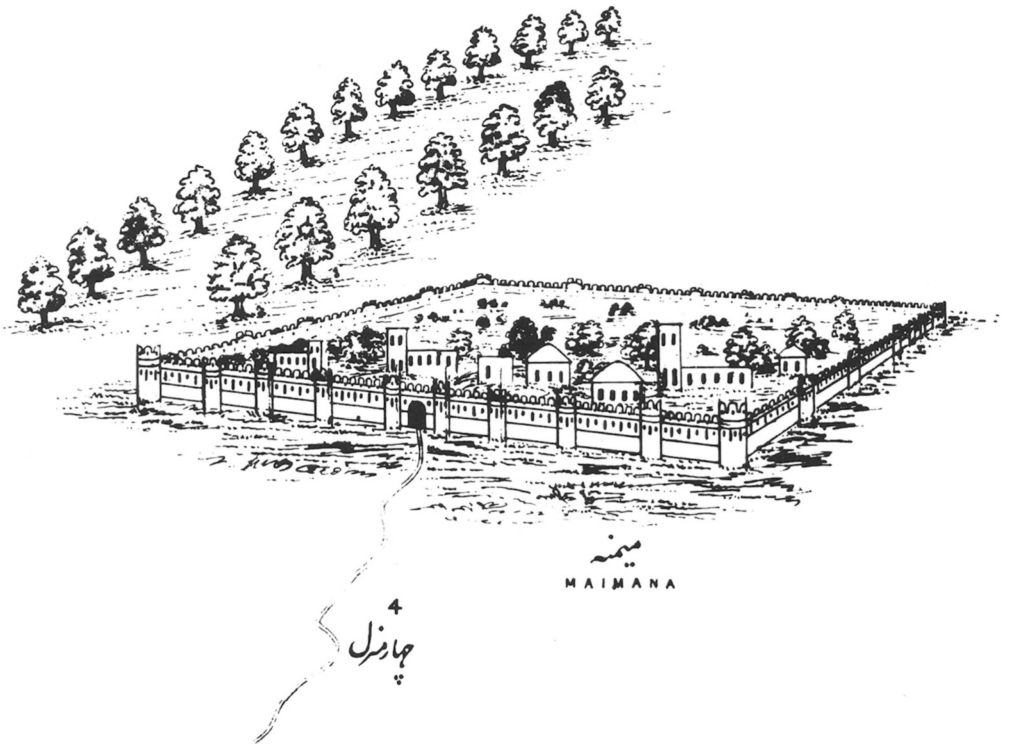

Map 6. The Hazhda Nahr (Eighteen Canals) of Balkh (from McChesney, 1991)



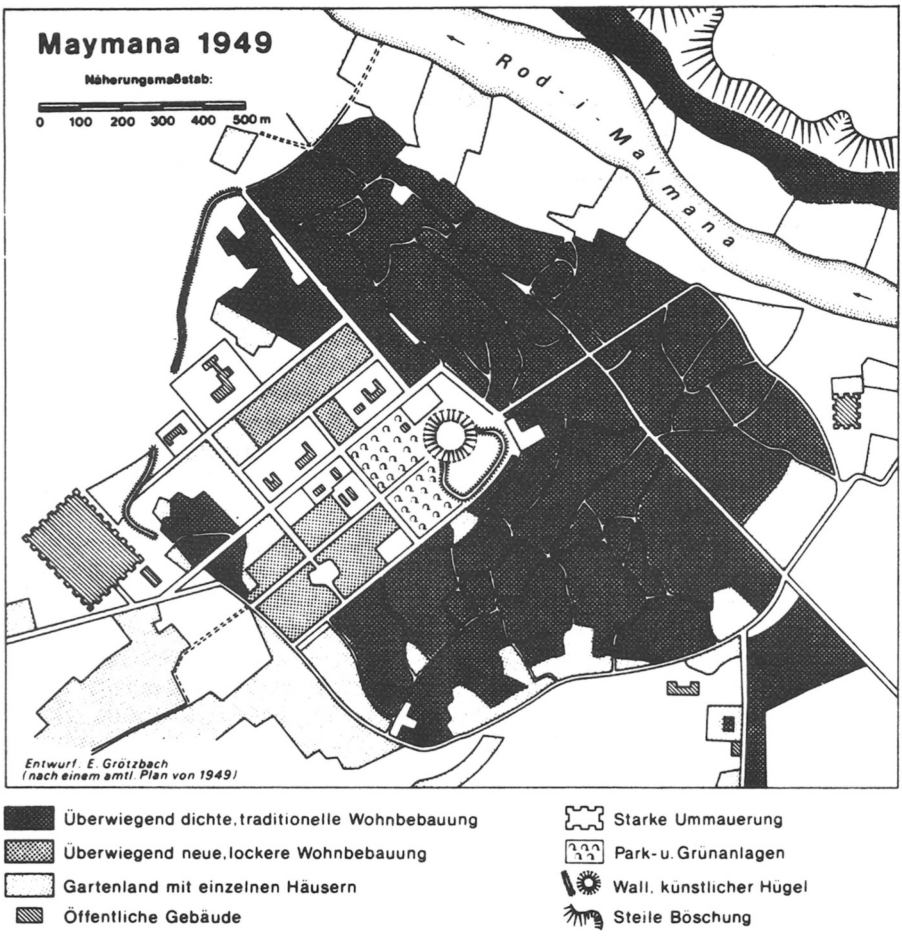

Map 7. Map to illustrate the operations between Samur and Géok Tépé (Skobeleff, 1881)




Map 8. Plan of the Environs of Denghil Tépé (Skobeleff, 1881)




Plan 1. Maimana, stylised sketch of town from map drawn by Amir ʻAbd al-Rahman Khan, 1883 (from L/P&S/7/37).




Plan 2. Maimana, Town Plan, 1949 (from Grötzbach, 1976).

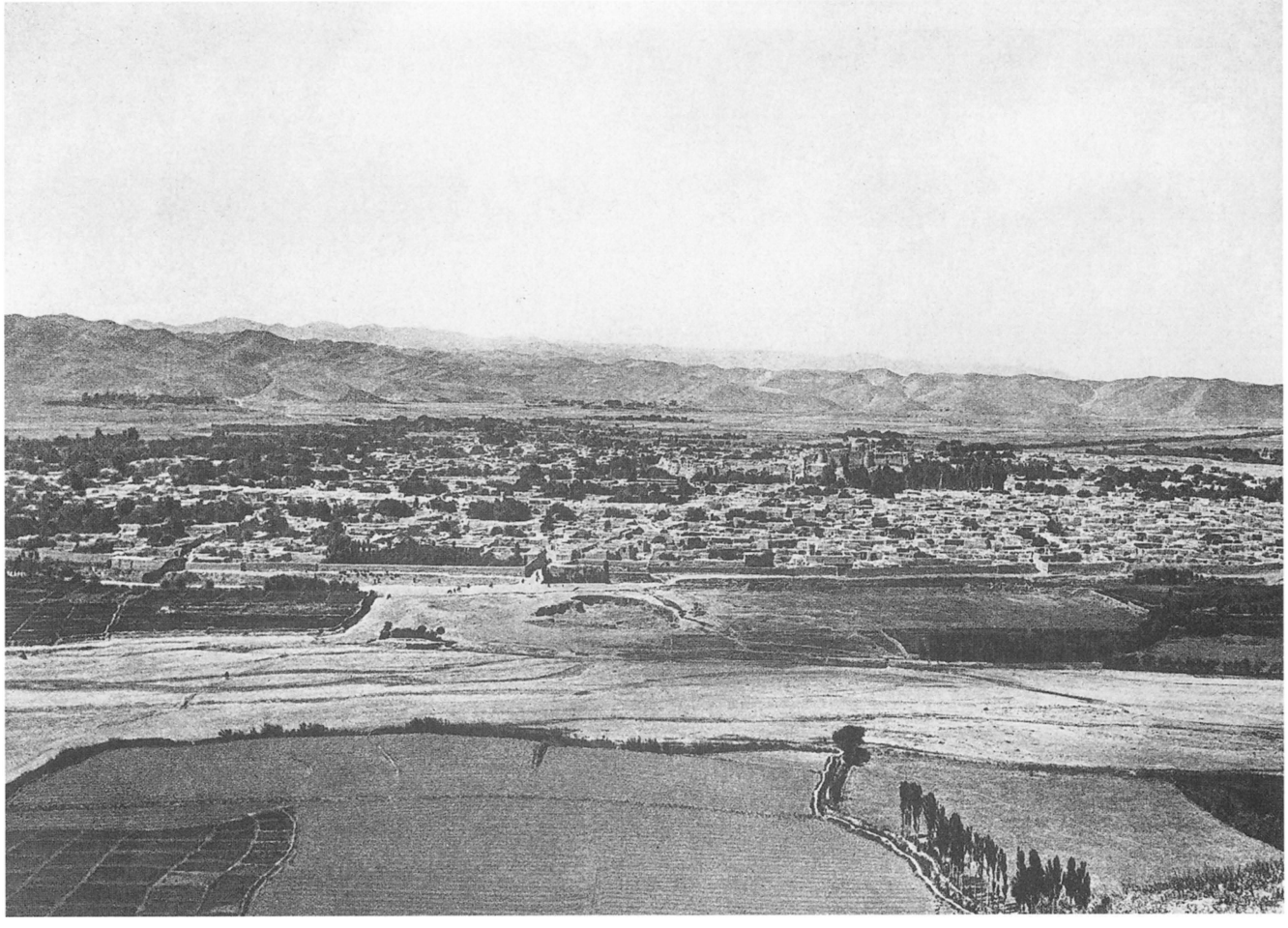
# PLATES



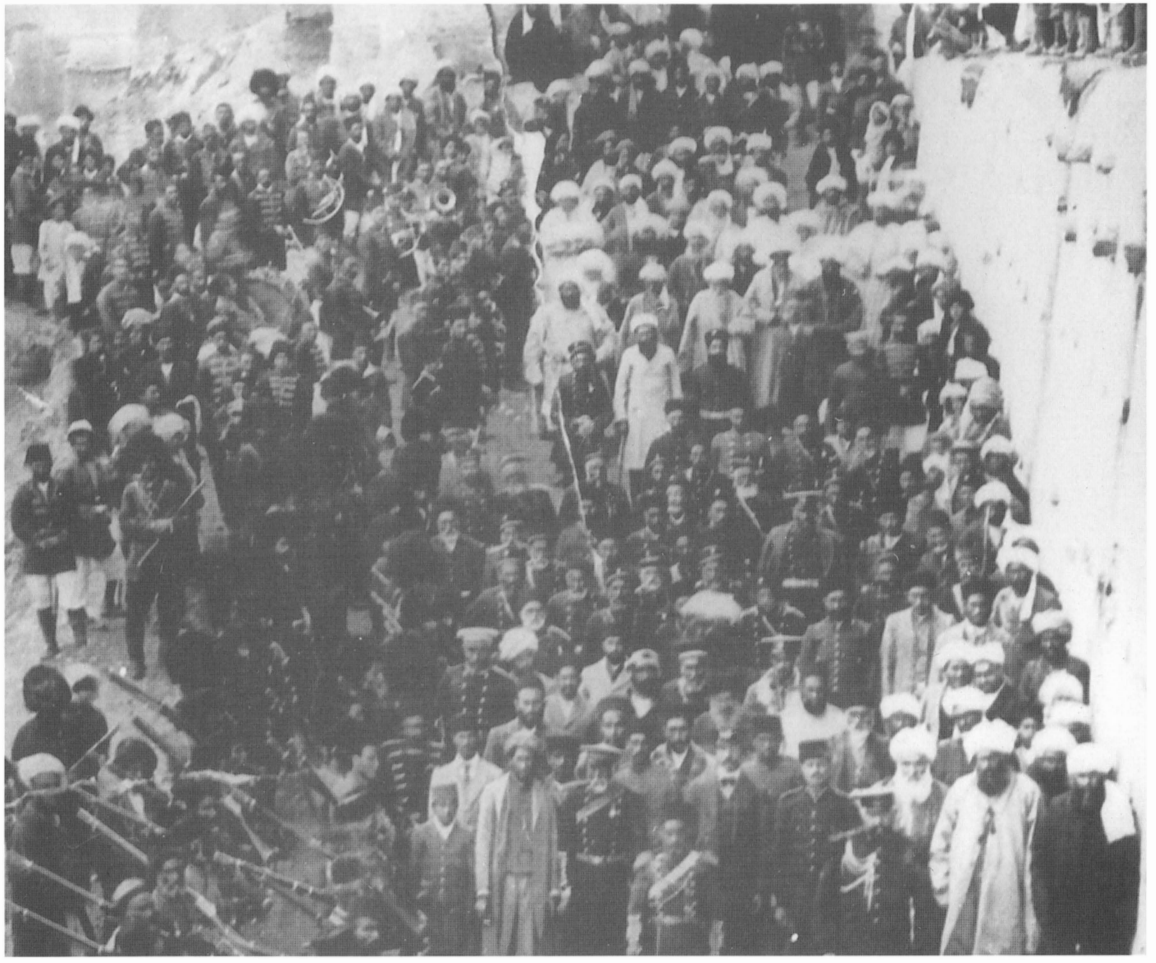
I. The *Arg* of Maimana, seat of the Mingid Dynasty (Niedermeyer, 1916).



II. Maimana, view from *Arg* to Talash Khan hills. Note *Ziyarat* of Saif al-Muluk in foreground (Niedermeyer, 1916).



III. Maimana, general view of city from the Talash Khan Hills (Niedermeyer, 1916).



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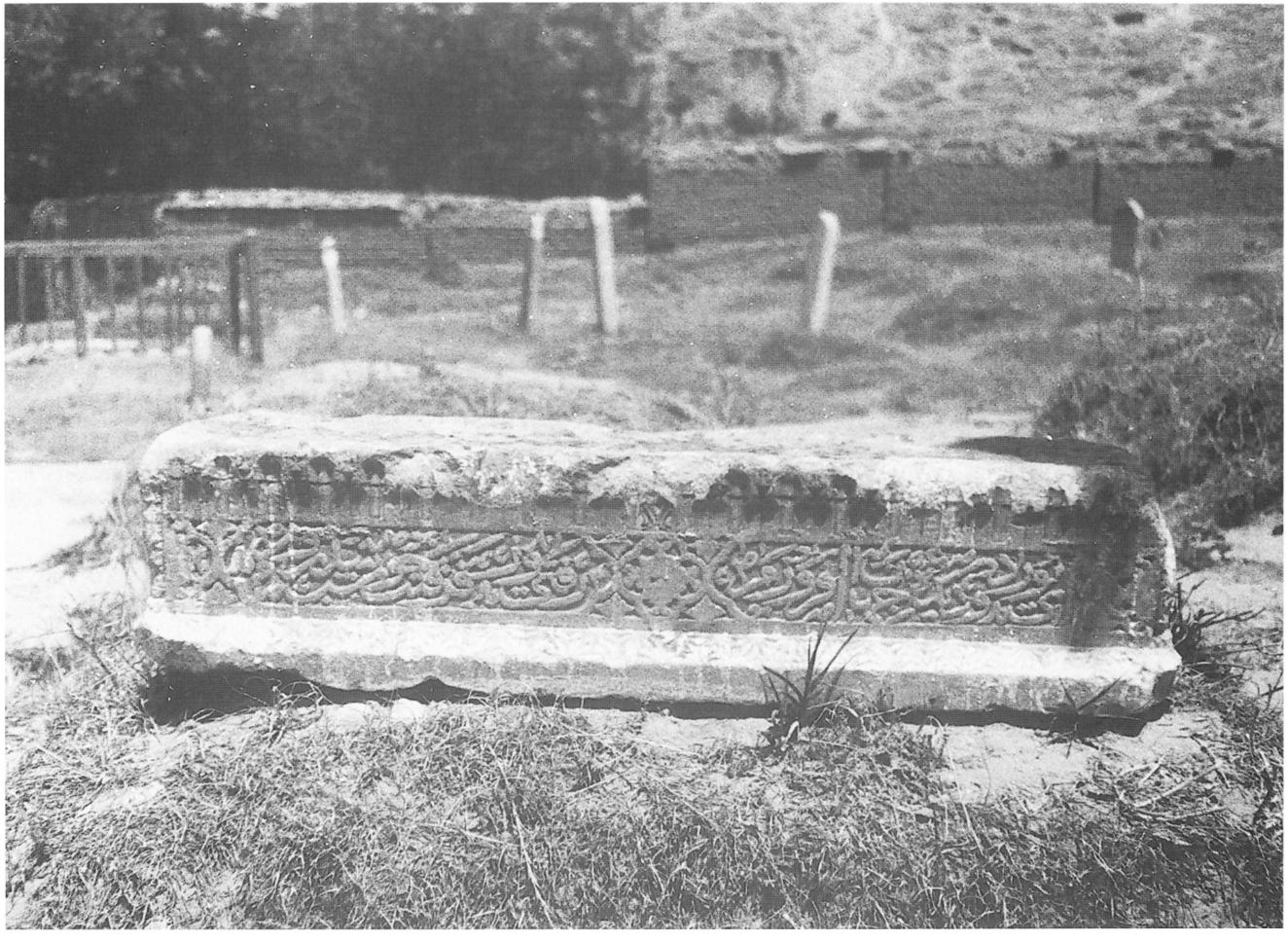
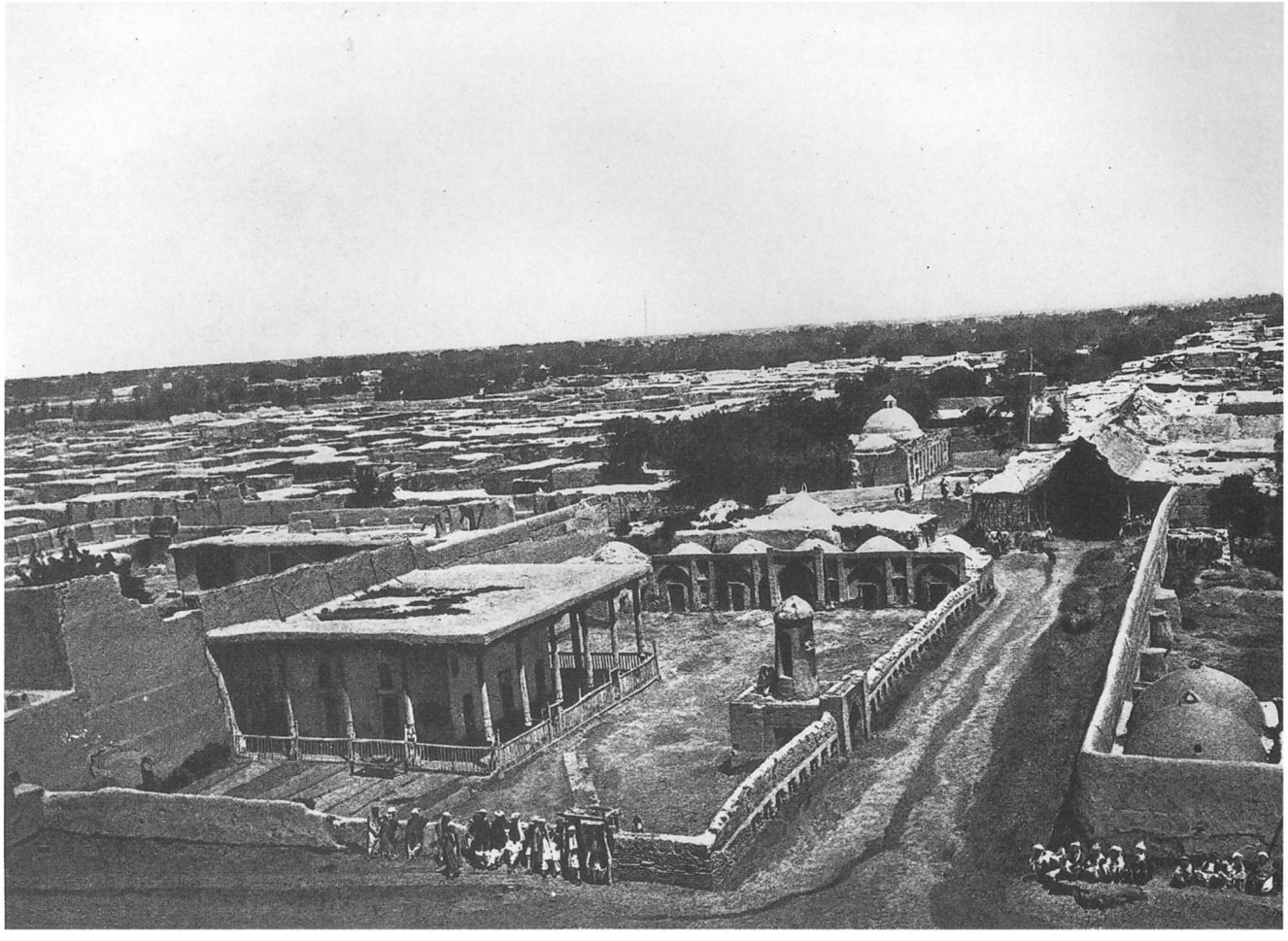
IV. Maimana, celebrating *Nauroz* at entrance to *Arg* (Collection of Emil Rybitschka, Afghanistan 1915–1920, held in the Foundation BA).



V. Imam Sahib, Maimana, tombstone of unknown Mingid Khan (Lee, 1978).



VI. Maimana, *Madrassa* founded by Mizrab Khan Ming (Lee, 1978).

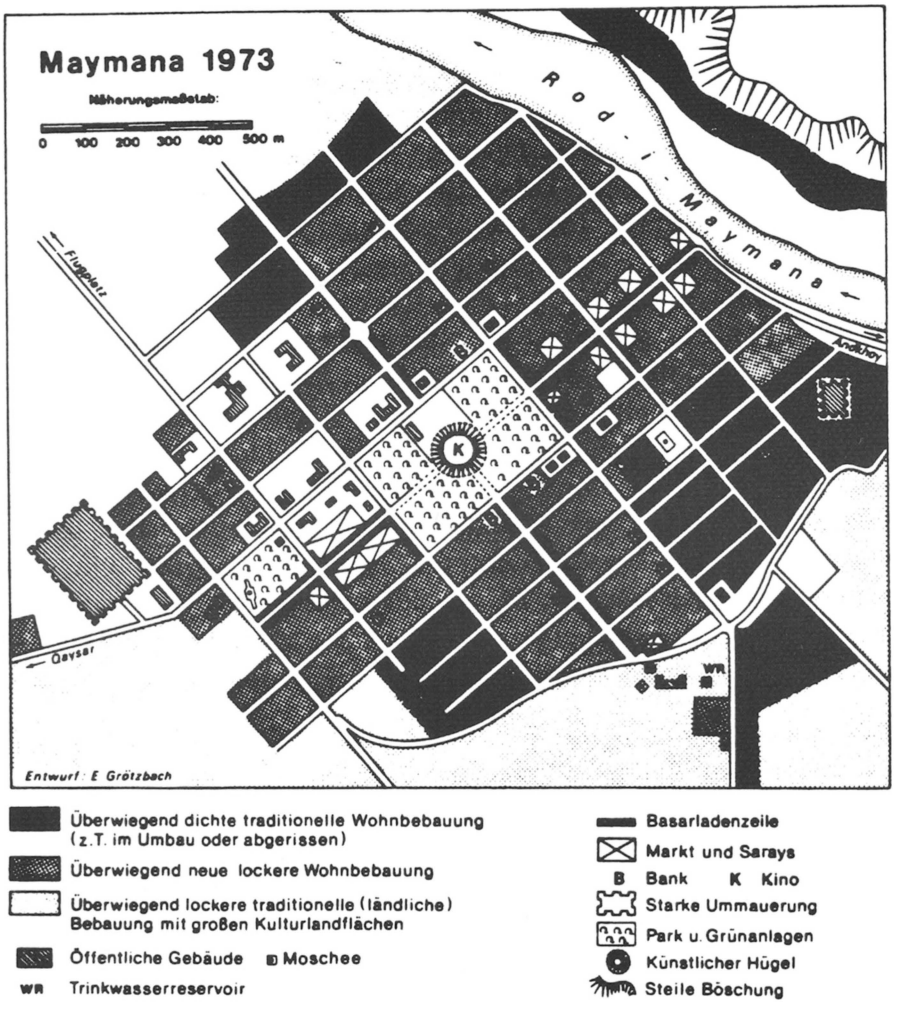


VII. Shibarghan view from the *Arg* (Niedermeyer, 1916).

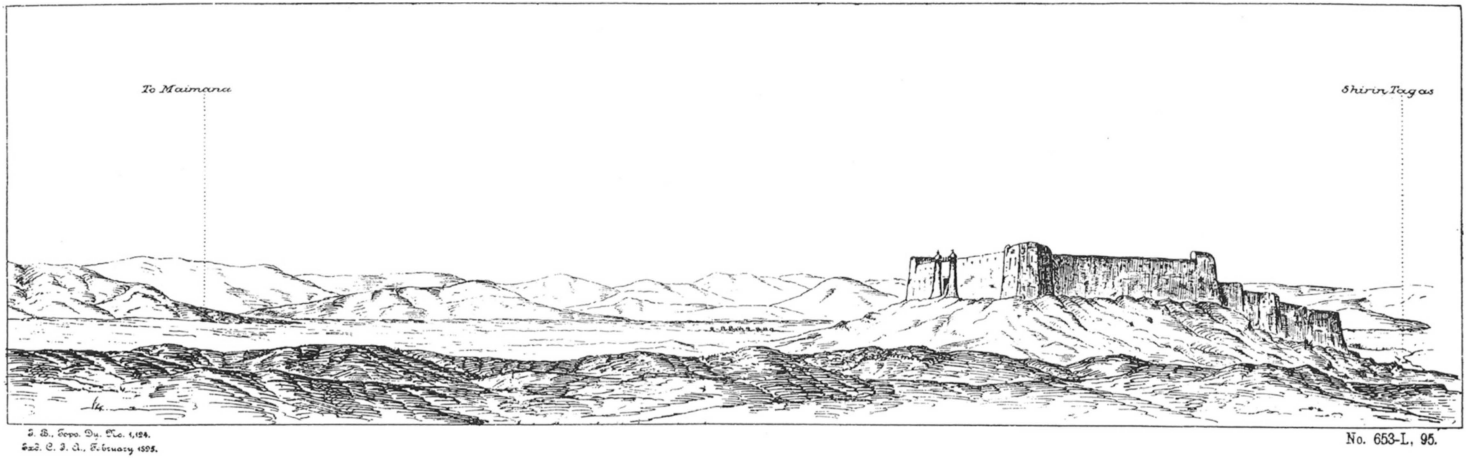


VIII. Mazar-i Sharif, shrine of Ishan Sudur and Ishan Uraq (Lee, 1993).

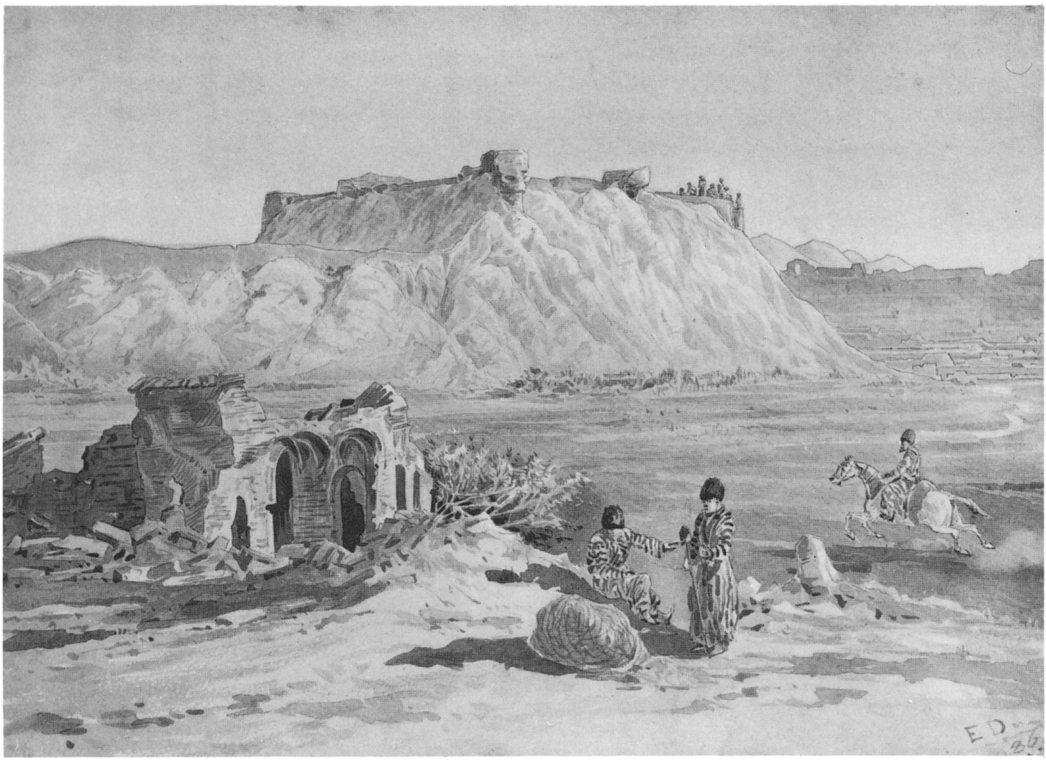
# PLANS



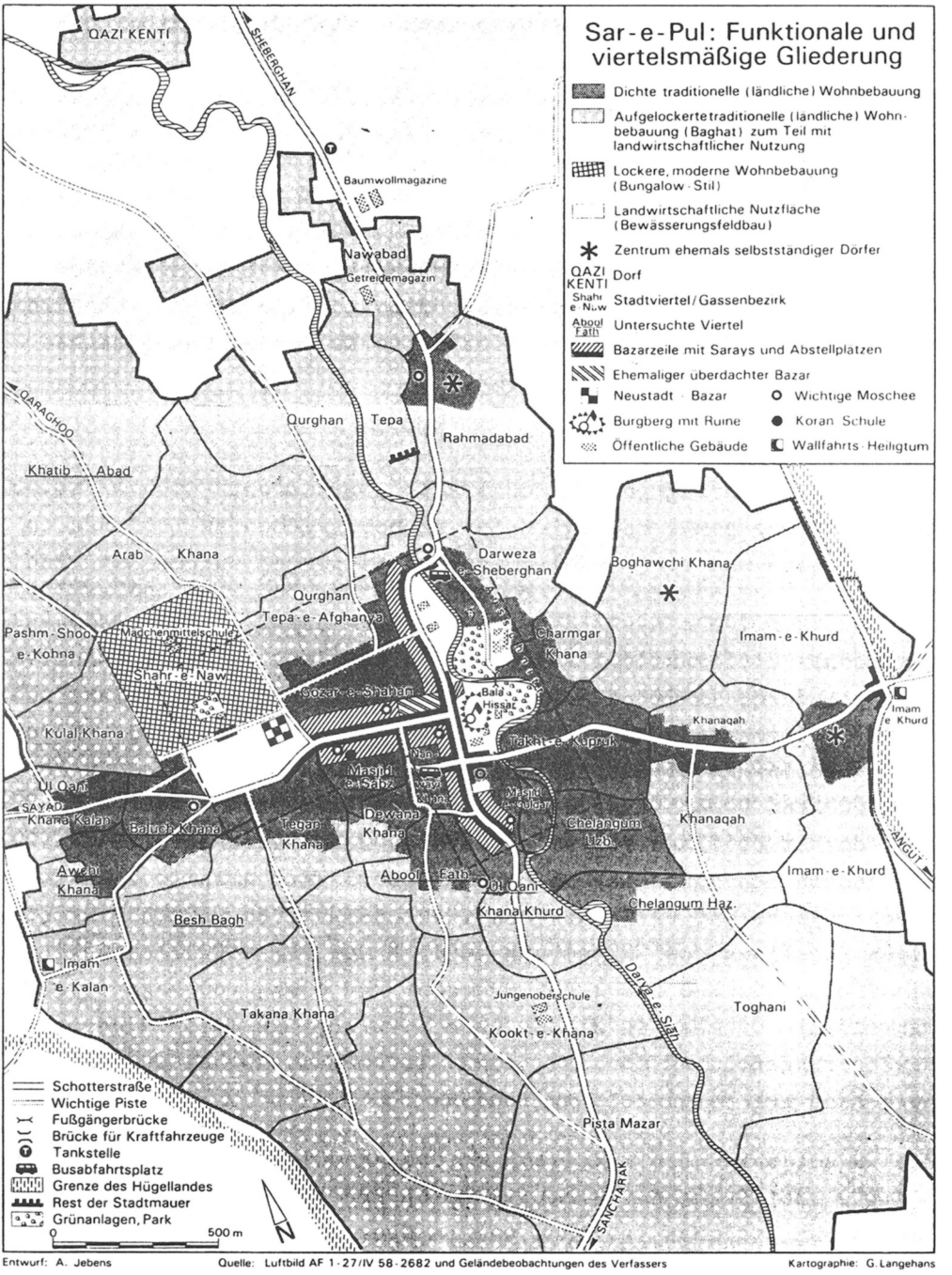

Plan 3. Maimana, Town Plan, 1973 (from Grötzbach, 1976).



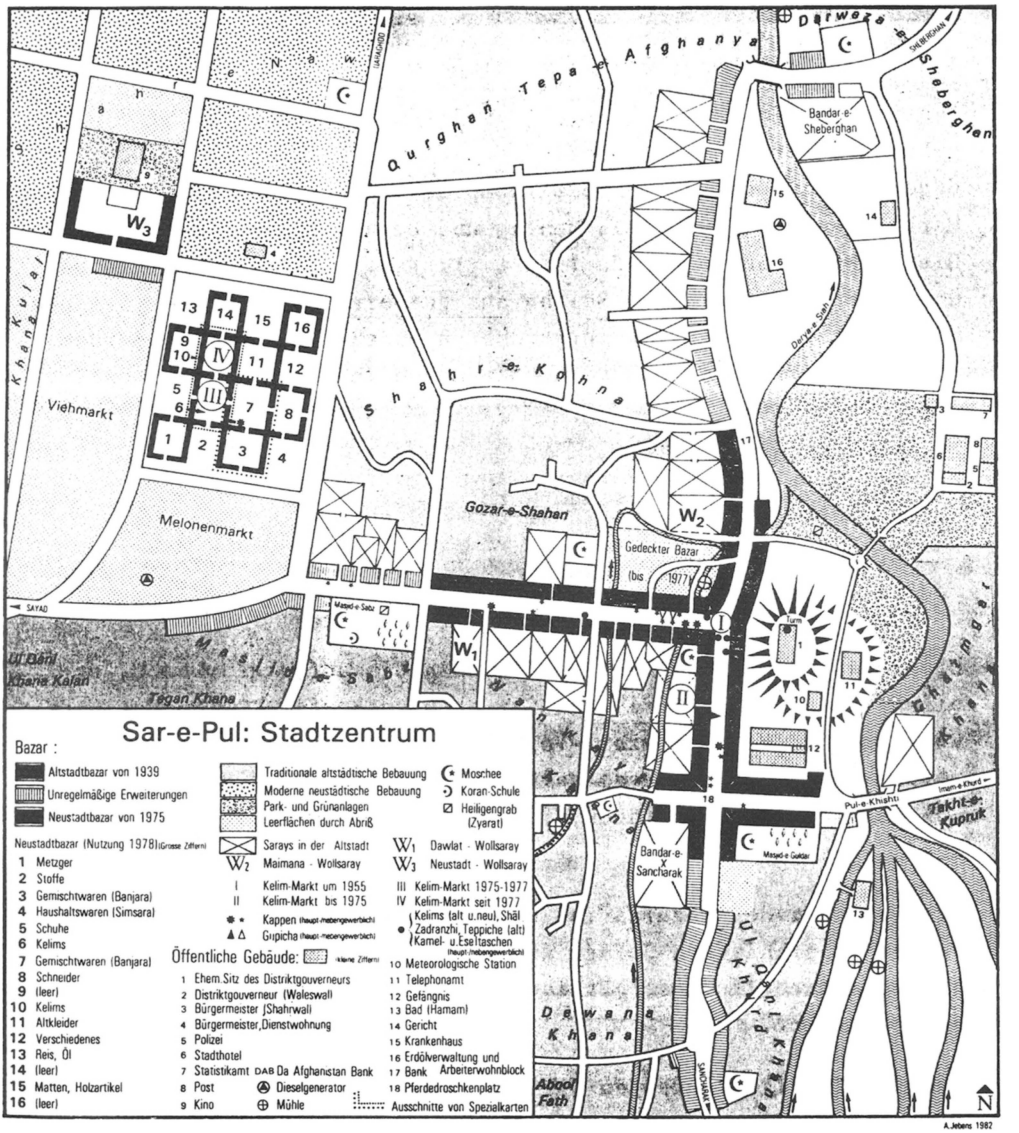

Plan 4. "Daolatabad Fortress looking S.W.", 1886 (Peacocke, 1886).



Plan 5. "Fort Maruchak", Durand, 1885 (IOLR, Durand Collection).




Plan 6. Sar-i Pul, Town and Suburbs, 1975 (Jebens, 1975).




Plan 7. Sar-i Pul, Town and Bazaars, 1975 (Jebens, 1975).

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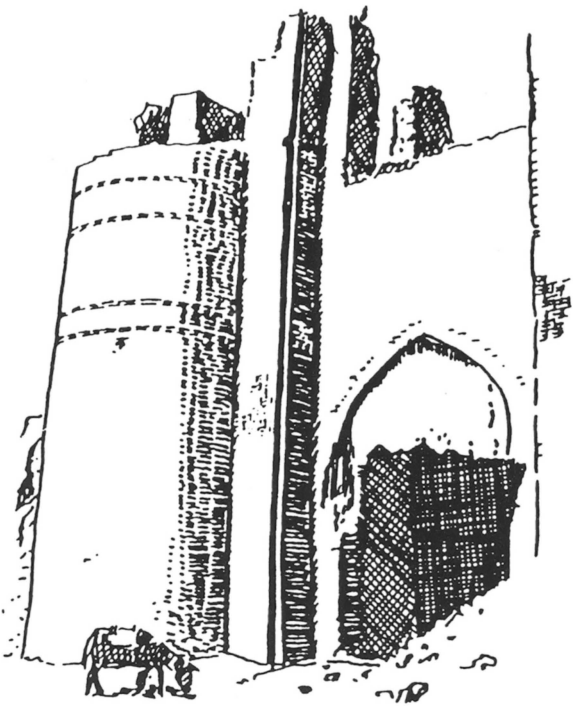

Plan 8. Shibarghan, Bastion and Entrance to *Arg*, 1942 (Collection of Rudolf Stuckert, Afghanistan 1940-1946, held in the Foundation BA).

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Plan 9. Shibarghan, Sketch of Bazaar and *Arg*, 1942 (Collection of Rudolf Stuckert, Afghanistan 1940-1946, held in the Foundation BA).

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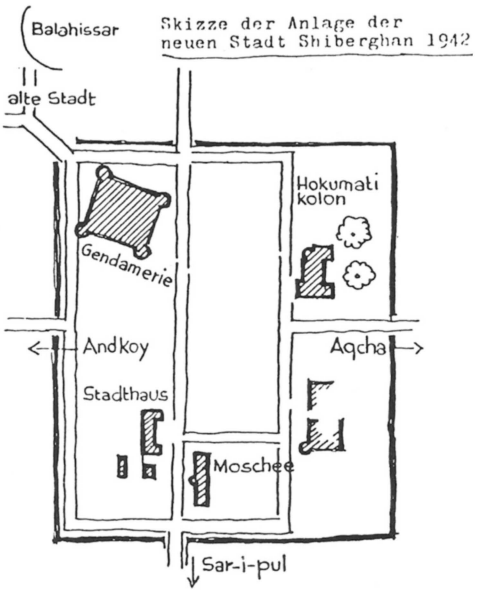
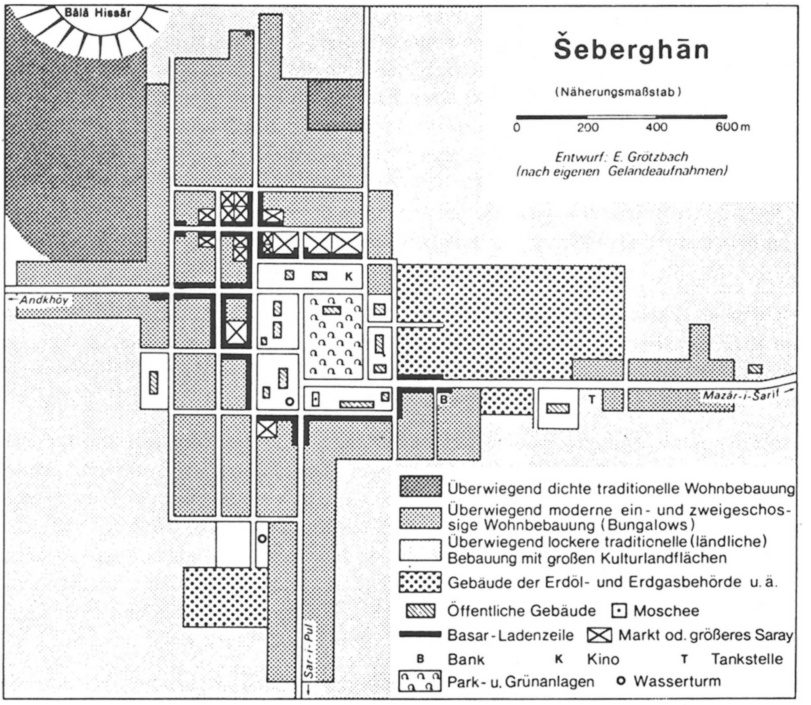
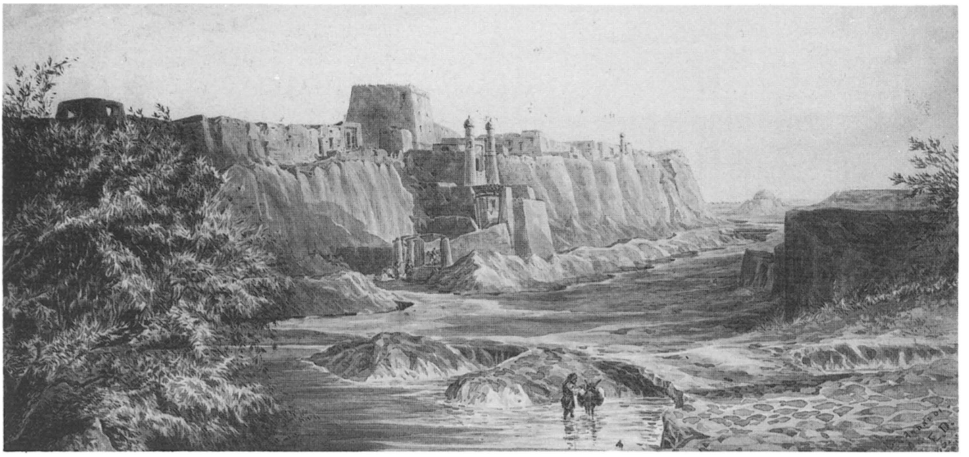


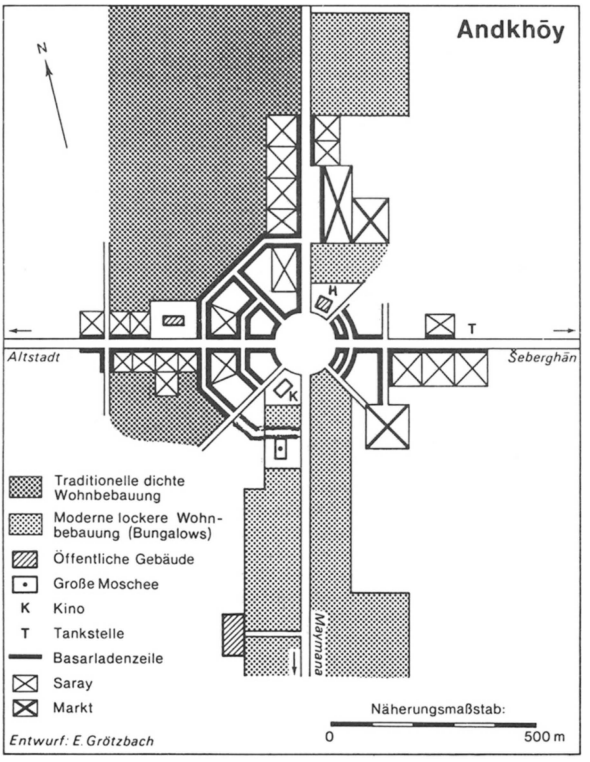

Plan 10. Shibarghan, Town Plan, 1942 (Collection of Rudolf Stuckert, Afghanistan 1940-1946, held in the Foundation BA).




Plan 11. Shibarghan, Town Plan, c. 1975 (Grötzbach, 1979).



Plan 12. "Andkhoi, Town and Fort", 1886 (IOLR, Durand Collection).




Plan 13. Andkhui, Town Plan, c. 1975 (Grötzbach, 1979).

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Plan 14. Aqcha, Sketch of *Arg*, 1943 (Collection of Rudolf Stuckert, Afghanistan 1940-1946, held in the Foundation BA).

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