Nomadism and Politics: The Case of Afghan Nomads in the Indian Subcontinent

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The administrative structures are not sufficiently dealt with as a factor in nomadic life. They are a real and integral part of nomadic life (A.S. Ahmed, 'Nomadism as Ideological Expression: The Case of the Gomal Nomads', *Nomadic Peoples*, 9, 1981, pp. 3–15 [p. 10].)

Pastoralism may be described as an adaptative strategy resorted to by human groups in areas where they face a seasonal shortage of grazing resources for feeding their animals. They are thus prompted to gain control of, and regularly move to, complementary pastures some distance away. Pastoralism can therefore roughly be identified as a *genre de vie* whose territory spans two ecologically contrasted areas such as highlands vs. lowlands (vertical pastoralism), or winter rainfall and summer rainfall zones. Geographers have devoted considerable attention and time to describe this adaptative strategy in every area of the world.[1] They have also extensively dealt with its great flexibility in relation to variability in rainfall and grazing ecosystems, especially in times of drought.[2]

However pastoralism is not only an ecologically adaptative and self-reproducing strategy, with no problems other than those arising on the one hand from the pastoral society's own internal evolution, mainly through its demographic growth, or on the other hand from ecological variability, mainly through periodic droughts, both inducing over-grazing, territorial expansionism, or sedentarisation. Pastoralism is also, as Khazanov has stressed,[3] historically adaptative in the sense that it developed in

[1] A large amount of the available literature has been summarised in D.L. Johnson, *The Nature of Nomadism*, Chicago, 1969 (Dept. of Geography, Research Paper No. 118).

[2] No general synthesis available. See the West African cases analysed in J. Gallais, ed., *Stratégies pastorales et agricoles des Sahéliens durant la sécheresse 1969–1974*, Talence, 1977 (Travaux et Documents de Géographie Tropicale No. 30), or, specifically for the Afghan nomads discussed here, D. Balland and C.M. Kieffer, 'Nomadisme et sécheresse en Afghanistan: l'exemple des nomades Pashtun du Dasht-e-Nawor', in Equipe Ecologie et Anthropologie des Sociétés Pastorales, ed., *Pastoral Production and Society*, Cambridge-Paris, 1979, pp. 75–90.

[3] A.M. Khazanov, *Nomads and the Outside World*, Cambridge, 1984.

Note: Unpublished material quoted in this paper comes from the National Archives of India, New Delhi (N.A.I.) and the India Office Records, London (I.O.R.).

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the context of the formation of state societies, the change in which may dramatically affect its further evolution. In that way, more and more studies have devoted themselves to describing the past and present relations of pastoralism with the 'outside world', more particularly pastoralists' relations with the states on whose territories they migrate(d).[4]

The evolution of the migratory pattern of Eastern Afghan nomads to and from the Indian subcontinent during the last hundred years provides an illustration of the primacy of external political factors in the transformation of a pastoral society.

Nomadic migration between temperate high summer pasturelands located in South-East Afghanistan—an area which the nomads used to call Khorasan[5]—on the one hand, and, on the other, tropical low winter grazing areas now situated in Pakistan, several hundred kilometres away (northern Baluchistan, Derajat, Bannu, and even Panjab on the left bank of the River Indus), is a typical case of vertical nomadism (Figure 1). In 1978, some 3,000 families, i.e., less than 20,000 individuals, were migrating according to this pattern which implied crossing an international border twice a year, in spring and autumn. They belonged to various Pashtun tribes, mostly (53 per cent) from the Ghilzay confederation.[6]

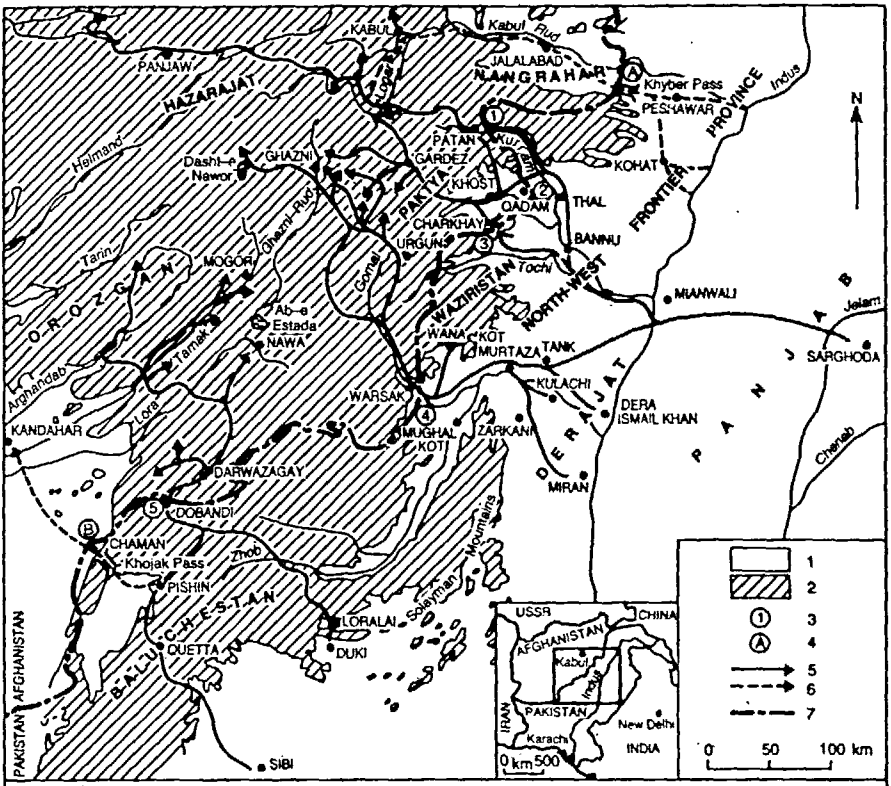
At that date, however, this migratory flow was only a residual one. It had been diminishing for purely historical reasons which had nothing to do

[4] The bibliography on this subject is quite extensive. For an early period, see M. Rowton, 'Enclosed Nomadism', *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, XVII, 1, 1974, pp. 1–30, and particularly, P. Briant, *Etat et pasteurs au Moyen-Orient ancien*, Cambridge–Paris, 1982 (with a rich bibliography). For more recent times, see X. de Planhol, 'Geography, Politics and Nomadism in Anatolia', *International Social Science Journal*, XI, 4, 1959, pp. 525–31; D.G. Bates, 'The Role of the State in Peasant-Nomad Mutualism', *Anthropological Quarterly*, 44, 3, 1971, pp. 109–31; J.-P. Digard, 'Les grandes tribus de pasteurs nomades d'Iran et le pouvoir central', in *Etre nomade aujourd'hui*, Neuchâtel, 1979, pp. 47–65; E. Bernus and F. Pouillon, eds., *Sociétés pastorales et développement*, Paris, ORSTOM, 1990 (*Cahiers des Sciences Humaines*, 26, 1–2). The danger of ecological reductionism in reconstructing the evolution of pastoral societies of the past has been recently stressed again by several contributors to C.R. Whittaker, ed., *Pastoral Economies in Classical Antiquity*, Cambridge, 1988 (see, pp. 3f., 26, 204).

[5] G.T. Vigne, *A Personal Narrative of a Visit to Ghuzni, Kabul, and Afghanistan, and of a Residence at the Court of Dost Mohamed*, London, 1840 (2nd ed. 1843), repr. Lahore, 1982, p. 103ff.

[6] Data from the unpublished Afghan Nomad Survey of 1978. On the methodology of this survey see A. de Benoist, *Approche du monde nomade afghan*, Paris, 1980 (Synthèse des recensements africains, Documents d'information No. 24). According to a previous survey carried out in 1972, the number of Afghan nomads crossing the Afghan frontier province of Paktya to Pakistan was put at 55,000. (A. Janata, *Nomadismus*, n.p. (Berlin), 1972 (Grundlagen und Empfehlungen für eine Perspektivplannung zum Regionalen Entwicklungsvorhaben Paktia/Afghanistan, 7, V, p. 28). This figure includes an estimated 25,000 Kharoti and Solaymankhel from the district of Gomal which could not be surveyed in 1978. The number of transborder nomads would therefore have dwindled down by 10,000 at the least between 1972 and 1978.

Figure 1 — Pastoral routes between Afghanistan and the Indian subcontinent.



1-Area below 1.500 metres;

2-Area above 1.500 metres;

3-Transborder crossings used by nomads in 1978: I: Peywar Pass: II: Khost Basin via Qadam: III: Khost Basin via Charkhay: IV: Gomal Valley: V: Darwazagay Passes:

4-Former transborder crossings no more in use in 1978: A: Khyber Pass via Jalalabad; B: Khojak Pass via Chaman;

5-Pastoral routes in use in 1978 (arrow-heads pointed to the summer quarters);

6-Former pastoral routes no more in use in 1978;

7-Durand Line (Afghanistan–Pakistan boundary).

with the internal evolution of the Pashtun nomadic society nor with ecological considerations. Many nomadic families who previously used to migrate into Indian territory in winter were compelled to stop and forced to develop new pastoral or non-pastoral strategies in order to cope with the difficult living conditions which ensued.

Measuring the Decline of Afghan Nomadism in North-West Hindustan

It is not known at what time regular nomadic migrations between the Afghan highlands and the Indus valley lowlands appeared. It must in any case have been an early phenomenon, since it was apparently already in force in the early sixteenth century when Babur's army attacked and looted in Bannu a caravan of Afghan Lohani trading nomads (*powinda*, Pashto *powanda* or *pôwanda*, from *powal*: to graze).[7]

Only since the establishment of British control over the passes that link Afghanistan with Hindustan in the late 1870s do we have regular estimates of the number of nomads involved. Two series of sources are relevant here.

The first one is the regular all-India census, conducted once every ten years since 1881 in late winter (February–March), hence at a time when Afghan nomads were still encamped in Indian territory.[8] This in fact accounted for all Afghan-born residents in India, i.e., not only nomads, but also a few Afghans who were permanently living there,[9] as well as a greater number who had come temporarily without their family to find a job (the so-called *charra* folk), or sometimes for more futile reasons: in 1941, for instance, true nomads represented barely one third of the so-called *powinda* (temporary migrants in the broadest sense) enumerated in

[7] *The Babur–Nama in English*, tr. A.S. Beveridge, London, 1921, p. 235. See also Abul Fazl, *The Akbar Nama*, tr. H. Beveridge, Vol. 3, Calcutta, 1913, p. 717, for an early attestation of the term *powinda*. Much earlier evidence of the existence of pastoral migrations between Afghan highlands and Indian lowlands has been investigated by P.S. Kavoori, Regional Interactions in Prehistoric Baluchistan: The Bolan Pass Route, M. Phil. Diss., Centre for Historical Studies, School of Social Sciences, Nehru University, New Delhi, 1983.

[8] On the history of the Indian census, see D. Natarajan, *Indian Census through a Hundred Years*, 2 vols., New Delhi, 1972–1973 (Census Centenary Monograph No. 2). In connection with the census operations of 1941, an unprecedented enumeration of the Afghan *powinda* entering British India took place between 1 September and 31 December 1940. The results were published in a special volume of the *Census of India 1941: Powindah Census, North-West Frontier Province and Baluchistan*, Delhi, 1942 (quoted hereafter as *Powindah Census 1941*).

[9] They included, among others, several hundreds of political refugees. At the end of 1921 their total number amounted to 1,678 individuals (N.A.I., Foreign and Political Dept., Frontier Branch, 1922, File No. 132-F), that is 3.5 per cent of the 47,835 Afghan-born residents enumerated in the census of that year. The most noticeable refugee among them was the ex-Amir Mohammad Yaqub Khan who ruled for eight months in 1879 in Kabul. For the rest of his life he lived as a pensioned refugee in British India on the monthly allowance of Rs. 5,000 granted to him in 1882. In 1921 he was reported to be living in Dehra Dun.

the census (Table 1 under headings 'Trading' and 'Grazing'). It is not known whether that proportion has remained constant throughout the period under review.[10]

Table 1

Reasons for which Afghan* powinda *entered British India in autumn 1940 (men only)

	Number	*Per cent*
Labouring	15,026	45
Trading	9,161	27
Grazing	2,374	7
Various*	450	1
No activity	6,556	20
Total	33,557	100

Source: *Powindah Census 1941.*

Note: * This includes migrations for religious or medical reasons (resp. 181 and 97 cases), and some odder ones such as coming into India for begging, or sending a telegram, or for visiting relatives.

Moreover, a few specific surveys of the *powinda* migration were conducted from time to time by the British authorities.[11] They are on the whole much better sources than the census returns, the best of all being Capt. Robinson's survey carried out during the winters of 1932–33 and 1933–34. The figures derived from such surveys have been consistently higher than those originating from contemporary censuses, an indication of how poorly the Afghan nomadic population has actually been enumerated by the census agents (Tables 2 and 3).

Whatever their absolute reliability, all these sources reveal that a sharp decline in the nomadic flow between Afghanistan and India has occurred

[10] Some sources of the nineteenth century usefully distinguish three different kinds of *powinda*, namely: the *kirri powinda* (*kirri*: encampment) who are purely pastoral nomads with fixed camping grounds; the *kafila powinda* (*kafila*: caravan) who are cameleers migrating without their family and have no fixed camping grounds; the *charra powinda* (*charra*, or more properly *jara*: single), or seasonal labourers, who 'wander about, sometimes in gangs, sometimes by twos or threes, through the towns and villages, ready for rough work of any sort, such as stone-breaking, road-making, clearing jungle (*butimari*), and any sort of job where energy and strength are more necessary than professional skills' (H.St.G. Tucker, *Report of the Land Revenue Settlement of the Dera Ismail Khan District of the Punjab 1872–79*, Lahore, 1879, p. 184). In 1878 the *kirri powinda* of Derajat numbered 14,133 adult men in 7,055 households scattered over 108 camping grounds, vs. 15,300 *kafila* and *charra powinda*.

Most later sources, especially the census returns, unfortunately did not retain this very important distinction and therefore incorporate any temporary Afghan migrant under the heading of *powinda*.

[11] J. Rai, *Rough Notes on the Nasar, Kharot, and Other Afghan Pawindahs*, Quetta, 1922; C.E. Bruce, *Notes on Ghilzai and Powindah Tribes*, Peshawar, 1929; J.A. Robinson, *Notes on Nomad Tribes of Eastern Afghanistan*, New Delhi, 1935, repr. Quetta, 1978.

Table 2

Estimates of the number of Afghan **powinda** *in India (West Pakistan since 1947) (1880–1960)*

Date		*Source*		*Number*
Winter	1880–81	*Census of India*	1881	112,690
–	1890–91	–	1891	84,963
–	1900–01	–	1901	112,502
–	1910–11	–	1911	91,640
–	1920–21	–	1921	47,835
–	1930–31	–	1931	81,053
–	1932–34	Robinson, *op. cit.*		More than 20,000 families, i.e., more than 120,000 persons
–	1940–41	*Census of India*	1941	47,298
–	1950–51	*Census of Pakistan*	1951	69,762
–	1960–61	–	1961	72,334

Note: Conflicting figures have been published in official Pakistani sources. The *Year Book of the North-West Frontier Province 1955*, Peshawar, n.d., states for instance that the 'approximate number' of *powinda* in the Province amounted to 166,916 in 1950–51, an unlikely figure (p. 180).

Table 3

Estimates of the number of Afghan **powinda** *in Derajat (1877–1950)*

Date		*Source*	*Number*
Winter	1877–78	*Gazetteer of Afghanistan*, Vol. 6	76,403
–	1878–79	J.Rai, *Op. cit.*	77,576
–	1880–81	*Gazetteer Dera Ismail Khan District*, 1884	49,392
–	1900–01	*Census of India*, 1901	20,619
–	1910–11	– 1911	21,060
–	1920–21	– 1921	16,570
–	1930–31	– 1931	15,426
–	1932–34	J.A. Robinson, *Op. cit.*	4,610 families, i.e., ca. 30,000 persons
–	1940–41	*Census of India*, 1941	4,259
–	1941–42	I.O.R., R/12/42/379 11/16–25	2,256 houses, i.e., ca. 15,000 persons
–	1950–51	*Census of Pakistan*, 1951	14,841

since the beginning of the twentieth century. Not surprisingly, this long-term trend allows for short-term fluctuations to take place, depending on the climatic, economic, sanitary, or political state of the frontier area. The successive Anglo-Afghan wars, for instance, resulted in a sharp drop in the

flow; at least, the second (1878–81) and third (1919) of these wars show evidence of this, and one can but suppose that during the first war (1839–42) the same cause must have produced the same effect.[12] High mortality due to famine or epidemics (such as influenza in 1918) also had a similar result.[13] Sometimes mere rumours were instrumental in cutting down the flow for a while, for example, in 1941 when 'the war and its ramifications frightened many tribesmen from leaving their own country by fictitious tales of the stern and forcible rounding-up of able-bodied men in India irrespective of their nationality'.[14]

It therefore appears that the migratory flow from Afghanistan to India has always been highly volatile, with a high range of inter-annual fluctuations. This was especially the case for the so-called *charra powinda*, much more dependent on the conjuncture than the pastoral nomads. But why did the flow of the latter experience a consistent tendency to decline in the course of the last hundred years?

The reasons are manifold and have appeared successively. Two different stages may be conveniently distinguished. The first extends over the whole colonial period; it is marked by the implementation of an anti-nomad policy in British India. The second begins with the Partition of India (1947); it is rooted in the violent political antagonism that developed then between Afghanistan and the newly created state of Pakistan.

The Anti-Nomad Policy in British India

It is a commonplace that the British period witnessed a tremendous growth in the population of India, including the areas where Afghan nomads used to graze in winter. One natural result was an extension of cultivation in these areas, partly through the restoration and modernisation of the Indus inundation canal, network (Panjab, N.W.F. Province)[15] or the digging of

[12] A.E. Wernicke, Report on the Powindah Migration down the Gomal, November 1920, unpublished, N.A.I., Foreign and Political Department, Frontier B, December 1920, No. 49–58: 'The Powindah migration this year down the Gomal is on a much larger scale than last. The reason for this being that it is now understood in Afghanistan that the British and Afghan Governments have come to a settlement and so they have no fear in migrating'.

[13] *Census of India 1921*, Vol. IV: Baluchistan, Calcutta, 1923, p. 94. On the influenza epidemics of September 1918–March 1919 in India, see I.D. Mills, 'The 1918–1919 Influenza Pandemic: The Indian Experience', *The Indian Economic and Social History Review*, 23, 1, 1986, pp. 1–40. In the N.W.F.P., the influenza mortality rate rose to 4.44 per cent (*Id.*, p. 12).

[14] *Powindah Census 1941*, p. 16.

[15] *North-West Frontier Province*, Calcutta, 1908, repr. Lahore, 1979 (Imperial Gazetteer of India, Provincial Series), *passim; Triennial Review of Irrigation in India 1918–1921*, Calcutta, 1922, pp. 43 and 116. It has been stated that in the thirty-five years following the annexation of the Dera Ismail Khan district by the British (1849), its cultivated area had doubled: S.S. Thorburn, Note on the Causes of the General Indebtedness of Agriculturalists in the Muhammadan Districts of the Punjab, more particularly in the Derajat Division, 1884,

new canals (Baluchistan).[16] Such growth could only lead to a concomitant limitation in the availability of grazing lands on the one hand, and to their increasing imbrication with new agricultural lands on the other. Simultaneously, the successive Land Revenue Settlements enforced in the administered territory brought about a fresh and strict delimitation of the common grazing grounds in proportion to the size of the herds owned by the villagers in each village,[17] with the result that the nomads' herds were deprived of access to some of their traditional pastures.

In such a context, the natural aggressiveness of nomadic pastoralists living and moving amidst a dense network of sedentary peasants' villages reached its climax. Conflicts between nomads and villagers overgrazing rights broke out with higher frequency every year (cattle theft, damage to crops by grazing animals, armed confrontation).[18] The British authorities could not tolerate such a disruption of social peace in the countryside under their own administration. They immediately set up a body of stringent regulations, all directed against the nomads, aiming to control the latter and to limit confrontations between them and the sedentary villagers. Three anti-nomad measures were successively enforced.

Grazing fee

The first anti-nomad measure was the payment of an annual grazing fee called *tarnay* in Pashto, *tirni (tirṇī)* in Western Panjabi (from Punjabi *tariṇ*; grass?): every herd-owner had to pay a fee in cash at his point of entry into British administered territory. The fee normally depended on the size of the flock according to a complex schedule including the species of animals and, in the case of camels only, their age and sex (Table 4).[19] Usually the

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unpublished (N.A.I., Foreign Dept., Internal A, June 1885, File No. 239). Converging observations for the Bannu valley by R.G. Taylor, Memorandum on the Dera Ismail Khan District, in R.H. Davies, *Report Showing the Relations of the British Government with the Tribes on the North-West Frontier of the Punjab from annexation in 1849 to the Close of 1855; and Continuation of the Same to August 1864*, Lahore, 1865, pp. 105–227, see pp. 170f.

[16] T.H. Thornton, *Colonel Sir Robert Sandeman, His Life and Work on our Indian Frontier*, London, 1895, repr. Quetta, 1977, p. 209.

[17] In the Dera Ismail Khan District, the apportionment was made on the basis of 12.5 acres per head of cow, buffalo, camel or horse, and 2.5 acres per head of sheep or goat (H.St.G. Tucker, *op. cit.*, pp. 263f.).

[18] In the Zhob district of Baluchistan, for instance, the Solaymankhel are reported to have killed 50 persons and wounded 18 more between 1919 and 1922. At the same time, they appear to have stolen 100 camels, 10 horses, 1,731 head of cattle, 19,777 sheep and goats, 437 donkeys, 17 'flocks', 63 rifles, as well as miscellaneous goods valued at Rs. 37,682 from the local inhabitants (R. Chenevix Trench, Political Agent, Zhob, Memorandum No. 1724, dated 14 August 1922, N.A.I., Foreign and Political Department, 1922–23, File No. 162 F, Serial No. 95).

[19] A single exception was granted in the Kohat district in favour of the Waziri tribes whose *tirni* was not proportional to the number of animals they introduced into the district (Table 5).

Table 4

Evolution of the* tirni *(grazing tax) in the Dera Ismail Khan, Bannu and Zhob districts (1877–1923)

	1877	*1905*	*1923*
	Rs. As.	Rs. As.	Rs. As.
Male camel	0–8	0–12	1–8
Female camel	1–0	1–8	3–0
Sheep or goat	0–1	0–2	0–4
Cow or buffalo	0–6	0–6	0–12
Donkey	0–4	0–4	0–8

Sources: 1877 - C.E. Bruce, *op. cit.*, p. 14.
1904–05–I.O.R.R/12/59, 59 and N.A.I., Foreign & Political Dept., Frontier Branch, 1923, File no. 658-F (hereafter quoted as N.A.I. 1923).
1923 - I.O.R.R/12/59, 64 and N.A.I. 1923.

Note: No charge was levied on suckling camels up to eight months.

malek or camp chief would pay for all his fellow tribesmen and afterwards recover money from each of them.

The *tirni* was not actually introduced by the British themselves.[20] For a long time a grazing right had been levied on both villagers and nomads either by local petty chiefs or government representatives.[21] Such a levy was nevertheless very loosely implemented: at the time of Sikh rule in Derajat (1821–49), for instance, the entering 'camels were only counted

[20] I wrongly wrote the contrary in a previous article (D. Balland, 'Le déclin contemporain du nomadisme pastoral en Afghanistan,' in E. Grötzbach, ed., *Neue Beiträge zur Afghanistanforschung*, Liestal, 1988, Schriftenreihe der Stiftung Bibliotheca Afghanica, 6, pp. 175–98).

[21] For example in the beginning of the nineteenth century the Miankhel used to pay 'a small sum on each camel' to the Afghan governor of Derajat (M. Elphinstone, *An Account of the Kingdom of Caubul, and its Dependencies in Persia, Tartary, and India*, London, 1815, repr. Graz, 1969, p. 376). The same situation was still prevailing in Afghanistan proper in the middle of the century when the Lohani paid Rs. 600 a year to the Amir of Kabul, and the Naser Rs. 3,000 to the chief of the Turan Ghilzi (H.B. Lumsden, *The Mission to Kandahar*, Calcutta, 1860, pp. 92f.). This is very close to the present-day practice in the Urgun area of Paktya province where a grazing tax is paid by nomads to villagers either in cash or in goats (A. Janata, *op. cit.*, p. 34).

The *tirni* for grazing on wastes and jungle seems to have been introduced in Punjab by the Mughal administration. It developed into an important source of income for the state under Diwan Sawan Mal, the famous and semi-independent Maharaja Ranjit Singh's governor of Multan (1821–44) (G.W. Hamilton, 'On the Tirnee Tax of Jhung', *Selections from the Public Correspondence of the Administration for the Affairs of the Punjab*, 1, 9, 1853, pp. 103–11, quoted in I. Banga, *Agrarian System of the Sikhs*, New Delhi, 1978, p. 106; see also H.K. Trevaskis, *The Land of the Five Rivers, An Economic History of the Punjab from the Earliest Times to the Year of Grace 1890*, Oxford, 1928, repr. under the title *An Economic History of the Punjab*, Vol. I, *From Earliest Times to 1890*, Gurgaon, 1989, p. 187). The date from which Afghan nomads became liable to the *tirni* remains however unknown.

once in many years' and the powerful chief of the Naser tribe successfully escaped payment.[22]

In fact, what the British bureaucracy introduced, was a modern management of the *tirni* to the nomads' disadvantage. Soon after British annexation of the Derajat (1849), a *tirni* of 6 annas was regularly charged as a cis-Indus (i.e., left bank) grazing due on every camel crossing the Indus ferries, but apparently no *tirni* was then levied in trans-Indus (right bank) territory where most Afghan nomads encamped in winter.[23] This system abruptly came to an end in 1872 with the extension of the *tirni* to every animal entering Anglo-Indian territory, a measure which compelled the colonial administration, first, to set up an annual enumeration of the migratory herds at the entrance of the passes leading to Afghanistan, i.e., at Kot Murtaza, Zarkani and Mughal Kot for nomads coming into Derajat (Figure 1), and second, in 1873, to sanction the employment of a special body of '*powinda* police' to keep order at these border points when the enumeration was in progress.[24]

By the early twentieth century the *tirni* collection had really become a very complex and troublesome administrative process. A *tirni* receipt was issued to each *malek* who had to produce it upon request. Moreover, various rates were applied, depending on the district and the tribe. The heaviest-taxed district was Kohat (N.W.F.P.) where Afghan nomads had to pay nearly four times as much as in neighbouring Kurram, reflecting sharp regional imbalances in the saturation of rural space.[25] Dera Ismail Khan, Bannu and Zhob districts had intermediate rates (Tables 4 to 6). On a tribal basis, nomads coming from Afghanistan proper were taxed about twice as much as pastoralists originating in the tribal areas of the N.W.F.P. such as the Afridi and Waziri in the Kohat district (Table 5).

Increases in the *tirni* rates were enforced at regular intervals during the British period, the first one in October 1905 (+ 50 per cent on camels, + 100 per cent on sheep and goats), a second one in September 1923 (+ 100 per cent on all animals, except in Kurram). The *tirni* increasingly became a burden to nomads (Table 7). For Derajat alone, it amounted to Rs. 64,280 in 1941, paid by 79 different camping units comprising 2,760 nomadic

[22] H.B. Edwardes, *A Year on the Punjab Frontier in 1848–49*, London, 1851, 2nd ed., Gurgaon, 1989, p. 425. It is not known if *powinda's* animals other than camels were liable to the *tirni* at that time, but the Sikhs used to take a tax on every head of cattle from the cis-Indus villagers (H.St.G. Tucker, *op. cit.*, p. 257).

[23] That point is unclear since one source argues that a *tirni*, here defined as a camel-tax, was levied on the *powinda* on both sides of the Indus in 1852 (R.G. Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 202).

[24] H.St.G. Tucker, *op cit.*, pp. 190f.

[25] J.A. Robinson, *op. cit.*, pp. 34 and 45. In the 1880s it had been observed that 'every year the difficulties of (the) nomads increase' in the Kohat district (H.St.G. Tucker, *Report on the Settlement of the Kohat District in the Punjab*, Calcutta, 1884, p. 105).

Table 5

Increase in the* tirni *(grazing tax) in the Kohat district of the N.W.F.P. (1905–23)

	For Khujal Khel Afridi		*For Ghilzi and Shinwari*	
	1905	*1923*	*1905*	*1923*
	Rs. As.	Rs. As.	Rs. As.	Rs. As.
Full grown camel	1–8	3–0	3–0	6–0
Young camel	0–12	1–8	1–8	3–0
Sheep or goats (per 10)	1–8	3–0	3–0	6–0
Cow, buffalo, donkey	0–4	0–8	0–8	1–0
Horse or mule	0–8	1–0	1–0	2–0

Source: N.A.I. 1923.

Note: From 1866 the Waziri entering the district (Hangu and Teri *tahsil*) in autumn had been subject to the payment of a lump sum which in 1904 amounted to Rs. 100 for the Tazikhel and Rs. 50 for the Kabulkhel (both amounts doubled in 1923), irrespective of the number of their animals. Between 1856 and 1866 however they used to pay a *tirni* of Re. 1 per 49 head of sheep or goat and As. 8 per camel (H.St.G. Tucker, *Report on the Settlement of the Kohat District in the Panjab*, Calcutta, 1884, p. 101).

families,[26] i.e., more than Rs. 810 per camp or Rs. 23 per family on average, which was almost equal to the monthly salary of a *moharrir* employed in the N.W.F.P. at the time of the Powinda Census of 1940 (Rs. 25).

As one would expect, nomads ceaselessly complained about *tirni* collection and increase. Files were filled up with their requests in the Afghan consulate

Table 6

Growth of the* tirni *(grazing tax) in the Kurram district, N.W.F.P. (1905–23)

	1905	*1923*
	Rs. As.	Rs. As.
Camel, horse, mule, pony	1–0	1–8
Female camel	1–0	1–0
Bullock, cow	0–6	0–8
Donkey	0–4	0–6
Sheep or goat	0–1	0–2

Source: N.A.I. 1923.

[26] Considering the successive increases in the *tirni* rate between 1877 and 1941, one may broadly assume a stability in the number of incoming animals between 1877 and 1915 on the one hand, and, on the other, a decrease of two-thirds of their number between 1915 and 1941.

in New Delhi, without any success. They were altogether more successful in trying to escape payment by using alternative routes. However, this was only feasible for sheep and goats, and hence the comparatively low figures for these animals recorded in the *tirni* registers (for example, only 11,600 in 1941–42). Camels, on the contrary, had to follow the main roads and evasion from payment was almost negligible in their case. Anyhow, *tirni* registers would appear to constitute a major source for the study of pastoral migrations between Afghanistan and India. It is therefore very unfortunate that none of these seem to be available in the National Archives of India, New Delhi, nor in the India Office Records, London. They are most probably still kept in the various border posts at which payment was made.

Very little information is available concerning the evolution of the *tirni* after the Partition of India (1947). In 1972 the Afghan nomads acknowledged payment of a grazing tax in Pakistan at various rates ranging from 5

Table 7

Income from the* tirni *in Derajat at various dates

Date	*Tirni (Rs.)*
1872–73	23,648
1873–74	29,745
1874–75	29,131
1875–76	36,027
1876–77	40,457
1877–78	42,329
1901–02	32,962
1902–03	36,292
1903–04	39,023
1904–05	28,060
1905–06	68,315
1906–07	61,864
1915–16	90,320
1916–17	76,799
1917–18	77,037
1918–19	84,339
1919–20	59,092
1941–42	64,279

Sources: 1872–78: H.St.G. Tucker, *Report of the Land Revenue Settlement of the Dera Ismail Khan District*, p. 191; 1901–06: H.N. Bolton, *Settlement Report of the Dera Ismail Khan District, North-West Frontier Province*, Lahore, 1907, p. 39; 1906–07: M.F. O'Dwyer, *Review of the First Report on the Settlement of the Dera Ismail Khan District*, in H.N. Bolton, *op. cit.*, pp. 1–15 (see p. 13); 1915–20: C. Latimer, Note on the Powindah Immigration of 1919–20 in the Dera Ismail Khan District, May 1920, unpublished, N.A.I., Foreign & Political Department, 1922–23, File No. 162 F, Serial No. 61; 1941–42: List of Powindah Maliks with their Camping Grounds for the Year 1941–42, unpublished I.O.R., R/12/42/379 11/16–25.

to 10 afghanis per sheep, and 20 afghanis per camel. Since the Pakistani rupee was worth about 7 afghanis on the free market at that date, this would indicate a substantial increase in the *tirni* rate since 1947, especially for sheep. It seems, however, that some nomads, for example, the Dawtani, managed to change the proportional *tirni* into a lump sum of 100 to 150 afghanis (i.e., Pak. Rs. 15–20) per family, which is a comparatively low figure.[27]

Disarmament

Since the Tank disturbances in January 1879, nomads were disarmed at entry points in the British administered districts.[28] Each caravan was only allowed to retain a small quantity of rifles for self-defence (usually up to ten rifles per camp, depending on its location). Arms in excess were confiscated and returned to nomads on their way back to Afghanistan upon presentation of a receipt. Any concealed weapon was liable to payment of a fee.[29] This measure had no financial incidence and was moreover loosely implemented,[30] but it was resented by nomads as an attack on their liberty and manliness.

Block-system Policy

The last measure imposed upon Afghan nomads by the British authorities aimed at complete control over their spatial distribution in Indian territory.

[27] A. Janata, *op. cit.*, p. 35. The exchange rate is taken from M.J. Fry, *The Afghan Economy*, Leiden, 1974 (Social, Economic and Political Studies of the Middle East, 15), p. 244.

[28] On 1 January 1879, large numbers of Afghan *powinda* from the Solaymankhel and Kharoti tribes, then in their winter quarters in Derajat, joined a *lashkar* (raiding party) of Mahsud who plundered and burnt the bazar and many houses in Tank. This was followed by general disorder in the area (firing on the Jatta police post, plunder of many villages including the Gomal bazar) which could be quelled only in March 1879. For details, see W.H. Paget and A.H. Mason, *Record of Expeditions against the Nort-West Frontier Tribes since the Annexation of the Punjab*, revised ed., London, 1884, pp. 533ff. (repr. Delhi, 1980, under the title *Tribes of the North-West Frontier*).

[29] K.C. Packman, Rules for Powindah Migration 1939–40, unpublished (I.O.R., R/12/42/379 11/2–4), art. 1 to 4. The compiler was Deputy Commissioner, Dera Ismail Khan. For three years, beginning in 1939, *powinda* coming to Derajat were not even allowed to retain arms for self-defence (art. 4a: 'All arms including licensed arms, and licences, should be taken from Powindahs entering the district'); the measure was relaxed in 1942 and art. 4a then read as follows: 'all arms not licensed for N.W.F. Province must be given up by Powindahs entering Dera Ismail Khan district'.

[30] According to Sir G. Roos-Keppel, Chief Commissioner of the N.W.F.P. from 1908 to 1919, the *powinda* managed to retain in practice far more arms than they were actually allowed (letter dated 21 December 1916, N.A.I., Foreign Dept, Frontier B, January 1917, No. 84).

Enforced first in Derajat in 1879,[31] and introduced later in the neighbouring districts, it involved the issuing of a pass to the *malek* or chief of each camping unit, after disarmament and payment of the *tirni*. The pass clearly indicated the route which the group was allowed to follow, with the enumeration of the authorised halting places and location of the sanctioned winter camp (Punjabi *mela/melagâh*, Western Punjabi *Kiṛī*, usually transcribed *kirri* in British sources). Moving back from the winter camp to Afghanistan was also subject to administrative authorisation. The *malek* was personally responsible for all his followers complying with these rules.[32]

Such a block-policy bears very close resemblance to other colonial attitudes towards nomadism—a subject still to be systematically investigated—such as the *cantonnement* policy introduced by the French in Algeria after 1869 or the reserve policy first initiated by the Germans, then taken up again by the British, in Tanganyika (present-day Tanzania).[33]

Together, these three measures actually had a strong negative impact on Afghan nomadism in India. Their effect was furthermore enhanced by the restrictions which were placed, at the same time, upon the non-pastoral activities of Afghan nomads in India. Traditionally, many of them had engaged more or less extensively in trade and money-lending, the latter being a kind of by-product of the former.[34]

Having encamped on their winter grazing pastures, they would leave their women, children, flocks, and a few armed adult men, and go to major trading centres to buy Indian and European merchandise which they would bring back and sell in Afghanistan or nearby Central Asia (Bokhara, Kokand) the following summer (tea, various manufactured goods such as clothes, shoes, modern rifles and ammunition, and matches). They could

[31] J.A. Robinson, *op. cit.*, p. 36; alterations in areas opened to nomads up to 1930 are detailed on pp. 37 to 43. The same author provides a complete list of regular winter encampments in N.W.F.P., Baluchistan and the Punjab (pp. 33–51). The sanctioned camping grounds were selected with a view to separating the tribes who were at feud, such as the Naser with the Sołaymankhel (Letter No. 1272-S, dated 16 September 1916, from the Deputy Commissioner, Dera Ismail Khan, N.A.I., Foreign and Political Dept., 1922–23, File No. 162 F, Serial No. 10).

[32] K.C. Packman, *op. cit.*, arts. 6, 7, 18.

[33] A. Bernard and N. Lacroix, *L'évolution du nomadisme en Algérie*, Algiers–Paris, 1906, p. 72; M. Boukhobza, *L'agro-pastoralisme traditionnel en Algérie*, Algiers, 1982, pp. 103ff; D.K. Ndagala, 'Pastoralists and the State in Tanzania', *Nomadic Peoples*, 25–27, 1990, pp. 51–64 (see p. 53).

[34] The proportion of trading nomads out of the total number of Afghan nomads in India has been variously estimated at between one third in 1877 (H.St.G. Tucker, *Report of the Land Revenue Settlement of the Dera Ismail Khan District*, p. 185), and more than one half in 1932–34 (my own calculation from J.A. Robinson, *op. cit.*: 10,150 families out of a total of 18,468). This would seem to support Mohammad Hayat Khan's affirmation that the number of trading nomads was continuously increasing (M. Hayat Khan, *Afghanistan and its Inhabitants*, tr. from the *Hayat-i-Afghan* by H. Priestley, Lahore, 1874, repr, Lahore, 1981, p. 19).

also bring goods from Bokhara and Afghanistan into India (fruit, medicinal herbs, wood, horses, handicraft products).[35] In the late nineteenth century these Afghan trading nomads had actually monopolised the long-distance trade between India and Central Asia and, as such, they were fully integrated into the international market economy.

When nomads travelled on foot with camel caravans, the towns they visited in India were not very far from the winter camps (Multan, Lahore, Amritsar, but also Delhi, Benares and even Patna); but with the construction of a railway network, some of them began travelling all over India, as far as Calcutta, Bombay, or Madras (Figure 2).[36]

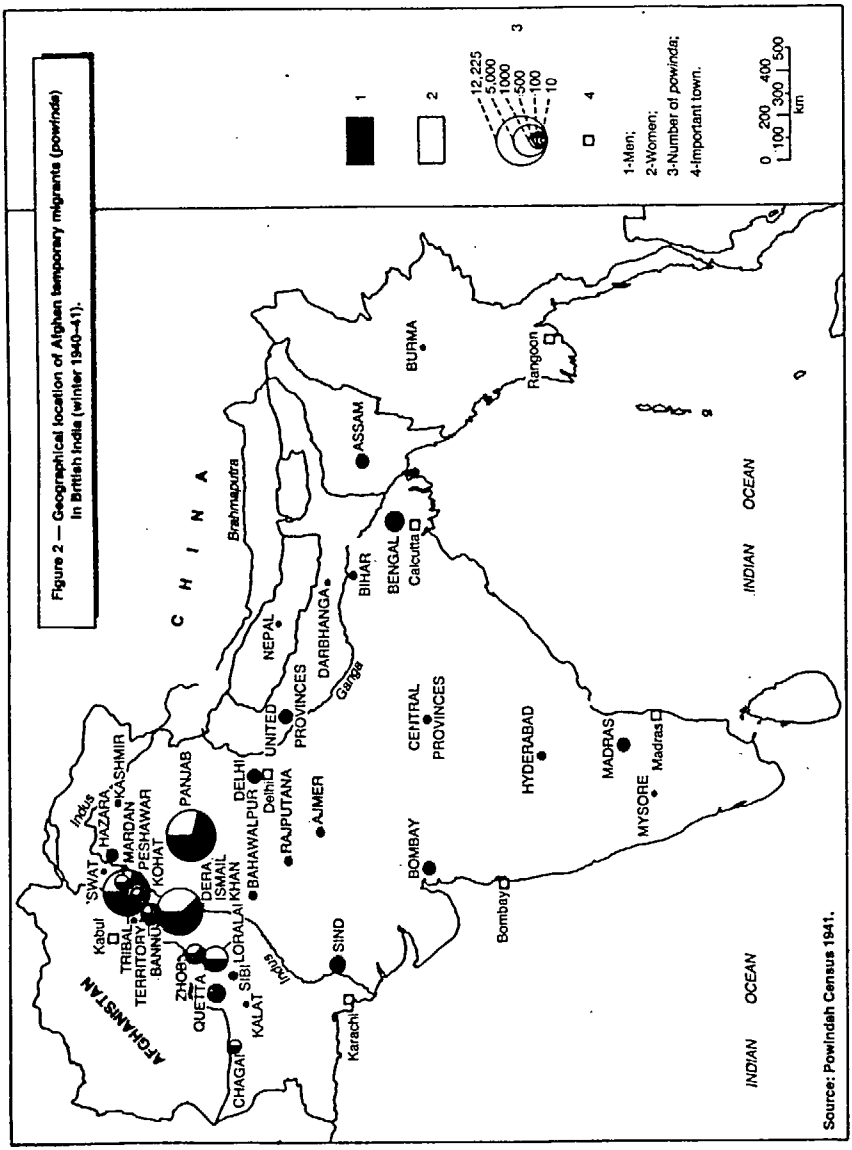
During the first half of the twentieth century, however, this traditional pattern underwent drastic changes. First, the growing competition of lorries—partly owned by former nomads who had settled—gradually replaced the camel as a more attractive means of transportation. Second, the old system of trade with Russian Turkestan was distrupted by the expulsion of the Indian merchants who used to finance much of the trade with India, and by the closure of the Soviet-Afghan border in 1924. Third, the Anglo-Afghan Treaty of 1921 allowed the transit to Afghanistan of foreign goods free of custom duties, eliminating part of the *powinda* trade. Fourth, the depression of 1929 'caused many of the Powindahs to default to their creditors (mostly bankers of Dera Ismail Khan) and the great losses thus incurred have never been made good nor has confidence been again fully restored between debtor and creditor'.[37]

On the other hand, money-lending, which mostly originated from selling goods on credit, brought the Afghan nomads into close contact with the rural classes of North India who called them *kabuli* whatever might be their precise origin. They were particularly active in Bengal where the local peasantry seems to have been greatly impressed by their warlike appearance

[35] The first detailed descriptions of this trading nomadism are found in M. Elphinstone, *op. cit.*, pp. 290ff. and A. Burnes, 'On the Trade of the Upper Indus or Derajat', in A. Burnes *et. al.*, *Reports and Papers, Political, Geographical, and Commercial*, Calcutta, 1839, Part 3, IX, pp. 98–104 (see pp. 98f.). The best modern analysis is K. Ferdinand, 'Nomadic Expansion and Commerce in Central Afghânistân. A Sketch of Some Modern Trends,' *Folk*, 4, 1962, pp. 123–59. Trading relations between India (Multan, Benares) and Kokand, which were carried on by Lohani nomads via Kabul and Balkh, are much less documented and were altogether much less important than the similar trade between India and Bokhara: see Shahzadah Sooltan Mahomed, An Account of the Country from Kokund to Ak Musjid, 1851, unpublished, N.A.I., Foreign Department A, 1854, No. 1–22, p. 232.

[36] Nawab Foujdar Khan, 'Statements regarding Trade Carried on by the Povindah Merchants', in R.H. Davies, *Report on the Trade and Resources of the Countries on the North-Western Boundary of British India*, Lahore, 1862, pp. LXXXV-XCV (see p. XCIV); H.St.G. Tucker, *Report of the Land Revenue Settlement of the Dera Ismail Khan District*, p. 185.

[37] *Powindah Census 1941*, p. 8. According to an article published in the *Partap* of Lahore dated 4 May 1931, 'the Powindahs defaulted to the extent of Rs. 40 lakhs in their accounts with the Hindus' (of Dera Ismail Khan). See also J.A. Robinson, *op. cit.*, pp. 24f.



and ruthless ways.[38] In the course of time, however, the adoption of laws aiming at control of money-lending in India (the Usurious Loans Act of 1918, the various provincial Debt Conciliation Acts and Money-lenders Acts of the 1930s), and the extension of indigenous banking facilities (Cooperative Societies Act, 1904), although they remained partly ineffective, slowed down the *powindas*' activities in this sector.[39]

Decreasing grazing facilities, coupled with decreasing profit from trade and money-lending, generated a crisis in Afghan nomadism in India[40] which eventually produced a decline in the nomadic flow between Afghanistan and India. In Derajat, the best-documented area with the greatest concentration of Afghan nomads in India, it fell by 80 per cent between the 1870s and the 1940s (Table 3) while the number of camels entering the district dropped from 77,113 in 1877 to 57,000 in 1907 and 25,311 in 1941, that is, a 67 per cent decrease.[41] Some groups shifted their migratory cycle and developed new migratory routes exclusively within Afghanistan, for example, in underpopulated North Afghanistan (Turkestan) where they were urged to move by the Afghan authorities willing to 'pashtunise' the area and to garrison it against possible Russian encroachments.[42] Others

[38] See the article entitled 'The Kabuli Pest' in *The Englishman* (Calcutta), 8 April 1903, in which the Afghan money-lenders are compared to 'a cloud of locusts that has stripped a whole district bare of its grass and leaves'. Some of these Afghan money-lenders eventually shifted from nomadic to sedentary life and settled down in Calcutta where their descendants can still be traced today (M.K. Siddiqui, *Muslims of Calcutta*, Calcutta, 1974, 2nd ed., 1979, Memoir of the Anthropological Survey of India, No. 36, pp. 31f. and 36). Afghan money-lenders are reported to have been active as far South as Coimbatore: C.M.R. Chettiar, 'Growth of Modern Coimbatore', *Journal of the Madras Geographical Association*, XIV, 2, 1939, pp. 101–16 (see pp. 110ff.).

[39] *Powindah Census 1941*, p. 8; A.G. Chandavarkar, 'Money and Credit, 1858–1947', in D. Kumar, ed., *The Cambridge Economic History of India*, Vol. 2, Cambridge, 1983, pp. 799ff.

[40] In April 1934, the Afghan Prime Minister, Mohammad Hashem Khan, is reported as having said to the British Ambassador, R.W. Maconachie: 'As for the Ghilzai migrations it was India who made money out of them, not the Ghilzais, and if the migrations were stopped, with the result that the Ghilzais were forced on to the hundreds of thousands of acres in Afghanistan which were available for cultivation by them, it would be an excellent thing both for them and for Afghanistan' (N.A.I., Foreign and Political Dept., Frontier Branch, 1935, File No. 4–7).

[41] The first figure originates from H.St.G. Tucker, *Report of the Land Revenue Settlement of the Dera Ismail Khan District*, p. 191, the second from M.F. O'Dwyer, *op. cit.*, p. 13, and the third is derived from the List of Powindah Maliks, *op. cit* The same sources point to a more than 90 per cent decrease in sheep and goats (150,902 in 1877, and even 171,531 in 1876, vs. 80,000 in 1907 and 11,614 in 1941), but, as we have seen, the reliability of sheep and goats statistics is poorer than those for camels.

[42] Examples of former *powinda* Ghilzi established in North-East Afghanistan (Qataghan) since the end of the nineteenth century include the Lakankhel Andar of the Nahrin Valley (A. Balikci, 'Pastoralism and Class Differentiation among the Lakenkhel', in J.G. Galaty and P.C. Salzman, eds., *Change and Development in Nomadic and Pastoral Societies*, Leiden, 1981 (International Studies in Sociology and Social Anthropology, XXXIII), pp. 150–57, see

settled down in their traditional Indian winter quarters, such as in the Derajat, the Gandapuri and Ushtarani near Kulachi, the Dawlatkhel (Lohani) near Tank, and the Miyankhel (Lohani) around Daraban—a process with a very long history.[43]

The Fate of Afghan Nomadism in Pakistan after Partition (1947)

With the Partition of India in 1947, the area available to Afghan trade became more congruent with the grazing area. The large market of North India was lost, or, more precisely, restricted to Pakistan proper (including East Pakistan). The situation referred to above consequently worsened with the result that in 1978, only one out of five nomadic families migrating between Afghanistan and Pakistan was still carrying on some trading activity, that is, about 600 families, a very low figure.

But the main obstacle to transborder nomadism after 1947 was the closure of the Afghan–Pakistani frontier in 1961, a sequel of the long-standing dispute between the two countries over the Pashtunestan affair.[44]

In modern times, as administrative control of the frontier has become

pp. 150f.) as well as unidentified groups in the Kondoz–Taloqan area (L. Dupree, 'The Changing Character of South–Central Afghanistan Villages', *Human Organization*, 14, 4, 1956, pp. 26–29, see p. 29). In the latter case, migrations to India through the Panjshir Valley are reported to have continued for some decades after the transplantation, but they had been completely abandoned by 1978, possibly following the 1961–63 crisis (see below).

[43] On the Ushtarani and Gandapuri, see M. Hayat Khan, *op. cit.*, pp. 286 and 291; H.St.G. Tucker, *Report of the Land Revenue Settlement of the Dera Ismail Khan District*, p. 43; D. Ibbetson, E.D. MacLagan and H.A. Rose, *A Glossary of the Tribes and Castes of the Punjab and North-West Frontier Province*, Lahore, 1919, repr. Lahore, 1978, Vol. III, pp. 242f., with complementary data in W.H. Paget and A.H. Mason, *op. cit.*, pp. 581f. For the Dawlatkhel, see M. Hayat Khan, *op. cit.*, pp. 189ff. For the Miyankhel, refer to J.S. Broadfoot, 'Reports on Parts of the Ghilzi Country, and on Some of the Tribes in the Neighbourhood of Ghazni; and on the Route from Ghazni to Dera Ismail Khan by the Ghwalari Pass', *Supplementary Papers, Royal Geographical Society* (London), 1, 1882–85, pp. 339–400, see p. 398 (the text is dated 1840); M. Hayat Khan, *op. cit.*, pp. 191f; D. Ibbetson *et al.*, *op. cit.*, p. 101. In all cases inter-tribal feuds have fostered an early sedentarisation process which amplified during the colonial rule.

[44] For the general context of the Pashtunestan issue, refer to L. Dupree, 'The Durand Line of 1893: A Case Study in Artificial Political Boundaries and Culture Areas', in *Current Problems in Afghanistan*, Princeton, N.J., 1961, pp. 77–93; J.W. Spain, *The Pathan Borderland*, The Hague, 1963, pp. 236ff.; L. Dupree, *Afghanistan*, Princeton, N.J., 1973, *passim*; L.B. Poullada, 'Pushtunistan: Afghan Domestic Politics and Relations with Pakistan', in A.T. Embree, ed., *Pakistan's Western Borderlands*, New Delhi, 1977, repr. Karachi, 1979, pp. 126–51. More details are available in K.M. Khan, 'Der Paschtunistan–Konflikt Zwischen Afghanistan und Pakistan', in K.M. Khan and V. Matthies, eds., *Regionalkonflikte in der Dritten Welt*, Munich, 1981 (Weltwirtschaft und Internationale Beziehungen, 21), pp. 283–384, E. Jansson, *India, Pakistan or Pakhtunistan? The Nationalist Movements in the North-West Frontier Province*, 1937–1947, Uppsala, 1981 (Studia Historica Upsaliensia, 119) and S.Q. Quddus, *Afghanistan and Pakistan, A Geopolitical Study*, Lahore, 1982.

more and more effective, its possible closure has been a permanent threat to Afghan nomads. As early as 1924, an incipient rebellion against King Amanullah among them had been quelled by a mere rumour of its possible closure by the British.[45] In the early 1930s, an English official observed that 'stopping the whole Powindah migration would probably be regarded in Afghanistan as equivalent to an act of war'.[46]

The threat became a reality in 1961 at the initiative of Pakistan. The date of the closure could not have been better selected: it took place on 3 September, at the very time when the nomads were making for their usual winter quarters and were converging towards the frontier. Most of them remained trapped behind the strictly guarded and almost impassable border. A few eventually managed to cross it by means of unfrequented and unguarded, circuitous routes, for instance in the Gomal area (Waziristan).[47] The majority did not, simply for fear of possible reprisals in Pakistan.

The entrapped nomads conglomerated in the Nangrahar and Khost Basins, the only areas of East Afghanistan offering mild temperatures in winter. However, only limited grazing land was available there. Unable to feed their flocks, many among them had to sell their animals at any price. In the course of a few months they experienced a totally unexpected process of depastoralisation. A minority among them however managed to get grazing rights on their co-tribalists' pastures in South Afghanistan, thus increasing pressure on the land there too.

The border only reopened to trade on 29 May 1963, and to nomad transit sometime later. This means that for the first time in history it had remained officially closed to nomads for two successive cycles of migration. What then remained of the once flourishing transborder nomadism never recovered from that traumatic experience, and its decline continued.[48]

Socio-Geographical Effects of the Decline of Afghan Nomadism in India

I will only outline here the main socio-geographical consequences of the decline of Afghan nomadism in India, referring for other details to a

[45] B. Markowski, *Die materielle Kultur des Kabulgebietes*, Leipzig, 1932 (Veröffentlichungen d. Geogr. Inst. d. Albertus-Univ. zu Königsberg i. Pr., N.F., Reihe Ethnographie, 2), p. 103.

[46] I.O.R.R/12/1/41. See however n. 40 above.

[47] A.S. Ahmed, 'Nomadism as Ideological Expression: The Case of the Gomal Nomads', *Nomadic Peoples*, 9, 1981, pp. 3–15 (see p. 11). The article has been reprinted in A.S. Ahmed, *Pakistan Society: Islam, Ethnicity and Leadership in South Asia*, Karachi, 1986, pp. 211–27 (see p. 224) and also, under the slightly altered title 'A Taste fof Freedom: The Case of the Gomal Nomads', in *Asian Affairs*, 13, 2, 1982, pp. 172–83 (see p. 180).

[48] See note 6 above for an appreciation of the decline between 1972 and 1978.

previously published paper.[49] To begin with, the spatial pattern of Afghan nomadism in the Indian subcontinent has been largely reorganised (Table 7). Some traditional routes have been completely abandoned, especially those which were used mostly by trading nomads, such as the famous Khyber route between Kabul and Peshawar, or the Chaman route between Kandahar and Quetta, which both accounted for about 20 per cent of the flow in 1940. Only five routes remained in use in 1978: the northernmost and least frequented one followed the Kurram river via Patan, two others crossed over the Khost Basin via Qadam and Charkhay respectively, one followed the Gomal River via Warsak, and the last and southernmost led to Baluchistan through Darwazagay. The Gomal route was the most important, accounting for 47 per cent of the total flow, against only 28 per cent in 1940 (Table 8). The migratory flow was therefore geographically more concentrated in 1978 than previously (Figure 1).

Table 8

Transborder routes used by Afghan nomads wintering east of the Durand Line in 1940 and 1978

	1940			*1978*	
Route	*Number of migrants*	*Percentage*	*Sex ratio (men/ women)*[a]	*Number of migratory families*	*Percentage*
Khyber	6,306	13.3	1.86	–	–
Kurram	–	–	–	20	0.7
Khost	13,099	27.6	5.25	937	30.4
Gomal	13,268	28.0	2.03	1,455	47.2
Darwazagay	11,916	25.1	1.50	670	21.7
Chaman	2,838	6.0	6.69	–	–
Total	47,427	100	2.45	3,082	100

Sources: 1940, *Powindah Census 1941*.
1978, Afghan Nomad Survey, unpublished.

Note: [a] The higher the sex ratio, the more nomadic the migration. One must however take into account the general reluctance to declare women and girls to official surveyors.

Another major geographical consequence has been the accumulation of winter encampments in the two main frontier basins of East Afghanistan, Nangrahar and Khost. This marks the highest concentration of nomads ever met with in Afghanistan, densities at the district level amounting to more than one tent per square kilometre.[50] They are the areas where

[49] D. Balland, 'Le déclin contemporain

[50] D. Balland, 'Contraintes écologiques et fluctuations historiques dans l'organisation territoriale des nomades d'Afghanistan', *Production Pastorale et Société*, Vol. 11, 1982, pp. 55–67 (see p. 65).

thousands of nomads were trapped on their way to Pakistan in 1961 and where they had to seek new winter quarters.

Social consequences include a widespread process of depastoralisation which has already been referred to. Many nomads did not resume going to Pakistan in winter when the border reopened in 1963 simply because they had lost their flocks and had no more need of grazing grounds. They have turned into what is called in Afghanistan 'harvesting nomads' (Persian *darawgar*, Pashto *lawgar*), a somewhat misleading expression which actually covers all kinds of menial activities which migratory people perform for settled villagers or city-dwellers. Besides crop-harvesting, it includes grape-picking, transportation, canal-digging or canal-cleaning, house-building, wood-cutting, etc. This kind of nomadism has existed for a long time in Afghanistan. It is already mentioned in one source from the early nineteenth century.[51] But harvesting nomads of that time seem to have been few in number and mostly originated from specialised, caste-like tribes of East Afghanistan such as the Masalli of Laghman,[52] and various Pashto-speaking groups such as the Hoseynkhel. The increase in their number, which could be detected in 1978, as well as the massive representation of Ghilzi nomads among them (Naser, Kharoti, and, above all, Solaymankhel), was quite a new development, largely a result of the crisis of the transborder nomadism and the impoverishment of nomads that followed.

The tribal composition of the migratory flow between Afghanistan and India has undergone drastic changes since the middle of the nineteenth century (Tables 9 and 10). Broadly speaking, three main types of evolution may be distinguished:

1) The first case includes tribes which have gradually disappeared from the migratory flow. Among them are various branches of the once very powerful Lohani tribe which had specialised in the long-distance trade between India and Inner Asia in the nineteenth century, especially the Miankhel (740 nomadic families in 1878, barely one hundred in 1932–34, 31 in 1941, none in 1978) and the Mitti (45 nomadic families in 1932–34, 11 in 1941, none in 1978). Other examples include smaller tribes such as the Kundi (230 nomadic families in 1932–34, 105 in 1941–42) or the Ghorani (85 nomadic families in 1932–34). The Kharoti, a Ghilzay tribe, which accounted for 12 per cent of the flow in 1878, 10 per cent in the early 1930s, still 7.5 per cent in 1940 (with however very few women among them, pointing more to a migration of male workers than to a true nomadic migration), have apparently followed a similar evolution. However, since the Afghan Gomal district, whence Kharoti nomads are supposed to have

[51] R. Strachey, Memoir on the Revenue and Trade of the Kingdom of Caubul, n.d., unpublished (I.O.R., Home Series Miscellaneous 659).

[52] A. Olesen, 'The Musallis—The Graincleaners of East Afghanistan', *Afghanistan Journal*, 9, 1, 1982, pp. 13–19.

Table 9

Some estimates of the tribal composition of the migratory flow between Afghanistan and India (mainly Derajat) in the nineteenth century

Tribe	1857[a]		ca. 1860[b]	1878[c]		1888[d]
	Families	Per cent	Families	Families	Per cent	Families
Solaymankhel	–		–	665	9.4	200
Naser	1,850	33.9	4–5,000	3,558	50.4	2–2,500
Kharoti	2,000	36.7	700	870	12.3	7–800
Dawtani	–		200	270	3.8	2–250
Lohani	1,010	18.5	500	860	12.2	1–2,000
Nyazi	590	10.8	250	195	2.8	4–500
Others	–		–	637	9.0	3–400
Total	5,450	100.0	5–6,750	7,055	100.0	5–6,650

Sources: [a] H.B. Lumsden, *The Mission to Kandahar*, Calcutta, 1960, pp. 92ff.

[b] Nawab Foujdar Khan, *op. cit.*, p. LXXXVI.

[c] H.St.G. Tucker, *Report of the Land Revenue Settlement of the Dera Ismail Khan District*, p. 189, also reproduced in J. Rai, *op. cit.*, p. 108. Only the so-called *kirri powindah*, i.e., real pastoral nomads, are counted here, excluding the *kafila powindah* (pure trading caravaneers) as well as the *charra powindah* (labourers) who, altogether, accounted for 15,300 men (8,000 Solaymankhel, 3,000 Taraki, 1,500 Tokhi, 1,000 Andar, 500 Dawlatzi, 300 Mollakhel, 200 Dawtani and 800 from various other tribes) with 20,500 camels (*Id., ibid.*).

[d] H.G. Raverty, *Notes on Afghanistan and Part of Baluchistan*, London, 1888, repr. Lahore, 1976, pp. 498ff.

come, could not be surveyed in 1978, the Kharoti case must remain inconclusive.

2) Other tribes have recorded a drastic decline in the number of their members wintering in Pakistan, but were still present in the flow in 1978. Sometimes the decrease has been a continuous and rather slow process since the nineteenth century: such is the case of the Naser, consistently recorded as the most numerous Afghan nomads coming to winter in India in the past century (Table 9). In some other cases the records show cyclic change which is well documented, for example, in the case of the Solaymankhel (incorporating the Ahmadzi) who increasingly practised transborder nomadism from the middle of the nineteenth century to the 1930s (Tables 9 and 10), even becoming the leading migratory tribe in the 1930s-40s (with a high proportion of women among the recorded migratory people), and finally declined quite abruptly in the second half of the twentieth century.[53] The Akakhel, Alikhel, Dawlatzi and, out of the Ghilzay

[53] Their decline might however have been overrated due to the non-inclusion of the Gomal district in the survey of 1978. Their growing participation in transborder trading nomadism in the last century has been noted by M. Hayat Khan, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

Table 10

Estimates of the tribal composition of the migratory flow between Afghanistan and India in the twentieth century

	1932–34[a]		*1940*[b]		*1978*[c]	
Tribe	*Families*	*Per cent*	*Persons*	*Per cent*	*Families*	*Per cent*
Solaymankhel	7,812	42.3	18,764	39.6	841	27.3
Akakhel	1,668	9.0	2,335	4.9	89	2.9
Alikhel	840	4.6	860	1.8	55	1.8
Dawlatzi	190	1.0	?	?	40	1.3
Taraki	172	0.9	1,018	2.1	200	6.5
Naser	2,434	13.2	8,197	17.3	410	13.3
Kharoti	1,991	10.8	3,528	7.4.	–	–
Various tribes	–	–	3,919	8.3	–	–
Total Ghilzi	**15,107**	**81.8**	**38,621**	**81.5**	**1,635**	**53.1**
Dawtani	976	5.3	?	?	933	30.3
Matani	200	1.1	?	?	54	1.8
Mollakhel	450	2.4	?	?	28	0.9
Nyazi	240	1.3	?	?	26	0.8
Shinwari	330	1.8	840	1.8	30	0.9
Various tribes	1,165	6.3	7,917	16.7	376	12.2
Total non-Ghilzi	**3,361**	**18.2**	**8,757**	**18.5**	**1,447**	**46.9**
Grand total	**18,468**	**100.0**	**47,378**	**100.0**	**3,082**	**100.0**

Sources: [a] Personal elaboration of Robinson's data. The figures are generally underestimated, especially in the case of the Solaymankhel which probably exceeded 9,000 families at that time.

[b] *Powindah Census 1941*. No detailed breakdown of the non-Ghilzi tribes has been released.

[c] Afghan Nomad Survey, unpublished. Solaymankhel and Kharoti nomads might have been actually more numerous than recorded since one of their summer districts, the Gomal district, could not be surveyed.

confederation, the Shinwari and Nyazi tribes also experienced similar evolutions, as well as the Mollakhel, another branch of the Lohani.

3) A third category of tribes includes those which succeeded in maintaining a significant flow of transborder nomadic migration to India throughout this period. The best example is provided by the Dawtanay (or Daftanay) tribe, from the Lodi confederation, which grew from a few hundred families going to India in the second half of the nineteenth century to about one thousand in the 1930s, (less than 5 per cent of the migratory flow) and still 933 in 1978, (30 per cent of the flow), henceforth the largest group of Afghan nomads wintering in Pakistan. The Taraki, a Ghilzay tribe, show a parallel change.

On the whole, the Ghilzi tribes, which accounted for more than four fifths of the total flow in the 1930s and 1940s, were much less preponderant in the 1970s: the tribal composition of the transborder nomadism had become more and more balanced, with non-Ghilzi tribes nearly equalling in number their Ghilzi neighbours.

The tribes most affected are precisely those which engaged massively in trading activities, such as the Lohani, the Solaymankhel or the Naser. On the contrary, the Dawtani and Taraki, who seem to have remained mainly pastoralists,[54] are the ones who suffered the least from the changing political environment in India and Pakistan. This observation, coupled with the changing route pattern of the transborder nomadic flow, suggests that the decrease in trading activities has been responsible for much of the decline, more at any rate than the parallel decrease in grazing resources.

The evolution of Afghan nomadism in the Indian subcontinent since the nineteenth century emphasises the fact that the ecological environment only procures a very broad, although necessary, framework in which nomads show a very large amount of plasticity in order to adjust to changing political and economic structures. The post-1978 evolution of Afghan nomadism, which is beyond the scope of this paper,[55] would definitively illustrate the primacy of external political factors in the comprehension of its contemporary evolution.

In most areas of the world where pastoral nomads are to be found, their 'encapsulation' by modern administrative structures has primarily resulted in the formulation of more or less ambitious sedentarisation policies. Unlike other Middle Eastern governments,[56] the successive Afghan governments have refrained from launching such systematic sedentarisation

[54] The Dawtani are however reported to have taken part in the long distance trade between India and Bokhara at the end of the nineteenth century: H.St.G Tucker, *Report of the Land Revenue Settlement of the Dera Ismail Khan District*, p. 188 and H.G. Raverty, *op. cit.*, p. 491. In the 1930s they were described as 'almost entirely pastoral' (J.A. Robinson, *op. cit.*, pp. 44 and 160).

[55] D. Balland, 'Le déclin contemporain'; p. 193; B. Glatzer, 'Afghan Nomads Trapped in Pakistan', in B. Huldt and E. Jansson, eds., *The Tragedy of Afghanistan*, London, 1988, pp. 240–47; G. Pedersen, 'Afghan Nomads in Exile—Patterns of Organization and Reorganization in Pakistan', *The Afghanistan Studies Journal*, 1, 1988, pp. 18–28.

[56] R. Bocco, 'La sédentarisation des pasteurs nomades: les experts internationaux face à la question bédouine dans le Moyen-Orient arabe (1950–1970)', in E. Bernus and F. Pouillon, *op. cit.*, pp. 97–117 (mainly based on the Jordanian case); X. de Planhol, 'L'évolution du nomadisme en Anatolie et en Iran. Etude comparée', in L. Földes, ed., *Viehwirtschaft und Hirtenkultur. Ethnographische Studien*, Budapest, 1969, pp. 69–93, to be complemented by D. Bates, *Nomads and Farmers: A Study of the Yörük of Southeastern Turkey*, Ann Arbor, 1973 (Anthropological Papers, 52) and J.-P. Digard, *op. cit.*

[57] Small sedentarisation schemes have nevertheless been implemented, notably in the Hélmand valley of Southern Afghanistan under pressure from American experts: R Kraus, *Siedlungspolitik und Erfolg, dargestellt an Siedlungen in den Provinzen Hilmend und Baghlan, Afghanistan*, Meisenheim am Glan, 1975 (Afghanische Studien, 12), pp. 13ff.

programmes.[57] Even in this case, however, Salzman's assumption that politics *sensu lato* prevails over all other factors in the evolution of pastoralism,[58] still remains valid.

[58] P.C. Salzman, 'Les facteurs politiques déterminant l'avenir des peuples pasteurs', in J.G. Galaty, D. Aronson and P.C. Salzman, *L'avenir des peuples pasteurs*, Ottawa, 1983, [illegible] *Future of Pastoral Peoples*).