

Settling the Frontiers: British Administrative Policy towards the Baloch Tribes of Dera Ghazi Khan (1849-1875)

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ABSTRACT

This article examines the policy followed by the British administration in Dera Ghazi Khan District in pacifying and penetrating into Baloch border areas after getting the control of Punjab. It probes the history of administrative measures taken by the colonial government such as the co-optation of the tribal chiefs by giving them different kinds of financial and administrative support, arranging for the settlement of tribal people residing in hills into plain areas by giving them agricultural lands. It also introspects the British efforts for the resolution of tribal feuds through 'Jirga' by adhering to tribal customs and traditions, employing tribal people in levies services for maintaining peace and order and along with all these peaceful arrangements, maintaining strong force for necessary use in case of violation of rules and regulations. These administrative measures were taken by the British initially in the colonial frontiers of Baloch tribal areas of Dera Ghazi Khan District and later on the colonial government

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followed these measures for the enhancement of colonial control and the establishment of peace in Balochistan and other tribal areas of colonial administration. This administrative policy of the British changed the tribal egalitarian organization of the Baloches into authoritative nature of organization which even today after the passage of almost 150 years, affects the life of the Baloch tribes of the area. It hampers the establishment of democratic organization of the society. Overall, the objective of the study is to describe and evaluate the British strategy of border management and to draw a lesson for the current circumstances of the Pakistan.

Introduction

British got the control of Punjab after defeating the Sikh army in 1849. In this way, Dera Ghazi Khan District, at that time being the part of *Derajat* administration of the Punjab came under British administration. At the time of conquest, based on its physiographic features Dera Ghazi Khan was divided into three distinct regions. The western part was consisted of mountainous region of Sulaiman Range, which extends in the North from the Gomal River to southward. This range separates Balochistan from the Punjab. The eastern part was plain area and consisted of the West bank of the Indus River. The middle region of these two areas was generally level but sometimes rolling in sandy waves. At the time of British conquest of Punjab, the boundary of the Punjab in this region fixed by the colonial administration was limited to only the plain areas of the District. The colonial government considered Sulaiman Mountains as the natural border of the empire. The hill area was not part of colonial administration. In its result the Baloch tribes residing in Sulaiman Mountains were virtually independent, owing allegiance neither to Sindh, the Punjab, nor Kalat.¹

1 William Henry Paget, *Frontier and Overseas Expeditions from India: Baluchistan and the First War*, Vol. III (Calcutta: Superintendent Government Printing India, 1910).

Probing into colonial administrative policy of the frontier management, it has been presented that how the British realized the importance of patronage in cultural context in this Baloch tribal society and changed its whole nature of social organization? How the patronage presented to *tumandars* [Urdu: A given title to the leader of Baloch tribe in Pakistan] made the tribes to come under colonial control? This mechanism followed by the British in this area of Baloch tribes of Dera Ghazi Khan further enhanced the way for colonial forward policy into Baloch tribal areas of Balochistan.

The Structure of Baloch Tribes in Dera Ghazi Khan

When the British got the control of Dera Ghazi Khan, the Baloch tribes formed the most powerful population of the area. Mazari, Gurchani, Dreshak, Leghari, Khosa, Lund, Buzdar, Nutkani and Qaisrani were the major Baloch tribes inhabiting in the region. These tribes were exclusively settled in mountainous region, in majority in plains and mixed with other population in riverbank areas of the District.

At the time of conquest, the Baloch tribal organization in the region was intact. In this tribal organization, the tribe was presided over by *tumandar*. It was a hereditary post and was always held by a member of one family to one clan of the tribe. Writing about the powers of a *tumandar*, a British source at that time mentioned: "He is chief judge and the leader in war. He cannot declare war or peace without the advice of his council, but when war is declared, he is charged with the conduct of it. Every member of a tuman is bound to render military service to his Tumandar."² Each *tuman* was divided into several clans which were led by *Mukaddims*. These sections were again divided into sub-sections. This tribal organization was as perfect in plain areas as in hill areas of the District.³ With this tribal organization, these tribes were in constant war with each

2 Paget, *Frontier and Overseas Expeditions from India*.

3 Septimus Smet Thorburn, *Musalmans and Money-Lenders in the Punjab* (London: W. Blackwood, 1886).

other. Carrying a sword for all men of grown age with shield was part of Baloch tribal culture. Many Baloch also had matchlocks.⁴ They looked upon “fighting as their trade, and despised agriculture and the arts of peace.”⁵ The *tumandar*, *mukaddams* and followers were all bound by the ideology of reciprocal obligation.

Before the British conquest of the district, the region was in a state of turmoil. In early Nineteenth Century in Punjab, with the decay of Delhi Empire, Sikh power aroused. It had dominated large part of the Punjab till 1806. But up to 1818, it could not reach to trans-Indus districts. In 1819, Ranjit Singh advanced towards trans-Indus areas and got the control of *Derajat* region. But in a deal, he gave the control of the district to Nawab of Bahawalpur state.⁶ The Baloch tribes of Khosa, Leghari and Nutkani resisted the authority of Nawab of Bahawalpur but later on they were subdued by the Nawab. Before 1827, the southern part of Harand-Dajal region of the district was under the authority of Khan of Kalat.⁷ The Baloch tribes living in this area, i.e. Mazaris, Dreshaks, Tibbi Lund and Gurchanis, were nominally subject to the Khan of Kalat. They infested the roads and committed robberies and murders upon travellers. They also remained in constant war with each other and their western neighbour tribes of Murree, Bugti and Khetran.⁸ Pottinger, who travelled through this area in early Nineteenth Century, in his travelogue writing about the Baloch tribes of the area mentioned that: “where every man is by birth, and education, a professed robber, and where there are no laws to protect either property or person.”⁹ In 1827, Nawab of Bahawalpur

4 Fryer, *First Regular Settlement Report of the Dera Ghazi Khan District, in the Derajat Division* (Lahore: Central Jail Press, 1876), 62.

5 Fryer, *First Regular Settlement Report*, 66.

6 A. H. Diack, *Gazetteer of the Dera Ghazi Khan District* (Lahore: Civil and Military Gazette Press, 1898), 62.

7 Diack, *First Regular Settlement*, 26.

8 Diack, *Gazetteer of Dera Ghazi Khan District*, 27.

9 Henry Pottinger, *Travels in Beloochistan and Sindh: Accompanied by a Geographical and Historical Account of Those Countries* (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, 1816).

annexed the area of Harand-Dajal to the district. In this way the Baloch tribes of the South area also came under the authority of Nawab of Bahawalpur. In 1830, the Sikh government got back the control of the district from Nawab of Bahawalpur, but the tribes living the extreme South of the district did not accept the Sikh authority. In 1832, Dewan Sawan Mal proceeded against the Mazari tribe and subdued them but the Gurchani tribe never submitted to Sikh rule. They remained in constant guerrilla warfare with them.¹⁰ In this way, not all these governments could establish their proper authority over the Baloch tribes of the district and the area was known as 'Yaghistan' i.e. the country of the rebels.¹¹ Especially the people of the tribes living in hill area maintained their independence.¹²

British Policy of Tribal Management

After the establishment of colonial rule in the region, the British interest in border area was focused on maintenance of law and order and continuation of westward trade to Afghanistan and Central Asia.¹³ In this regard, it deployed Punjab Frontier Force consisted of Pathans, Sikhs, Gurkhas and Punjabi Musalmans which was assisted by local militia consisted of the people of respective Baloch tribes.¹⁴ Moreover, to strengthen its security arrangements in the border areas of the district, it established two garrisons; one at Dera Ghazi Khan and the other at Rajanpur and 27 forts at the distance of ten or twelve miles. The Punjab Frontier Force held out of these six forts and the Baloch Frontier

10 Lepel H. Griffin, and Charles Francis Massy, *Chiefs and Families of Note in the Punjab*, Vol. I. (Lahore: Civil and Military Gazette Press, 1909), 365-366.

11 Richard I. Bruce, *The Forward Policy and its Results* (Quetta: Gosha-e-Adab, 1977), 33; A. L. P. Tucker, *Robert Sandeman: Peaceful Conqueror of Baluchistan* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1921), 27.

12 Hakam Chand, *Twarikh-i-Zilla Dera Ghazi Khan* [Urdu: History of District Dera Ghazai Khan]. 2nd ed. (Karachi: Indus Publications, 1992), 1.

13 Collin Davies, *The Problem of North West Frontier 1890-1908* (Cambridge: University Press, 1932), 22.

14 Davies, *The Problem of North West Frontier*, 24.

Militia held the rest.¹⁵ To pursue its colonial interests, the British administration initially also followed 'Close Border Policy' and restrained to interfere into the hill area. Under this policy, according to Bruce who served as Assistant Commissioner in Rajanpur tehsil of the district:

Our officers were forbidden to go beyond the red line, our troops were forbidden to patrol beyond the mouths of the passes, and even parties in hot pursuit of robbers were cautioned against following them up into the hills. On the other hand, hill men were not prevented crossing the border into the district, while murders, high ways robberies, and theft perpetrated by these men were rampant in our territories, causing grievous loss to our subjects.¹⁶

After realizing the insecurity of the people living under British authority, it was decided: "defensive attitude alone will not secure the peace of our borders. If the hill-tribes commit aggressions, they must be punished in their homes. Those who have lands and villages must lose them; those who have neither will yet have flocks and herds which may be confiscated; and if possible, all must be made to feel that their persons are never secure from our vengeance."¹⁷ Therefore, the people of the tribes residing in the hills at that time were "regarded as dangerous enemies and as foreigners, to be kept strictly to their own limits."¹⁸ In this regard, the colonial administration made different military operations against the different Baloch tribes into the hills. In 1853, colonial administration under the command of Brigadier Hodgson took action against the Qaisranis residing in the hills. A village Bathi having eighty to ninety houses and two other hamlets were destroyed. A huge property was

15 Fryer, *First Regular Settlement Report*, 4; Edward E. Oliver, *Across the Border or Pathan and Biloch* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1890), 180.

16 Bruce, *The Forward Policy*, 14.

17 *General Report upon the Administration of the Punjab Proper for the years 1849-50 & 1850-51* (Lahore: Chronicle Press, 1854), 28.

18 H. S. Barnes, "Sir Robert Sandeman's Method of Dealing with Frontier Tribes," in *Sir Robert Sandeman: His Life and Work on Our Indian Frontier*, ed. Thomas H. Thornton (London: John Murray, Albemarle Street, 1895), 302.

destroyed. Some flocks were also captured by the force.¹⁹ In 1857, in the way, an expedition was carried out with heavy force against the Buzdar tribe completely residing in the hills, under the command of Brigadier Chamberlain. In this expedition, twenty men of the tribe were killed and a large number were wounded. The force destroyed their crops and burnt their villages. Ultimately, they subdued under hard conditions laid down by the colonial authorities for their future conduct on border with the government.²⁰ However, despite these expeditions, the highway robberies and attacks into the British territories could not be stopped. From 1854 to 1857, the Lashari section of Gurchani tribe facilitated the Murri tribe's men to attack on Dreshak tribe living on the plains in which the chief of Dreshak tribe and other men were killed. Ghulam Hussain Bugti and his group was also a constant source of terror in the plain areas of the District.²¹ During this time, border pacification and maintenance of law and order in adjacent areas remained a challenge to the colonial administration.²²

Under these circumstances, there was strong realization among the colonial administration that the peace could not be established in these tribal areas only with punitive measures. To control the tribal people of hill areas, as a policy measure, strong patronage and co-option of Baloch *tumandars* was realized. In this regard, Captain Minchin who served as Deputy Commissioner of the district, in a memorandum, recommended that:

Amongst these Baloch tribes, the question of maintaining the position and influence of the chief is in my opinion one of paramount importance, both in the interests of the tribe and of Government.

19 Paget, *Frontier and Overseas Expeditions from India*, 106.

20 Paget, *Frontier and Overseas Expeditions from India*, 110-124.

21 R. B. J. Bruce, "Notes on the Dera Ghazee Khan District, N. W. Frontier, and Its Border Tribes," *Selections from the Records of the Government of the Punjab and its Dependences* (Lahore: Civil Secretariat Press, 1871), 48.

22 For detailed discussion of Colonial Policy of Frontier Management, Confer to Dilip Kumar Ghose, *England and Afghanistan: A Phase in their Relations* (Calcutta: The World press, 1960), 1-27.

The tribes are sub-divided into sections or families, each governed by its own headmen, who are again responsible to the chief for the conduct of their sections. In all police cases, the chief through their agency is able to trace out the offenders and enforce their surrender to government, whether residing in British territory or beyond the border. The members of the tribe willingly submit themselves to the guidance of their chiefs, and if he is a man of common energy and prudence, he is able to govern the tribe completely. No police measure could equal this paternal form of government. To enable the chiefs to maintain their influence it is necessary that they should be provided with ample funds to exercise that liberal hospitality, which is as much regarded by the Beloches as the Arab from whom they are descended. If a chief is unable, from poverty, he at once loses his prestige, the tribe soon becomes disorganized, the several sections remain intact, but they lose their clan feeling, and the general control is lost for a time. Under these circumstances, a bad chief is better than none at all.²³

All the administrators of this frontier region subscribed this recommendation of patronage to Baloch tumandars expressed by Minchin.²⁴ So the British administration with this approach for the protection of passes and maintenance of law and order in the border areas of the tribes, employed all the *tumandars* as 'middle-men' and gave them the powers of police officers in their respective areas. In this regard, Sardar Fazal Ali Khan Qaisrani was given the responsibility of safeguarding the passes from Kot Qaisrani to Vehowa. Sardar Ghulam Haider Khan Lund was made responsible for the protection of the border between Amdani and Shah Sadar Din. Sardar Jamal Khan Leghari was given the responsibility of the border and passes from Vedoor to Tibbi Lund. Sardar Meeran Khan Drishak was made responsible for the protection of border and passes of the Asni area and Sardar Imam Bakhsh Khan Mazari was made responsible for the protection of passes and border area between Omer Kot and Shah Wali. On the recommendations of the *tumandars*, for intelligence purposes, the people from

23 Captain C. Minchin, "Memorandum on the Beloch Tribes in the Dera Ghazi Khan District," in *Selections from the Records of the Punjab and its Dependences*, New Series, no. 3 (Lahore: Punjab Printing Company, 1869), 3-4.

24 Bruce, *Notes on the Dera Ghazee Khan District*, 112.

their own *tumans* were also employed in levies in hill areas. They were responsible to report their respective *tumandars* regarding any unlawful activity of the people. On the recommendations of the *tumandars*, *sowars* (levy persons) from the plain areas of respective *tumans* were also appointed as government servants to patrol the border, chase and arrest the people who commit any crime in the plain areas of the respective tribe. Under this policy in 1857, when the colonial government was facing serious resistance in war of independence or mutiny, it called back its regular force from this Baloch dominated border area of the Punjab and gave control of the respective areas to the *tumandars* to protect the border. In absence of regular colonial force, the local levies under the command of their respective *tumandars* protected the border efficiently. Even the *tumandar* of Drishak tribe along with his son gave life in protection of border attack by the Marri tribe in 1857. In recognition of this tribal service by Drishak chief, at this time odd for colonial administration, Sardar Meeran Khan, a minor son of the *Tumandar*, was bestowed a *khillat* with one thousand rupees by the Governor General himself at Sialkot in 1860.²⁵ In the same way, in recognition of tribal services, the Governor General also bestowed a *khillat* with one thousand rupees to Sardar Imam Bakhsh Khan Mazari *tumandar* at Agra.

Political and Economic Arrangements for Baloch Tribes

In colonial management of frontier, police was not allowed to interfere in Baloch border areas unless specially called on to assist the *tumandars*. However, the colonial administration realizing the seriousness of crimes in the areas of Khosa and Gurchani *tumans*, the *tumandars* of these two tribes were also appointed as direct incharge of the police stations of Yaroo and Harrand of their tribes. Moreover, to deal with civil and criminal petty cases of their tribes, these tribal chiefs were also given the powers as Honorary Magistrates

25 Rai Bahadur Hatto Ram, *Gul Bahar* [Urdu: Flower of Spring], 2nd ed. (Quetta: Balochi Academy, 1982), 230.

and Civil Judges in their own tribes. For heinous crimes, they were responsible to submit the cases for trial to Deputy Commissioner's Court.²⁶

The colonial administration also realized the need to make suitable economic arrangements for the settlement of the people of Baloch tribes living in the hills into plains and in this way by creating their economic interest bring them under the influence of the government. In this regard, it followed the policy of encouraging and supporting the *tumandars* to excavate new canals and manage the existing canal system of their respective areas of influence in the plain areas of the district. It also encouraged the tribal people to come down and settle in plain areas. In this regard, it granted excessive land to different *Tumandars* and *Mukadims* of the tribes. Sardar Ghulam Haider Khan, Gurchani *tumandar*, on the recommendation of Captain Minchin, the former Deputy Commissioner of the District, was granted the Noorwah estate, consisting of the villages of Maranpur, Kutalipur, Bukkerpur, Bumbli, Gurkuna Wazeeri and Alipur.²⁷ In 1860, Major Pollock, as Deputy Commissioner of the District bestowed revenue free lease of Mukwal Wah and Goli Wah estates to Kaireh and Umran, two powerful *mukadims* of Lasharee sections of the Gurchani tribe. In this way, it had favourable impact on the lives of immediate families and near relatives of these two *mukadims*.²⁸ In 1867, the government also bestowed Drigree and Raju Wah rent-free estate to other sub-sections of Lasharees and gave them *tuccavee* grant to purchase cattle and seed. In the same way, to settle the Pitafees and Durkanees sections of this tribe from the hills to plain areas, the government also bestowed Wuzeeri and Gurkuna estates near Harrand. Under this policy, at the time of first regular settlement of the district i.e. in 1870s, the Dreshak tribe entirely and Mazari tribe largely had shifted to plain area of the district.²⁹ This

26 Minchin, *Memorandum on the Beloch Tribes*, 65-66.

27 Bruce, *Notes on the Dera Ghazee Khan*, 49.

28 Bruce, *Notes on the Dera Ghazee Khan*, 48-49.

29 Fryer, *First Regular Settlement Report*, 66.

policy of provision of economic opportunities and the settlement of the Baloch tribes into plain areas changed their behaviour. In this way, in next years on the border, there remained peace and no highway robbery or any other disorder happened in the area.³⁰

In addition, to enhance the influence of *tumandars* in their respective tribes, the government also realized the need to make proper arrangements for the betterment of their financial position. In first such regular settlement of the district, Sardar Fazal Ali Khan, *tumandar* of Qaisrani tribe, was granted *inam* [Urdu: gift/grant] of Rs. 1,200 per annum.³¹ Sardar Ghulam Haider Khan, *tumandar* of Lund tribe was granted Rs. 4,000 per annum.³² Khosa *tumandar* was granted Rs. 5,000 per annum, Jamal Khan Leghari *tumandar* was granted Rs. 8000 and Sardar Imam Baksh Khan Mazari was granted Rs.10000 per annum.³³ By giving financial support to all the *tumandars*, the colonial administration enhanced their capacity to be more generous in hospitality while dealing with their tribes men and ultimately raising their influence through tribal culture of lavish hospitality by the *tumandar*.

Furthermore, the colonial administration, in its policy of tribal management, to enhance the powers of the *tumandars* and strengthen their financial position, in their respective plain areas of their tribes appointed them as *zaildars*. In this regard, Sardar Fazal Ali Khan, *tumandar* of the Qaisrani tribe was appointed as *zaildars* in his own tribe.³⁴ Sikander Khan Khosa, *tumandar* of Khosa tribe and Jamal Khan *tumandar* of Leghari tribe were appointed as *zaildars* in their own tribes.³⁵ Moreover, in Punjab, when the colonial

30 Bruce, *Notes on the Dera Ghazee Khan*, 49.

31 Fryer, *First Regular Settlement Report*, 22.

32 Fryer, *First Regular Settlement Report*, 22.

33 Fryer, *First Regular Settlement Report*, 26.

34 Hakam Chand, *Twarikh-i-Zilla Dera Ghazi Khan* (Karachi: Indus Publications, 1876), 458.

35 Chand, *Twarikh-i-Zilla Dera Ghazi Khan*, 453.

administration passed Land Revenue Act, the government adopted the policy of revenue collection in cash, but unlike the practice of other areas of the province, in villages under the influence of Baloch *tumandars* of Dera Ghazi District the policy of collection of revenue in kind was continued. The colonial settlement officer writing about this policy mentioned that the government followed this policy “to maintain the chiefs in their present position, and to preserve their influence over their tribes.”³⁶ Gilmartin writing about the recognition of tribal authority of the Baloch *tumandars* by the British, mentioned that the “British attempted to underscore the continuing tribal authority of these men by allowing them to collect these *inams* directly in kind in order to strengthen ‘the patriarchal or tribal system of administration in Baloch tumans.’”³⁷

The British Policy of Border Management

In 1866, Robert Grove Sandeman was appointed as Deputy Commissioner of the district. He realized the need to bring the hilly areas of the tribes under the British influence. Therefore, he followed a comprehensive policy of engagement with the tribal chiefs and the people commonly known as “Sandeman System” of tribal management. This policy was based on ‘friendly and conciliatory intervention’ into Baloch tribal areas. With this approach, Sandeman changed the previous ‘Close Border’ policy of administration. With this new policy of administration, in convergence of interests, all the *tumandars* of the Baloch tribes of the districts were eager for the enhancement of British authority beyond the previously settled borders of the Punjab. They were in this way getting more opportunities to enhance their wealth and powers and becoming more influential over their

36 Fryer, *First Regular Settlement Report*, 150.

37 David Gilmartin, “Irrigation and the Balouch frontier,” in *Sufis, Sultans and Feudal Orders: Professor Nurul Hasan Commemoration Volume*, ed. M. Haidar (New Delhi, India: Manohar Publishers, 2004), 388.

tribes.³⁸ Like Sandeman in a memorandum on the rectification of the border mentioned that when it was asked about the existing frontier border, Sardar Jamal Khan, *tumandar* of Leghari tribe, was of the opinion that it “has been most unjustly and unfairly fixed.”³⁹ He was of the claim that in present close border policy, it was difficult for him to maintain control over his tribe and his ancestral possession lands of Barkhhan Leghari, a fertile valley that was situated on the other side of region of Balochistan.⁴⁰ Same was the opinion of Sardar Ghulam Haider Khan *tumandar* of Gurchani tribe regarding the expansion of British authority towards the hill areas of the border. He, in an interview with Sandeman, lamented that it was extremely difficult for him to control his two clans of the *tuman* which were residing in the hills beyond the borders of the colonial Punjab. Moreover, the productive land of the *tuman* due to demarcation was out of his reach and just the wasteland of low quality was under his control.⁴¹ Moreover, the pacification of frontier areas was creating the opportunity of enhancing the financial benefits of tribal chiefs and the people by opening the abandoned westward trade routes passing through Sulaiman hills and the adjacent areas of Marri and Bugti tribes of Baluchistan. Before 1844, this route was used for considerable trade between *Khorasan* and India. After that due to plundering of Baloch tribes of the area, the route was virtually deserted.⁴² In the days of trade, various tribal chiefs protected caravans passing through the Baloch tribal areas of the region. The traders for their services paid them. Like Gurchani *tumandar* used to get Rs. 700/- for escorting one *kafila* [Urdu: Caravan]

38 Rai Bahadur Lala Hatto Ram, *Tarikh-i-Balochistan* [Urdu: History of Balochistan], 4th ed. (Karachi: Syed Hashmi Reference Library, 2018), 345-346.

39 Robert G. Sandeman, “Memorandum entitled “Rectification of the North West Frontier of India”” in *Sir Robert Sandeman: His Life and Work on Our Indian Frontier*, ed. Thomas H. Thornton (London: John Murray, Albemarle Street, 1895), 336.

40 Sandeman, “Rectification of the North West Frontier of India,”.

41 Sandeman, *Rectification of the North West Frontier of India*, 337.

42 Diack, *Gazetteer of Dera Ghazi Khan District*, 125.

passing through Chachar Pass of his *tuman*.⁴³ It was the case of Leghari *tumandar* getting money in lieu of giving protection to the trade caravans passing through Shaki Sarwar Pass. The region of Harrand-Dajal under the rule of Khan of Kalat and under the authority of Nawab of Bahawalpur was directly controlled by deploying force in trans-border area of Barkhan.⁴⁴

Under this new policy of border management which later on became the basis for the colonial 'Forward Policy' to enhance British authority over the Baloch tribes, according to Chapman, Sandeman developing "personal relations with the chiefs of all the tribes,... by familiar and particular dealings with the heads of the families, and individuals of every race, throughout the territory."⁴⁵ So continuing the already established alignment with the Baloch *tumandars* in plain areas of the district, in 1867, Sandeman in company of the *tumandars*, made a tour of the hill areas of Dera Ghazi Khan. In this tour, all the *tumandars* of the Baloch tribes, viz Sardar Haider Khan, *tumandar* of Gurchani tribe, Sardar Jamal Khan, *tumandar* of Leghari tribe, Sardar Nur Muhammad Khan, *tumandar* of Bozdar tribe, Sardar Imam Bakhsh of Mazari tribe, Sardar Miran Khan, *tumandar* of Drishak tribe, Sardar Sikandar Khan, *tumandar* of Khosa tribe, Sardar Mazar Khan, *tumandar* of Tibbi Lund accompanied him.⁴⁶ In this tour, nearly three hundred tribe's men also accompanied their *tumandars*.⁴⁷ It was previously unthinkable for a colonial administrator to enter into the hill areas without the proper arrangement of force. In the italicized words of Thornton, his biographer, he "boldly

43 Fryer, *First Regular Settlement Report*, 44.

44 Fryer, *First Regular Settlement Report*, 44.

45 E. F. Chapman, "Sir Robert Sandeman's Work on the Frontier Viewed from a Military Standpoint," in *Sir Robert Sandeman's Method of Dealing with Frontier Tribes*, ed. T. H. Thornton," 298.

46 Mansel Longworth Dames, *Popular Poetry of the Baloches* (London: David Nutt, Long Acre, 1906), 103.

47 Bruce, *The Forward Policy*, 27.

crossed the border and made a tour of twenty days in the interior of the hills without military protection of any kind".⁴⁸

Moreover, the colonial administration in its policy of border pacification to enhance its influence over the tribes residing the hill areas also developed close relations with the tribal chiefs of adjacent Baloch areas of Balochistan. In this regard, Sandeman with the help of Sardar Imam Bakhsh Khan Mazari developed close relationship with Sardar Murtaza Khan Bugti and Sardar Ghazee Khan Murree.⁴⁹ Sandeman also with the help of Sardar Jamal Khan Leghari developed close relationship with Babul Khan Khhitran.⁵⁰ So after making tour of the hill region of Baloch tribes of Dera Ghazi Khan, he went into the adjacent areas of Baloch tribes of Balochistan in company of all these *tumandars* of Dera Ghazi Khan. In Balochistan, he was also given warm welcome by *tumandars* of the areas of Marri, Bugti and Khhitran tribes.⁵¹ Describing the results of this tour, in a war ballad, a Drishak mentioned that: "Thieves were brought in as captives, grief departed from the cities, from the gallant Maris above and from the borders of the Bugtis, and according to my understanding, from the whole country."⁵²

Moreover, in continuation of this Sandeman's policy of development of close relationship with the *tumandars* of the border tribes, when Donald Macleod, Lieutenant Governor of Punjab came to Bahawalpur state and held a durbar, the colonial administration invited Marri, Bugti and Khhitran tribal chiefs along with all the Baloch *tumandars* of Dera Ghazi Khan to attend the function. In this function, the three tribal chiefs of Balochistan came with four to five hundred fellow mounted men. They were given a most gracious and kind

48 Thornton, *Sir Robert Sandeman*, 36.

49 Bruce, *The Forward Policy*, 38.

50 Fryer, *First Settlement Report*, 23.

51 Bruce, *The Forward Policy*, 27.

52 Drishak Bard, in *Popular Poetry of the Baloches*, ed. Mansel Longworth Dames, 102.

reception by Donald Macleod. He held long conversations with them and presented the three Baloch tribal chiefs of Balochistan, Murtaza Khan Bugti, Ghazeen Khan Marri and Babul Khan Khhitran, with handsome *khillats* to each about the value of five hundred rupees. Donald Macleod also gave presents to all the *tumandars* of Dera Ghazi Khan.⁵³ Writing about the impact of this “kind and generous reception” accorded them by Macleod, Bruce mentioned that on their return the chiefs were “as pleased and as happy as kings.”⁵⁴ He also mentioned that this event “had a most excellent and lasting effect on the border. It set, as it were, the seal of high authority to all Sandeman had accomplished, and the tender of their allegiance which the chiefs then made to the Lieutenant-Governor they have never swerved from...”⁵⁵ Later on, to further enhance his influence in hill areas of the district and on the adjacent areas of the Baloch tribes of Balochistan, Sandeman also established his new summer head quarter in 25 miles into the hills at ‘Fort Munro’.

Innovative Methods for Border Management

Sandeman in continuation of this policy of tribal management, to establish colonial authority over the hill areas introduced the system of “tribal service (or tribal allowances) and tribal levies, whereby the tribe was not only made responsible for law and order but also given the means by which it could be enforced.”⁵⁶ In this context, the British administration gave more powers and authorities not only to all the tribal chiefs of the district who were already responsible for the maintenance of law and order and pacification of passes in plain areas to hill areas of their respective tribes but also to the adjacent Baloch tribal areas of Balochistan. In this regard, in levies service 60 men from

53 Bruce, *The Forward Policy*, 37-41.

54 Bruce, *The Forward Policy*, 40

55 Bruce, *The Forward Policy*, 40.

56 Charles E. Bruce, “The Sandeman’s Policy as Applied to the Tribal Problems of Today,” *Royal Central Asian Society Journal* 19, no. 1: (1932): 51.

Murri tribe, 40 men from Bugti tribe, 34 from Khetran tribes of the Balochistan were also inducted under the command of their respective *tumandars* for intelligence purpose into government service. They were given financial benefits for these responsibilities.⁵⁷ Through these appointments, the colonial administration enhanced the influence of the *tumandars* over the people of their tribes. In this way, the tribal chiefs of the Dera Ghazi Khan, in their respective tribes could provide the tribal people either patronage or can impose upon them sanctions in particular areas under their authority. Like in Qaisrani tribe, the five sons of Sardar Fazal Ali Khan *tumandar*, were given prestigious position in tribal levies. His son Mahmood Ali Khan was appointed as *Jamadar* (a senior officer) in Border Military Police. Another son Sher Bahadur was appointed *Subedar* (an officer) in Baluch Levy and Dilshad Khan as *Jamadar* (a senior officer) in Zhob Levy. Two other sons of the *tumandar*, Mithu Khan and Ghulam Haider Khan were appointed as *sowars* (urdu: Constables) in Baloch levies.⁵⁸ In the same way, in Leghari tribe, Lal Khan, a close relative of the *tumandar* was appointed as *Jamadar*, a senior levy officer in the tribe.⁵⁹ In Mazari tribe, Atta Muhammad Khan, the brother of Sardar Imam Bakhsh *tumandar*, was appointed as senior police officer. Taj Muhammad Khan, cousin of the latter, was employed as *Subedar-major* of the Levy. Ghaus Bakhsh Khan, the nephew of the *Tumandar* was also appointed as *Jamadar* of the levy.⁶⁰ In Drishak tribe, the brother of the *tumandar*, Bacha Khan was given the position as *Jamadar* in Baloch levy.⁶¹ The eldest son of the Gurchani *tumandar*, Lashkar Khan was also appointed as *Jamadar* in the levy.⁶² These *tumandars* were also given the authority of nominating *sowars* from their tribes. They were paid for all

57 Chand, *Twarikh-i-Zilla Dera Ghazi Khan*, 458.

58 Griffin & Massy, *Chiefs and Families of Note*, 377.

59 Griffin & Massy, *Chiefs and Families of Note*, 343.

60 Griffin & Massy, *Chiefs and Families of Note*, 339.

61 Griffin & Massy, *Chiefs and Families of Note*, 361.

62 Griffin & Massy, *Chiefs and Families of Note*, 367.

these responsibilities.⁶³ As the people appointed from the plain areas for the responsibilities of safeguarding the passes and watch and ward of the border areas were from their own tribes and had some contacts like marriages with the people residing in hill areas, it did not create feelings of resentment among the people residing in the hill areas.

Therefore, when in 1867, Ghulam Hussain Mussori Bugti with twelve hundred men from Marri, Bugti and Khetran tribes, attacked on Harrand, his attack was repulsed by the British administration with the strong help of local tribal chiefs of Mazari, Drishak, Gurchani and Tibbi Lund *Tumandars*.⁶⁴ The tribal chiefs with their strong tribal followings along with the British frontier forces stationed in the area successfully protected the area by killing Ghulam Hussain with his two hundred fifty seven followers. This was the greatest achievement of the colonial administration in his policy of management of frontiers with the assistance of local tribes. In this cooperation of local *tumandars*, Sardar Ghulam Haider Khan, *tumandar* of Gurchani tribe was awarded the *jagir* of Nurwali estate. He was appointed Honorary Magistrate and his *inam* was also raised to Rs. 3000 per annum.⁶⁵ In this incident, Sardar Mazar Khan, *tumandar* of Tibbi Lund tribe with three hundred men participated. His brother Sardar Khan who received serious wounds, died. In reward of services, the chief and his nephew were awarded *jagir* of *mouza* Muhammadpur, amounting Rs. 800 per annum.⁶⁶

In the same way, in 1868, Captain L. J. H. Grey, the Deputy Commissioner of Dera Ismail Khan District, when came to probe in a murder case, to a village Tibbi in Qaisrani tribe, then the area under the jurisdiction of Dera Ismail Khan District, was abducted by Sardar Koura Khan Qaisrani, chief

63 Bruce, *The Forward Policy*, Griffin & Massy, *Chiefs and Families of Note*; Chand, *Twarikh-i-Zilla Dera Ghazi Khan*.

64 Bruce, *The Forward Policy*, 30.

65 Griffin & Massy, *Chiefs and Families of Note*, 366.

66 Griffin & Massy, *Chiefs and Families of Note*, 381.

Mukaddim (elder) of Qaisrani tribe to the hills. To release the Captain Grey, all the chiefs of Baloch tribes of Dera Ghazi Khan District along with Sandeman and the Pathan tribes of Dera Ismail Khan District along with the Government forces then chased Koura Khan. They in their collective effort caught Koura Khan and he was then trialled. In this case under the colonial policy of collective responsibility of tribes to maintain order in hill areas of tribes, all the *tumandars* provided the security services of their tribesmen to the government. Like Buzdar tribe sent 1000, Leghari tribe 700, Lund tribe 400, Khosa tribe 50 and Gurchani tribe sent 50 fighting men to assist the colonial administration. In their services for the government for the arrest of Sardar Koura Khan Qaisrani, all the tribes were then awarded money and all the expenditure occurred on this expedition were received from Koura Khan in compensation.⁶⁷ Bruce writing about this policy of border management mentioned that this “was one of the most successful cases of its kind which ever occurred on this border. Two independent hill tribes were coerced into obedience by our own friendly tribes both within and beyond the border, and without having to appeal to the force of arms.”⁶⁸

Sandeman, in his policy of border management, after getting confidence of the Baloch tribal chiefs in cultural context also used the tribal system of conflict resolution as a tool to enhance the colonial influence over the tribes. The traditional Baloch tribal pattern of conflict resolution was ‘*meela*’ in which tribal elders used to settle the internal tribal feuds by social pressure and intermediation. Sandeman, by using this traditional institution, introduced the system of *Jirga* in which he enhanced the colonial influence by introducing the administrative role through conducting the *Jirga* meetings under the supervision of their tribal chiefs who were under the control of colonial administration. So in this way, the traditional system of conflict management was also used as

67 Thornton, *Sir Robert Sandeman*, 35.

68 Bruce, *Notes on the Dera Ghazee Khan*, 111.

a tool to enhance the colonial control over the tribes. In this regard, for intertribal conflicts from 1875, Sandeman started yearly tribal *jirga* of the *tumandars* of the Baloch tribes of the district and the adjacent Baloch tribes of Murree, Bugti and Khetran of Balochistan which otherwise might bloodshed among the tribes at his summer station in the centre of Sulaiman hill at Fort Munroo. In these *jirgas*, by presiding the meetings, he used to settle disputes in accordance with the customs of the Baloch tribal society. Under this policy, according to Baloch culture he even used to settle disputes by developing marital relations among the tribal elders.⁶⁹ In this context, one of the major breakthroughs towards making peace in the region was the settlement of old blood feud among the Marri, Mazari and Drishak tribes. Sandeman settled this dispute with local tradition by persuading Marri chief to give his nieces in marriage to chiefs of Drishak and Mazari tribes.⁷⁰ A Balochi war ballad, describing the role of Sandeman in establishment of peace and justice through *Jirga* in the Baloch tribal areas of Dera Ghazi Khan mentioned that:

He wanders about alone like a tiger, nor is anyone so strong to oppose him. This is a long lasting Government. The world trembles from dead of it over the whole land as far as Qandahar. Justice is done in assembly this glorious and lofty ruler. Thou art the Commander, thou art the Maker of arrangements, thou art the leader of brave youths; as lofty as the peaks of mountains, wherever thou hast rested a mark remains.⁷¹

Fryer as settlement officer, writing about the results of new border management policy of colonial administration, mentioned:

Captain Sandeman, the present Deputy Commissioner, has an excellent understanding with the chiefs of the independent hill tribes. The Bozdar, Khetran, Mari and Bugti chiefs all have a certain number of sawars in the services of Government, by means of communications with these chiefs are kept up, and notice is

69 V. Ball, *Jungle Life in India or the Journeys and Journals of an Indian Geologist* (London: Thos De La Rue, 1880), 448.

70 Thornton, *Sir Robert Sandeman*, 34.

71 Dames, *Popular Poetry*, 104.

received of any intended raids by the more turbulent men of the tribes. So thorough is the confidence which the hill chiefs have in the Deputy Commissioner that he is enabled to make excursions into the independent Biloochistan attended only by Biloches selected from both within and without the border.⁷²

In 1873, the colonial administration of the Punjab, to establish its effective control in the tribal areas of the province, introduced 'The Punjab Frontier Regulations'. By these laws, the Deputy Commissioner of the District was empowered to: (a) Blockade hostile tribe, (b) Check the construction of villages and forts within five miles of the frontier, (c) Fine village communities for colluding with or harbouring offenders or escaped prisoners, and for suppressing evidence; (d) Banish any person who has a blood feud in the district or any person of it.⁷³ With the implementation of these regulations, the colonial administration established peace and maintained law and order in the Baloch tribal area. Sandeman in his letter to his father about the results of his policy in 1875 mentioned that "By my arrangements I have for the last six years prevented bloodshed within our border entirely. The lives on this frontier lost formerly from causes beyond our control averaged thirty-three yearly. No British subject has been killed for years by hill men."⁷⁴ So in this way, the colonial administration ultimately established its authority over the tribal people living in hill areas of the district. It also achieved the colonial objective of minimizing the security cost occurring on the maintenance of forces in the area. It minimized the presence of force in the border area. As until 1857, there were 422 security personals appointed as regular force to safeguard the border, but in 1876, it had reduced to 113.⁷⁵ So the colonial administration through indirect measures got the complete control of these Baloch tribal areas of the district. Writing about the British control of

72 Fryer, *First Regular Settlement Report*, 72.

73 Fryer, *First Regular Settlement Report*, 71.

74 Thornton, *Sir Robert Sandeman*, 317.

75 Thornton, *Sir Robert Sandeman*, 317.

the Baloch region of Dera Ghazi Khan, a colonial administrator mentioned: "There is probably no race in Punjab more thoroughly loyal than the Baluches of Dera Ghazi Khan in present Day."⁷⁶

Conclusion

The British in pursuance of their colonial objectives introduced an indirect method of control into the Baloch tribal areas of the district with particular reference to Dera Ghazi Khan. Working into cultural context of the Baloch tribes, the colonial administration realized the importance of role of *tumandars* in control of the tribes and established the authority of the *tumandars* of the tribes. They were granted tremendous financial as well as administrative powers over their tribes. For financial empowerment, they were granted agricultural lands in the form of *inams*, bestowed the powers of collection of revenue in plain areas of their respective tribes, and provided support for excavation of canals, payment for the security of passes and trade routes and appointments on important positions in security forces. In administrative control mechanism, they were given the powers of judicial magistrates and revenue collectors in their respective tribes. They were also appointed as levies officers over their respective tribes. Their family members and close relatives were also inducted into government services. Moreover, they were also given the authority to nominate the persons for appointment in the levies among their tribe's men. So in this way, the colonial masters enhanced the dependence of the tribal people on these *tumandars*. In its result, the *tumandars* through economic and administrative powers strengthen their control over the people of their respective tribes. In this way, ultimately British got the control of these areas of Baloch tribes of Dera Ghazi Khan and turned the Baloch tribal libertarian organization into authoritarian tribal organization.

76 Griffin & Massy, *Chiefs and Families of Note*, 330.