

CHAPTER - I

MOHMAND AGENCY : MAIN CHARACTERISTICS

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

Location and Access

The North West Frontier Province has two boundaries, one administrative, separating the settled districts from the Tribal belt and the other International, known as the Durand Line, separating Afghanistan from Pakistan. The intervening area between the two boundaries is commonly known as Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). The whole region of these Tribal Areas is virtually a sprawling mass of mountains with narrow and beautiful valleys. The mountains are mainly part of North-Western Himalays, Karakoram and Hindu kush ranges. These high mountainous borderlands extend from the Pamir in the North to Takht-i-Suleman and Gomal Pass in the South. The region has been divided into seven Political Agencies- the Bajawar, Mohmand, Khyber, Orakzai, Kurram, North Waziristan and South Waziristan with special areas attached to Peshawar, Kohat, Bannu and Dera Ismail Khan districts, commonly known as the Frontier Regions (FRs).

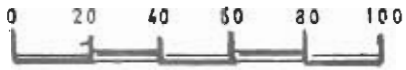
For centuries, the inhabitants of these Tribal Areas have survived by force of arms, fighting outsiders and each other for every inch of their rocky territory. They live by a code that knows no compromise, feuds can last for generations and a man's honor is held to be more important than life itself.

No external power has ever ruled these Pukhtun tribes. In recognition of their stubborn independence, this land of 40,000 square miles has been designated as Tribal Areas in which the normal state laws have no force. Here, the tribesmen live as they always have done, relying on herding and poor agriculture but maintaining as fiercely as ever, their ancient ethos. The Tribal

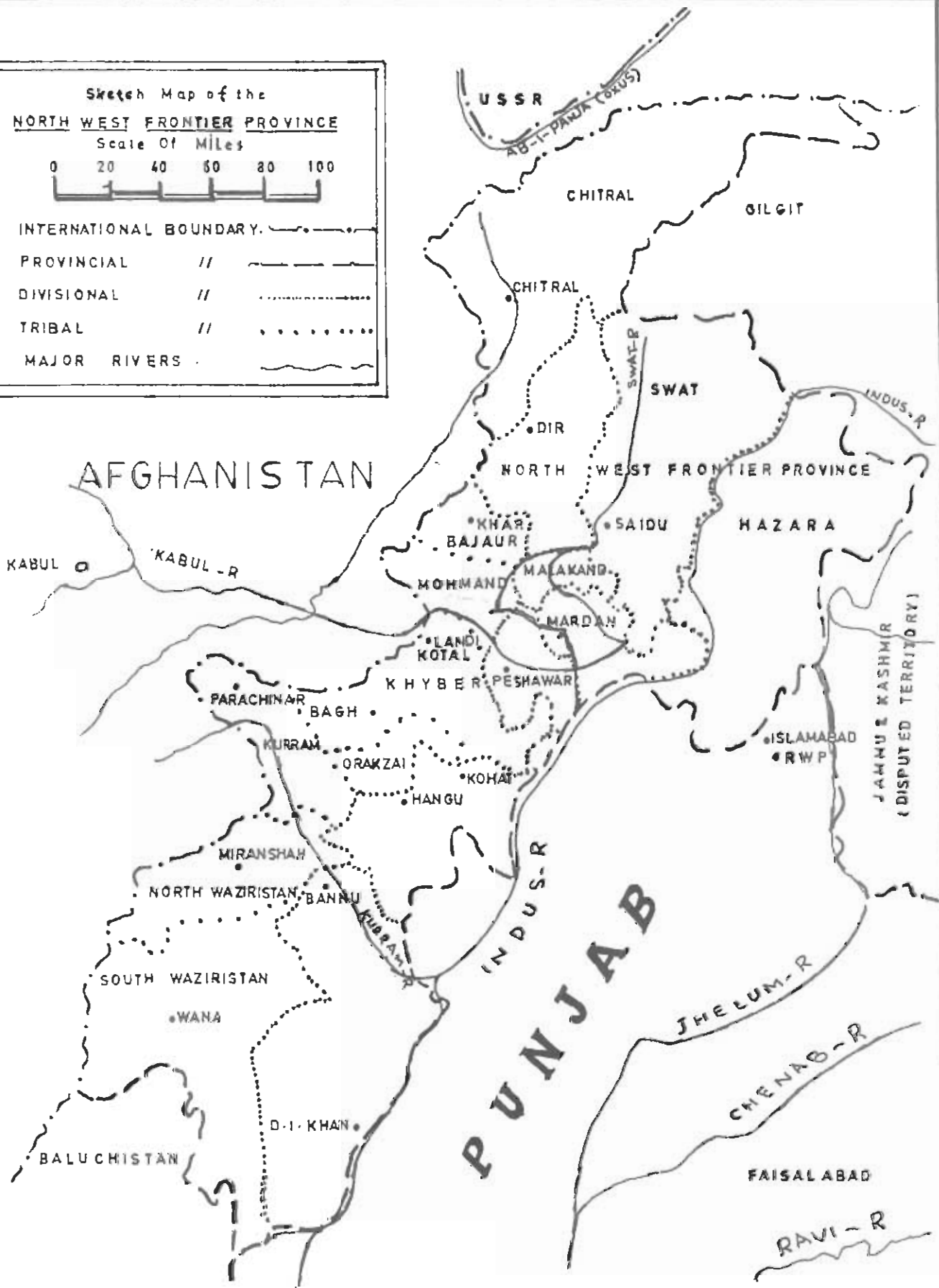
(FATA)

Sketch Map of the NORTH WEST FRONTIER PROVINCE

Scale Of Miles



INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY.		- . - . - . - . - . - . - .
PROVINCIAL	//	- - - - -
DIVISIONAL	//	- . - . - . - . - . - . - .
TRIBAL	//
MAJOR RIVERS		~~~~~



Territory of Mohmand Agency is situated at a distance of forty kilometers to the north-west of Peshawar city. It is bounded on the north by the Bajawar Agency, on the west by Afghanistan, on the south by the Kabul river which separates it from the Khyber Agency and on the east by the fertile plains of Charsaddah and Peshawar districts. Mohmand Agency was created in 1951 and covers an area of 2296 square kilometers.¹

The international border (Durand Line 1893)² runs through the centre of Mohmand hills dividing them in half. Thus Mohmands, live partly in the Ningrahar Province of Afghanistan, partly in the hills between the Kunar Valley and the Peshawar Plain and partly in the settled districts of Charsaddah, Peshawar and Mardan. The Mohmands who live between the Kunar Valley and the Peshawar plain, were known to the British as independent or "Hill Mohmands".³

The Mohmand society is made of many segments, related to each other and their genealogical lines resemble the branches of a tree that lead to the main trunk. Mohmands are thus divided into four major segments: the Tarakzai, Baezai, Khwaezai and Halimzai clans, that generally correspond to the maximal lineage, having a genealogical depth of eight to eleven generations on the tribal charter. A young Mohmand can trace his ancestry precisely from three to six generations, called section or Khel, while the elders can trace their lines even to Mohmand Baba,⁴ who was the apical ancestor of the tribe and after whom the tribe takes its name. The

¹ Bureau of Statistics, Planning and Development Department, Government of NWFP, Peshawar, 1990, P.1, Socio-Economic Indicators of FATA 1990.

² The Durand Line (1893) has never been visited by any commission including Durand Commission.

³ Lal Baha, NWFP Administration under British Rule 1901-1919, National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research, Islamabad, 1978, P.67.

⁴ Mohmand Baba, the apical ancestor of Mohmand Tribe is buried in the Tarakzai graveyard near Eakka-Chund in the Mohmand Agency.

contact of the Mohmand Agency with the NWFP is, through the only metalled road running through the middle of the Agency. The road from Bajawar Agency in the north to Pir Qilla in the South, divides it into three geographical zones, that correspond to clan localities. The Safi area lying towards Bajawar in the north, extends to Halimzai area in Kamali Dag. The Halimzai area lies in the centre, dividing by the Nahqi range into Kamali and Gandhab Halimzai, extending upto Karappa Pass below Ghallanay, which is the permanent headquarter of the Agency. The Tarakzai area, lies to the south of the Agency between the Karappa Pass and the administrative border of the Peshawar district.

At Pir Qilla, the road leading to Peshawar City takes two routs. One leads to Peshawar through the Michni area, via Warsak road (35 kms) while the other route passes across Subhan-khwar, towards Shabqadar-Fort and reaches Peshawar via Charsaddah road (25 kms). Shabqadar-Fort is the Training Centre of the Frontier Constabulary (FC) and the main market for the sale and purchase of the required goods by the Mohmand Tribes. There are a few small markets such as Ekka-Ghund, Ghallanay, Gandhab and Lakarai in Mohmand Agency for the sale and purchase of products of daily use.

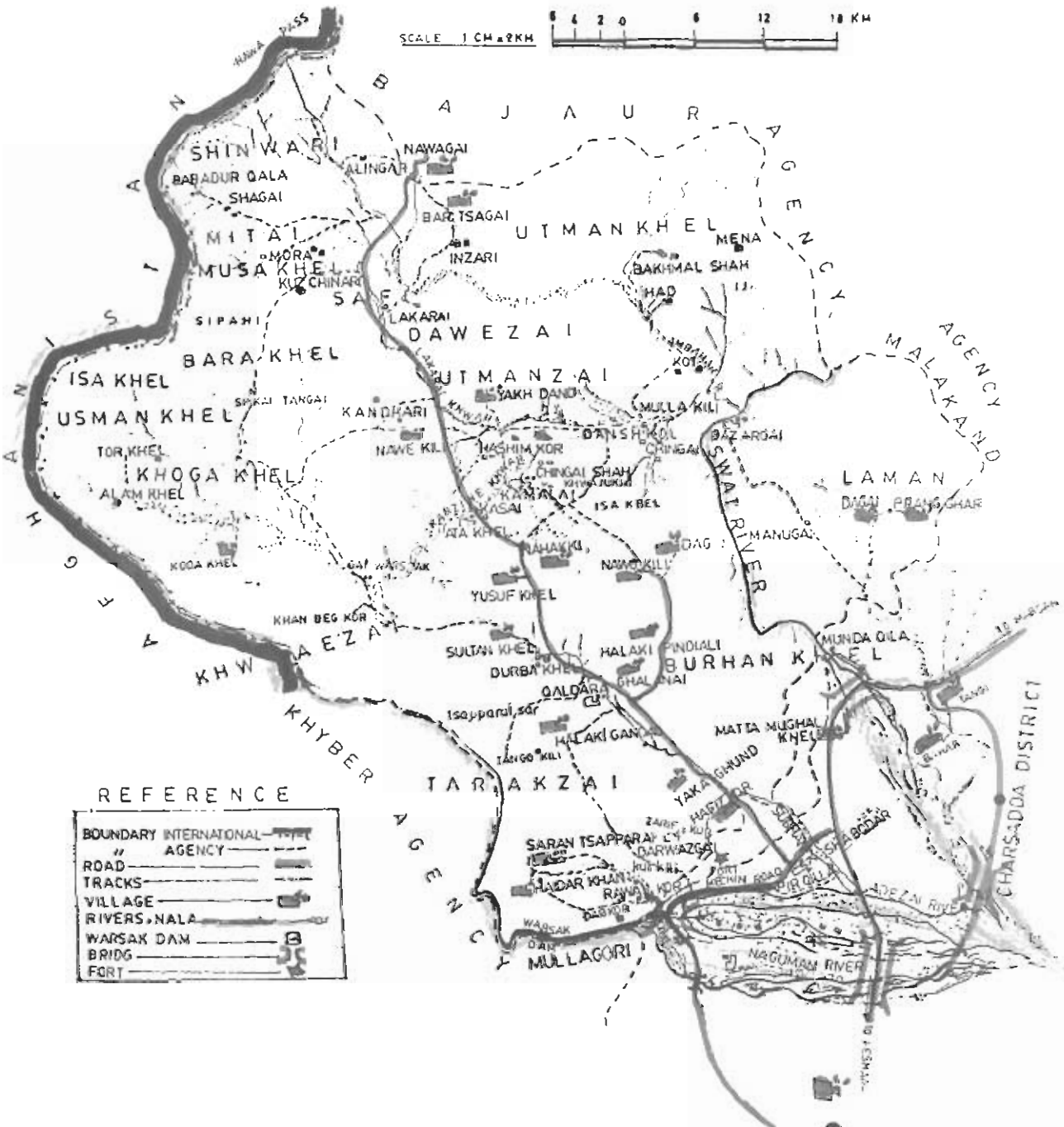
Till 1973, the headquarter of Mohmand Agency was in Peshawar, when it was moved to Ekka-Ghund Just inside the Agency. In 1977, the headquarter was shifted to Ghallanay.

Physiography

The region comprising Mohmand Agency, is formed by glens and rugged mountains with bare slopes between the towering peaks of Hindu Kush and low-land basins. Mohmand hills include the Sapper ranges, the Ilazai hills, and Malakand hills with an average height of 3,500 feet.¹ The Sapper ranges are extensions of the Dir-Bajawar ranges and run to the north of the Agency forming a watershed between it and the kunar river basin on Afghanistan side. The

¹ Geography Department, "Land Use Survey of NWFP, Part I, University of Peshawar, 1975, P. 53.

MAP OF MOHMAND AGENCY



REFERENCE

BOUNDARY INTERNATIONAL	---
" AGENCY	---
ROAD	---
TRACKS	---
VILLAGE	•
RIVERS, NALA	---
WARSAK DAM	---
BRIDGE	---
FORT	---

PESHAWAR

Ilazai hills have branched off from the Sapper ranges to the south-west of the Mohmand Agency, forming watershed between the various streams, flowing in the east and south directions. The Malakand hills occupy the eastern part of the Mohmand Agency with a thin cover of olive and oak trees. Most of the area is drained by the Swat river, which enters the Agency from north-east, flows south-wards and finally flowing east-wards, enters into the Charsaddah plains at Munda Bridge. On its way, the river collects the waters of Danishkool stream, Pindiyaali stream and Ambar river. It flows in a deep gorge and not much cultivated lands are found along its banks. However, at places, the river banks are pierced by deep nullahs, at the confluence of some of these, are found patches of alluvial lands, which are cultivated. The entire drainage of the northern and western half of Mohmand Country is carried by the Danishkool and Pindiyaali streams, combined with the Ambar river.

The Kabul River flows along the southern border of the Mohmand Agency. It runs through a gorge of 200 to 300 feet wide with steep sides, rising to several feet high. Thus fertile patches of lands are found only where streams have pierced through valley sides and formed alluvial fans. A number of streams draining the eastern and southern faces of Ilazai hills e.g. the Gandhab, Shalman, Sallala and Bara Darra, flow into the Kabul river. These streams, except the Gandhab stream, do not contain much water, however, considerable fertile areas are found along their banks, which are either dry cropped or irrigated by springs. There are no wide valleys with river flood plains. The terrain is pre-dominantly hilly and mountainous with some rolling ground and little flat area. The hill slopes are littered with blocks, the soil is stony and infertile. The valley plains of the Shalman, Gandhab and Danishkool possess rich alluvial soils.

Climate

The climate of Mohmand Agency is very hot in summer and very cold and dry in winter. The mean maximum temperatures during the hottest months of June and July are 38°C and 28°C respectively .

December and January are the coldest months with mean minimum temperature of about 12°C and 9°C.¹

Rainfall is very scanty. The total annual rainfall is 157.4 millimeters² which produces poor crops of barley and wheat on the small scattered plots in the region. The Agency is barani and entirely depends on rainfall for its agricultural needs. Most of the rainfall occurs during winter, when there are cyclonic rains which are of great importance for winter crops and wheat cultivation.

Demography

Population is one of the basic human resources which is essential for the overall socio-economic development of any region, particularly in relation to its natural resources, environment and development. Thus population and development are interrelated. Demographic patterns and welfare measures ought to be integrated into comprehensive social and economic plans and programmes. Their integration should be reflected in the goals. Development objectives and strategy to be followed in the national planning areas.

Since independence, four population censuses have been conducted in Pakistan. The first decennial population census was conducted in February 1951, showed the population in Mohmand Agency as 129300. The second conducted in 1961, showed it as 294,215 and the third held in 1972 depicted it as 382,922, showing an increase of 30 percent during the intercensal period of 1961-72.³ According to the census of 1981, the population of Mohmand Agency is 163,933,

¹ Bureau of Statistics, Planning and Development Department, Government of NWFP, Peshawar, FATA Development Statistics 1988-89, P. 48.

² Ibid, P. 48.

³ Census Organization, Interior Division, Population Census of Pakistan 1972, Census Bulletin No. 2, Vol.5, Islamabad, 1975, P.1 .

TABLE-1

POPULATION OF MOHMAND AGENCY IN CENSUS YEAR 1951-90

S.No	Year of Census.	Population in Thousand.	Intercensal Increase.	Density per sq. km.	Sex-ratio Males per hundred Females.
1	1951	129.300	-	-	-
2	1961	294.215	-	128	-
3	1972	382.922	30.00	167	110
4	1981	163.933	-57.18	71.4	101
5	* 1990	215.000	-	94	-

Note:- (*) Estimated Population

Source:-

- (i) FATA Development Statistics 1988-89.
- (ii) Socio-Economic Indicators of FATA 1990.

TABLE-2

INTERCENSAL POPULATION GROWTH IN FATA 1951-90

S.No	Census Year.	Area in Sq. km.	Population	Density per sq. km.	Sex ratio Male per hundred Females.
1	1951	27220	1332005	49	-
2	1961	-do-	1847195	68	-
3	1972	-do-	2491230	92	103
4	1981	-do-	2198547	81	108
5	* 1990	-do-	2880000	106	-

Note:- (*) Estimated Population.

Sources:-

(i) FATA Development Statistics 1988-89.

(ii) Socio-Economic iIndicators of FATA 1990.

out of which 82520 are males and 81413 are females.¹ Thus there has been a large fall of (-) 57.18 percent during the (1972-81) intercensal period in the population of the Agency.² Population density per square kilometer is 71.4 while average household size is 6.9 persons. During the intercensal period 1972-81, the population of FATA decreased by (-) 11.72 percent. A special survey was conducted by the Government in Mohmand Agency to check the reliability of the 1981 Census, however, the results of the survey did not indicate any under enumeration. In all the previous censuses of FATA, estimates of population were provided by the Political Agents based on speculated figures supplied by the Tribal Maliks. Another reason for the decline of population in FATA is the migration of tribesmen within Pakistan and to the Middle East countries. The 1981 Census indicates that only in NWFP, 37 percent of the migrants came from the Tribal Areas.³ The 1981 Census also indicates that 39% of the out-going workers to Middle East countries were from NWFP and FATA. The emigration of these workers, however, is a temporary phenomenon, still, it has been the main reason for the negative growth rate in the population of the Tribal Areas.

The Mohmand Agency has been divided into a number of Tehsils. The Tehsil-wise break down of Mohmand Population is given in (Table-3).

¹ Population Census of Pakistan 1981, Islamabad, 1984, P.62.

² FATA Development Statistics 1988-89, P.18.

³ National Institute of Population Studies, The State of Population in Pakistan, Islamabad, 1988, P. 25.

TABLE-3

TEHSIL-WISE BREAK-DOWN OF MOHMAND POPULATION

Area and Age group	Both Sexes	Male	Female
<u>Mohammad Agency</u>	163,933	82,520	81,413
Below 10 Years	49,791	20,229	29,562
10 Years and above	114,142	62,291	51,851
1. <u>Halimzai Tehsil</u>	26,783	12,742	14,041
Below 10 years	8,247	2,832	5,415
10 years and above	15,536	9,910	6,804
2. <u>Pindiali Tehsil</u>	23,671	12,286	11,385
Below 10 years	7,938	3,357	4,581
10 years and above	15,733	8,929	6,804
3. <u>Safi Tehsil</u>	35,708	18,085	17,623
Below 10 years	10,955	4,573	6,382
10 years and above	24,753	13,512	16,166
4. <u>Upper Mohmand Tehsil</u>	48,757	24,707	24,050
Below 10 years	13,204	5,320	7,884
10 years and above	35,553	19,387	16,166
5. <u>Utman Khel Tehsil</u>	16,613	8,383	8,230
Below 10 years	4,766	1,909	2,857
10 years and above	11,847	6,474	5,383
6. <u>Ekka Ghund Tehsil</u>	12,401	6,317	6,094
Below 10 years	4,681	2,238	2,443
10 years and above	7,720	4,079	3,651

Source: Population Census of FATA 1981, Population Census Division, Islamabad, 1984, P.63.

TRIBAL SETTLEMENTS

According to the Housing Census Report of FATA 1980, there are 22770 housing units in Mohmand Agency.¹ The majority of the people live in mud houses. The houses are usually rectangular in shape, with a courtyard. The average area of a compound is some 50 square yards with a surrounding wall of mud, about 2 feet thick and 10 feet high. The construction material is a mixture of mud and hay instead of cement and bricks. Most of the houses consist of 2 to 4 rooms built against the outer wall and a verandah in front but a few houses have more rooms representing the social status of the owner. A typical house consists of sleeping rooms, a kitchen, bathing area, a grain store, a clay built oven, a prayer platform and an animal shelter. Every house is essentially guarded at the diagonal end by a tower between 30 to 50 feet high. The open courtyard is the heart of family life. In summer, the women and children sleep there, and during all seasons, it is the scene of daytime activity.

Hujra (guest room) is an essential part of tribal settlements. Hujra is the focus of all social and political activities where men sit, talk, receive and entertain the guests. There is a clear distinction between the private life of a Pukhtun household from public life. The house symbolizes the primary law of pardah (seclusion) for women while the Hujra symbolizes the political prestige and other vital aspects of Pukhtun social activity. "Within the private domain, are housed, four distinct and important items, the women, the cattle, the grain store and the water well."² Water well is another important part of a tribal settlement. Once the well is captured, there is little resistance from the village. The small villages may have one well while the larger villages may have more than one.

¹ Important Agency-wise Socio-Economic Indicators of FATA, 1990, P.2

² Ahmed, Pukhtun Economy and Society, P.223.

DWA-KORA SYSTEM (DUAL RESIDENCE)

Migration has been an essential factor in the life of human beings since long. Its history is as old as the history of mankind. Migration inevitably produces important socio-economic changes in the societies, losing and gaining population. The act of migration is frequently disruptive but its social, economic and political consequences, have historically created important turning points in human history.

An interesting feature of the settlement arrangements in Mohmand Agency, is their tendency to be pushed out of the Agency and attracted to the settled areas, often by success or failure in tribal politics which create the concept of dual residence (Dwa-Kora).

Owing to their social, economic and political compulsions, Mohmands usually own two homes, often at considerable distance from one another and therefore called Dwa-Kora. But inspite of Dwa-Kora, both houses are fixed places of residence because Mohmands do not prefer nomadic life like other tribal groups, for instance, the Baluchis.¹ The two houses are fully functional and interchangeable. Most of the land in Mohmand Agency is barani, hence agriculture is not the major mode of subsistence, people seek other means such as smuggling, trade, transportation and taking political allowances from the Government. Agricultural activity is not given much importance. Small pieces of one or two acres of land, scattered on sides of mountains and Khwars, is treated more as a political factor in lying a claim to the tribal charter than as a source of agricultural income. As a result, there is a general trend towards migration to the agriculturally developed regions of NWFP to farm on irrigated lands and supplement their income.

Another important reason responsible for the creation of Dwa-Kora system (dual residence) is the tribal conflict. The basic causes of conflict are usually neither land nor wealth. They are

¹ Pherson, R.N. The Social Organization of the Marri Baluch, Chicago, 1966, P.4.

intangible concepts involved in Tarboorwali and Pukhtu.¹

As a result of conflict when a group is defeated, it is ejected from their village. Being expelled from their original place of residence, they migrate into the settled areas to work as labourers and tenants, hence become Dwa Kora. However, the idea of the other Kor lost in the Tribal Area is in his mind which he hopes to regain in his life time or that of his sons. The important point to emphasize is that, one may lose land and be ousted from his residence in Tribal Area, but still he retains his position and rights in the tribal charter. Emphasis is thus on descent groups and affiliation in the lineage structure. Being expelled, yet one has the right to claim the land, his father may have lost even many generations ago. Thus having become one Kora, he has the right on his old property in the Tribal Areas, and hence called Dwa Kora.

SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS

Language

The people of the Mohmand Agency speak Pushtu language, but of a variety, more akin to the Peshawari dialect (pukhtu) and vastly different from the Qandahari dialect (Pushtu) of the southern tribes. In Mohmand Agency out of 22,055 households, 22,029 households speak pushtu, 20 households speak Hindko, 3 households speak Urdu and 3 households speak Punjabi language.² The language pushtu or pukhtu is " derived from the zend branch of the Arayan family of languages. It has borrowed largely from Persian and Sanskrit languages. It is a strong virile language, capable of expressing ideas with neatness and accuracy and though harsh-sounding, suits the nature of its speakers and of the mountains which form its home. Due to their frequent contacts with the people of the developed areas of Pakistan, most of the Mohmand youth can speak urdu fluently. The recent progress in the field of education

¹ Ahmed, Pukhtun Economy and Society, P. 158.

² Population Census, 1981, P.33.

has resulted in producing a class of highly educated youth, who can speak English language as well and now face their future with confidence and deep belief in their destiny.

Dress and Cosmetics

The tribesmen are very particular about their attire and they generally stick to their tribal traditions. Most of the people wear their traditional dress which consists of gamiz (loose shirt) and pertug or shalwar (baggy trouser). A sadar, or chadar, (big sheet of cloth) of cotton or wool, according to the season is also worn by the menfolk. The lungi (headgear) which symbolizes the age, lineage and social status of individual, is a seven meter long silk or cotton turban with coloured stripes on it, and is worn upon the Kulah. A cap made of lamb skin (qaraquli) is usually worn by the younger and middle aged men of sound economic position.¹ An ordinary cap made of muslin, coarse cloth or wool is also worn by most of the laymen. Waist coats are also worn over shirt and the more wealthy often wear woolen over-coats and jackets of European style. Foot wear usually consists of saplai (leather shoes) of various designs, however, boots of European style made of leather, rubber and canvas are also used now-a-days.

The women folk wear gamiz and partug of various colours, green, blue, yellow and red by girls and young women and black being used more and more with the increase in age. A lopata (large stool) of colourful silk or muslin is used to cover head and upper front of the body. Some women ornament their lopata with coins sewn into the side border or decorated with exquisite silk-thread needle work and sometimes studded with thumb-nail mirrors and coloured beads. As for the women's footwear, traditional shoes of rubber, sponge-slippers, sandals and heel-less chappals, both simple and embroidered are used according to the individual taste and occasion. Since women are treated as the honour of the family and the system of pardah is strictly observed, no decent woman comes out in

¹ Ahmed, Pukhtun Economy and Society, P. 102.

public, except in burqa(veil) and that too rarely.

Many traditional devices are used by the womenfolk in their make-up and preservation of beauty. For example, dandasa (walnut-bark) is used to clean the teeth and redden the gums and lips. Nakrizae(hena leaves) are used for dying hands, finger tips, hairs and feet, specially on festive occasions and weddings. To make the eyes look dark and bright, kajal and ranjah (antimony) are used. Mustard oil is commonly used in hairs. Perfumes (itrs) are generally used at the festive occasions like Eid and weddings etc.

The modern make-up aids are gradually replacing the traditional ones, many of these indigenous beauty aids and cosmetics which for generations, women have used and handed down to their daughters and grand daughters, are still prevalent in the Tribal Areas.

In the Tribal Areas, arms are considered as men,s ornament and is an essential part of dress. The senior Maliks (chiefs) in addition to having a son or grandson, carrying a gun as an escort, usually carry a pistol or revolver themselves, while the ordinary maliks and tribesmen carry their own guns. A member of junior lineage, religious or occupational groups (carpenter, blacksmith, butcher and barber etc) seldom carries a gun.

Ornaments and Jewellery

The wide variety in ornaments, worn by the womenfolk in Mohmand Agency are, necklace, the bowo worn around the wrists; the silver uguai, worn around the neck; the mang, and teeka made of gold, worn on the forehead; the Jahoomer worn in the hairs; the Kara, Pazeb and ghungroo for the decoration of feet; the magari, doroono, Joomkai and walai for ears; the pizwan, Natha, Nathkai, Chargul and Mikhakai worn in the nose; and finger-ring (Gutha) made of gold or silver with precious stone, worn both by the men and women. It is customary for the bridegroom's parents to include a few pieces of fine Jewellery among the presents which they must give to bride on the wedding day. It is also essential for the bride's parents to give to their daughter, some dowry in the form

of Jewellery such as necklace, Mang, Teeka, Doroona or Magar which are always to be seen worn by a new bride on festive occasions. The young girls normally wear walai (ear-rings) and Mikhaki (small pin) in the nose, while the aged women wear no other ornament, except Chargul worn in the right side nostril.

Religion

The majority of population in Mohmand Agency are Muslims.

"The pukhtun social world, its mores and norms, the symbols of its society, are embedded in and often identical to those of the wider world of Islam."¹ In Mohmand Agency, out of a population of 163,933, there are 162,755 Muslims, 230 Ahmadis, 944 Christians, 2 Hindus and 1 Parsi.²The muslim population belong to the sunni school of thought. The unity of Pukhtunwali and Islam is symbolized and expressed in the village social life by the physical existence of the mosque adjacent to the Hujra (male guest-house). Obviously all the social rituals are conducted according to the strict Islamic precepts. The religious leaders (mullas), Syeds, Pirs and Mians, wield considerable influence over the tribesmen. The mulla is appointed by the people, usually, by a village Malik and not by any official authority. His task is to care for village mosque, to provide basic religious education to the children and to attend to the spiritual needs of his congregation. In a few cases, villagers voluntarily give a percentage of their crops to the mulla or a cherished holy man, but usually a village mulla lives by farming a small piece of land, set aside by the community for the mosque. Most of the people keep beards and dye them with hena leaves. We may conclude, that Mohmands accept religion without any doubt or question, as there is no conflict between Islam and his code Pukhtunwali. His adherence to Islam reaches back to the origin of the religion. He is, by definition a muslim, just as by birth he

¹ Ahmed, Pukhtun Economy and Society, P. 105.

² Population Census, 1981, P.63.

obtains the inalienable right to pukhtunness. Thus his place in the society, as pukhtun and as a muslim is secured and defined from the moment of his birth.

SOCIAL PRACTICES AND CEREMONIES

A number of customs and practices prevail in Mohmand society which are rigidly adhered to. A number of ceremonies are performed by the people at a child's birth, during the period of his early growth, followed by the marriage and death.

Birth

In the Tribal Areas, it is a matter of great rejoicing, when a son is born in a family. Shots are fired in the air, the relatives assemble at the house of the newborn and congratulate the parents. After a week, the rite of aqiqah is performed. The child is named and sweet-meats are distributed amongst the relatives, friends and neighbours who in turn give gifts and money to the child. The same day, two he-goats or lambs are sacrificed on a boy's aqiqah, and one, if it is a girl's aqiqah. The meat is distributed among the poor and neighbours. But when a female child is born, her birth mostly goes unmarked, "If she is the second or third girl in succession born into a family, her arrival is the occasion of general mourning"¹ The birth of a girl is not an occasion of rejoicing.

Marriage

Marriage is one of the most important functions amongst the social customs and traditions in the Tribal Areas. There is no concept of love marriage in tribal society. When a girl reaches the age of puberty, she has to observe strict purdah. She is not allowed to go outside the house frequently and has no contact with the boys, other than her own brothers. For the girl herself, the

¹ Andre Singer, Guardians of the North West Frontier, The Pathans, USA, 1982, P. 72.

entry into purdah represents more than restriction, it means respect and security."As for the young pathan woman herself is concerned,purdah is the will of God and a great gift and she neither knows, nor can imagine any other life."¹

Marriages among tribesmen are highly endogamous to lineage and are usually arranged by the parents. The preferred form is the marriage between patrilateral parallel cousins. Sometimes, a girl may be promised in marriage at birth and in that case, the booking of a girl by the boy's mother, is considered equivalent to the formal agreement and as such is accepted a decision by the community. "Henceforth the girl is considered engaged and as good as married to the boy."²

Then the money for head (sar-paisy) or bride-price is decided upon if it is not a badal (exchange) marriage, and paid by the groom's family to the bride's parents. In badal (exchange) marriage, no bride price need to be paid, a considerable relief to tribesmen who have little cash on possession to spare for dowry. In Mohmand Agency, monogamy is highly practiced, however polygamy is also favoured by the economically sound families.

In the Tribal Areas, strict terms and conditions of haq-mher, a guarantee for the financial security of a wife in the event of divorce is not settled, as for divorce, involving the honour of a pukhtun, is theoretically impossible in pukhtun society.³ Though some small amount is earmarked at the time of Nikah as haq-mher to give religious sanction to the marriage under Islamic Law. A pukhtun would like to prefer death, rather than to divorce his wife which is an integral part of his honour (nang). As there is no question of divorce, hence no need for haq-mehr in a pukhtun society. It is also evident from the fact, that the divorce rate in the tribal society is negligible one.

¹ Ibid., P.80.

² Ahmed Pukhtun Economy and Society, P. 249.

³ Ibid., P.250.

Another misconception is that because of male dominance in the tribal society, the woman has no role of social importance and thus are victims of considerable social in-justice. In contrast, they are often close and valued companions directly affecting the lives of their men. The man seeks to uphold his nang (honour), he can do it himself, but with a wife he feels insecure, for she can dishonour him by any misconduct, affront to his nang (honour). That is why, he keeps his wife inside the privacy of the house. Her presence is known, only through the tea and food she prepares and that too inside the house. The women must never be seen by the men other than the family members. She never leaves the compound walls without the permission of her husband. She helps to uphold his honour, for she is a part of all he possesses and her behaviour is a direct reflection of his social prestige. A wife's ability to influence her husband, usually operates indirectly, by subtle hints, rather than open questions. In course of time, she will be mother and later on grandmother herself. Her status now depends on her sons or grandsons as well as her husband. Even after her widowhood and into old age, she is considered to be a pillar of the community, exerting indirect influence on various important matters in social life. When she dies, she is remembered, that she had lived her life as a Pukhtun woman, with obedience and modesty, upholding the honour of her family according to the Pukhtunwali.

Deaths

In the Tribal Areas, on the occasion of a natural death, it is announced in the village mosque and hujra. Messengers are sent to inform the relatives living in far-flung areas. The people then begin to assemble in the hujra of the deceased, and every new comer raises his hand to pray for the departed soul. Arrangements for the burial are then made without any delay. The elders are sent to make purchases for the funeral while the young people dig up and prepare a grave in the village graveyard. The village mulla performs all the burial rites, leads congregation and prays for the departed soul. In case of a murder, the close kins gather together and vow

to avenge the death. At the death of a headman, elder, or Malik (Chief) of family, clan or tribe, the relatives and respected elders of the deceased, assemble in the grave-yard after the burial, and nominate usually the brother or elder son of the dead person to take over as the head of the family, clan or tribe. For this purpose, the lungi (head-gear) of the deceased is worn on the head of the nominated person and all the leading family members put their hands on it as a mark of their acceptance. From this moment onwards, the person accepted as Malik (Chief), commands respect and authority and takes over as the head of the tribe. It is generally known as head-wear ceremony.

CULTURAL CHARACTERISTICS

Geographical and Tribal Division

Mohmand Agency can be divided into a number of geographical zones, that correspond to the clan localities. The whole tribe consists of the four major clans, namely Tarakzai, Halimzai, Khawaezai, and Baezai.

The Tarakzai clan is further subdivided into Tarakzai (proper), Isa khel and Burhan khel. The Tarakzai proper consists of two sections, Dadu khel and Qasim khel.

The Tarakzai are settled in Ekka-Ghund Tehsil of the Mohmand Agency between the Karappa Pass and the Kabul river. The area between the Kabul river and Ekka-Ghund is known as Michni and shared by the two major subclans Dadu khel and Qasim khel Tarakzais. The Dadu khel, representing the senior lineage are settled to the south in a strategic position along the banks of Kabul river and in the hilly tract of Alki Gandhab.¹ The Qasim khel sub-clan occupies the north-west part of Michni area up-to Ekka-Ghund.

The Isa-khel Tarakzai have taken their residences in the Pindiali Tehsil and therefore called Pindiali Mohmands. They inhabit the hilly tract between the Gandhab valley and Swat river

¹ W.R.H.Merk, The Mohmands, Lahore, 1984, P.72.

towards south.

The Burhan khel Tarakzais are divided into Upper Burhan khel living in the Pindiali Tehsil and Lower Burhan khel, mostly residing in and around the Krappa pass and thus called Krappawal Burhan khel.¹

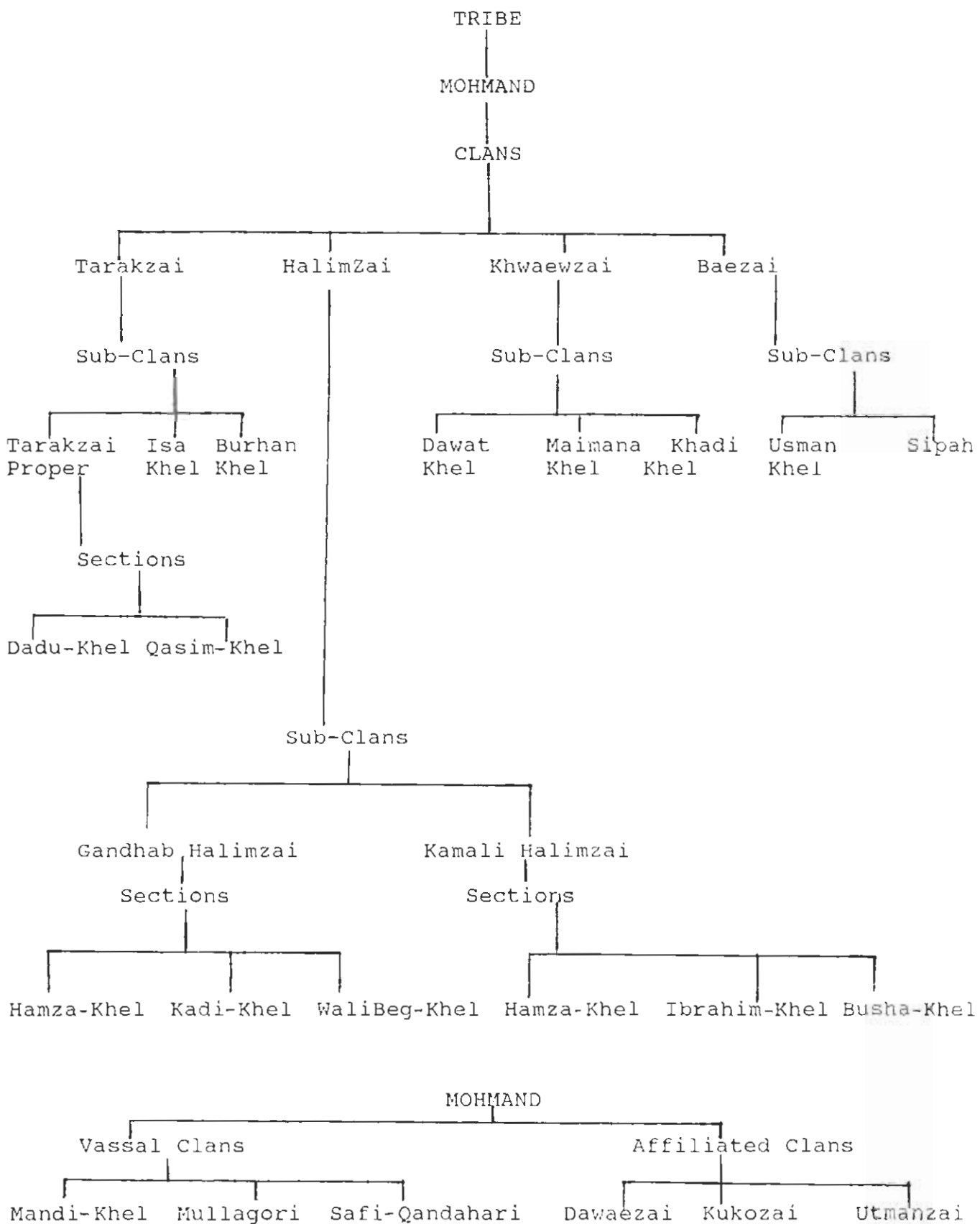
Geographically, the Halimzais are divided into Gandhab Halimzai, living in the Gandhab valley, extending from Ghalanai (Agency headquarter) to the Nahqi range in the north-west and Kamali Halimzai, living to the north of Nahqi Pass in Kamali plain. The area and clans across the Nahqi Pass are considered Upper Mohmands for administrative purposes. The only main road which passes through the middle of the Gandhab valley, divides the clans into three geographical zones, the Hamza khel, occupying the south, Wali Beg, residing in Sangar village and Shati khel to the north. The Kamali Halimzai occupy a central position, surrounded on the north by the Danishkool and Ambar valleys, on the east by the Pindiali Tehsil and on the west by the Khwaezai area.

The Khwaezai clan, resides in a hilly tract, west of the Gandhab valley, extending to the banks of Kabul river in the south and upto Lalpura in Afghanistan. They are bounded on the north west by the Baezai Mohmands. The area is mostly dry cropped and most people carry out wood trade, hoteling, gold and currency exchange business, in Peshawar, and other cities of the developed regions of Pakistan. Some sections of the Khwaezai clan, exclusively reside in Goshta Afghanistan.²

¹ Ibid., P. 78.

² For detail see Ibid., PP. 79-80.

MOHMAND TRIBAL SUB-DIVISION



The Baezai is the most powerful clan of the Mohmand Tribe.¹ They reside on both sides of the International Border (Durand Line) between Pakistan and Afghanistan in the north-western part of the Mohmand Country. They are bounded on the north by the Kunar River, on the south by the Khwaezai zone and Kabul river and on the east by vassal clan of the Safi Mohmand and Bajawar Agency. Most of the Baezai Mohmands are agriculturists and cattle owners. The hills are generally barren and devoid of any vegetation. The wood-trade in the main cities of Pakistan is in the hands of the Baezai Mohmands, specially in that of Mitai Musa-khel.

Apart from the above four main tribes, there are a number of Affiliated clans, such as Dawezai, Utmanzai, Kukkozai, and vassal clans such as Safi, Mullagori and Mundikhel, who are not actually related to the original ancestor of Mohmands, but over the time emerged with the genealogical charter of Mohmand tribe and call themselves Mohmands, if asked their tribe. There are also some tribal groups such as Pirs, Syeds, Mians, Mullas and occupational groups, such as carpenters, blacksmiths and barbers etc, living in Mohmand Agency. All these groups are considered equally entitled to their tribal rights like their Mohmand brothers.

The Dawezai are supposed to be descendants of Musammat-i-Dawai, the second wife of the Mohmand Baba.² They mostly reside in the Pipal and upper Ambar valley. The Utmanzai Mohmands reside in a small tract of the Mohmand Country bounded on the north-west by the Baezai tribe, on the south by the Kamali plain, on the west by the Dawezai clan and on the east by the Isa-khel of Danishkool valley. Geographically, they are divided into Bar(upper) Yakhdand and Kuz(Lower) Yakhdand Utmanzai.

The vassal clan of Safi Mohmands resides towards Bajawar Agency on the northern border of the Mohmand Agency. They mainly reside in Sur-Kamar valley and Qandahari Dag. The main market of the Safi area is Lakkarai Tehsil. The tribe has extended upto ChammarKand, Sheikh Baba Ziarat and even upto the Kunar river.

The vassal clan of Mullagori, resides to the south of the Mohmand Agency on the slopes of Tatara ranges. Their neighbours to

¹ R.T.I Ridgway, Pathans, Peshawar, 1933, P.122.

² Ibid., P.122.

the west are Shilmanis, to the north, the Tarakzai Mohmands and to the south, the Kuki-khel Afridis of the Khyber Agency. The Mullagoris have a small tract of cultivable land which produces a poor crop of wheat in summer and barley in winter. They are also famous for smuggling foreign goods from Bara Markets in the Khyber Agency to the markets in the Mohmand Agency across the Kabul river near Warsak Dam.

TRIBAL TRADITIONS AND INSTITUTIONS

The Pukhtun social behaviour and organization revolve around the concept of the code of the Pukhtuns i.e. Pukhtunwali.

Generally, Pukhtuns are, as a rule, frank and open in their manners, the better ones, extremely courteous and easy. The people of the Tribal Areas are more simple and show little distinction for rank, though they seldom intend rudeness.

Their best characteristics are, their fidelity, truthfulness, hospitality and great power of endurance. The people see themselves unequivocally upholding Pukhtun values and at times, violence erupts as a result of anxiety and tension of the society, wishing to live upto these ideals. The basis of this ideal are embodied in Pukhtunwali.

Pukhtunwali (Pukhtun code)

The general concept of the Pukhtun code, can best be understood by reference to each of its components separately. This code is deeply rooted in the social structure of the society and is upheld by all the persons, irrespective of their financial or social status. In fact, the degree to which a person adheres to the code, often determines the esteem, with which one is beholden by his fellow tribesmen. This code has numerous laws which in one way or another, are interrelated in the form of:-

(a) Nang (honour)

Under this code, a tribesman is obliged to employ every means in order to shield and protect himself and his honour. It is composed of hospitality, revenge(badal), and to seek forgiveness (Nanwatte), etc. A tribesman is obliged to strictly adhere to these values and traditions in order to ensure his own honour and that of his family and tribe as a whole.

(b) Mialmastia (Hospitality)

The hospitality of the Pukhtun is proverbial. This means the showing of hospitality to all visitors without any hope of remuneration or favour. The Mohmands are not lacking in this quality and never lose an opportunity to show hospitality to their guests. Even strangers are received with an open heart and arrangements for their entertainment and lodging are made in the Hujra which usually serves as a guest-house. The Mohmand elders equate a Pukhtun with an "entertainer of guests" or Milmadost and miser (shoom) is a term of abuse. The liability for entertainment of guests is communal, and is usually shared on the basis of ownership of land distribution or any other arrangement mutually decided upon by the community. At times, the entire burden is born by one person, more often, the senior patriarch of a lineage. A guest is always well looked after and in case the male members are absent, it is not uncommon for the women to come forward and look after their welfare. In fact, hospitality is the hall-mark of tribal social customs and traditions which is very strong even today.

(c) Badal (revenge)

Badal means the taking of revenge over time, over space and over cost, in order to avenge a wrong. There is a Pushtu proverb, "he is not a Pukhtun who does not give a blow for a pinch."¹

In a society which believes in the doctrine of "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth" and where the shackles of an impartial administration and law enforcing agency are non-existent, it is natural that there will be blood feuds and enmities which extend at times through generations. This has caused the ruin of many a family among the Pukhtuns.

On the positive side, it is only because of this unremitting principle of revenge that crimes in the Tribal Areas are limited in number and extent. Tribal ties disallow the "principle of might being right"² and even the most powerful Malik will think twice before imposing his will through force on the poorest or weakest of his clansmen. The consequences of any rash act are so severe that

¹ Akbar, S. Ahmed, Mataloona: Pukhto Proverbs, Peshawar, 1973, P.52.

² R.T.I. Ridg-way, Pathans, P.14.

they have a deterrent effect. However, when an incident does occur, the tribesman is honour bound to abide by the principle of badal. The method employed in relation for either personal insults and injuries or family blood feuds, is to take revenge. Here again, the culprit does not usually suffer the consequences personally but revenge may be taken from his close lineage and tribe. That is why, a combined action is taken, usually by the intervention of a Jirga to settle the dispute, otherwise the whole tribe may drag on fighting for generations.

(d) Nanawatee (to seek forgiveness)

This means to go in and seek forgiveness from the victims to whom a wrong has been done. It is used when the vanquished party is prepared to go into the house or Hujra of his enemy to beg forgiveness and make peace with him, usually with the Holy Quran in hand. " There is no nanawatee when the dispute involves tor (black) i.e. concerned with the dishonor of a women. Tor can only be converted to spin (white) by death." ¹ The act of nanawatee is to be honoured by the victims on agreed conditions, showing respect and reciprocal magnanimity. Generally nanawatee is arranged when the village of someone is occupied by his enemy or incidently someone is killed, made captive or dishonored. In most of the cases, nanawatee is granted with the traditional slaughtering of goats, sheep and cows at the house or Hujra of those who are to grant forgiveness and accept nanawatee. In case of a person being killed, the Jirga may determine the blood money (Marre por) payable to the victim party. The amount varies from ten to fifty thousand or even more and may be paid in lump-sum or in installments. In certain cases, a nominal amount is accepted by the aggrieved party and the enmity ends. " In very rare cases, is nanawatee rejected and is not looked upon favourably by the tribe unless the reasons are well known and considered as valid".²

Nanawatee is also considered as an extreme form of hospitality where the hospitality of the Pukhtuns over-rides all other considerations. As for example, if someone in extremity seeks any asylum under a roof, he is given protection and in that case, the

¹ Akbar, s.Ahmed, Social and Economic Change in the Tribal Areas 1972-76, Karachi, 1977, P.39.

² Omar Khan, Afridi, Mahsud Monograph, Peshawar, 1980, P.24.

protector is bound to harbour the refugee even at the risk of his own life. In the case of mediation, restored to by a person, generally the weaker party, who seeks to make peace with someone he has injured, the good offices of the elders or religious leaders are solicited. In both cases, the matter is generally settled by the Jirga according to the Pukhtun code.

Tarboorwali (cousin rivalry)

The term tarboor is used for paternal cousin and has a connotation of cousin rivalry in Pukhtun customs and traditions. Though the tarboor (cousin) may grow up as the childhood companion, in time, he becomes the chief rival for status, and political leadership, within the lineage. It is very simple to comprehend. Since within a lineage, it is not possible for all to lead, this leadership has to be with one of its members and since all are struggling for power, prestige and status, therefore everyone in the lineage becomes a competitor. It is in this competition that tarboorwali (cousin rivalry) exists and manifests itself in many a conflicts in the Tribal Areas. "When he (cousin) is little, play with him, when he is grown up, he is a Tarboor, fight him."¹

This cousin is often one's in-laws as well, since marriage within the lineage is greatly favoured. By marrying the sister of cousin, one hopes to gain control over his main political rival. The Tarboor is an ally too, for only, he can be counted upon to come to one's help, in case of an attack from a more genealogically distant adversary.

The main sources of motivation in Tarboorwali are nang (honour), ghairat (shame), izzat (prestige) and Pukhtu (to uphold the code). No political beliefs or economic considerations are involved. The traditional sources of most Pukhtun conflicts such as zan (woman), zar (gold) and zamine (land) do not involve or operate in Tarboorwali. Tarboorwali is based on the notion of cousin enmity and the desire to maintain honour in relation to him. The two essential features of the Pukhtunwali are, Tarboorwali and Tor. It is important to underline that the only killing in the society that does not invoke the law of revenge is of Tor when a man and women

¹ Ibbetson, Outline of Punjab Ethnography, Calcutta, 1883, P.219.

have had illicit relations and both the families acknowledge their killing by agreeing that Pukhtu has been done.

In the Tribal Areas, politics confer power, prestige and status and is largely limited to agnatic male cousin. Thus agnatic rivalry may be analyzed as a zero sum situation in which one cousin's gain is, another cousin's loss, within the lineage where the scarce commodity and source of conflict are personal honour and political status. This cousin rivalry helps to maintain the balance between democracy and stability in the society on the one hand, and the emerging despotic leadership and anarchic political conditions, on the other. The Mohmands are actually aware of the Tarboor as they say, 'if the Tarboor is good, he kills others, if he is bad, he kills us.' Another common saying is, 'tolerate anyone but the Tarboor. Tarboorwali also includes the rivalry of paternal uncles, "God knows that the uncle is a Kafir."¹

Tarboorwali can not be explained in terms of a man to man duel. It does not occur at any appointed time or place. It is only a means to an end. The end is revenge (badal) itself. Thus Tarboorwali as it operates, can best be understood as rivalry between the two male cousins, usually of the same generation but related to different lineages within the sub-section (khel) and often involving a series of rivalries deep-rooted in social history on depths of clan genealogy.

Jirga (tribal council)

The word Jirga signifies an institution, composed of tribesmen, who get together for consultation. Caroe quotes Edwards on Jirga "The Maliks talked Pushtu. The deliberate way in which each delivered his opinion, the expressive gestures with which they enforced it, and the courteous silence observed by all the rest, while one was speaking, was a model for any deliberative assembly."²

Thus Jirga is an assembly of tribal elders who are called to decide specific issues and whose decision is binding on parties in conflicts, "The Jirga as an institution, exists and functions among

¹ Ahmed, Mataloona, P. 35.

² Olaf Caroe, The Pathans, London, 1958, P.455.

the Mohmands."¹ The smallest Jirga can be held by the smallest segment of a khel and even two people deliberating, is a Jirga. The size increases with the participation of larger groups at various levels ranging from a subsection to section, subclan, clan and tribe, which is at the top of tribal categorization.

The matters that can't be solved at the individual or family level, can be brought to the Jirga. Anyone can call for a Jirga at any level, but the response depends on the involvement of interest groups in larger aggregates of population. However, the convening of a Jirga, does not guarantee that a decision will be arrived at. If any member, does not accept the ruling of the Jirga, no decision can normally be made, thus resulting in long sittings that can mean the economic ruin of the host, who has to feed all the members of the Jirga. The Jirga is composed of representatives or delegates of each khel or segment. Every member of the Jirga has the right to attend its meetings and the freedom of speech in it. Different kinds of matters of dispute are discussed here openly, until a unanimous decision is reached. Finally, the opinion of those who have more supporters, prevails. Great weight is traditionally given to the opinion of spin-giry (greybeards) in the Jirga, who, as a rule, belong to the established families of senior lineage and whose social standing, experience and sagacity entitle them to a place on the council. The members of Jirga are called "Jirgeez". Similarly the opinion of the religious functionary (mulla) carries weight only when it concerns religious matters or attempt at conciliation.

The decision of a Tribal Jirga is usually based on the combination of Islamic Law and Pukhtun's Custom. The Jirga judges the rights and wrongs of the case and tries to find a compromise that would end the disagreement with justice for all. The main purpose of the Jirga is, to maintain peace, tribal or inter-tribal and dispensing a simple Justice. As an institution, the "Jirga" may pronounce penalties against persons or groups, who do not submit to its decision. The Jirga may also call for a lakhkar (tribal army) to implement its decision through force. The relations of the tribesmen with the outside world have been conducted through the Jirga since 19th Century when the British sought ways of dealing

with the troublesome fighters on their north-west frontier".¹

A person who rejects the collective wisdom (decision) of the Jirga, takes a grave risk, for a Jirga can impose powerful sanctions to back up its Judgement. It can put a man outside the society, so that he is ignored by everyone. Jirga has the power to confiscate his rifles or impose a heavy fine, payable to other party in the dispute. The Jirga can use force by sending men of Lakhkar (tribal army) to burn down his house or, as at last resort, to shoot him dead.

There is a general impression based on the false and out-dated notion, that a tribal society which allows such freedom to the individual, is close to anarchy. Some British administrators in India in the 19th century referred to tribal society as "unstable and without law."²

But, for all its murders, a tribal society is not lawless, nor is it unstable, despite the lack of formal criminal and civil law, because an anarchic society could never have survived so long, outliving the empires that tried to crush it. The secret of Pukhtun resilience lies in the code of Pukhtunwali, which imposes duties as well as gives rights and the Jirga is the institution, by which the community Judges, then tries to resolve the problems of the society.

Teeqa or Kanraj (Cease-fire stone)

In order to avoid bloodshed, the Jirga as a first measure, fixes a date till which all the hostilities between warring factions are to be suspended. The Jirga then ensures the implementation of the Teeqa, literally means cease fire.

There is an interesting theory that this custom is derived from a pre-Islamic Rajput practice, of writing an agreement on a stone and placing it at a place selected by the tribe.³

The Jirga, thus enforces a truce upon the warring parties for a specific period and any violation of the terms of the truce, by

¹ Andre Singer, The Pathans, USA, 1982, P.152.

² Olaf Caroe, Asian Affairs, Vol-III, October 1977, P.352.

³ W.King, Monograph on the Orakzai Country and Clans, Lahore, 1900, P.49.

any party, makes it liable to joint action by the Jirga. This truce is referred to as Teega or Kanrai (cease fire stone) which separates the parties from further clashes. The origin of a feud, may vary on case to case basis in relation to property, debts, women insults or murders etc.

Lakhkar or Lashkar (war party)

Another manifestation of the strength of tribalism is the institution of Lashkar or Lakhkar. Lakhkar refers to tribal army which implements the decision of the Tribal Jirga through force. It is normally a body of tribesmen raised and assembled for an offensive purpose or to deal with a particular incident. This force is also used to deal with any eventuality requiring concerted action on the part of the whole tribe. The occasions for use of this force, may range from a defensive or offensive action, to a purely punitive force used by the tribe, against one or more of its own members. When a person or a party defies the authority or collective wisdom of a Jirga, the Jirga calls for a Lakhkar (tribal army) to use force to bring the defying person or party to book, sending men to burn down his house or as a last resort, to shoot him dead. The sanctity of action by the Lakhkar is respected and no retaliation allowed for any punishment inflicted on any member or party of the tribe. The Jirga, however takes the decision on a certain action, after giving it a deep thinking thought, and proceeds to act in conformities with the tradition of Pukhtunwali.

Malatar (factional fighting force)

Malatar i.e. Mala (back) and tar to tie, means the factional fighting force and consists of " those members of a tribe who will actually join the fighting on behalf of their leaders."¹

They are the active supporters in factional conflict who provide men, money, guns and ammunition for fighting. Those members of a faction who do not take part in the fighting, such as women religious leaders and occupational groups, do not form malatar. The Hujra is the central physical index of political status and activity of the leader who must maintain a reasonable standard of

¹ Ahmed, The Tribal Areas, P.41.

hospitality, to attain the sympathy of his followers or malatars which further increase his prestige and authority in the society.

Badragga (tribal escort)

" Badragga means a tribal escort, usually composed of members of that tribe, through which the travellers are passing."¹

In any case, travel into the Tribal Areas requires clearance from the political authorities for non-locals and an armed official escort of tribal levies(badragga), to ensure their security. But the question of issuing 'travel permits' in Mohmand Agency does not arise. Even the non-local staff working in the Agency Headquarters Ghallany and far remote areas, travel to and from the Agency freely and do not need any official permit or armed escort.

Tor (literally black)

It refers to those cases that are concerned with the dishonour of women." Tor can only be converted to Spin (white) by death."² Because of the serious consequences involved, cases of adultery or illicit relations between the sexes are extremely rare. The tribal law makes a woman equally liable to suffer the consequences like her paramour. In such cases, the punishment usually meted out by the offended party, is death of the two and the case is considered as settled.

For the offence of a rape committed on a married woman, the man is liable to be killed or pay full blood money. In some cases the raped woman is also handed over to the man after the payment of Por (blood money). In case, the woman is unmarried, then the man is not usually killed but instead Por is paid to the girl's parents and he is obliged to marry the girl. However if the relatives of the unmarried girl kill them before the payment of Por, the case is considered as settled.

The chastity and good name of a woman are the most sensitive points of honour in Pukhtun society. Socially a woman's act reflects her husband status and honour. The male Pukhtun is most vulnerable through the behaviour of the women of his house. It is important to

¹ Ahmed, The Tribal Areas, P.40.

² Ibid., P.39.

underline that the only killing in tribal society that does not invoke the law of revenge, is, when a man and a woman having illicit relations, are killed.

The ideal Pukhtun woman is a model of virtue, chastity and loyalty. Opposed to this model, is the disgrace of tor. Tor cases are referred to as shaming and shame is associated with the action, as honour is with the reaction. Such severity of punishment and unanimity between involved groups, act as a social mechanism to ensure continuity within the system of certain moral standards and social behaviour. The whole is kept greater than the individual.

Hujra and Mosque

Hujra is the focus of all social and political activities of the village in a tribal society. It can be translated as a guest-house. It is also in the Hujra that the hospitality of the Pukhtun is portrayed. Visitors and unmarried young men of the village sleep in the Hujra. Expenses of the Hujra are usually shared by the village people. " Almost every Hujra has a mosque adjacent to it in the village structure."¹

The Hujra is an institution. "It is men world," composed of a large room with cots and chairs lying in it. On the walls are hung the guns. A tape-recorder or a transistor lies on one of the tables.

Whenever a person enters a Hujra, he is entertained according to the time of the day. It is the main instrument of implementing mailmastia (hospitality) on day-to-day basis.

In addition to serving as headquarters for transient, the Hujra is a kind of club for local people of the village. The men of the clan gather there to drink tea and discuss the affairs of the day. The person, who receives and entertains more people at his Hujra, commands more influence, power and status in the tribal society.

This is derived from the fact that if food is shared with someone, it has to be regarded as nimak (salt), and partaking person becomes friend and ally. The more allies one has, the greater is his influence, political power, prestige and social status. Therefore, this power and status is achieved and vehemently

¹ Ahmed, The Tribal Areas, P.41.

desired, through the functioning of hospitality at the Hujra.

Hujra and all the activities associated with it, entail a considerable amount of expenditure. Those who have greater amount of wealth, are the ones who owned better hujras. For that matter, since they can entertain more people, the balance of power is gradually shifting towards those with sound economic position and power. This change and shift in the source of power, has been a cause for many a conflicts and at times leads to the feuds and bloodshed in the society.

The mosque is also an integral part of the Hujra with which it has its wall in the same compound. Women are not permitted inside the mosques, instead they congregate and offer their prayers, in the courtyards of their houses, as the local customs forbid women to Join the men in the mosque.

The village Malik regulates the affairs of the mosque through his chosen Imam (mulla) to conduct prayers, to provide basic religious education to the children and generally to attend to the spiritual needs of his congregation. The whole system is highly informal and the mulla exercises his authority largely on the esteem, the tribesmen bestow on him. Not even the most respected of mullas can levy any kind of tithe, since that would imply an authority, offensive to most of the tribesmen. If a mulla is the member of the local tribe, he lives by farming his own land, but usually a village mulla lives by farming a small area of land, set-aside by the community for the mosque.