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# **Section V**

## **Socio-economic Issues**

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# TRADE IN CHITRAL IN THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY: A BRIEF REVIEW

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## **Background**

Chitral<sup>1</sup> (called Chetrar by the inhabitants) is situated between latitudes 35 degrees 15 minutes, and 37 degrees north, and longitudes 71 degrees, 30 minutes, and 73 degrees, 50 minutes east. Kashqar is the name given to it by the Pathans. Its greatest length, from the Yarkhun-Karambar watershed in the north to Arandu in the south, is about 200 miles. Its total area is approximately 4500 squares miles.

The exact geographical and political boundaries can be traced as follows:

To the North and North-East there is the crest of the Hindu Kush Range from the main watershed between the Oxus River to its North and the Yarkhun-Chitral river to its South, then dividing Chitral from the Afghan province of Wakhan and Badakhshan and forming the Pak-Afghan Frontier.

On the West the Hindu Kush sends out from the vicinity of the Dora Pass, a spur to the South. This spur or as it may be called, the Kafiristan range, running south to the junction of the Chitral and Bashgal rivers divides Chitral from the Afghan Province of Kunar and forms the Pak-Afghan Frontier on this side.

To the South, the boundary between Chitral and the Afghan district of Asmar was, before the third Afghan War, said to be formed by the Southern watershed of the Arandu (Arnawaii) stream.

To the East the Mashabar or Shandur range, a subsidiary spur of the Hindu Kush, which branches just South-East of the Baroghil Pass divides Chitral from the districts of Hunza, Yasin and Ghizer in the Gilgit Agency. From the Shandur Pass the eastern boundary dividing Chitral from Dir, runs along the Hindu Raj range to the Shandur Pass.<sup>2</sup>

Chitral State, due to its geographical position, had close socio-historical relations with the Central Asian states during ancient and medieval times. Professor Israr-ud-Din points out, 'The various races of immigrants who came, either as invaders or refugees, from diverse backgrounds, especially those from Badakhshan and the surrounding countries have made great contributions to the customs, culture and character of the people.'<sup>3</sup> The same fact has been endorsed by Sir Aurel Stein as follows:

Along with other observers, I was impressed from the outset by the far reaching higher standards in comforts of life manners, and method of cultivation which I noticed as soon as I entered Chitral. Much if not most of what I was able to observe as regards the material civilization of Chitral, distinctly recalled Turkistan, while India seemed to be far behind me in customs and conditions alike. With so much before my eyes that betokened direct importation from Badakhshan, it was

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impossible not to realize how important a part the ancient civilization established by the Oxus have played in shaping the past of Chitral.<sup>4</sup>

### **Silk Route**

Pamir, also known as the roof of the world, is linked with the extreme north of Chitral by the Silk Route.

There was an important emporium of the Silk Route at Yarkand and Kashgar,<sup>5</sup> which implies the trade caravans used to benefit from the sale of commodities on their way to Central Asia.

### **Trade Promoted in the Period Under Review**

There are two historic inferences, one from the *Military Report and Gazetteer on Chitral*, that the chief interest of His Highness Sir Shuja-ul-Mulk, KCIE, who was ruler (*mehtar*) of Chitral State from 1895 to 1936, was finances. The second source is the book titled *Chitral Ek Taaruf*, which suggests that the aforesaid *mehtar* had promoted the trade of Chitral. Consequently, the trade under his patronage followed with that of British India and Afghanistan.

### **Trade Routes**

The principal trade routes between the former British India, the state of Chitral, and Afghanistan were as below:

1. From Dargai to Badakhshan via the Malakand, Loari, and Dora passes
2. From Dargai to Wakhan via the Malakand, Loari, and Boroghil passes
3. From Kashmir to Chitral via the Tragbal, Burzil, and Shandur passes

The trade route between Dargai and Badakhshan was the most important and direct route between Peshawar and Chitral, as well as the main trade route between Chitral and Badakhshan. The traffic which passed along it from May to November, particularly, was considerable<sup>6</sup>.

### **Trade Imports and Exports**

From July to October, when the passes were open, a certain amount of trade between the Punjab and Afghan Turkestan was carried on via Chitral by petty merchants who belonged to Bajour and Badakhshan. The Chitralis themselves had very little inclination for commercial purposes<sup>7</sup>.

Goods were carried on ponies, mules, and donkeys, as the routes were impracticable for camels, except between Dir and Chitral via the Loari Pass.

Prior to the British occupation of Chitral, there was trade in timber. The deodar trees were cut and thrown into the rivers during the summer by coolies drafted for this purpose from all

parts of Chitral. These coolies received no remuneration and the work was very unpopular. Mehtar Sher Afzal discontinued the system and this was one of the principal reasons for his popularity.

As regards trade in Chitral, till 1928, when the *Military Report and Gazetteer on Chitral* was published,

the chief imports from India and Dir comprised Bajauri and Dir iron, salt, indigo, raw silk, long cloth, washed and unwashed chintz, cheap velvets, broad cloth, Punjabi and Peshawari coarse cotton cloth. There were Ludhiana and Peshawari Lungis, susi (striped cloth manufactured in the Punjab), groceries, spices, tea in small quantities, sugar, sugar candy, powder, all kinds of pedlar's wares, printed religious books, cowries, enamel wares, tobacco, cooking pots, agricultural implements, rice from Swat, gur and muslins.<sup>8</sup>

The imports from Badakhshan consisted of a few ponies, which were lightly built though very hardy and excellent for polo, and sheep surreptitiously brought over every year by the Sar Istragh Pass, as trade was then interdicted by the Afghan government. The remaining details of imports from Badakhshan were carpets, cotton, pistachionuts, almonds, raisins, Russian Kazan or flat metal cooking-vessels, Russian chintz, Bukhara-made striped silks (*alachas*), silk and cotton striped cloth (*adras*), and broad-striped silks (*behasab*), Bukhara boots and gaiters, and Russian leathers for sleeping on (*chirm-e-Bulgaria*); also saddles and bridles made in Badakhshan, gold dust, *zira*, and *chogas*. Fixed dues were also levied on the thorough trade with Badakhshan.<sup>9</sup> The petty traders in the Chitral bazaars from Peshawar, Bajour, and Badakhshan drove a fairly brisk bargain. There were also bazaars in Drosh, one inside cantonment limits and the other outside. The traders undoubtedly took advantage of the ignorance of the Chitralis. Local trade may increase in the future but it can never be very great as the population is scanty, and the majority are content to lead a very simple life.<sup>12</sup>

## Home Industries

Very good homespun cloth was made from the wool of sheep, goat, ibex, and yak, duck's feathers sometimes being interwoven. The best homespun, called '*kárbei*', was made of lamb's wool in the Torkhow valley; superior cotton carpets, goat's hair mats, woollen stockings, *chogas*, and caps were made all over Chitral.

## Garam Chashma

Garam Chashma (Hot Spring) is situated on the way to the border linked with Badakhshan. It is an emporium of precious stones. At a little distance from Garam Chashma there existed the famous valley of Mogh on the way to Shoghor where was produced the well-known puttee called *Moghikan*.<sup>11</sup>

Iron, copper and orpiment of superior quality were found in Kashqar, and were minted, a few villages being wholly employed in the industry. Chitrali daggers and sword-hilts were in great demand in the neighbouring valley.<sup>12</sup>

## Conclusion

This brief study of the trade of Chitral shows that the region had flourishing trade relations with Central Asia. In the present purview of the newly independent countries of Central Asia, and their relations with Pakistan, it can be expected that Chitral is going to play an important role in the future as a centre of commerce between this country and the surrounding regions, thus reviving the ancient Silk Route.

## NOTES

1. Chitral began to be called as such from the middle of the 19th century AD when for the first time the court of Kashmir and the British Indian government came into contact with it.
2. Israr-ud-Din, Wazir Ali Shah, and Inayatullah Faziail. *Chitral Ek Taaruf*, (Chitral, 1986), p. 14.
3. General Staff India, *Military Report and Gazetteer on Chitral* (Calcutta, 1928), p. 20.
4. Israr-ud-Din, 'A Social Geography of Chitral State' (M.Sc. thesis, University of London, 1965), p. 33.
5. Sir Aurel Stein, *Serindia*, vol.-I (Oxford, 1921), p. 28. Quoted by Israr-ud-Din, 'Social Geography,' p. 32.
6. *General Staff India, Military Report*.
7. *Ibid*.
8. *Ibid*.
9. *The Imperial Gazetteer of India*, vol.-X (Oxford, 1908).
10. *General Staff India, Military Report*, pp. 50, 51.
11. Inayatullah Faizi, *Chitral*, in Urdu (Islamabad, 1992), p. 59.
12. *The Imperial Gazetteer*, p. 304.

# THE CHANGING POSITION OF WOMEN IN NORTHERN PAKISTAN: FROM AGRICULTURAL PRODUCERS TO OFF-FARM EMPLOYEES

*Hiltrud Herbers\**

## Introduction

Until the beginning of the 1970s, research institutes, relief agencies, and society in general paid little attention to women in developing countries. In fact, one might say that up to this point their traditional role was more or less taken for granted and their specific contribution to economic processes was virtually 'invisible.' This situation changed radically with the publication of Ester Boserup's study on *Women's Role in Economic Development* (1970). Since then, more emphasis has been put on the status of women, female issues, and gender relationship (Tekülve 1993; Monk & Momsen 1994).

The majority of women in developing countries live in rural areas. Studies on women in Northern Pakistan<sup>1</sup> point out that, during the last two to three decades, their position has been changing remarkably. Owing to the increase in off-farm employment and labour migration of male household members, their responsibility within agriculture has grown significantly. Today, women play a crucial role as agricultural producers. This development constitutes the first step of their changing position (York 1984; Hewitt 1989; Felmy 1993).

Recently, first signs of the next step within this process have emerged in Northern Pakistan: women who have traditionally been confined to home-based work, are now striving for off-farm employment. However, this process is taking place almost unnoticed. So far, it has been completely neglected by academic literature, perhaps because it is expected rather in urban areas than in peripheral regions such as the rural and mountainous Northern Pakistan.

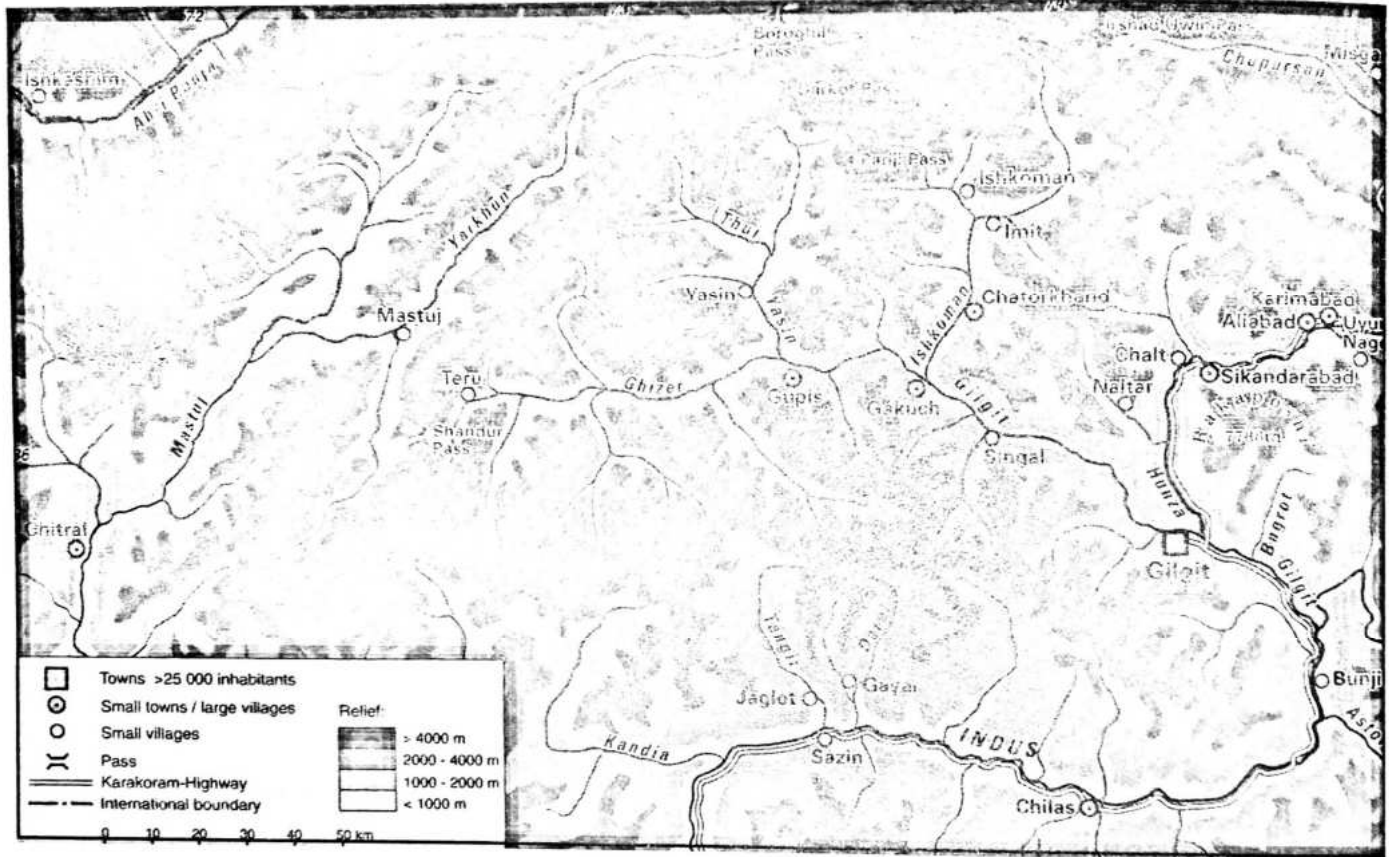
This study intends to analyse current changes, problems, and perspectives regarding female off-farm employment in the Yasin valley. Within the scope of the Third International Hindu Kush Cultural Conference the subject represents a very recent development in this region. The study area is located about 230 kilometres to the east of Chitral Town and 120 kilometres to the west of Gilgit and the Karakoram Highway (KKH) at an elevation of 2,160 to 2,750 meters above sea level (see Fig. 23.1). A gravelled road is Yasin's only link with Chitral, or with Gilgit and the KKH. Owing to the limited access to the administrative and commercial centres and to the main trade route in Northern Pakistan, Yasin is a rather peripheral place.

Most of the 27,500 inhabitants of Yasin Valley (Löhr 1993), who mainly belong to the Islamic community of the Ismailiya, work as farmers on their own land. With average annual precipitation below 200 millimetres in the valley bottom, crops can only be grown by means

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of irrigation. Today, agricultural production from crop cultivation and animal husbandry is insufficient to secure a livelihood. Therefore, on average, one male person in each household has a non-agricultural occupation in order to support the family.

**Fig. 23.1 Geographical Location of Yasin**



### Prerequisites of Female Off-farm Employment

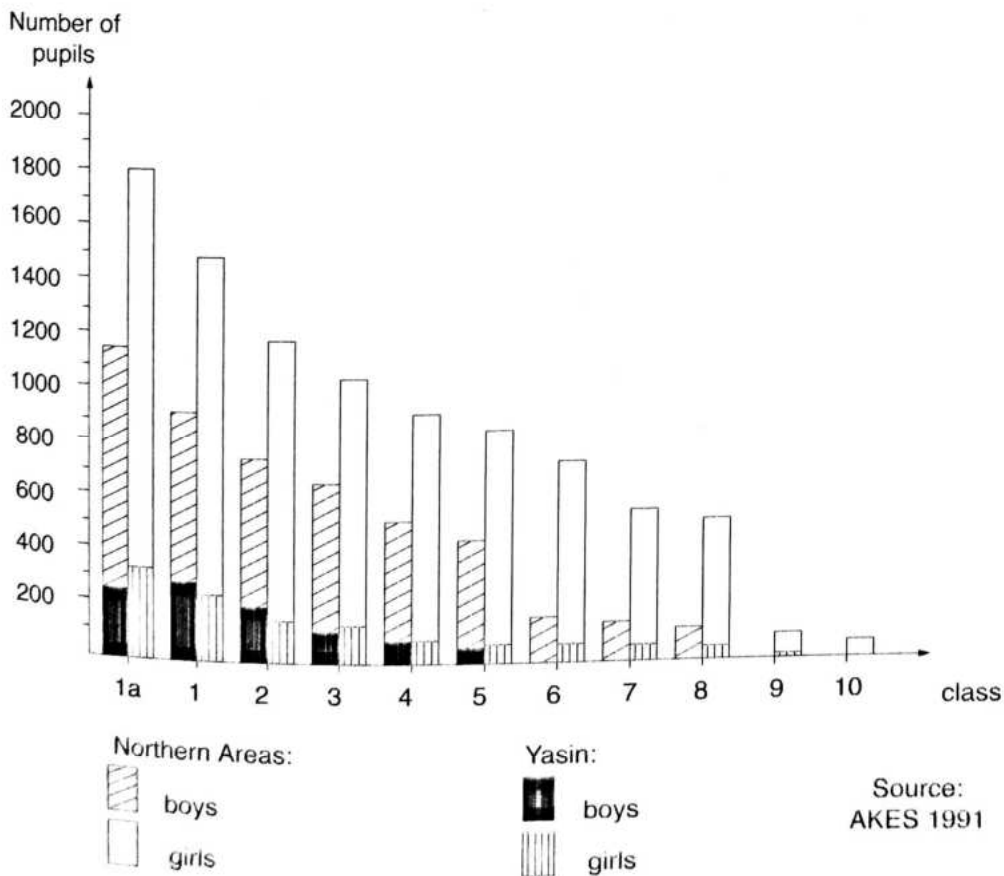
School education is one of the most important prerequisites for non-agricultural employment. The *District Census Report of Gilgit* gives a literacy rate as low as 7.1 per cent for Yasin. This figure conceals a remarkable difference between men and women: until 1981, only seven women, compared to 115 men, received a matriculation certificate, marking the successful completion of Class X of the schooling system (Government of Pakistan 1984: 52).

The main reason for this gender-specific difference in the level of literacy is the limited access of girls to governmental schools. In the Northern Areas of Pakistan, out of 73,651 pupils 62,014 (84.2 per cent) are boys and 11,637 (15.8 per cent) are girls (Mehr Dad 1992).<sup>2</sup> In order to encourage more girls to attend school, the Aga Khan Education Services (AKES), the educational institution of the Ismailiya community, particularly promotes female education. Although preference is given to girls, Diamond Jubilee Schools are open also to boys. Moreover, these schools are accessible to children of all religious groups. Owing to this particular framework, the Diamond Jubilee School system can be said to both supplement and complement the efforts of the government (AKES 1991).

Photo 23.1 Young Girls in a Diamond Jubilee Primary School in Yasin



Fig. 23.2 Number of Female and Male Pupils in Diamond Jubilee Schools in the Northern Areas of Pakistan and in Yasin (1991)



Source:  
AKES 1991

Until today, one high (since 1994), five middle, and nineteen primary Diamond Jubilee Schools have been established in Yasin, enabling girls to take advantage of the full range of the educational programme and to graduate with a matriculation certificate.<sup>3</sup> For further studies they have to leave the valley in order to go to a governmental girls college in Gilgit, Skardu, or the lowlands of Pakistan. Financial support is provided by the Development of Human Resource Programme sponsored by the AKES (AKES 1991).

The proportion of female to male pupils demonstrates the success of the Diamond Jubilee Schools. As Fig. 23.2 shows, more girls than boys are enrolled in these schools in the Northern Areas of Pakistan. Although this trend is less obvious in Yasin, the total number of pupils proves that girls (1246) outnumber boys (1096) (AKES 1991).

At present, future off-farm employment is not the main reason for girls to attend school. While the girls themselves, aside from gaining more prestige among their peers, often merely enjoy studying and meeting classmates, their parents have different interests. Since nowadays many men prefer an educated wife, parents hope to make their daughter more attractive for a future husband by sending her to school. They do not usually derive any direct benefit from their daughter's education because traditionally her marriage is arranged as soon as, or even before, she has finished school. Therefore, the husband's family, but not her parents, will profit from her taking up a job.<sup>4</sup>

As is to be expected, in promoting female education the AKES pursues aims quite different from those of the local people. Besides a general increase of literacy, it has two main objectives: first, it aims at training 'good mothers and housewives,' and second, it hopes to meet the ever-rising need for qualified professionals such as physicians, nurses, and teachers (AKES 1991: 2-3).

School education is neither the only prerequisite for female off-farm employment, nor a necessary one for all kinds of jobs. Since women in Yasin are not allowed to plan and decide for themselves, the permission of their parents or husband and parents-in-law is required. They consider the interests of the entire household, the family's honour, financial needs, and other questions.

Moreover, the observance of *purdah* rules, which regulate the seclusion of women—a common practice in Islamic countries—, has to be guaranteed during the working hours. This means that women should work neither in positions traditionally reserved for men, nor in an environment where they would have contact with men who do not belong to their family. In addition, to safeguard a woman's good reputation, the occupation should be available in the village in which her family lives so that she is able to return home every evening.

Finally, to allow a woman to leave the house for off-farm employment enough additional female household members are required within her family. These have to compensate for her absence and possibly look after her children while she is away. This prerequisite is usually only fulfilled in extended families.

### **Actual Female Off-farm Employment in Yasin**

In case all prerequisites are met, the actual supply of jobs on the local labour market determines a woman's chance to pursue a non-agricultural occupation. Current opportunities for women in Yasin are listed in Table 23.1. Women in Yasin pursue paid professions as teachers, midwives, and field coordinators, particularly within various Aga Khan institutions. Only a few women work either for the Government Health Service (as midwives or community health workers) or for the Pakistani-German research project 'Culture Area Karakorum.' The

latter was carried out between 1990 and 1996 and provided four temporary positions for women, who were employed predominantly as assistants and interpreters.

**Table 23.1 Off-farm Employment\* of Women in Yasin**

		<i>Kind of Work</i>	<i>Number of Employees</i>	<i>School</i>	<i>Origin</i>
Paid Employment	AK Education Services	-Teacher	12	+	Yasin
		-Religious Teacher	25	+	Yasin
		-Midwife (LHV)	6	+	Hunza Punial Down-country
		-Midwife (LHV)	3	-	Yasin
		-Community Health Worker	1-2 per Village	+	Yasin
		-Field Coordinator	1	+	Yasin
Honorary Occupation	AK Rural Support Programme Research Project 'CAK'	-Assistant/Interpreter	3	+	Hunza Yasin
		-Caretaker of Weather Station	1	+	Yasin
	AK Health Services	-Trained Birth Attendant	1-2 per WO	-	Yasin
		-Community Health Worker	1 per Hamlet	-	Yasin
		-Chicken Specialist	1-2 per WO	-	Yasin
		-Vegetable Specialist	1-2 per WO	-	Yasin
		-WO-cashier	46	+	Yasin
		-Tailor	?	-	Yasin

AK = Aga Khan WO = women's organization

CAK = Culture Area Karakorum + = school education

LHV = lady health visitor - = no school education

\* The following criteria were used to define off-farm employment:

—monetary income and/or

—off-farm occupation and/or

—non-agricultural occupation

Source: AKES 1991; own investigations 1992-95.

Honorary occupations are also mainly available within the Aga Khan Health Services (AKHS) and the Aga Khan Rural Support Programme (AKRSP). These programmes provide non-paid jobs for trained birth attendants, community health workers, chicken and vegetable specialists, and cashiers of the women's organizations (WOs). In addition, many women who

own a sewing machine work as tailors for other females. In contrast to their male colleagues they do not receive any salary. Their work is rather taken for granted among neighbours and relatives.

In total, female employment is very low in Yasin. In 1995, merely eighty to ninety women earned a regular income. This number even further decreases if one takes into account that several of them are not residents or native inhabitants of Yasin: some female employees are migrants from Hunza, Punial, or the lowlands of Pakistan; others, especially female teachers, are born elsewhere and came to Yasin in order to get married.<sup>5</sup>

Seasonal or permanent migration is a common response to a regionally limited supply of employment. Whereas many men from Yasin migrate to Gilgit, downcountry, and even to foreign countries (e.g., Saudi Arabia) in order to find a job, so far no woman has left Yasin for this purpose.

Female off-farm employment is a new phenomenon in Yasin. As such it is characterized by not only a small number of female employees, but also the many problems which these women have to face.

### Social Acceptance of Female Off-farm Employment

The perspectives of female employment depend on its acceptance in society. In Yasin, a rather negative conception of female off-farm employment prevails. A woman who frequently goes out is a *gucaras*, a 'gadabout.' A proverb from Yasin expresses this view:

Gus hurútuka mo hútes yâre barkát	If a woman stays at home, blessing is under her feet;
Hir gučarika ne hútes yâre barkát	If a man goes out, blessing is under his feet.
Gus gučaruka hâlum barkát hóla dúčuúmbu	If a woman goes out [gads about], she carries the blessing out of the house;
Hir hurútika ne saja kam maimi.	If a man stays at home, his status might deteriorate.

As this proverb indicates, female off-farm employment is believed to run counter to a woman's 'natural' disposition and duties. This belief results in an often negative, if not outright hostile, attitude toward women pursuing an occupation outside their household or farm. Those who still venture to do so will meet with disapproval even among close relatives, male as well as female.

Despite this overall negative attitude towards female off-farm employment, there are differences in acceptability depending on the kind of work a woman does. As a rule, the greater the mobility and spatial range which is required to pursue an employment and the more frequent the interactions with men, the less is a woman's employment accepted by local people. For instance, compared to field coordinators or midwives<sup>6</sup> female teachers have a better reputation.<sup>7</sup>

Family status and age are other factors affecting the acceptance of female employment. Being married is advantageous insofar as it provides a socially acknowledged status. Furthermore, women having a job are generally accepted when they are above the age of 40, that is, past their reproductive period, when they no longer endanger the honour of their families.<sup>8</sup>

Owing to an insufficient supply of jobs in Yasin, men and women compete for certain jobs (e.g., teachers, tailors). This condition lessens the men's willingness to accept female off-farm occupation. Moreover, few men will approve of their wives earning a higher income than themselves since this would question their role as the family's breadwinner.

Although, in general, people in Yasin disapprove of female employment for moral reasons there are more and more families who nevertheless tolerate it out of necessity. Since subsistence agriculture is not sufficient for making a living, a regular income is indispensable for almost all of the households. Particularly families with no or only a low non-agricultural income are increasingly less reluctant to allow a female household member to pursue a paid job.

In 1984, the first WOs of the AKRSP were founded throughout the Northern Areas of Pakistan. Today, forty-six WOs with 1532 members operate in Yasin. These institutions have helped to reduce women's isolation and provide a forum for discussing female issues. In addition, their weekly meetings contribute much to the growing acceptance of women in public places.

The establishment of several honorary occupations within the AKRSP and the AKHS has similar effects. For the first time, women have taken over new tasks and responsibilities apart from their traditional roles. So far, mainly elderly women pursue honorary occupations or are members of the WOs. Yet, they have an important impact as pioneers for the future employment of women of all age groups.

Despite the many difficulties working women have to face in terms of social acceptability, young women especially intend to pursue a profession. Hence, the question arises as to what the motives for their decision are. School education provides girls with an opportunity to get to know a world beyond the narrow confines of what has traditionally been regarded their domain. They learn for instance mathematics, Urdu or English, and other subjects. Except for home economics, most subjects are only of minor or indirect advantage for household and agricultural work. It is understandable, therefore, why nowadays more and more women are seeking employment which matches their educational level.

While old women have more freedom to visit different places, younger ones never travel farther than to a neighbouring village. Long distances are only covered occasionally—such as if a woman goes to visit the parental home located far away, attends a ceremony on the occasion of a visit of the religious leader, His Highness Karim Aga Khan al-Husseini in the area (1962 Yasin, 1988 Gupis), or falls seriously ill and has to be taken to a hospital in Singal or Gilgit.<sup>9</sup> Off-farm employment might give her more opportunities to see places she heard about at school, on the radio, or from male relatives who worked there.

### **Effects of the Intra-household Organization of Labour on Female Employment**

The subsistence economy of Yasin is labour intensive and characterized by a high work load. Every household needs a minimum of two women to perform all daily tasks: one for food preparation and housekeeping, another one mainly for animal tending. In addition, during the summer season, garden work and fieldwork has to be done by women. The minimum of females required in a household increases with the size of the farm (livestock, fields, gardens), the number of children, and the intensity of the utilization of summer pastures (Herbers 1995).

Depending on the number of working hours, female off-farm employment causes a complete or partial loss of a woman who otherwise would do her share of household tasks. Owing to the gender-specific division of labour this gap can only be filled by other females. Even if

there are enough males in the household, the inflexibility of the system does not allow them to substitute for a woman.

Only few households can spare a 'pair of female hands' without negative consequences on the intra-household organization of labour. In this regard, extended families have an advantage over small or nuclear families. For the latter, it is almost impossible to compensate for the loss of a female household member since labour and time saving technologies for female tasks are not available or applicable (owing, for instance, to the lack of electricity in the Yasin Valley). Therefore, women in small households who want to pursue off-farm employment have to resort to one of the following strategies:

- Firstly, they can try to find employment which also allows them to take care of their duties in the household. Women work, for instance, as paid tailors, an occupation which enables them to organize their working hours so that it does not interfere with their daily tasks on the farm. The problem with this solution is, however, that these women have a much higher work load.
- Unfortunately, it is not possible to hire labourers for female household and agricultural tasks. The arrangement of a marriage is the only possibility to provide the household with an additional female labourer, that is, a new daughter-in-law. She can take over the duties of her sister-in-law who is striving for off-farm employment. Yet, this solution depends on the availability of an unmarried son of a suitable age within the household.
- To abandon the local subsistence economy would be another strategy to give women the opportunity to pursue a job. However, as long as agricultural production is indispensable for securing the family's livelihood and women play a pivotal role in maintaining it, at present it is highly unlikely that agriculture will be given up in favour of female off-farm employment.

## Conclusion

Until recently, none in Yasin questioned that off-farm employment is an exclusive domain of men and that women stay and work at home. At present, this view is undergoing a remarkable change. Owing to improved access to schools and colleges more and more women have the desire to find a job outside their households. There are, however, a number of obstacles, social as well as economic, to female off-farm employment.

In spite of these factors it seems likely that the activities of female pioneers (as well as the general infrastructural progress in areas such as transportation, electricity, etc.) will, in the long run, lead to the spread of female off-farm employment. This process is necessary for not only helping young women develop their individual skills but also reducing the shortage of female staff, particularly in health institutions (Operations Evaluation Department 1990).

## NOTES

1. The general term Northern Pakistan refers to the northern part of the country. In contrast, the Northern Areas of Pakistan represent an administrative unit consisting of the five districts Ghizer, Gilgit, Diamir, Baltistan, and Ghanche. Ghizer District is further divided into the subdivisions Gupis/Yasin and Punial/Ishkoman.
2. With 9077 male pupils (95.6 %) versus 421 female pupils (4.4 %), the difference is even greater in Ghizer District where seven high, fourteen middle, and thirty-seven primary schools have been set up by the government.

- These include one middle school and five primary schools for girls. None of them is located in Yasin (Mehr Dad 1992).
3. In villages which have neither nearby middle or high schools nor large numbers of female pupils, coaching classes are arranged. The most talented girls of the Northern Areas of Pakistan, selected on a competitive basis, can get secondary-level school education (above Class VII) at the Aga Khan Academy in Karimabad (Hunza) or at the Aga Khan School at Sherqilla, Punial). Both are model schools, but only the first one provides hostel facilities for eighty girls (AKES 1991; Mehr Dad 1992).
  4. York (1984) related the high drop-out rate of girls to the low benefit of their formal education. School fees (in 1993 monthly Rs 12–15) might be another reason for parents to remove girls from school. In particular, families with more than one schoolchild are not always able to bear this financial burden.
  5. The same process took place in the Hunza valley. At the beginning, female teachers were brought in from outside, i.e., from downcountry (Felmy 1993). Today, women from Hunza not only work as teachers in their native valley but also migrate to other places like Yasin, for example, to work as midwives (see Table 23.1).
  6. Field coordinators travel from village to village to supervise the women's organizations (WOs); midwives visit female patients during pregnancy or for delivery at home whenever they are called, i.e., day or night.
  7. Similar patterns of social acceptance of female employment are found in Punjab: home-based income generating activities (handicrafts such as sewing, knitting, embroidery) are generally welcomed. Teaching is less accepted but is still considered preferable to the work of nurses or secretaries (Klein & Nestvogel 1984).
  8. In Yasin, all three local midwives who work for the Government Health Service are above the age of 40.
  9. In 1993, the author asked twenty-one women about their travel habits. Only eight of them have ever been to Gilgit. Seven came here for medical treatment, one accompanied her husband who ran a show in town.

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- These include one middle school and five primary schools for girls. None of them is located in Yasin (Mehr Dad 1992).
3. In villages which have neither nearby middle or high schools nor large numbers of female pupils, coaching classes are arranged. The most talented girls of the Northern Areas of Pakistan, selected on a competitive basis, can get secondary-level school education (above Class VII) at the Aga Khan Academy in Karimabad (Hunza) or at the Aga Khan School at Sherqilla, Punial). Both are model schools, but only the first one provides hostel facilities for eighty girls (AKES 1991; Mehr Dad 1992).
  4. York (1984) related the high drop-out rate of girls to the low benefit of their formal education. School fees (in 1993 monthly Rs 12–15) might be another reason for parents to remove girls from school. In particular, families with more than one schoolchild are not always able to bear this financial burden.
  5. The same process took place in the Hunza valley. At the beginning, female teachers were brought in from outside, i.e., from downcountry (Felmy 1993). Today, women from Hunza not only work as teachers in their native valley but also migrate to other places like Yasin, for example, to work as midwives (see Table 23.1).
  6. Field coordinators travel from village to village to supervise the women's organizations (WOs); midwives visit female patients during pregnancy or for delivery at home whenever they are called, i.e., day or night.
  7. Similar patterns of social acceptance of female employment are found in Punjab: home-based income generating activities (handicrafts such as sewing, knitting, embroidery) are generally welcomed. Teaching is less accepted but is still considered preferable to the work of nurses or secretaries (Klein & Nestvogel 1984).
  8. In Yasin, all three local midwives who work for the Government Health Service are above the age of 40.
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## HINDU KUSH OR MARDUM KUSH (HUMAN KILLER)

*Sardar-ul-Mulk\**

The land-locked region of Chitral District falls in the second position of health registered under development after the Kohistan District of Hazara Division, NWFP. Kohistan District, with approximately the same population and area, has fewer health facilities and medical manpower. However, Kohistan has better road communications with the rest of Pakistan all year round. Owing to difficult communication within the district of Chitral and impossible communication during the winter with the outside world, many precious lives are lost. The worst affected are the low priority groups of mother and child, and the Kalash minority. During the winter months they prefer to die near their hearths rather than to be carried uncomfortably on wooden cots to the nearest jeepable road. This journey could take some days and is beyond the means of many.

### **Specialist Medical Resource Development—A Crying Need**

The above-mentioned natural barriers also affect adversely the availability of specialist treatment facilities in Chitral. In Chitral District only one local ophthalmologist is working and nine posts of specialist doctors have been lying vacant for many years. The non-availability of specialist doctors and modern diagnostic facilities has led to an increase in mortality, particularly in the mother and child category. Specialist doctors from other districts cannot be forced to serve in Chitral. The only way to overcome this serious health problem is to train young, talented Chitrali doctors for specialization in surgery, gynaecology, and medicine immediately in Europe. An appeal is lodged with the Hindu Kush conference to arrange a sponsor for such training. A bond of service could be obtained from these doctors (to be selected on merit) for a minimum of ten years' service in government hospitals within Chitral.

To achieve the national and international objectives of 'health for all by the year 2000' the following measures should be adopted:

### **Primary Health Education through Primary School Teachers, Religious School Teachers, and Imam Masjid by Means of a Mobile Pilot Project**

Community participation is sought for a team of volunteer educationists, health workers, and social workers. Short partial orientation will be imparted to the target group on health

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\* Retired director general health, Govt of NWFP. Currently honorary district vice-chairman of the Red Crescent Society of Chitral (all donations should be routed through the secretary, Pakistan Red Crescent Society, Red Crescent House, Dabgari Gardens, Peshawar).

promotion and prevention with special emphasis on child survival and safe motherhood. The topics shall include Extended Poly-immunization (EPI), control of diarrhoeal disease (CDD), control of communicable diseases (CCD), control of iodine deficiency, nutritional education, awareness about priority diseases and the major killers, control of malaria, tuberculosis and leprosy, care of the sick at home and hospital, safe water for drinking, village sanitation, domestic toilets, disposal of household refuse; measures against destruction of the ecology and pollution; ventilation and lighting of houses, maximum use of sunshine and fresh air; population planning and AIDS awareness; and measures against drug addiction and rehabilitation of the addicts. For the success of this project volunteers are needed from across the whole of the Hindu Kush. Transport and portable audiovisual aids are needed for mass communication. This component shall be totally free. The teacher orientation shall include an important component of checking the students at the time of admission for squinting and trachoma, as well as detection advice about preventable disorders like defective vision, defective hearing, early signs of dental decay and sore throat and heart trouble, physical and speech defects, and marital subnormality. Government primary schools total 477 (male schools 464, female schools thirteen); there are 842 teachers for the male primary schools and 247 for the female schools and the total number of students in the district are 24,446.

The number of religious schools and NGO schools and the *imams masjid* will be determined after a survey.

### **Safe Motherhood and Child Survival Unit**

It is proposed that the above unit be started in Drosh where a building at the cost of Rs 8,500,000 is available free of cost by the organizer. This building, however, needs some alteration, modification, and furnishing along with the provision of equipment for emergency treatment and operation. Service of a qualified pediatrician is available free of charge. Services of a volunteer midwife, preferably an expatriate, are needed. Some local, experienced staff could be employed. These services, through the mobile wing, could be extended to the Kalash valleys, particularly for childbirth cases. At the centre, health education will be imparted to mothers, women of childbearing age (CBAs), trained birth attendants (TBAs), government lady health visitors (LHVs), female medical technicians (FMTs), and female school teachers.

### **Public Health Laboratory Diagnostic Centre**

This service is needed for the proper diagnosis of diseases. It should have facilities for women of CBA, TBAs, LHVs, and FMTs.

Lack of these services locally is one detrimental factor preventing specialist doctors from serving in Chitral. Further, the diagnostic centre could be a great help to the community and render visits to Peshawar unnecessary. These services shall be free for the underprivileged and the minority groups but user charges shall be levied on those who can afford them. International medical agencies are requested for the supply of equipment. Surplus hospital equipment may be donated by the European community and Japan. The equipment should include a microbiological laboratory; a blood bank, including AIDS and hepatitis screening facilities; equipment for the prevention and treatment of heart disease, tuberculosis foetal examination, and the prevention of dental decay and preservation of eyesight and hearing, particularly in schoolchildren.

## **Community Participatory Development**

Community participation shall be achieved by involving and motivating the existing established community organizations, as well as village organizations (VOs) and women's organizations (WOs) of the Aga Khan Rural Support Network and Chitral Area Development Project (CADP). For sustainability, a service user charge and health insurance schemes shall be introduced. The local community will be involved in all phases of planning, implementation, supervision, and monitoring. Community leaders have been involved in a participatory committee in the project preparation. Such committees comprise of educationists, health workers, and social workers. These committees will function from the village, union council, *tehsil*, and district levels.

## **Funding Sources**

Multi-donor financial support is requested of the World Bank, WHO, UNICEF, CIDA, NORAD, SAP, GTZ, ODA, ECC, Edhi Trust, Aga Khan Foundation, JAICA, Overseas Pakistani Organization, Shaukat Khanam Memorial Trust, Hindu Kush Society, Red Crescent Organization, Society for the Prevention of Blindness, NWFP TB and Diabetes Organization, and CADP. The project could be split for funding purposes.

## **Sponsoring Agency**

The organizer, Dr Sardar-ul-Mulk, is a public health physician, health management consultant, and pediatrician. He was the first doctor from Chitral and has served there for more than twenty years out of a total of thirty-five years of service in the provincial health department. On 10 February 1995 he retired from government service on superannuation. His last assignment was as director general of health, NWFP, Pakistan. He has dedicated his remaining days to the health development of Chitral primarily through health promotion and prevention. He has a close liaison with the UNICEF, the Aga Khan Health Services (AKHS), Pakistan Health Foundation, and TB and Diabetes Association. He is in the process of reactivating the Chitral branches of the Red Crescent Society, TB and Diabetes Organization, and the Society for the Prevention of Blindness. He has succeeded in opening branches of these organizations in Chitral, Drosh, Garam Chashma, and Buni. He works as honorary district vice-chairman of the Red Crescent Society of Chitral.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy**

Internally, the project will be monitored through regular reports of activity and returns to the Red Crescent Society, government departments of health and education, district administration, and donor agencies. The project will be open to external evaluation through the agencies mentioned above.

## **Auditing**

The project will be supervised and audited by the auditors of the Red Crescent Organization.

### Logistics Needed

The project requires a four-wheel-drive vehicle for mobile activity, portable audiovisual aids and public-address system with generator, furniture for the office and the child and mother survival units, and equipment for the diagnostic centre and public health laboratories, as well as funds for the renovation of the building and employment of the salaried staff and recurring costs during the initial phases till the project becomes sustainable through income generation and community participation. This last component is necessary to achieve the long-term goals of reducing mortality.

### Duration of the Project and Period of Implementation

This pilot project is to be of two years duration. Its implementations will start immediately after a firm commitment from any of the donors. The following chart of activities is proposed. Depending upon resources, the project component of health education can be launched separately and independently from the mother-child survival unit and diagnostic centre.

#### PHASE I (1995-6)

1. This involves initiation of primary health education in the primary schools of Chitral, Drosh, and Garam Chashma *tehsils*, along with the purchase and development of the necessary teaching material and their translation into the local dialect. Letters of credit for the diagnostic centre, public health laboratory, and essential life saving equipment for the mother and child survival units will be established. Qualified staff will be inducted and given orientation.
2. The existing community organizations, VOs, and WOs of the Aga Khan Rural Support Programme (AKRSP) and the (CADP) shall be utilized to avoid any duplication.
3. Renovation of the building in Drosh and setting up of a project office on rent in Chitral is also planned.
4. Orientation of the girls school teachers shall commence first and that of the boys school teachers next.

#### PHASE II (1996-7) includes:

1. preparation and submission of report of activities for the past year for evaluation to the Government of Pakistan and the donor agencies;
2. extension of the project to the *tehsils* of Mastuj, Buni, Torkhow, and Mulikhow in Upper Chitral;
3. full activity of the mother and child survival units with gradual weaning of external support as the project starts generating income;
4. preparation and publication of the final report;
5. evaluation and its possible replications in other districts of the NWFP, Pakistan.

**Target Dates**

- a. Planned commencement date: 1 January 1996
- b. Planned completion date:
  - Phase I: first year: December 1996
  - Phase II: second year: December 1997

**Total Cost of the Project**

Phase I:	1995-6	Rs 2,429,000
Phase II:	1996-7	Rs 9,370,000
Total:	Rs 11,298,500 (two years pilot project)	

**Cost for Phase I (1995-6)**

	Per Month	Per Year
Salaries		
Health education officer	Rs 7,000	Rs 84,000
Female medical technician tutor	Rs 5,000	Rs 60,000
Midwife/LHV tutor	Rs 5,000	Rs 60,000
Motivator	Rs 2,000	Rs 24,000
Driver	Rs 2,500	Rs 30,000
<i>Chowkidar</i> (guard)	Rs 1,600	Rs 19,000
Cleaner	Rs 1,500	Rs 18,000
Personal assistant-cum-computer operator	Rs 4,000	Rs 650,000
One four-wheel-drive jeep	Rs 4,000	Rs 500,000
Renovation of building		Rs 500,000
Fuel and electricity charges		Rs 100,000
Computer with printer software		Rs 100,500
Electronic typewriter		Rs 100,500
Audiovisual aids		Rs 225,000
Photostat® machine		Rs 225,000
Office furniture		Rs 50,000
Health education literature		Rs 25,000
Supplies and stationary		Rs 25,000
Rent for the Chitral branch		Rs 60,000
	Total	Rs 2,429,000

**Equipment to be purchased for Phase II**

Laboratory instruments	Rs 200,0000
X-ray 300 milliangstroms	Rs 500,000
Dental unit	Rs 500,000
Heart monitor	Rs 250,000
Oxygen concentrator	Rs 1,000,000
Infant incubator	Rs 500,000
electrocardiogram machine: stress miction of defibrillator	Rs 2,500,000
Labour room furniture and linen	Rs 500,000

Blood bank equipment	Rs 500,000
During second year a second service vehicle and ambulance	Rs 2,000,000
Annual Recurring Charges: Fuel for transport	Rs 120,000
Electricity and winter heating	Rs 100,000
Essential drugs	Rs 100,000
Replacement and repairs of equipment	Rs 50,000
Contingencies and unforeseen expenditure	Rs 100,000
Repair and replacement of vehicle spares	Rs 100,000
Management by the Red Crescent (auditing and travel assistance)	Rs 100,000
<i>Total</i>	<i>Rs 9,370,000</i>
<i>Grand Total</i>	<i>Rs 11,799,000</i>

# PUNIAL: A MOUNTAINOUS TRANSIT VALLEY IN A CHANGING REGIONAL CONTEXT

*Reinhard Fischer\**

## **Introduction**

From around 1800 until 1972 Punial was ruled by the Burushe family of Chitrali origin as a semi-autonomous principality. Now it is a *tehsil* in the Ghizer District of the Northern Areas of Pakistan. So Punial was in its present borders a political-administrative territorial entity for the last two centuries. During this period the political and socio-economic framework of Northern Pakistan has changed dramatically three times. The three changes are marked firstly by the advent of British colonial power in the second half of the nineteenth century, secondly by the end of British colonial power and Pakistan's independence in 1947, and thirdly by the further integration of these territories into Pakistan in the early 1970s through the dismissal of local rulers and the building of the Karakoram Highway (KKH), linking the Karakoram mountains with the Pakistani lowlands. The purpose of this study is to show the effects these changes had on Punial's socio-economic development.

## **Punial as a Transit Valley**

Punial is situated on both banks of the Gilgit River west of Gilgit town and comprises also the lower part of the Ishkoman River. Along the southern bank of the Gilgit River there is the old trade route from Gilgit through Punial to Gupis and across the Shandur Pass to Chitral. North of Gupis there is the valley of Yasin, a powerful political centre in the nineteenth century with firm links to Chitral. Thus, Punial is on a through road, and is a thoroughfare or transit valley between the regional centre of Gilgit in the east and Gupis, Yasin, and Chitral in the west.

To the north there is Ishkoman, accessible through Punial on a road along the Ishkoman River. Punial's southern border towards Darel, now part of Diamir District of the Northern Areas, is the only natural border fixed by a topographical feature, the watershed between the Gilgit River and the Indus. There is no road but a track from Punial to Darel.

## **The Pre-colonial Period**

Shah Burush, the founder of the Burushe dynasty that ruled Punial until 1972, was installed as ruler of Punial around 1800. He was the grandson of Shah Khushwaqt of Yasin and throughout

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the first half of the nineteenth century Punial had close links with Yasin.<sup>1</sup> Punial did not emerge as a fully independent state but the Burushe *rajas* in Punial acted on behalf of their powerful Khushwaqt relatives in Yasin. In 1827, Sulaiman Shah of Yasin appointed Azad Khan of Punial as ruler in Gilgit, but in 1834 Tahir Shah, ruler of Nager, attacked Gilgit and killed Azad Khan.<sup>2</sup> In 1842, when the Sikhs had taken Gilgit, the legendary Gauhar Aman of Yasin stopped the Sikhs on Punial's eastern border. So Punial was the eastern outpost of the Khushwaqt territory. Gauhar Aman managed to drive the Dogras, who had taken over Sikh positions, out of Gilgit, but for the people of Gilgit and Punial his rule was devastating, because he sold many of them, including his own relatives from the Burushe family, into slavery.<sup>3</sup> Isa Bahadur, grandson of Shah Burush and then nominal ruler of Punial fled in fear of Gauhar Aman to Kashmir, where he offered his services to the Dogras. In return the Dogras gave Punial as a hereditary fief (*jagir*) to Isa Bahadur in 1860 when they recaptured Gilgit and took Punial for the first time. The Burushe family also received two smaller *jagirs* near Srinagar and was thus made a loyal subject of the *maharaja* of Kashmir. Kashmiri troops were posted at Sherqilla in Punial, and Punial's western border towards Yasin was the westernmost border of Kashmiri territory. But it was not a peaceful border as Kashmiri troops, supported by Isa Bahadur, attacked Yasin in 1863. In 1866 the *mehtar* of Chitral led his troops through Punial trying in vain to capture Gilgit; the following year, Mir Wali of Yasin attacked Punial. Punial in this pre-colonial period is described as 'a bone of contention,'<sup>4</sup> meaning insecurity for the inhabitants. They had to retreat every night into fortified villages.<sup>5</sup> There were only eight settlements in Punial in this pre-colonial period.

### The Advent of British Colonial Power

The British interest in the area that is now known as the Northern Areas of Pakistan was the result of their fear of a possible Russian attack across the Pamir, Hindu Kush, and Karakoram mountains. This Anglo-Russian rivalry euphemistically called 'the 'great game' led the British into the area.<sup>6</sup> The method used to exert influence was 'indirect rule' in cooperation with the *maharaja* of Kashmir.

Ever since the establishment of the first British agency in Gilgit in 1877, the British tried to incorporate the territories west of Punial, namely Yasin and Chitral, into the Kashmiri-British sphere of interest. When Biddulph, the first British agent in Gilgit, visited Mehtar Aman-ul-Mulk in Chitral in 1879, the *latter* told him that he still considered Punial a part of Chitral, but that he was willing to give up his claim on Punial in exchange for a suitable subsidy.<sup>7</sup> This implied that Punial was still a 'bone of contention.'

Biddulph was completely taken by surprise when, in 1880, Pehlewan Bahadur of Yasin attacked Punial and tried to advance towards Gilgit. While they were still besieging the fort in Sherqilla, in Punial, the Yasinis learned that Yasin had been attacked from Chitral. Thus, they withdrew and the Kashmiri-British position in Gilgit and Punial was saved. All the villages in Punial except Sherqilla were heavily fined by the political agent for their alleged cooperation with Pehlewan Bahadur and the attackers from Yasin.<sup>8</sup> Nevertheless, this incident led to the closure of the British political agency in 1881.

Colonel Lockhart, who visited Gilgit, Punial, and Chitral in 1885 and 1886 recommended the re-establishment of the British agency in Gilgit,<sup>9</sup> and in 1889 it was re-established to stay until 1947. Now it was British policy to keep Kashmir's influence in Punial as low as possible without challenging Punial's legal status as a Kashmiri *jagir*. Kashmiri troops were withdrawn from Punial and Raja Akbar Khan, son and successor of Isa Bahadur, was given rifles and

money to put up a levy force. As his father had been loyal to the Dogras, now Akbar Khan was loyal to the British and Puniali levies supported the British in Hunza in 1891, in Chilas in 1893, and in Chitral in 1895.

During the Chitral siege in 1895, the British realized the strategic importance of the road running through Punial when Colonel Kelly led troops from Gilgit through Punial across the Shandur Pass to Chitral.<sup>10</sup> In the following years, the road was improved and military depots were installed in Gulapur, Singal, and Gakuch in Punial. This route was never used to bring supplies into Gilgit, but it was an important line of communication, especially during the winter, when the Shandur Pass is still mostly passable for horses and pedestrians but the Burzil Pass between Gilgit and Srinagar is closed.

### The Impact of British Colonial Power on Punial

The British colonial penetration affected Punial in two respects: the establishment of security and the integration into an emerging market.

The administrative reshuffle in the aftermath of the Chitral siege meant that the territories west of Punial, that is, Yasin and Kuh-Ghizer, were also, like Punial, administered from Gilgit. So Punial had lost its role as a border region. Settlement was no longer restricted to fortified villages and the pattern of settlement still observed today with houses scattered throughout the cultivated land could emerge. The number of settlements increased from eight to thirty in the colonial period.

Only in the south, towards Darel, Punial bordered territories that were not part of the Gilgit Agency. The British had no intention of incorporating the acephalous societies of Yaghestan (the Land of Rebels)<sup>11</sup> into the Gilgit Agency since the latter were seen not as a menace but as a nuisance. Since 1866, Darel paid an annual tribute to the *maharaja* of Kashmir, which was paid through the *raja* of Punial, and until 1947 the *rajahs* of Punial acted several times as mediators between the British and Darel. The British were monitoring Punial's relations with Darel,<sup>12</sup> but this relationship never jeopardized British control over Punial.<sup>13</sup>

The second aspect in which the colonial power influenced Punial was by integrating it into an emerging market. Before the British took control of the region most of the inhabitants lived as subsistence farmers. This is illustrated by an episode of 1880, when a Badakhshani prince fled to Gilgit with a party of sixty-three persons. The British political agent in Gilgit, Biddulph, was unable to acquire enough food for these people locally, and in defiance of the orders of his superiors he had to send the party to Srinagar.<sup>14</sup>

The deployment of foreign troops in the region and the difficulty of bringing in supplies from Kashmir across the Burzil Pass created a local demand and market for grain. In 1889, the *raja* of Punial agreed to supply 250 *maunds* (9.33 t) of grain per annum at a fixed rate to the army.<sup>15</sup> So Punial became a grain exporter. Unfortunately, we do not know how the quantity of grain supplied by the *raja* of Punial developed, but we do know that in the mid-1930s he sold about 1000 *maunds* of grain on the Gilgit market.<sup>16</sup> The total dependency of the grain market on the army as the main buyer is illustrated by the fact that the price of wheat fell from 4 rupees per *maund* to 1 rupee in 1935 due to the withdrawal of Kashmiri troops in connection with the lease of the Gilgit Agency.<sup>17</sup>

The *raja* acquired the grain in the form of taxes (*malia*) from the *zamindar*. In order to increase his tax revenue, the *raja* allotted land to immigrants and Punialis. The immigrants came mostly from the south, from Darel and other parts of Yaghestan, but also from the west. The British political agents were monitoring the immigration of Darelis with suspicion<sup>18</sup> but

since the ultimate aim, the increased production of grain, was in the British interest, never hindered the *raja*.

The linguistic situation in Punial today is a result of immigration. The majority (approximately 85 %) speak Shina, the lingua franca in Punial and in Gilgit. The Puniali Shina is close to Gilgiti Shina and slightly influenced by Khowar, the language of Ghizer and Chitral.<sup>19</sup> Some of the Shina speakers are descendants of people who migrated from Darel, Chilas Astor and Bagrot into Punial. The linguistic minorities in Punial are all immigrants. Gujari speaking people migrated from the south mostly via Darel and Tangir into Punial. Kilodja speakers came from Kandia.<sup>20</sup> Burushaski speakers came in the 1940s from Hunza to the village of Golodas in Punial. Khowar speakers came from Chitral and Kuh-Ghizer. Most of these linguistic minorities are found in settlements that were established in the colonial period where the *raja* allotted plots of land to immigrants in exchange for taxes. Sherqilla is the only old village with a large non-Shina speaking community because it was the *raja*'s residence and his household employed many immigrants.<sup>21</sup>

In addition to the *raja*, the *zamindar* population of Punial also started to market their surplus in Gilgit. In 1914 and 1935, the people of Punial were not very keen to join the Gilgit Scouts.<sup>22</sup> One reason is that they did not depend, like the people of Hunza, on the possibility of a cash income through enrollment, but they were able to produce and sell a surplus of grain.<sup>23</sup> From 1935 onwards part of the tax to the *raja* had to be payed in cash,<sup>24</sup> so every *zamindar* household had to sell part of their surplus.

### **The End of British Rule, Pakistan's Independence, and the Impact on Punial**

When British rule ended and through partition India and Pakistan emerged as two independent states, the still unresolved problem of Kashmir came on the agenda. The Gilgit Agency, which was not Kashmiri territory but under Kashmiri suzerainty, was part of the disputed territory. In Gilgit, the Gilgit Scouts arrested Brigadier Ghansar Singh, the *maharaja*'s governor, and opted to join Pakistan.<sup>25</sup>

The *raja* of Punial was de jure a *jagirdar* of the *maharaja* and first supported the latter's governor.<sup>26</sup> Later, he also opted for Pakistan and his family lost the two *jagirs* near Srinagar, but kept control over Punial.<sup>27</sup>

The internal situation in Punial did not change directly through Pakistan's independence. The *raja* still ruled and collected taxes from the *zamindar*. He continued to sell 1000 *maund* of grain per year on the Gilgit market in the 1950s and 1960s.<sup>28</sup>

But change occurred indirectly through improvement in transportation and education. In 1949, the first jeep came to Gilgit and in 1953 to Punial. Shops emerged in the villages that were formerly supplied by peripatetic traders. At the end of the colonial period there was only one primary school in Punial. In 1948, five Aga Khan Diamond Jubilee Schools opened in Punial.<sup>29</sup>

The *zamindars* were frustrated that their position vis-à-vis the *raja* was still very weak and in 1951 there was a tax revolt led by a former tax collector.<sup>30</sup> The *raja* could suppress the revolt with police forces from Gilgit but he had to reduce the tax burden by granting partial exemptions. The *zamindars* had gained new perspectives through increased contact with the lowlands and education. They were no longer willing to accept the *raja*'s autocratic rule but they had to wait until 1972 for a major change.

## Administrative Reform and the KKH

In August 1972, the then president of Pakistan, Z.A. Bhutto, dismissed the *raja* of Punial and other local rulers like the *mir* of Nager and abolished the agency system. Districts were established and Punial became a *tehsil* in the Gilgit District administered by a *tehsildar*. A tax in cash was fixed on the basis of the 1935 tax list but in 1974 all taxes for farmers were abolished. The *numberdars* or village headmen who were hitherto appointed by the *raja* were now elected by the villagers. The *zamindars* saw this development as a liberation.

Another important event of the early 1970s was the construction of the KKH, which connects the Karakoram mountains with the Pakistani lowlands. It was completed up to the Chinese border in 1978. Many goods and ideas came on this road into the mountains<sup>31</sup> but the most important commodity since the early 1970s was subsidized grain from the Pakistani lowlands. Within a few years Punial developed from a grain exporting area into a grain importing area. Today, half of the grain consumed in Punial is imported to feed twice as many people as in 1972.<sup>32</sup> The availability of subsidized grain enabled the farmers to give up difficult plots in the higher parts of the *nallahs* outside the villages.<sup>33</sup> But it increased the need for a cash income. Only few households can sell enough fruits, nuts, or meat to cover the expenditures. The preferred strategy is to seek off-farm employment. The army is the most important employer. The decision to re-establish the Ghizer District in 1989 created 300 jobs in different offices in the district headquarters in Gakuch Pain in Punial.<sup>34</sup> Since the road from Gilgit to Gakuch was made truckable, the bazaar in Gakuch Pain grew into an important regional one attracting traders from outside Punial. Nevertheless, unemployment especially among educated young people is seen as a major problem in Punial.

Before the construction of the KKH, Punial was privileged by its proximity and good links with Gilgit. Now the focus of development has shifted to valleys along the KKH, like Hunza,<sup>35</sup> which has better market access and more visiting tourists than Punial, which is off the KKH. The Punialis hope that the improvement of the road through their valley as part of a road from Gilgit, via Punial, Ishkoman, and Wakhan in Afghanistan to Tajikistan would bring benefits for them.

## Summary

Each of the described changes in the regional context has increased Punial's connection with the world outside the valley. The population has increased tenfold in this century.<sup>36</sup> The standard of living has improved. Educational and health facilities are now widely available. The people in Punial are less vulnerable to epidemics and can cope better with natural hazards through technical facilities. But new dependencies have emerged. The price of wheat, transportation costs and the ability and willingness of the Government of Pakistan to provide jobs in the public sector are of vital importance for them. But decisions on these matters are made outside Punial and are beyond their control.

## NOTES

1. Biddulph 1880: opp. 155 gives a genealogy of the Khushwaqte and Burushe families. A copy of a genealogy made in Kashmir for Raja Akbar Khan in 1908 was kindly made available to the author by the *raja's* family.
2. Leitner 1895: 70.
3. Schomberg 1935: 259.

4. Biddulph 1880: 31.
5. Drew 1875: 410–14.
6. Cf. Keay 1979.
7. Biddulph's report on the meeting can be found in IO L/P&S/7/21: 1366.
8. Gilgit Diary (GD) for the week 1 to 7 Jan. 1881 in IO L/P&S/7/27: 1486.
9. Lockhart & Woodthorpe 1889.
10. The official report was published by Robertson 1898. Lieutenant Beynon's account under the title 'With Kelly to Chitral' is in IO MSS EurD 830.
11. Staley 1969 shows the distinction between acephalous 'republics,' including Darel in the south and centrally governed principalities or 'rajaships,' like Punial in the north.
12. In 1905, Assistant Political Agent Captain Smith proposed to expel nineteen 'trouble making' Yaghestani migrants from Punial (IO R/2/1080/255: 192–94). In 1910, Political Agent Drew dismissed Sifat Bahadur, who was temporary governor of Punial at that time, because he had gone to Darel to establish himself as permanent *raja* there (IO R/2/1080/258 and 259).
13. The Frontier Crimes Regulations (FCR) averted the possibility to put pressure on Darelis by banning them from entering the Gilgit Agency. This meant that they could no longer visit the markets in Chilas and Gilgit and could not use the pastures in Singal Nallah in Punial.
14. IO L/P&S/7/26: 2009–21
15. IO R/2/1080/255: 69
16. GD for Dec. 1934 in IO L/P&S/12/3285.
17. GD for Jan. 1935 in IO L/P&S/12/3285.
18. Cf. note 12.
19. Radloff 1992: 124 and 167
20. Kilodja is probably the Kandia dialect of Indus Kohistani (cf. Hallberg 1992: 92) since people referring to their language as 'Kilodja' state that their ancestors came during the colonial period from Kandia to Punial. No linguist has done research among these speakers in Punial.
21. On linguistic groups in the Northern Areas cf. Kreutzmann 1995.
22. GD for Jan. 1914 in IO L/P&S/10/826 and GD for March 1935 in IO L/P&S/12/3285.
23. For Hunza cf. Kreutzmann 1989.
24. According to the 1935 tax-list every *zamindar* household had to pay Rs 10 per year.
25. Dani 1989: 326 ff. describes the events of 1947 and 1948 in Gilgit.
26. In the night Ghansar Singh was arrested the *raja* of Punial tried in vain to visit and probably support him (Ghansar Singh 1983: 37). According to Dani 1989: 327 this support was only half-hearted.
27. The *raja*'s house in Gilgit was bombed and damaged by Indian planes in June 1948 (Ghansar Singh 1983: 45).
28. Two former tax collectors mentioned this figure in interviews.
29. On the development of education in the Northern Areas cf. Mehr Dad 1995.
30. Holzwarth 1994: 77 on the sectarian aspects of the revolt. The *zamindars* were mostly Ismaili and the *raja* was Sunni. Memory of the 1951 revolt is still alive in Punial because it had divided the people as supporters or opponents of the *raja*.
31. For example on the spread of agrarian innovations cf. Pilardeaux 1995.
32. Punial's population according to the 1972 census was 16,826. According to the author's estimate there were 35,000 people living in Punial in 1995. Annual population growth is thus at 3.3 %.
33. These plots were used before to yield one crop of maize or barley per year and are now used to produce fodder or are abandoned.
34. The Ghizer District comprising the *tehsils* of Punial, Ishkoman, Gupis, and Yasin existed between 1974 and 1978 and was again part of Gilgit District after 1978.
35. On the effect of the KKH on Punial cf. Kreutzmann 1989.
36. In the 1870s it was 2000 (Biddulph 1880); according to the censuses, population increased from 4423 in 1911; 5492 in 1921; 6108 in 1931; 8154 in 1941 (Census of India 1912, 1923, 1933, and 1943); 8990 in 1951; 11,790 in 1961; 16,826 in 1972; 22,487 in 1881 (Government of Pakistan 1952, 1975, and 1984); and is estimated to be 35,000 in 1995.

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