

Chapter 2**Contracting Nomadic Carriage for an Aquatic Agenda****Sayyid Muhin Shah and the Validation of Market Profitability**

Sayyid Muhin Shah became a nomadic trader in response to unfavorable political conditions in his home village near Qandahar. He met Arthur Conolly in Herat and the two traveled to Delhi where Muhin Shah impressed the Governor General and Viceroy of India, and other high-ranking colonial officials. Muhin Shah was immediately contracted to perform a series of commercial experiments for the British that validated the profitability of exporting Indian and European goods to Afghanistan and Central Asia.¹ 1

Muhin Shah came from a family of Sayyids, or descendants of the Prophet Muhammad, who resided in Peshin, a village about twenty miles north of Quetta on the road to Qandahar. The Sayyids' social status carried economic and political benefits. In nineteenth-century Afghanistan and elsewhere in the Muslim world, sayyids, saints, and sufis received monetary offerings from ordinary people and political elites in return for a variety of blessings, consultations, and ritual performances. For example, during his aborted attempt to reclaim the Durrani throne in 1833, Shuja borrowed Rs. 2,000 from a merchant in Sind to use as monetary "blessings" to the Peshin Sayyids as he advanced to Qandahar through their village.² But, more important, their Sayyid status gave them access to an interregional network of Muslim merchants. The Peshin Sayyids used their piety, capital, and network connections to become significant actors in the horse and slave trades through Qandahar and Quetta and prominent landholders in Peshin, as the following quotes reveal: 2

The Syads of Peshin and other small traders carry on the traffic in human beings in Western Afghanistan, and some 400 or 500 are annually disposed of in Kandahar alone. . . . There are a good many African slaves in Qandahar; most of these I find, are brought by pilgrims from Muscat, through Persian and Herat or Seistan, while some . . . are smuggled up with 'kafilas' (caravans) from Bombay. The principle dealer on the Persian line is a Syad (Mir Ali Syad) who has an agent at Herat, while Najak Shah, one of the Peshin Syads, used to be notorious on the Bombay route . . . ³

The Syads of Peshin, Kakars, Bakhtiars, and Bilochis generally are the tribes chiefly engaged in the horse trade, which usually flourishes for six months of the year, but is stagnant for the hot months during winter, when the roads are partially closed by snow; about 2,000 or 3,000 are said to pass through Qandahar annually. The chief breeding districts drawn on these traders are Sarakhs, in Iraq, Maemana in Turkistan, Nur and Kala Nao in Hazara; Daria Gaz and Kalat-i Nadar in Mashad; Gulza and Firozkoh in the Herat district. . . .

Animals of much higher blood are to be found in these places; but they are seldom purchased by traders, as there is great chance of such horses being picked out by the Durani Sirdars in transit, at their own valuation, and all together the profit on blood horses is not so great as that on the cheaper breeds.⁴

The Sayyids' mercantile precociousness in the horse and slave trades was accompanied by large-scale landholdings in Peshin. However, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, Durrani sardars or petty nobility in and around Qandahar were becoming increasingly prominent. Their rise in economic and political stature resulted from extensive state patronage repeatedly dispensed toward them by various kinsmen who needed to reaffirm and buttress political alliances among tribal constituencies as they replaced each other as dynasts in Kabul.⁵ Muhin Shah was an elder in a family of Peshin Sayyids whose lands were confiscated by the ever more active and aggressive Durrani nobility concentrated around Qandahar. Muhin Shah joined the ranks of the Afghan nomadic traders in response to adverse local political and economic circumstances that resulted in disenfranchisement from his landed capital.⁶ His transition to nomadism was advantaged by being able to tap into the extensive trading networks and circuits populated by other Sayyids from Peshin.⁷ 3

In September 1830, Muhin Shah came to Herat to recover a debt the capital from which he reinvested for thirty "tolerably good" horses destined for sale in the Indian markets.⁸ While in Herat, he met Arthur Conolly, who was *en route* to becoming the first Englishman to document overland travel from England to India through Russia, Iran, and Afghanistan. Conolly lacked ready cash and was in debt, and Muhin Shah rescued him from a situation of financial insolvency. Through a bill of exchange transaction based on interaction between gold and silver currencies, Muhin Shah acquired a bale of Kashmiri shawls that he promptly sold to pay off Conolly's debt. Muhin Shah assumed the liability of standing as security for the *farengi* or Christian foreigner, which motivated him to escort the woebegone European to Delhi. Pecuniary compensation also motivated Muhin Shah because he mentioned with satisfaction to Conolly that about twenty years previously Elphinstone had given his nephew a "handful of money for answering a few questions."⁹ It will be shown later in this chapter that Muhin Shah's hopes regarding monetary compensation from colonial authorities were amply fulfilled. 4

There were approximately fifty quality horses among the four hundred carried by Muhin Shah and the dozen or so other traders, who were mostly Peshin Sayyids, in their *qafila* or caravan when it left Herat.¹⁰ Conolly's inquiry about how profits could be made on this generally pathetic lot of animals elicited two responses. First, the Peshin Sayyids said in Bombay they dealt with merchants from Basra who could pass their average horses, worth between Rs. 400 and Rs. 500, on to British buyers as Arab-bred for between Rs. 1,200 and Rs. 1,500 per animal.¹¹ The Afghan nomads' trade in horses from Iran and Central Asia to India during the fall was not the most profitable part of their business enterprise. The Peshin traders said the 5

majority of their profits came from the second or spring leg of their annual interregional trading cycle when they transported and sold Indian and English goods in Afghanistan, Iran, and Central Asia.¹² Conolly claims to have seen a partial accounting of commercial transactions made by Muhin Shah in 1828. That year in Bombay the Peshin Sayyid invested Rs. 7,000, mostly toward English piece-cloths, which he transported by boat to Sind and from there overland to Kabul and Bukhara. Conolly claims Muhin Shah made a profit of 110 percent on the goods he sold in Kabul, and between 150 percent and 200 percent profit on the remaining portion he disposed of in Bukhara.¹³

Conolly depended on the services of an Indian Sayyid named Karamat Ali to get him from St. Petersburg to Herat.¹⁴ Karamat Ali had been living in Iran for many years and maintained cordial relationships with a number of British officials in that country. Conolly and Karamat Ali were essentially stranded in Herat when Sayyid Muhin Shah came to their rescue. While traveling through Afghanistan to India, Muhin Shah bore all forms of financial and physical responsibility for his two adopted companions and literally delivered them as human cargo to Delhi in mid-January 1831. Conolly's gratitude toward Muhin Shah is amply expressed at the end of his travelogue narrative:

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The reader will have formed some idea of the care, and of the difficulty, with which Syud Muheen Shah conveyed us (Conolly and Karamat Ali) from Herat to Dehlee, but I could not in words express the kindness and delicacy of this man's conduct towards us during the whole of the journey. Wherever he met friends, they laboured to convince him that I was an imposter, and he was exposed to extreme vexation and danger on my account; yet he never relaxed his endeavours to promote my safety and comfort, he paid all of our expenses, and avoided alluding to my debt to him. I have to express my gratitude to many different Englishmen in different parts of India, who have made a point of showing attention to this friend, and I am happy in the assurance that he is every way satisfied with the result of his generous conduct towards a stranger in distress.¹⁵

Conolly alludes to the fact that almost immediately on their arrival in Delhi a significant relationship began to form between the Peshin Sayyid and British officials. Muhin Shah entered colonial bureaucratic discourse at a fortuitous time. Eleven months before, Muhin Shah deposited Conolly and Karamat Ali in Delhi, the Secret Committee of the British East India Company's Court of Directors issued an important directive. The Secret Committee budgeted Rs. 50,000 for the transmission of a consignment of "European and Indian goods to a principal city between Persia and the Indus to promote commerce and try the markets" of Central Asia.¹⁶ The anti-Russian British policy toward Afghanistan is articulated in the following passage that helped to inaugurate the "Great Game" of Anglo-Russian colonial intrigue and competition over Iran and Afghanistan. In order to thwart recent Russian "advances" in Central Asia, the British resolved to:

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... use the Indus route to undermine Russian commercial enterprises in Central Asia by transporting (cheaper and higher quality) British goods to Cabul so as to secure a large portion of the Central Asian trade. The object being to introduce English goods not Englishmen into Central Asia.¹⁷

There was a near temporal coincidence between the Secret Committee's declaration of a commerce-based colonial strategy for Central Asia and the solicitation of certain forms of market intelligence to achieve their anti-Russian commercial goals, and Muhin Shah's entry into the colonial field of vision. Between 1831 and 1835, Muhin Shah performed four commercial experiments for the British that validated the profitability of sending Indian and European goods to Afghanistan and Central Asia via two different sets of routes. The Company's patronage of Muhin Shah's commercial activities generated the trade statistics used to justify the British invasion of Afghanistan in 1839. Muhin Shah provided British officials with the prerequisite data necessary to launch the great colonial project of transforming the Indus River into a commercial thoroughfare for flat-bottomed steamships docking at the inland riverine port of Mithenkote.¹⁸ **8**

The Army of the Indus was a manifestation of the colonial imagination then dominated by the Indus commercial navigation project. The first Anglo-Afghan war was about issues much larger than Shuja and his Durrani dynastic privilege. The British reinvigoration of the Durrani monarchy was a lower-level concern in a hierarchy of considerations dominated by interregional and global commercial aspirations and considerations. An anti-Russian political posture, in South Asia, Eurasia, and globally, also weighed more heavily in the British colonial mind-set regarding Kabul and Afghanistan than Shuja's political career. The first colonial revamping of the Durrani monarchy was a less significant issue in the British Imperial worldview than the strong cultural emphasis on science, in this case the technological abilities to manipulate the general course, seasonal flow, and depth of the Indus in order to accommodate commercial steamers. **9**

Sayyid Muhin Shah's British-sponsored commercial experiments between South and Central Asia covered a pair of latitudinal trajectories of trade through Afghanistan, one through Qandahar and another through Peshawar. The southernmost of the two east-west route series went through Qandahar and linked that city with Mashhad and Herat to the northwest, and Quetta, Karachi, Shikarpur, and Bombay to the southeast. The northerly route sequence linked Peshawar with Kabul, Mazar-i Sharif (Balkh), and Bukhara to the northwest, and Lahore, Amritsar, Delhi, and Calcutta to the southeast. Nomadic traders such as Muhin Shah could and did use both trajectories during the two seasonal movements comprising a full year's migration cycle, but strutting north or south between the two constellations of route segments during one migratory period was less common. The British intended to alter the trajectory of the southern east-west route sequence by diverting a greater portion of the trade **10**

north from Qandahar to Kabul. The north-south route between Qandahar and Kabul was considered viable by the British despite that road's reputation as notoriously treacherous for non-Ghalzi Pashtun nomadic traders.¹⁹

The Peshin Sayyid's first British-sponsored trading excursion from South to Central Asia, summarized in Table 2.1, was initiated approximately eight months after he deposited Conolly and Sayyid Karamat Ali in Delhi. During the interim period, Muhin Shah communicated with and made a favorable impression on a number of high-ranking colonial officials, including the Assistant Commissioner of Delhi, C. E. Trevelyan, and the Governor General of India, William Bentinck.²⁰ For his "pecuniary assistance and protection" of Conolly the British Indian Government offered Sayyid Muhin Shah an official reward of Company Rs. 20,000, of which only Rs. 12,000 was accepted and "faithfully repaid."²¹ The reward was actually an interest-free British loan advanced without any form of security deposit that was designed to "further Muhin Shah's commercial activities and to allow him to benefit from increased commercial capital" in keeping with the Secret Committee's directive.²²

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Articles	Invoice price at Bombay	Sold at Qandahar	Sold at Kabul	Sold at Bukhara
Light blue broadcloth	Rs. 2.8 per yard	Rs. 5.13		
Small flowered chintz	Rs. 5 per piece of 25 yards	Rs. 17.8	Rs. 15.13	Rs. 16.4
Striped chintz	Rs. 9.6 per piece of 25 yards	Rs. 22.5	Rs. 23.5	Rs. 22.12
<i>Large printed chintz</i>	Rs. 16 per piece of 25 yards	Rs. 30.4	Rs. 31.1	
<i>Sumbric (?)</i>	Rs. 12 per piece of 12 yards	Rs. 20		
Plain muslin	Rs. 10 per piece of 22 yards	Rs. 21.1	Rs. 21.1	
Flowered muslin	Rs. 5 per piece of 10 yards	Rs. 10.15	Rs. 9.2	
Long cloth	Rs. 12.6 per piece of 35 yards	Rs. 39.1	Rs. 29.3	

<i>Aloran</i> (?) bolstered to be shawl stuff	Rs. 1.12 per yard	Rs. 2.7	Rs. 3.2	
Satin	Rs. 18 per piece of 22 yards	Rs. 35	Rs. 35.7	
<i>Muslin "a"</i> (illegible)	Rs. 4.8 per piece of 10 yards	Rs. 9.2	Rs. 9.15	
<i>Muslin "b"</i> (illegible)	Rs. 5 per piece of 20 yards	Rs. 8.5	Rs. 10.13	

Muhin Shah invested his initial dose of British speculation capital in a variety of textiles that he purchased in Calcutta. These were popular consumption materials, not luxury items. It is unclear whether the Peshin Sayyid traveled overland or by ship to Bombay from where he accompanied the goods to Karachi or one of the smaller ports in Sind, then overland to Bela, Kelat, Qandahar, Kabul, and Bukhara. He sold the British Indian textiles in Kabul and Bukhara. The following is a narration of the first commercial experiment concluded between Sayyid Muhin Shah and the British:

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The Syud carried an investment of broad cloths, chintz, cambris, long cloths, satins, etc. from Bombay via Bayla and Kelat to Candahar and Cabul where, though he had to pay duties, etc. amounting to 12 per cent, he disposed of his goods some at 200 per cent and the greater part at 100 per cent above his price at Bombay. . . . The successful speculation of Syud Muhim Shah, the companion of Lt. Conolly's journey, gives ground for believing that English manufactures when brought into competition with Russian should in a few years completely drive the latter from the markets not only of Afghanistan, but all of Central Asia.²⁴

Despite incomplete documentation, the Peshin Sayyid's first trial carriage of British Indian goods from South to Central Asia was received as a resounding success. He was rewarded for his honesty in executing the first experiment by another loan of the same amount and on the same terms. Muhin Shah repeated the same cycle with the same commodities during the following year, the only difference being his catering to shifting consumer demands by bringing a greater volume of chintz with large flowery patterns for disposal in Kabul on the second journey.²⁵ The first two joint ventures between Muhin Shah and the British validated

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the profitability of routing goods to Kabul and Bukhara through Qandahar, the key market node in the southern series trade route segments traversing Afghanistan. The use of water transport from Bombay in the initial pair of Muhin Shah's company-contrived commercial experiments reflects the burgeoning colonial emphasis on the Indus navigation project.

The British underwrote and oversaw at least two additional commercial experiments conducted by the Peshin Sayyid to whom Connolly owed his life. The third and fourth commercial experiments regarding the export of British Indian commodities to Central Asia were entirely overland affairs, and they were more thoroughly documented than the first pair of partially aquatic ventures in 1831 and 1832. The second pair of official British excursions into and evaluations of the Central Asian markets via the services of a contracted Afghan nomad occurred in 1834 and 1835. These commercial experiments validated the profitability of the northern route sequence through Peshawar to Kabul and Bukhara. The results of Muhin Shah's third and fourth experiments were fully implicated in the colonial attempt to develop the Mithenkote market as the lynchpin of the Indus navigation project (see later in this chapter). **14**

A conspicuously unfavorable opinion of Muhin Shah and his activities accounts for the repetition of the transactions executed along the northern strictly overland route from Calcutta to Bukhara. Claude Wade, the influential British Political Agent in Ludiana, cast the solitary dissenting voice on the Peshin Sayyid's ability to "ascertain whether British goods can compete with Russian goods in markets of Bukhara by way of India."²⁶ His reasons were twofold. First, Wade felt there was a methodological shortcoming in the experiment because Sayyid Muhin Shah did not accompany the goods for the duration of their marketing life. Muhin Shah did not escort the British Indian commodities from Kabul to Bukhara and Wade felt that the decision not to see the experiment fully through to its proper conclusion: **15**

... redounded neither to his zeal nor his discretion (and that) the object of the Government's experiment has been defeated by his employment (and that) no fair conclusion can be drawn by an experiment so conducted.²⁷

Wade also accused the Peshin Sayyid of a form of abuse of privilege. The Ludiana Agent objected that the first northern experiment was concluded in Bukhara without Muhin Shah's supervision. Wade was offended that after abrogating his duties to fully execute the British commercial experiment Muhin Shah asked him for a recommendation for a proposed sale of horses to Ranjit Singh.²⁸ Wade's appeal to ultraorthodox commercial methodology adhered among colonial policy makers who satisfied the stated concerns by advancing another Rs. 12,000 to Muhin Shah with instructions to improve his written accounting of the colonially contrived transactions.²⁹ Wade eventually came to believe the Sayyid's claim that the reason for his subcontracting the Kabul to Bukhara portion of the 1834 experiment was illness that forced him to retire to his home village of Peshin.³⁰ There is no data indicating variation in **16**

the commodities, routes, or prices between the third and fourth ventures, so it is reasonable to assume they were exactly repeated. The apprehension expressed by Wade about the third speculation helps to explain the far more thorough documentation of Muhin Shah's fourth and final British commercial experiment, summarized in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2: Summary of Sayyid Muhin Shah's Fourth British-Sponsored Commercial Experiment in Central Asia, 1835³¹
I. Rs. 11,416 toward Muhin Shah's purchase of cloth piece goods at Calcutta ³²
II. Rs. 976.1 toward 13 transit tolls and related extractions ³³
III. Rs. 586.8 toward the hire of camels ³⁴
IV. Rs. 284.6 toward a 2.5 percent exaction on all goods at Kabul ³⁵
V. Rs. 9,827.12 derived from the sale of goods in Kabul ³⁶
VI. Rs. 8,399.15 derived from the sale of goods in Bukhara

With all expenses (items I–IV) being Rs. 13,263, and the proceeds from sales (items V and VI) totaling Rs. 18,227, the final joint commercial venture between Muhin Shah and the British yielded Rs. 4,964, or approximately 37.42 percent profit.³⁷ In order to establish the feasibility and profitability of exporting British Indian commodities, particularly textiles, to Central Asia and thus undermine the Russian presence in that region, colonial officials depended on communication and commercial interaction with Muhin Shah. Muhin Shah appears as a rather typical Afghan nomadic trader whose fortuitous encounter with Conolly resulted in extended and extensive British patronage of his commercial activity. The Peshin Sayyid surely benefited from the repeated infusions of colonial capital into his resource base. For our purposes, it is more significant that Muhin Shah provided the British with vital commercial information that was deployed as the empirical foundation and economic rationale of a much larger colonial program, namely, the Indus navigation project.

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Kabul, the Indus River, and Global Trade

During the experimental period of Anglo-Afghan relations under consideration here, British officials most commonly used the term "Lohani" in reference to Afghan nomad traders. Lohanis were the central figures in the Indus navigation project and the Mithenkote market scheme underpinning it. Communication between the British and the Lohanis about the

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proposed Mithenkote market was multifaceted. This section deals with the British advertisement of their Indus-based commercial agenda among the Lohanis through intermediaries stationed in Kabul.³⁸

Muhin Shah's British-sponsored commercial experiments and the Mithenkote scheme were key elements of the colonial project to "open up" the Indus River for commercial navigation. During the nineteenth century, the British fabricated genealogical connections to ancient Greece to construct their political lineage. The British regularly claimed direct political descent from Alexander the Great and the democratic traditions of ancient Greece. Officials and intellectuals in England and the colonies practiced this Greek-centered political history narration. For example, in India colonial officials regularly invoked Alexander as one who appreciated the potential of the mighty Indus. The affiliation felt by British officials in India to Alexander was reflected in the following comment on the Indus navigation project: "to establish a direct intercourse between the Indus and Babylonia and Egypt was Alexander's project, and in a later age the plan was revived by some English speculators."³⁹

During his early missions (1830 and 1831), Alexander Burnes gathered the scientific, social, and commercial data used by colonial policy makers to inaugurate the Indus project. Burnes's later appointments and roles in Kabul (1836 and 1839) represent the British attempt to foster the political conditions in Afghanistan deemed necessary for the riverine commercial navigation scheme to succeed.⁴⁰ There was a vigorous internal debate among colonial authorities as to the most suitable location to develop a large inland port capable of handling the anticipated exponential increase in commercial activity on and around the Indus. Although Burnes favored Dera Ghazi Khan and Macnaughten indicated a preference for Dera Ismail Khan, Mithenkote was the site chosen for the establishment of a major inland port on the Indus.⁴¹ The Mithenkote market scheme was the cornerstone of the Indus navigation project, and the Lohanis' attendance was essential for Mithenkote to succeed. Referring to the Lohanis as the "chief carriers of the trade" between Bukhara, Kabul, and India, British officials claimed that:

. . . [b]y establishing a market at Mithenkote for products of India (the Lohanis) will get a reduced price and suffer less inconvenience, delay and trouble arising from being away from their own frontier. Also (British Indian) merchants will have facility for bartering their merchandise for the Bokhara and Cabul markets, which will extend and develop commercial resources of Hindustan with those countries making a mutual interest and dependency not hitherto exerted.⁴²

One of the ways that the British advertised their Indus commerce agenda was to write directly to Dost Mohammad and other Durrani political elites in Kabul. In 1835, Macnaughten, then the Secretary to the Governor General of India, wrote directly to Dost Muhammad Khan, Nawab Jabar Khan, and other influential people in Kabul.⁴³ Macnaughten posited a

commercial affinity between the British and the Afghans and expressed a desire that the Durrani government use its resources and influence to direct merchants from Kabul and Qandahar to the Indus:

It is the sincere desire of my nation to cultivate a close friendship with the Afghans, and this is one of the principle objects I had in view in the formation of the late arrangements for re-opening the navigation of the Indus. The Afghans, like ourselves, are a people fond of commercial pursuits, and it is hoped that our mutual intercourse will now become much closer than it ever has before. A direct and easy communication with the merchant vessels of England has been opened by the channel of the Indus and there is nothing to prevent the merchants of Kandahar and Cabul from bringing the wares of their own country and the more distant marts of Bukhara and Central Asia to the Indus, and receiving in return chintzes, metals, and other manufactured goods of England.⁴⁴

The British believed exerting leverage in Kabul was the best way to direct the Lohanis to Mithenkote. In addition to state-to-state or official "diplomatic" correspondence, the British relied heavily on their newswriter in Kabul to circulate information about the Indus navigation project among the Lohanis and other interregional traders. Sayyid Karamat Ali, who traveled with Conolly and Muhin Shah from Herat to Delhi, occupied the important post of the British Newswriter in Kabul from 1831 to 1834. Karamat Ali's service to the British in Kabul involved both the collection and dissemination of information on a wide variety of subjects. Regarding Mithenkote, the Hindustani Sayyid, was instructed: **22**

. . . to tell all the merchants in his quarter of the establishment of a mart at Mithenkote and the advantage of their finding a market at that place for the fruits of Cabul (and to) inform all the merchants of those countries that whatever quantity of fruits they may bring to the aforementioned mart, they will find purchase for it among the merchants of Hindustan and other parts who will probably supply them with any kinds of goods they may require. By this means they will be saved the trouble and inconvenience to which they are exposed to on a long journey through the Punjab to Hindustan.⁴⁵

Karamat Ali's colonial employment was based on his literacy, and his textual skills were marketable and apparently in demand. Karamat Ali was dismissed from his position as the British Newswriter in Kabul partly for hiring out his scribal services to Nawab Jabar Khan who was the brother of the Amir of Kabul, Dost Muhammad (ruled 1826–36 and 1842–63).⁴⁶ Another reason for Karamat Ali's dismissal from Kabul was his alleged failure to adequately disseminate Mithenkote market propaganda to the Lohanis.⁴⁷ Mithenkote lay in allied Sikh territory, and the colonial effort to transform the site into a high-volume inland commercial **23**

port resulted partly from a British desire to displace Shikarpur as a commercial and banking center. Shikarpur was then under the political purview of the Sind Amirs who were generally not cooperating with the increasing colonial inundation of the Indus.⁴⁸

British policy makers conceived Mithenkote as the midway market between South and Central Asia, and as mutually accessible for traders from each region. Rather than a single substantially longer annual commercial migration eastward as far as Calcutta, the Lohanis were imagined as being able to run multiple shorter trading circuits to the banks of the Indus during one year. The goal was a constant rather than seasonal exchange of Afghan fruit and other commodities from inside and beyond the Hindu Kush at Mithenkote. Similarly, the British conjured North Indian products as continually flowing overland westward to the collection point of Ludiana, then down the Sutlej river south to Mithenkote, from where the Lohanis would incessantly transport and market the goods in Afghanistan and Central Asia. European and other commodities, such as Chinese tea and Caribbean sugar, were envisioned as being shipped from Bombay up the Indus to the proposed entrepot for transnational and global traders at Mithenkote.

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In 1835, Charles Masson assumed the duties, although not the title, of British Newswriter in Kabul from Sayyid Karamat Ali.⁴⁹ Masson was instructed to contact Mullah Badr al-Din to begin the process of routing the Lohanis to Mithenkote from Kabul. With a portfolio valued between 10 and 20 lakhs of rupees, Mullah Badr al-Din was considered the "richest" merchant in Kabul, was honorifically referred to as *baba* or father by Dost Muhammad, and figured prominently in the trade between Russia and Bukhara.⁵⁰ Mullah Badr al-Din's son Khair al-Din also enjoyed a glowing mercantile reputation in Central Asia. Mullah Khair al-Din was among the most prominent and prosperous merchants of Bukhara, and considered the "greatest" merchant in Kabul.⁵¹ Khair al-Din held the farm to the transit duties of Kabul, and this was perhaps the most attractive element of his resource base from the British perspective.⁵² Between at least August 1834 and April 1836, Muhin Shah, Karamat Ali, and Masson facilitated communication between Mulla Khair al-Din and a number of colonial authorities including the British Indian Governor General and Wade. This correspondence, portions of which are reproduced below, involved an exchange of gifts and panegyric letters peppered with reference to Mithenkote and "free trade" rhetoric.⁵³ It was reported that with his immense wealth Mullah Khair al-Din:

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. . . wishes to establish a factory in British territory . . . (and) will lend any sum of money which may be required by the English who may visit Cabul or Bokhara . . . (and) also offered to supply (the British Newswriter in Kabul) or any person recommended by him any sum of rupees that may be wanted . . . (and) all that he wants from them is protection.⁵⁴

Wade responded to these overtures by encouraging the Mithenkote initiative:

A project for opening the navigation of the Indus and Sutlej has lately been formed and an extensive mart is to be established at Mithenkote. Lieutenant Mackeson an officer on the part of the British Government has been appointed to protect and superintend the interests of merchants and afford them every facility in trading with that place. Agreeably to my invitation the Lohanee merchants have resorted to that mart and began to barter their goods with the merchants of Hindustan. Every kind of merchandize the produce of China and Europe will be had there. I would therefore suggest that you should inform your agents as well as other merchants in your quarter to conduct their sales and purchases hereafter at Mithenkote by which means they will avoid the inconvenience and trouble to which they are now liable in trading by the Punjab to Hindustan.⁵⁵

To which Khair al-Din replied:

Information shall be given by me to all the merchants of these countries, and I will endeavor to induce them to resort to Mithenkot as a general entrepot of commerce. Verily! You have formed a scheme no less beneficial to the people at large than to the mercantile community.⁵⁶

Masson clearly articulated the tactical importance of harnessing the Lohanis to the Mithenkote market scheme, and how Kabul would benefit from such a relationship. He recognized the interrelationships between the Lohanis, Mithenkote, and Kabul, and communicated information about each element in a series of reports and letters constituting a significant elaboration and justification of the British commerce-based strategy toward Russia in Afghanistan and Central Asia. Over roughly the previous decade before becoming a *bona fide* British Agent, Masson was not in colonial service, but he spent considerable amounts of time in and around Kabul where he cultivated local relationships and became a repository of knowledge and information in his own right. He argued for the necessity of prompt and strong British advocacy of the Mithenkote market among the Lohanis by referencing the Russian sponsorship of a competing commercial fair at Nangkishlak on the northern banks of the Oxus river in Turkistan.⁵⁷ When considering ways to contact the Lohanis and attach them to the Mithenkote market, Masson specifically referenced Muhin Shah's successful commercial speculations in Central Asia and the Sayyid's roots in the strategic Peshin valley:

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. . . [t]hat the Lohanis be used to introduce British goods into Kabul, no one is better placed to facilitate this than Syad Mohin Sha because he is a Syad from Peshin through which the route from Mithenkote to Qandahar goes. He is well disposed and anxious to serve the Government and his pervious commercial loans were successful experiments in introducing British goods into Central Asia.⁵⁸

Masson indicated the Lohanis traveled *en masse* for self-protection and that they did not pool their capital or engage in collective commercial action.⁵⁹ He characterized Lohani trading activity as measured and frugal and involving regular but small transactions determined by the conservative disposition of individual carriers. According to Masson, the Lohanis were prone to:

. . . entrust small investments to individuals among them . . . no other traders can afford to bring or carry merchandize at so cheap a rate, and they have therefore no competitors in the markets they frequent able to undersell them . . . their caution and perhaps apathy cause them to form their investments in such goods as they know will sell, and by no means of such as may sell, seeming to prefer a certain but small profit to a large but doubtful one.⁶⁰

Despite their conservative fiscal practices, Masson believed that at least some Lohanis would recognize the profitability of handling "such articles as it might be desirous (for the British) to introduce into the markets of Kabul."⁶¹ Arguing the Lohanis already monopolized the trade in specifically Indian commodities such as "spices, indigo, muslins, fine sugar, drugs, etc.,"⁶² Masson articulated an agenda of attaching them to Mithenkote and the Indus scheme for the purpose of conveying more profitable British manufactures to Central Asia. The commodities produced in Europe specifically targeted for Lohani transport from Mithenkote to Kabul and Bukhara included:

Chintzes, fine calicos, muslins, shawls etc. of British manufacture, broad cloth, velvet, paper, cuttery, China ware, gold and silver lace, gold thread, buttons, needles, sewing silks and cotton thread, iron bars, copper, tin, brass, quicksilver, iron and steel wire, looking glasses and a multitude of various little articles conducive to comfort and convenience.⁶³

The British were confident in the ability of European commodities to penetrate and restructure the appetites of Central Asian consumers. Masson proffered a list of Russian goods found in the bazaars of Kabul which he dissected item-by-item in order to demonstrate the superiority of comparable English commodities on each count.⁶⁴ His attention to paper is typical:

It is singular that not a sheet of English manufactured writing paper can be found in the bazaar of Kabul while Russian foolscap, of coarse inferior quality abounds, and it is generally employed in the public departments.⁶⁵

Masson expressed a clear belief in Kabul's subsidiary benefit from the Mithenkote plan:

The opening of the navigation of the Indus, and the establishment of British factories at Mithenkot cannot fail to have salutary effect in increasing the extent and facility of commercial transactions between India and Kabul and of inducing

a much larger consumption of British manufactured goods both in Kabul and Turkistan.⁶⁶

Kabul occupied a central place in the British strategy toward Central Asia. The city was important as a site to exchange information with the Lohani nomadic traders about the burgeoning inland river port-market of Mithenkote. To disseminate Mithenkote market propaganda among the Lohanis colonial officials exploited their communicative links with local merchants including Mullah Khair al-Din and British agents and newswriters stationed in Kabul such as Karamat Ali and Masson. Masson's reports specifically addressed the interrelationship between the Lohanis and Mithenkote and the amenability of Kabul and other Central Asian markets to select British Indian and European commodities. Collectively, his official correspondence reaffirms and highlights the British need to deal directly with Afghan nomad traders to attain their political and commercial goals in Afghanistan and Central Asia. When the British decided to invade and occupy Kabul to actualize the Mithenkote and Indus plans, they communicated directly and extensively with two Lohani nomad chiefs about an array of subjects. The most significant realm of interaction between the Lohani chiefs and colonial officials concerned the provision of carriage services for the Army of Indus. 30

Sarwar Khan Lohani, a Tribal Khan in Colonial Service

There was extensive communication and interaction between the British and Lohani chiefs immediately before and during the first Anglo-Afghan war. British agents and officials contacted a number of Lohani chiefs to convey information about the proposed Mithenkote market. However, the colonial riverine port scheme, like the greater Indus navigation project, never came to fruition because of the resounding British defeat during the first war. The markets and masses in Kabul and Bukhara did not experience the lopsided commercial competition between English and Russian goods the colonial imagination envisioned to result from the inland Indus port. Although British agents and officers and the Lohani chiefs communicated extensively about Mithenkote, the market never developed. Colonial authorities disseminated false or misleading information about the market on a number of occasions. For example, during his 1834 communication with Mulla Khair al-Din about Mithenkote, Wade claimed the Lohanis accepted his invitation to attend the new Indus market.⁶⁷ However, this claim is contradicted in a letter written to Wade in 1838 by Omar Khan, "a principal Lohani chief": 31

A few years ago you informed me as well as other merchants that you would establish an entrepot at Mithenkot and open the navigation between that place and Bombay which the people anxiously expected, but as nothing has hitherto come to pass they appear to be disheartened.⁶⁸

Wade later compromised the veracity of his earlier statement about the Lohanis' attendance of the Mithenkote market. In his own words penned in 1838: **32**

... finding no adequate efforts made by our merchants to meet their wishes the Lohanis remain disappointed in the realization of the benefits which have been held out to them and are likely to remain so until the merchants of Bombay can be induced to consign cargoes of goods suited to the wants of these people. There are many motives of self interest which operate to deter the great merchants of India and partly those of Shikarpur from using any effectual exertions to exempt the Lohanis from the necessity of visiting their own marts.⁶⁹

In the British view, the reluctance of Indian merchants to meet Afghan nomads on the Indus was the main impediment to the development of Mithenkote. A Lohani chief expressed interest in the Mithenkote project, but ordinary Indian merchants did not. Omar Khan Lohani was the brother of Sarwar Khan Lohani who was identified by Elphinstone and Masson as a prominent tribal chief in the daman plains of the Sulaiman mountains in the area of Dera Ismail Khan on the west bank of the Indus.⁷⁰ Various forms of leadership existed among the tribes of this area. For example, Elphinstone noted a number of expressions of the single institution of *chelwashtee* or the temporary magistracy granted to an individual by the maliks or heads of families in each *khel* or lineage among the "pastoral merchant carriers" of the daman.⁷¹ Elphinstone also discussed how external political involvement led to the emergence of a chief among the daman tribes who was so strong as to warrant the military despot label. He narrated how Sarwar Khan Lohani combined local cultural institutions and Durrani political patronage to reclaim, consolidate, and expand the authority and resources purportedly usurped from his father by a constellation competing local elites.⁷² **33**

Roughly twenty years later, when Masson arrived on the scene, Sarwar Khan had developed the trappings of a local potentate.⁷³ Sarwar Khan was then publicly voicing the superiority of settled agricultural pursuits over nomadic commercial endeavors. His fortress was under constant expansion and upgrade, and there were over two hundred women in his harem. He taxed travelers and local producers, dammed and diverted the Gomal River to irrigate his lands, held a public court where he received political agents and diplomatic guests, and constructed a cannon foundry and other workshops. Sarwar Khan and his elder sons maintained gardens where wine was drunk, poetry read, and music played.⁷⁴ Sarwar Khan Lohani was a nomadic tribal chief whose prosperity and influence were very well recognized by colonial authorities. **34**

In 1832, Burnes met Omar Khan and Sarwar Khan Lohani in Bukhara. Burnes referred to the brothers as "two of the principle men among the Lohanees engaged in carrying on the trade from India to Cabul and Turkistan."⁷⁵ The Lohani brothers are also referenced in the final accounting of Muhin Shah's company-sponsored commercial speculations in Central Asia. **35**

These records show Omar Khan in Darraband collecting Rs. 2 and Sarwar Khan in Tank receiving Rs. 3 on each of the six camels employed by the Peshin Sayyid to execute the British commercial experiment between Calcutta and Bukhara.⁷⁶ In Darraband, Muhin Shah either exchanged or rehired camels.⁷⁷ The area under the control of the Lohani brothers was a market for transport animals, and a general supply center for interregional commercial caravans. Mohan Lal reported that on being funneled out of the Gomal Pass to the daman, Lohani caravans arrived in Majingorah, a place:

. . . ruled by Sarwar Khan Lohani, to whom two rupees and eight annas are paid on each of the loads and sometimes he extorts large sums of money from the merchants. In Majingorah they buy provisions and passing through Zarkani they come to Daraband where their family remains under the protection of Omar Khan until they return.⁷⁸

While stationed in Kabul from September 1836 to October 1838 Burnes actively propagated the Mithenkote market, and secured the services of the Lohani brothers to transport commodities to the inland Indus port.⁷⁹ As the Lohanis' annual commercial migration to Hindustan commenced in October 1837, Burnes drew very favorable attention to Sarwar Khan and Omar Khan in a letter to the Governor General of India.⁸⁰ Sarwar Khan had just come from Bukhara to Kabul and was preparing for the move to India where he intended to seek out the Governor General. While drawing attention to Russian commercial initiatives in Central Asia, Burnes notified his superiors that:

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. . . [a]fter the anxiety displayed by the Russians to show every attention to the Afghan merchants visiting their fairs, I have felt myself more than solicitous to exhibit to these men the equal interest the British Government takes in their welfare. . . . I avail myself of the opportunity to introduce to your notice, Sarwar Khan and his brother Omar Khan, two of the principle men among the Lohanees engaged in carrying on the trade from India to Cabul and Turkistan. Sarwar Khan is the individual who acted so very friendly a part when I visited Bokhara in 1832, from where he has just come and where he still enjoys much of the confidence of the Kosh Begee or first minister of the King. . . . Sarwar Khan is a man well acquainted with all mercantile affairs here and in Toorkistan, and if His Lordship wishes a *viva voce* of them and other subjects, I am certain Sarwar Khan's intelligence will enable him to give satisfactory information.⁸¹

The collusion of interests between Burnes and the Lohani brothers was extensive and multifaceted. In the spring of 1838 Burnes arranged for Sarwar Khan and Omar Khan to deliver three hundred sheep and eleven rams to Mithenkote for shipment to the Governor of Bombay.⁸² In order to secure their passage through Sikh-controlled territory, Burnes provided the Lohani chiefs with his own personal passport and a letter from the Governor of Multan, within whose jurisdiction Mithenkote lay. When Sarwar Khan and Omar Khan

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reached Dera Ghazi Khan, then also under Sikh control, the animals were taxed, which the Lohanis perceived to be an illegal and unjustified act. The Lohanis wrote to Burnes about the incident:

Jawahar Mull, the ruler of that place, behaved very ill towards us. We showed him your passport and a letter to Sarwar Mull . . . but he paid no attention to their contents nor believed that the sheep were sent for the Governor of Bombay. He made us to pay him Rs. 427 as a tax on the sheep which was very shameful.⁸³

It is unclear how this issue was resolved, but the British attachment to Lohani carriers became even more evident during the occupation of eastern and southern Afghanistan. The Army of the Indus relied heavily on the transportation services provided by the Lohanis, and the dependence of colonial forces upon Sarwar Khan is particularly noticeable during the buildup to and the early stages of the invasion. To prepare for the invasion and during their occupation of Kabul, Qandahar, and parts of eastern and southern Afghanistan, the British depended on Burnes's ability to communicate with and secure the services of Omar Khan and Sarwar Khan.⁸⁴ At the end of September 1838, Burnes was reassigned from Kabul to a special mission to Kelat.⁸⁵ Before proceeding to Kelat, Burnes was directed to Shikarpur, where he was: **38**

. . . authorized to draw bills totaling 19 lakhs of rupees . . . (and) arrange for supplies in advance of the army in conjunction with communication officers and to use his abilities to secure provisions from certain chiefs and the Lohanees.⁸⁶

Relations between the British and the territory being transformed into Afghanistan were taking a critical turn. In November 1838, a force that would later come to be known as the Army of the Indus was gathering at Ferozapore in the Punjab. At this time, roughly a year after Burnes first brought the utility, if not indispensability, of the Lohanis to his superiors' attention, Sarwar Khan and Omar Khan received a letter directly from the Governor General of India. The Governor General wrote to announce the invasion and solicit the Lohani chiefs' assistance regarding transportation and supply services for the colonial army: **39**

At this time it is not concealed that an Army composed of British troops and those of Shah Shooja ool-Mulk is about to enter Afghanistan by the route of Shikarpore to place Shooja on the throne of his ancestors.

Having the greatest desire that no injury should befall men so respectable as you and your brother I thought it right to let you know this that injury may not accrue you.

I have deputed Captain Burnes to Shikarpore to make arrangements in carriage and provisions for the army and as that officer tells me you are the well wishers of this Government and have it in your power to give assistance at this time, I request you to attend to the wishes of that officer, and it will hereafter give me

great pleasure to reward those who perform good service.

The going and coming I am sorry to report is now shut up between Cabol and India, but by the blessings of providence, enemies will soon be dispersed and the roads of commerce become passable. This will give me the highest pleasure, as I have no wish nearer my heart than the encouragement of trade, and the protection of enterprising merchants like you and your tribe.⁸⁷

Faithful to Burnes's expectations and the Governor General's invitation, Sarwar Khan arrived in Shikarpur to market his carriage services to the British. In May 1839, the British Political Agent in Shikarpur, W. J. Eastwick, reported having made a cash advance of Rs. 1,06,063 to Sarwar Khan. This payment covered the hire of 3,098 camels and security men for the animals and the baggage they carried.⁸⁸ In this transaction, Sarwar Khan was contracted to carry supplies from Shikarpur to the Army of the Indus that was then camped near Qandahar. The vast preponderance, nearly 98 percent, of the money received by Sarwar Khan on this occasion went toward the employment of camels and their human supervisors.⁸⁹ Colonial officials valued the combination of informality and constancy of their loyal Lohani, who in this instance arrived in Shikarpur without an "official account of the terms of the agreement" that brought him there. For receipt on departure from Shikarpur on May 9, 1839, Sarwar Khan provided the following text:

I Moolah Surwar Khan Loohanee give this written receipt to the British Government that the amount of one lac six thousand sixty three rupees, fifteen annas, eight pies, have been received by me from Captain W.J. Eastwick official Political Agent on account of the hire of 3098 camels which are now proceeding to Khorasan.⁹⁰

The 2 percent not mentioned in this quotation involved the compensation that Sarwar Khan successfully petitioned for regarding a number of camels that were stolen from his camps in Shikarpur and Khairpur. The colonial account of how the Lohani chief responded to one of the thefts produces and reflects the reputation bestowed upon him by the majority of his British patrons and interlocutors. Eastwick differentiated Sarwar Khan's noble actions in response to the theft from the baser instincts of the seven hundred security personnel he employed and whom he had "difficulty managing":

The Afghans were greatly excited at this (robbery) and (I) could scarcely prevent their committing an outrage in retaliation for the plundering . . . [but] Sarwar Khan behaved with temper and moderation, pursued the robbers, recaptured his camels and brought back four prisoners, one of whom was a thief of some celebrity he delivered over to the Diwan of Shikarpore to be hung at the city gates, which was carried out the next morning. The three others, seeing the fate

of their comrade, delivered valuable information on the haunts, names, and tribes of those engaged in the outrages.⁹¹

Sarwar Khan does not appear to have been threatened or disrupted by the events and processes defining the first Anglo-Afghan war. Quite to the contrary, he seems to have behaved with comfort and ease as a result of the formation of the colonial army. The business dimensions and profit potential of state-sponsored war were familiar and perhaps appealing to Sarwar Khan. Even when the states controlling the trade routes he traversed were not at war, certain route segments were particularly treacherous for trade caravans. As a result, Lohani commercial migrations typically involved both the display and use of force against other tribal populations at certain points and in certain areas. Masson's foundational description of the Lohanis highlights their use of weapons and need to fight their way through certain areas.⁹² The region of commercial depredations (e.g., banditry, plundering of caravans) referenced by Masson falls within a larger area of eastern and southeastern Afghanistan, roughly between Kabul, Jalalabad, and Qandahar, known as Ghalzi country. This mountainous zone, particularly the passes leading from it to the Indus plains, were noted by the Lohanis as requiring either forced-passage or prominent displays of force.⁹³ During the Army of the Indus' very first march from Qandahar to Kabul through Ghalzi country, the British Envoy and Minister to Shuja's court, Macnaughten, reported the following to the Governor General:

We were detained by some time in expectation of the arrival of Lohanee merchants, but they refused to go beyond Qandahar on the plea that their families were in the hands of the Ghiljies. The grain brought by them was therefore left at Candahar.⁹⁴

Ghalzi country and Ghalzi chiefs impeded the movement of the well-armed Lohanis, the Army of the Indus, and Shuja to Kabul. British officials indicated that the ability of the Lohanis to transfer thirty thousand maunds of grain from Dera Ismail Khan to Kabul depended on whether the Ghalzis decided to support Shuja.⁹⁵ And although the Ghalzis generally did not support Shuja or his colonial patrons during the first British invasion and occupation, it was reported that Sarwar Khan successfully traversed the Ghalzi impasse between Qandahar and Kabul. Sarwar Khan's "high standing, sense and enterprise" became a model for the British as they sought to contract other Lohanis to convey personnel and supplies through Ghalzi country to Kabul.⁹⁶

In addition to Ghalzi country, Sikh territory also presented challenges for Sarwar Khan and his efforts to assist the British in their invasion and occupation of Afghanistan. The critical distinction between Sikh and Ghalzi territory is that the former was represented by one clear ruler, Maharaja Ranjit Singh, who was explicitly allied to the British and Shuja through the Tripartite Treaty of 1838. Ghalzis did not have a single identifiable agreed-on political

representative, and apparently none of the multiple Ghalzi chiefs committed to supporting either Shuja or the British. The Sikhs did not provide men, arms, or money to the cause of restoring Shuja. The expected role of the Sikhs during the first Anglo-Afghan war was to provide uninterrupted passage through their territory for the British and the Lohanis as they proceeded toward Qandahar and Kabul.⁹⁷

Sikh officials appointed by Ranjit Singh who were stationed in districts relatively far from Lahore were not always or even consistently cooperative with the Lohanis in their role as colonial baggage-handlers. For example, in July 1840 Sarwar Khan wrote to Macnaughten in lengthy detail about fifty camels that a Sikh official detained at Ataree.⁹⁸ The incident originated in February when Sarwar left his home in the daman with twelve hundred camels destined for Ludiana to transport Shuja's family and much of his entourage and material possessions to Kabul. During a river crossing between Multan and Ludiana a Sikh official named Diwan Missur demanded unexpected and steep taxes on the Lohani camels that Sarwar Khan could or would not pay. As a result, fifty camels were left as security and the first leg of the journey was extended by twenty-three days. The detention was costly in tactical terms, as by the time Sarwar Khan arrived in Ludiana Shuja's family announced it had become too hot for them to travel from Ludiana to Kabul.⁹⁹ Sarwar Khan's letter to Macnaughten about these circumstances concludes with an informative statement of account. The Lohani chief claimed the following expenses in connection with his British-contracted transportation of Shuja's family:

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Rs. 340 paid to ferry men at Kheree, Mooltan, and Ataree for crossing the camels;

Rs. 30 for hire of messengers from Doman to Loodianah and from Mooltan to Loodianah;

Rs. 1024 paid to Jemadars appointed on each 100 camels @ Rs. 20 per month;

(sub) total: Rs. 1394.¹⁰⁰

Sarwar Khan then adds, almost as a footnote:

The hire of 1,200 camels for four months and 8 days at 20 rupees amounts to Rupees. 1,02,400, in all Rs. 1,03,794.0.0. Of this we have received Rupees. 30,000 and the balance Rupees 73,794 is due to us.¹⁰¹

These are consequential sums that reflect the breadth and depth of British attachment to Sarwar Khan Lohani during the first Anglo-Afghan war. Perhaps because he played such a crucial and prominent role in the prosecution of the war, Sarwar Khan was subject to criticism by English officers stationed in Afghanistan. The few colonial officials who voiced

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disapproval of Sarwar Khan may not have known or appreciated the extent of the British dependence on this mobile but locally grounded and influential Lohani chief. William Hough, a major in the Bengal Native Infantry who served in Afghanistan, cast aspersions on Sarwar Khan's loyalty and service to the British during the first Anglo-Afghan war. Hough was a lesser player in the conflict but his words form an interesting counternarrative to the official discursive posture of the colonial regime toward one of its most important local collaborators. Hough introduces Sarwar Khan in conspicuously unfavorable terms as follows:

The convoy experienced much opposition in the Bolan and Kojuk Passes from predatory hordes, who plundered and wounded many people belonging to it. The people attached to the convoy were all armed, and Surwar Khan, their leader, is a most determined man. He said that if he was refused grain at any place, or was plundered near any village, he invariably attacked the place . . . putting all he caught to the sword, he then destroyed the village, &c. Captain O(utram) says, "had the chief himself remained faithful, of which there is some reason to doubt." The conduct of Surwar Khan was of a very doubtful character.¹⁰²

Hough's comments about Sarwar Khan originate in the summer of 1839 when Shuja and the Army of the Indus were moving from Qandahar to Kabul. They arose in a context that was unfavorable to the British, namely, the failed transport of twenty thousand maunds of grain from Qandahar to the Ghazni vicinity where Shuja was bunkered. Hough stated that near Quetta on the road from Shikarpur to Qandahar the caravan commanded by Sarwar Khan was boarded by emissaries of Dost Mohammad, the Durrani ruler whom the colonial army intended to replace with Shuja.¹⁰³ Hough's accusation is that illicit communication resulted in Sarwar Khan nearly handing over the British supply caravan to Dost Mohammad's forces.¹⁰⁴ This assertion destabilizes understandings of Sarwar Khan's uncompromising loyalty to the British. Hough quotes a circular order from the Commissariat Department of the invasion force to support his position that the Lohani caravan did not proceed from Qandahar because Sarwar Khan was trying to sell the camels he rented in Shikarpur to British officers in Qandahar.¹⁰⁵

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However valid his interpretation of the events may have been, Hough's evaluation of Sarwar Khan was atypical. The vast preponderance of colonial officials involved in the first Anglo-Afghan war habitually lauded Sarwar Khan. Data from a later period supports the favorable majority opinion of the influential Lohani chief formed during the first war, and indicates the relationship between Sarwar Khan and colonial authorities may have been more extensive than indicated in contemporaneous documents. In November 1893 Sarwar Khan's son Mushka Khan petitioned the British Indian Government for Rs. 1,00,000 with interest.¹⁰⁶ Mushka Khan claimed his father delivered six thousand camels of wheat and one lakh of rupees to Macnaughten while colonial forces were besieged in Kabul during the winter of

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1840–41. In return, Sarwar Khan was given two hundis that served as money orders, one for Rs. 85,000 payable at the Ludiana treasury, and another for Rs. 15,000 payable from the Peshawar treasury.¹⁰⁷

Mushka Khan said that on his father's death the orders were not cashed for fear of the whole amount being confiscated by Sher Ali (ruled 1863–6 and 1869–78), who was then the Durrani dynast in Kabul.¹⁰⁸ Mushka Khan detailed how Sher Ali initially conspired and negotiated with him to hand over the valuable paper notes, but then threatened him to do so. He indicated that Sher Ali ultimately tried unsuccessfully to forge and cash the hundi money orders.¹⁰⁹ Mushka Khan narrated his imprisonment in Turkistan and the confiscation of his property at the beginning of Abd al-Rahman's reign.¹¹⁰ He claimed to have escaped confinement and fled to Russian Central Asia during a jailhouse revolt prompted by a more widespread rebellion against Abd al-Rahman.¹¹¹ After chasing down outstanding debts due to his late father from other Afghan traders in Central Asia, Mushka Khan traveled to Quetta to plead his case to Major James Browne. According to "Russian spies and others who had recently" come from that city, Browne was the British officer best suited to hear the case.¹¹² Despite appeals to the great service his father provided the British during the first war, and the assistance that Mushka Khan claims to have rendered during the second war, his petition does not appear to have been successful.¹¹³

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Notes

Note 1: To varying degrees, Indian, European, machine-made, and handcrafted commodities were involved in Sayyid Muhin Shah's commercial experiments. Unless indicated otherwise, in what follows those distinctions are subsumed in the phrasing "British Indian" "goods" or "manufactures." Tables 2.1 and 2.2 and numerous quotations in this chapter list some of the items involved in these colonial commercial speculations and considerations. The name Muhin appears in the sources to be a rendition of the name commonly spelled today as Moeen or Mu'in.

Note 2: PPA, Book 139, Serial No. 47. The loan may have been granted by the Persian merchant Agha Ismail.

Note 3: MacGregor, pp. 512–13 (quoting H. B. Lumsden, who wrote about Qandahar's trade in 1857).

Note 4: *Ibid.*, p. 512.

Note 5: The Persian term for this rotation of royalty is *badshahgardi* or king turning, which Caroe repeatedly applies to the intra-Durrani dynastic succession squabbles. See Caroe, pp. 262, 292, 316, *passim*.

Note 6: Conolly, vol. II, pp. 49 and 112.

Note 7: Incidents of nomadization such as that experienced by Muhin Shah are far less frequently discussed in anthropological literature than episodes of sedentarization. For more on nomadization specifically, see Khazanov, ch. 2. For a model of sedentarization as a processual, voluntary, and flexible response to changing local circumstances, see Salzman (1980), p. 14, which is useful because it prompts a reciprocal characterization of nomadization and its forms as adaptive strategies rather than teleologically. Anthropologists have long recognized the importance and vitality of relationships between nomadic and sedentary societies. For considerations of this symbiotic relationship, see Nelson and a number of essays in *Pastoral Production and Society*.

Note 8: Conolly, vol. II, pp. 48–49.

Note 9: *Ibid.*, p. 48.

Note 10: *Ibid.*, pp. 51 and 170.

Note 11: *Ibid.*, p. 170.

Note 12: *Ibid.*

Note 13: Conolly, vol. II, p. 232. This appears to be one segment of a longer twenty-month commercial journey between South and Central Asia undertaken by the Sayyid between November 1827 and June 1829 that covered 2,337 miles of land and 1,600 miles of water. For details of this extended trading expedition see "Commercial and Political Resources of Central Asia," NAI, Foreign S.C., 25 November 1831, Proceeding Nos. 7–12.

Note 14: Conolly, vol. I, p. 9, *passim*. There is a portrait of Sayyid Karamat Ali facing the cited page. A portrait of Sayyid Muhin Shah faces p. 49 of vol. II.

Note 15: Conolly, vol. II, pp. 255–6. Conolly notes that Sayyid Karamat Ali went on to serve the British Indian Government in Kabul (and Qandahar, see later), then became the *mutawali* or administrator of religious endowment or *waqf* property in Hooghly.

Note 16: My near verbatim paraphrase from "Memorandum on Trade of Afghanistan," NAI, Foreign S.C., 25 November 1831, Proceeding Nos. 1–3. The Secret Committee dispatch referenced is dated February 17, 1830.

Note 17: *Ibid.*

Note 18: See the next section for more on the role of Mithenkote in the larger Indus navigation project.

Note 19: See later for more on the Ghalzi presence along and the British use of the Qandahar-Kabul road during the first Anglo-Afghan war. In practice, nomads had the ability, opportunity, and periodic need to break from planned paths, directions, or series of incremental movements. There were generally multiple routes to choose from when moving between the aforementioned cities. Temporary labor opportunities for nomads, as road builders and canal and well diggers in particular, also make it difficult to fully and precisely chart the spatial dimensions of nomadic commercial migrations between the major markets. See *Zhob District Gazetteer*, pp. 165–6, for Ghalzi Pashtun nomads as excavators of *qanats* or underground irrigation channels, and Balland, p. 209 (footnote), quoting another source about the class of nomads who entered the subcontinent for seasonal labor opportunities such as "stone-breaking, road-making, clearing jungle (*butimari*), and any sort of job where energy and strength are more necessary than professional skills." The latter quote implies a degree of flexibility and unpredictability concerning where and by what routes the nomads traveled in India.

Note 20: "Memorandum on Trade of Afghanistan," NAI, Foreign S.C., November 25, 1831, Proceeding Nos. 1–3. According to his entry in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, vol. 19, p. 1135, from 1827 to 1831 Trevelyan held the post of Assistant to the Commissioner of Delhi who was then Thomas Metcalfe. William Bentinck served as the British East India Company's Governor General of India from 1828 to 1835. Auckland held the post from 1836 to 1842, during which time he was under "the pernicious influence of his young secretary, William Macnaghten" (see Wolpert, p. 219). Auckland's "folly" in Afghanistan resulted in Ellenborough assuming the Governor Generalship of India in 1842, followed by Dalhousie from 1848 until 1856. See *ibid.*, pp. 218–26, for a consideration of the first Anglo-Afghan war in the high politics of colonial India.

Note 21: "Commercial and Political Resources of Central Asia," NAI, Foreign S.C., November 25, 1831, Proceeding Nos. 7–12. See also NAI, Foreign P.C., September 5, 1836, Nos. Proceeding Nos. 9–19, which I, perhaps incorrectly, have cited as both "Trevelyan's Note on Commerce of Afghanistan" and "Trevelyan's Note on Trade of Cabul."

Note 22: "Memorandum on Trade of Afghanistan," NAI, Foreign S.C., November 25, 1831, Proceeding Nos. 1–3.

Note 23: "Commercial and Political Resources of Central Asia," NAI, Foreign S.C., November 25, 1831, Proceeding Nos. 7–12. See also NAI, Foreign P.C., September 5, 1836, Proceeding Nos. 9–19, which I, perhaps incorrectly, have cited as both "Trevelyan's Note on Commerce of Afghanistan" and "Trevelyan's Note on Trade of Cabul."

Note 24: "Memorandum on Trade of Afghanistan," NAI, Foreign S.C., November 25, 1831, Proceeding Nos. 1–3. The tabular account and narrative recitation of Muhin Shah's first British-sponsored commercial experiment do not consider transport expenses beyond a generic "duty" category, omit the Bombay purchase prices, lack references to currencies, exchange rates, and other important transactional details.

Note 25: NAI Foreign P.C., September 5, 1836, Nos. 9–19, which my notes indicate as both "Trevelyan's Note on Commerce of Afghanistan" and "Trevelyan's Note on Trade of Cabul."

Note 26: "Result of Muhim Shah's Commercial Speculation in Bukhara," NAI, Foreign S.C., May 8, 1834, Proceeding No. 14. See Wade's entry in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, vol. 20, pp. 411–13. Ludiana was the primary location where the British concentrated the large numbers of Afghan exiles, pensioners and refugees, which gave Wade a unique influence on British policy toward Afghanistan.

Note 27: Ibid. However, Wade continued to communicate with Kabul through the Peshin Sayyid's conveyance of information, gifts, and other resources (see later).

Note 28: "Result of Muhim Shah's Commercial Speculation in Bukhara," NAI, Foreign S.C., May 8, 1834, Proceeding No. 14.

Note 29: See PPA, Book 118, Serial No. 50, being a letter from Macnaughten, then the Secretary to the Governor General of India, to Wade dated November 2, 1835: "Muheen Shah has already been furnished (with) another loan of Rs. 12,000, for the purpose of assisting him in carrying on his commercial dealings with the countries beyond the Indus, on condition of rendering an account of the manner in which it shall be employed."

Note 30: See PPA, Book 140, Serial No. 66, for Wade's concurrence that Muhin Shah's retreat to Peshin from Kabul, which prevented him from accompanying the Company's capital to Bukhara resulted from illness and not any "neglect of Government interest."

Note 31: "Results of Muhim Shah's Commercial Speculation," NAI, Foreign P.C., August 17, 1835, Proceeding Nos. 70–73.

Note 32: Ibid. The items and quantities were: "60 pieces of shubnum (or book muslin) of the first sort, 60 pieces of shubnum of the second sort, 60 pieces of shubnum of the third sort, 50 pieces of nynisook (or Jaconet) muslin, 200 pieces of chintz, 300 pieces of striped chintz, 100 yards of silk net, 80 pieces of red English town cloth, 20 pieces of imitation jamawar, 50 pieces of jamdanee (or lenoo), 250 pieces of long cloth, 200 yards of gauze, 100 yards of satin of different sorts, 50 yards of broadcloth of the first sort, 20 yards of broadcloth of the second sort, 20 yards of broadcloth of the third sort."

Note 33: Ibid. The points and/or persons collecting transit tolls were, from east to west, "Calcutta, Bikaner, Moughgurh, etc. (dependency of Bhawulpore), Bhawulpore, Multan (a dependency of the Sikh territory), Leya (a dependency of Multan), Kehree (a dependency of Multan), Omer Khan (Afghan of Darabund), Sarwar Khan (Afghan of {Tuck}??), Jagree (??), Babian (an *ellaka* of Dost Muhammad Khan), Khullum (in the *zilla* of Kundoo)." I have rendered these persons and places as close as possible to how they appear in the source cited, and indicated any ambiguities with question marks. More will be said about Sarwar Khan and Omar Khan in the next section. Tuck as rendered in the original is today's Tank, and Babian is Bamian.

Note 34: Ibid. Six camels were hired for the Calcutta to Benaras, Benaras to Darraband, and Darraband to Kabul stages of the journey, and three camels were need for the final segment between Kabul and Bukhara.

Note 35: Ibid. This exaction represents the *chihil yak* or one-in-forty exaction claimed by Muslim rulers. The Islamicate *chihil yak* shown here differs from the exactions claimed by Sarwar and Omar Khan in Tank and Darraband, respectively (see earlier). Sarwar Khan charged Rs. 3 and Omar Khan Rs. 2 on each of the six camels employed by Muhin Shah that traversed their territories.

Note 36: Ibid. Of the sixteen cloth groups, five were disposed of in equal amounts in Kabul and Bukhara, eleven were not. See Yapp (1980), ch. 6 for more on the Indus river in colonial Kabul-Afghanistan policy considerations.

Note 37: Ibid.

Note 38: Direct communication between Lohani chiefs and British officials will be explored in Chapter 3.

Note 39: "Trevelyan's Note on Commerce of Afghanistan," and "Trevelyan's Note on Trade of Cabul," NAI, Foreign P.C., September 5, 1836, Proceeding Nos. 9–19.

Note 40: For more on Alexander Burnes, see his entry in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, vol. 3, pp. 389–91, Norris, *passim*, and "Trevelyan's Note on Trade of Cabul," NAI, Foreign P.C., September 5, 1836, Proceeding Nos. 9–19. The early missions referred to began in 1830 when Burnes was deputed to deliver six horses to Ranjit Singh. This delivery was the context for Burnes's initial surveying of the Indus for commercial navigation. Burnes concluded the river could be navigated by large flat-bottomed commercial vessels. In December 1831, he and a small party including James Gerard and Mohan Lal were deputed to investigate the commercial potential of the territories northwest of the Indus river. Burnes, and the majority of Lal (1846) are based on this expedition. In September 1836, the Governor General of India selected Burnes "to conduct a commercial mission to the countries bordering the Indus, with a view to completing the reopening of that river on the basis of treaties lately concluded with powers possessing territory along its banks" (the Amirs of Sind, primarily); see again "Trevelyan's Note on Trade of Cabul," NAI, Foreign P.C., September 5, 1836, Proceeding Nos. 9–19. The literary results of this expedition include Burnes, et al. (1839), and Wood. Burnes's 1836 mission to Kabul also had political dimensions because part of his assignment involved securing the commitment of Dost Muhammad to an alliance with the British and the Sikhs. The purported failure of the political aspect of this mission was based on the arrival in Kabul of a competing Russian Agent. The mere presence of a Russian agent in Kabul was apparently used to justify the formation of the Army of the Indus that invaded Afghanistan in the spring of 1839, marking the final stage of Burnes's career and life. He was killed in Kabul in November 1841 as the British occupation was unraveling.

Note 41: Wade was the most consistent advocate for Mithenkote. Burnes argued Dera Ghazi Khan was superior to Mithenkote because of the seasonal flooding experienced by the latter; see "Establishment of an Entrepot for Indus Trade," dated January 18, 1838 in Burnes, et al. As late as 1840, Macnaughten was voicing a qualified preference for Dera Ismail Khan, see "Macnaughten's Opinion on Trade of the Indus," NAI, Foreign S.C., March 2, 1840, Proceeding Nos. 113–17.

Note 42: "Assembly of Lohanis at Mithenkot," NAI, Foreign S.C., May 8, 1834, Proceeding Nos. 16–18.

Note 43: PPA, Book 118, Serial No. 7, being a collection of letters from Macnaughten to Wade. The letter quoted is dated February 11, 1835, and it also was addressed to Nawab Muhammad Zaman Khan and Sardar Sultan Muhammad Khan.

Note 44: Ibid.

Note 45: PPA, Book 140, Serial No. 94. The quote comes from a letter from Wade to Karamat Ali.

Note 46: In 1833, while serving the British in Kabul, Karamat Ali was paid Rs. 150 per month in addition to Rs. 50 for expenses. After Karamat Ali was dismissed from his post in Kabul, he was reassigned to Qandahar, where he served the British until 1836. Nawab Jabar Khan's service as a British Agent was betrayed by Karamat Ali, which also figured in the latter's dismissal from Kabul and reappointment to Qandahar (PPA, Book 140, Serial No. 94, and "Resources of Afghanistan," NAI, Foreign P.C., March 30, 1835, Proceeding No. 46). Nawab Jabar Khan arranged for his son, Abd al-Ghias Khan, to study English with Shahamat Ali (see Ali) at "Wade's school" (Vigne, p. 144) in Ludiana under the supervising tutelage of Mirza Muhammad. Karamat Ali likely facilitated this opportunity. Nawab Jabar Khan sent his son to India to form a "familial connection with the English" to guard against whatever might happen in Afghanistan in the future (PPA, Book 140, Serial No. 93). As a minor, Abd al-Ghias initially received Rs. 100 per month as a stipend from the British, but soon petitioned for an increase to Rs. 150 per month. Afghan adults "expected" Rs. 1,500 per month as a British pension in India (*ibid.*, containing a letter from Wade to Macnaughten dated November 16, 1834). Because he had not "received anything" from his father, Abd al-Ghias felt compelled to borrow Rs. 3,000 from a local banker in Ludiana ("Commercial and Political Resources of Central Asia," NAI, Foreign S.C., November 25, 1831, Proceeding Nos. 7–12, containing a letter

from Wade to Macnaughten dated February 11, 1835). The colonial policy of providing liberal stipends to various Durrani political elites perpetuated the *badshahgardi* or "king-turning" that was often bemoaned in British discourse about Afghanistan (e.g., Caroe). Masson, vol. III, pp. 218–19, notes the jealousy between Dost Muhammad and his brother Nawab Jabar Khan was such that the former would have detained Abd al-Ghias had he known of the Ludiana plans. Ultimately, to avoid detection by Dost Muhammad, Abd al-Ghias was secretly set on a raft and floated down the Kabul river from Jalalabad to Peshawar, his horses and attendants following. The hundreds if not thousands of these Durrani elites, their families, and entourages who received British pensions in North India, particularly Ludiana, deserve separate treatment.

Note 47: PPA, Book 140, Serial Nos. 94 and 96.

Note 48: Mazari tribespeople, whom preyed on vessels moving through the territory they inhabited on both banks of the Indus, also were identified as obstacles necessary to surmount in order to actuate the Mithenkote plan. See paragraph nine of Burnes's instructions for his 1836 mission in "Trevelyan's Note on Commerce of Afghanistan," NAI, Foreign P.C., September 5, 1836, Proceeding Nos. 9–19.

Note 49: Masson was intelligent and articulate, a prolific correspondent, but a deserter or fugitive from the Indian Army with criminal claims standing against him in British territory. Wade suggested his service as Newswriter in Kabul didn't have to be recognized but should certainly be encouraged, and that the quality of information he provided "merits some clemency on the part of the Government for his past crimes/conduct" (PPA, Book 140, Serial No. 96). On February 11, 1835, he was formally appointed "Agent in Kabul to report intelligence" with a monthly payment of Rs. 250 ("Resources of Afghanistan," NAI, Foreign P.C., March 30, 1835, Proceeding No. 46).

Note 50: PPA, Book 140, Serial No. 66.

Note 51: Ibid.

Note 52: The revenue from the chabutara or customs house of Kabul was farmed for Rs. 1,40,000 in 1834. See "Masson's Observations on Kabul Commerce," NAI, Foreign P.C., November 2, 1835, Proceeding No. 56.

Note 53: Ibid., and "Measures to Promote Trade Between Mithenkote and Central Asia," NAI, Foreign P.C., May 16, 1836, Proceeding Nos. 47–48. The first series of gift exchanges had Khair al-Din sending a Persian sword and sheep skin coat or *postin* valued at Rs. 20, and the Governor General conveying six yards of fine creped gauze (@ Rs. 1.8 per yard, totaling Rs. 9), six yards of *garnit*, a muslin (@ Rs. 2 per yard, totaling Rs. 12), six yards of flowered silk (@ Rs. 1.12 per yard, totaling Rs. 10), 2 penknives (Rs. 4), one powder flask (Rs. 4), one leather shot belt (Rs. 3.8), one box containing matches, and so on for striking fire (Rs. 5), six dozen enameled gilt buttons (Rs. 7.8), and two boxes of detonating powders (Rs. 2), the total of which came to Rs. 57.8.

Note 54: PPA, Book 140, Serial No. 66.

Note 55: PPA, Book 118, Serial No. 24.

Note 56: "Measures to Promote Trade Between Mithenkote and Central Asia," NAI, Foreign P.C., May 16, 1836, Proceeding Nos. 47–48.

Note 57: "Masson's Observations on Kabul Commerce," NAI, Foreign P.C., November 2, 1835, Proceeding No. 56 (which also may be titled "Observations on Trade of Kabul"). The threat of a competing fair in Russian Turkistan was reiterated by Burnes two years later: "The Cabul and Bokhara merchants at the last fair at Negnei Novogorod were all presented to the Emperor Nicholas, which is much talked of here, and who gave them great encouragement and commendation" (NAI, Foreign P.C., January 31, 1838, Proceeding No. 35).

Note 58: "Masson's Observations on Kabul Commerce," NAI, Foreign P.C., November 2, 1835, Proceeding No. 56 (which also may be titled "Observations on Trade of Kabul").

Note 59: Ibid.

Note 60: Ibid.

Note 61: Ibid.

Note 62: Ibid.

Note 63: Ibid.

Note 64: Ibid.

Note 65: Ibid. Lal (1977), p. 46 reiterates the claim: "The blue paper of Russia is found throughout the whole Afghan state."

Note 66: Ibid.

Note 67: See earlier and PPA, Book 118, Serial No. 24: "Agreeably to my invitation the Lohanee merchants have resorted to that mart and began to barter their goods with the merchants of Hindustan" (letter from Wade to Mullah Khair al-Din dated May 11, 1834).

Note 68: "Lohanis Complain About Their Treatment at Dera Ismail Khan," NAI, Foreign P.C., December 12, 1838, Proceeding Nos. 34–38. In 1836, Wade requested Omar Khan Lohani to escort a British officer, G. T. Vigne, through eastern Afghanistan. The results of this experience are conveyed in Vigne.

Note 69: "Wade's Report on the Lohanis," NAI, Foreign Political Proceedings, January 3–17, 1838 (atypically, this document was consulted not as a single separate file but in a larger bound monthly proceedings volume).

Note 70: Dera Ismail Khan was a key financial hub where transactions between Lohanis and their Hindu brokers occurred each fall when the former descended from the crevices of the Hindu Kush through the Gomal Pass to the daman. See "Wade's Report on the Lohanis," NAI, Foreign Political Proceedings, January 3–17, 1838. Referring to the Lohanis, Wade says: "of these meritorious merchants, the honesty of whose character is not less conspicuous than their enterprise I may observe, that in my visit to Dera Ismail Khan in 1833 I had the satisfaction in meeting the principle part of them. They were then congregated there contemplating their annual investment of indigo (likely from Multan for export to Central Asia). I explained to them as well as the Hindu merchants of the place, who act as their brokers, the object which the British Government had in opening the navigation of the Indus."

Note 71: Chelwashtee is a Persianized nisba adjective of the Pashto *tsalwekht* or forty. Elphinstone claimed the institution existed only among the daman tribes, the Sulaiman Khels of Katawaz, and other Ghalzi Pashtuns. He argued the institution was not found where strong khans existed and that it remedied the bad effects of hereditary chiefs. According to Elphinstone, the institution of chelwashtee was the "first step from a patriarchal government to a republic in usual form." See Elphinstone, vol. II, pp. 60–66.

Note 72: Ibid. Sarwar Khan invoked the Pashtun concept and institution of *nanawati*, or asylum/mediation/protection, with the brother of his main rival. It is important underscore that the Durrani government sent Ghalzi contingents to assist Sarwar Khan in recouping his hereditary prerogative.

Note 73: Masson, vol. I, pp. 49–59.

Note 74: Ibid., and MacGregor, p. 309.

Note 75: "Burnes' Letter of Introduction for Lohanis," NAI, January 31, 1828, Proceeding No. 35.

Note 76: See earlier and "Results of Muhin Shah's Commercial Speculation," NAI, Foreign P.C., August 17, 1835, Proceeding Nos. 70–73.

Note 77: Ibid. Muhin Shah paid Rs. 258 for the use of six camels from Benaras to Darraband, and Rs. 84 for the same from Darraband to Kabul.

Note 78: "Moonshi Mohun Lal's Report on the Commerce of Multan," NAI, Foreign P.C., May 9, 1836, Proceeding No. 42. This item is inexactly reproduced (e.g., Donaz for Omar Khan and the table) in Lal, 1846, pp. 239–44. Lal notes that at Darraband the Lohanis, who had congregated at Daud between Ghazni and Katawaz for collective defense, disaggregated into three groups. Those heading to Hindustan were said to go through Dera Ghazi Khan, those going to Multan went through Kohri and Leya, and the portion traveling to Amritsar were routed through Dera Ismail Khan. For adult male Lohanis to leave their women and children with Omar Khan he must have commanded a significant amount of confidence and trust from them. This socially translated into prestige and cultural capital that helped form the basis of Omar's position as a Lohani chief.

Note 79: "Lohanis Appraised About Burnes' Deputation to Shikarpoor," NAI, Foreign S.C., November 14, 1838, Proceeding Nos. 55–67. Burnes's commercial and political mission to Kabul lasted from September 5, 1836, to October 1, 1838. During this period, the Governor General of India targeted Burnes to secure the carriage and provisioning services of the Lohanis for the impending invasion and occupation of Afghanistan and restoration of Shuja in Kabul. See "Carriage Supply Furnished by Lohanis," Governor General's Dispatch to Secret Committee, September 24, 1838, Proceeding No. 23 (contained in a large bound monthly proceedings volume).

Note 80: "Burnes' Letter of Introduction for Lohanis," NAI, January 31, 1828, Proceeding No. 35.

Note 81: Ibid. Wade subsequently validated Burnes's view: "I beg leave to observe that Capt. Burnes has, in my opinion, placed a just value . . . on conciliating the Lohani Chiefs to whom he has given a letter of introduction to insure their presentation to the Right Honourable the Governor General of India, in the wish of these men seeking an interview with his Lordship." See "Wade's Report on the Lohanis," NAI, Foreign Political Proceedings, January 3–17, 1838 (consulted in a large bound monthly proceedings volume).

Note 82: "Complaints by Lohanis of Their Treatment by Maharaja Ranjit Singh's Agents at Dera Ghazee Khan," NAI, Foreign P.C., December 21, 1838, Proceeding Nos. 34–38. It is unclear whether the animals were intended as a personal gift or an "official specimen of local produce."

Note 83: Ibid.

Note 84: The invasion's preparation period went from November 1838 to April 1839, the former date being when the Army of the Indus gathered at Ferozpur and the latter when it entered the Qandahar province (the force left Ferozpur in December 1838 and marched through Sind and Baluchistan). In August 1839, Shuja reentered Kabul, marking the height of the occupation that began to collapse in the early fall of 1841. A large portion of the Army of the Indus was destroyed during an attempted retreat from Kabul in January 1842. During the fall of 1842, a colonial army of retribution returned to avenge the earlier losses by destroying large parts of Kabul and inflicting significant damage to the fruit-producing villages surrounding the capital city, such as Istalif and Charikar. These events represent the end of the first Anglo-Afghan war according to a military timeline.

Note 85: "Lohanis Appraised About Burnes' Deputation to Shikarpoor," NAI, Foreign S.C., November 14, 1838, Proceeding Nos. 55–67. As part of his transfer Burnes was directed to "render all accounts of the Kabul mission" (ibid.). Accordingly, Burnes submitted data or "descriptions and quantities of articles . . . which may serve as guides to the speculator," on the commodities carried by Lohanis from India to the Kabul customs house or chabutara during 1837 and 1838. See "Taxes Levied on Indian Goods Taken By Lohanee Merchants to Cabul," NAI, Foreign P.C., September 26,

1838, Proceeding Nos. 10–11. That year, the Lohanis brought Rs. 3,89,300 of "Iamandane, Coloured chintz, Mlwan Goolvar, Chintz of Jamugur, Jalee, Muslin, Long Cloth, Long Muslin, Half Coloured Chintz, Khasa Manee, Mushrou, Chintz of Farrukhabad, Nainsookh, Raj Mahal, Mootan Longee, Nasurkhanee Chintz, Chintz of Sona Nugur, Mbra Chaf of Bhawalpur, Timour Shahi, Gallou, Mootanee Daboo Chintz, Feringee Narouz, Lakharee Chintz, Mdrus, Hyder Shahee, Hyjuanee Chintz, Flowered Muslin, Jhora, Shalkee, Budulkhanee, Chikun, Momee Chintz, Handkerchiefs, Bhawulpur Alacha, Coarse Cloth, Juglahoo Otter Skin, and Bafta Mooltaneee." These textiles were taxed at the standard Islamic 1 in 40, leaving the state Rs. 9,732. Indigo was taxed separately from textiles in the Kabul chabutara. Ibid. See Chapter 3 for more on Burnes's revisions of the Kabul customs house during the occupation.

Note 86: "Lohanis Appraised About Burnes' Deputation to Shikarpoor," NAI, Foreign S.C., November 14, 1838, Proceeding Nos. 55–67. During the occupation, Burnes was placed in a subordinate role to Macnaughten, who had been removed from his influential position as Secretary to the Governor General of India in favor of a uniquely sensitive role as Envoy and Minister to the colonially restored Shuja. Burnes's salary became Rs. 1,800 per month with an additional Rs. 200 when absent from Shuja's court.

Note 87: "Lohanis Appraised About Burnes' Deputation to Shikarpoor," NAI, Foreign S.C., November 14, 1838, Proceeding Nos. 55–67.

Note 88: "Shikarpore Political Agent's Advance to Lohani Chiefs," NAI, Foreign S.C., July 31, 1839, Proceeding Nos. 31–32. The sum of Rs. 1,06,063.15.8 broke down as follows (near-verbatim descriptions of the amounts are attached): Rs. 1,953 as compensation for camels and property stolen at Shikarpur and Khairpur; Rs. 96 for hire of treasure camels from Sukkur; Rs. 13,700 in advance to camel man at Shikarpur; Rs. 314.15.8 in exchange on Shikarpur (rupees acquired at 2 per cent commission); Rs. 90,000 as an advance to *jemadars* or camel men, totaling Rs. 1,06,063.15.8 (a sum not including Rs. 285.7.9, an amount advanced on account of Mr. Macnaughten for conveyance of articles with exchange on Shikarpur included).

Note 89: Ibid. 1,03,700 is 97.77 percent of 1,06,063.

Note 90: "Shikarpore Political Agent's Advance to Lohani Chiefs," NAI, Foreign S.C., July 31, 1839, Proceeding Nos. 31–32. The words *mullah* and *Khorasan* used in this receipt deserve notice. Concerning the former, this is an isolated if not the only instance in documents at my disposal where that title was attached to Sarwar Khan Lohani's name. Use of the word *Khorasan* here indicates that the word and concept of Afghanistan had then not fully adhered in colonial and local discourses.

Note 91: Ibid. In addition to the aforementioned cash advance, Eastwick transmitted coercive resources to Sarwar Khan. These included a matchlock "forced upon" the former by the Sind Amir Mir Rustam Khan, fifty remount horses "with permission to use them if need be, 100 muskets from the stores of Bukkur (through Colonel Gordon), and 33 matchlocks costing Rs. 8 each."

Note 92: "Masson's Observations on Kabul Commerce," NAI, Foreign P.C., November 2, 1835, Proceeding No. 56 (also titled "Observations on trade of Kabul"). Speaking of their monopoly of the Multan-Kabul trade, Masson notes "no other men could travel even in kafilas from Kabul to Dariband, the Lohanis pass with arms, and the camels (the beasts of burden they employ) are their own property, no other traders can afford to bring or carry merchandize at so cheap a rate, and they have therefore no competitors in the markets they frequent."

Note 93: "Gordon's Observations on Ghiljies," NAI, Foreign S.C., October 2, 1839, Proceeding Nos. 81–82. According to the Lohani trader Lal Khan, fifteen thousand armed men were desirable when Lohanis passed through the Gomal Pass and the Waziri tribes inhabiting its vicinity. Lal Khan said that the Sheranis, who lived further north in the area of the Tawa Pass, were friendlier to the Lohanis. Because only four thousand armed retainers would be required, Lal Khan suggested the

Tawa Pass be used for the Lohani transport of British mail and supplies to Kabul and Qandahar from Dera Ismail Khan. Noting the heightened security of property held by Sayyids and Sufis in Sind and Baluchistan, Gordon proposed using such holy men as "shields for kafilas" passing through the Gomal and Waziri territory. He suggested placing "Bahawudeen of Mooltan, the peer most revered in Sind, Baluchistan and the Punjab (when moving) military stores through Vizeeree country." Furthermore, based on information gathered in Multan, the British were prepared to pay the Waziris Rs. 20,000 to secure the route between Dera Ismail Khan and Ghazni, which passed through their territory.

Note 94: "Lohanis Refuse to Go Beyond Qandahar," NAI, Foreign S.C., October 2, 1839, Proceeding Nos. 59 and 62. This statement obviates the fact that not all Lohanis left their families with Omar Khan in Darraband (see earlier) when proceeding to India during the fall trading season. This source also indicates that when Shuja was encamped in Ghalzi country local chiefs "behaved in a most unbecoming manner to (Shuja), making exorbitant demands of him. (Shuja) has maintained utmost temper and forbearance in the face of these provocations."

Note 95: "Gordon's Observations on Ghiljies," NAI, Foreign S.C., October 2, 1839, Proceeding Nos. 81–82.

Note 96: Ibid. It is unclear when and under what circumstances Sarwar Khan traversed the Qandahar-Kabul route. Gordon noted that in local markets it was assumed the British had unlimited funds and that prices would be driven up if merchants knew the commodities they sold, apparently to the Lohanis, were going to *farengis* or the British (farengi applies to European Christians generally). It is worth noting that rum was imported in high volume to Afghanistan during the occupation, and that in June 1839 Lohanis were identified as the only suitable carriers of such alcoholic spirits from Dera Ismail Khan to Ghazni ("Wade's Proposal to Employ Lohanees in Convoys," NAI, Foreign S.C., September 11, 1839, Proceeding Nos. 54 and 56). Wade knew of "no way whatever of conveying rum from D.I. Khan to Ghazni excepting through the agency of the Lohani merchants, unless it's escorted by a large body of troops who could force their way through the passes. Even the Lohanis are frequently obliged to effect their passage by force."

Note 97: Ranjit Singh and the British consistently maintained cordial relations. For Sikh support of the Mithenkote scheme, see "Proclamation of Sikh Government on Trade," NAI, Foreign S.C., January 1, 1840, Proceeding Nos. 128–31.

Note 98: "Detention of Lohani Camels," NAI, Foreign S.C., August 17, 1840, Proceeding Nos. 22–25.

Note 99: Ibid.

Note 100: Ibid.

Note 101: Ibid.

Note 102: See Hough, pp. 123–30, for scattered attention to Sarwar Khan. Refer to *ibid.*, pp. 126–7, for the quoted passage. Hough insinuates, perhaps correctly, that Sarwar Khan could not fully control his armed caravan retainers.

Note 103: *Ibid.*, p. 126.

Note 104: *Ibid.*

Note 105: *Ibid.*, p. 128. The Commissariat's circular order implies the invasion force was also a roving camel market: "Officers reminded the camels brought to Hd. Qrs. by Sarwar Khan, and other Lohanee merchants, are still in Government employ; and they are not to purchase any of them."

Note 106: "Petition from Mushka Khan son of Sarwar Khan Lohani," NWFPA, Peshawar Commissioner's Office Records, 1893–1894, Bundle No. 73, Serial No. 2049.

Note 107: *Ibid.*

Note 108: Ibid. Mushka Khan states that Sher Ali treated him and his father well, but that after Sarwar Khan's death he fell out of favor with ruler. Mushka claims Sher Ali knew about this pool of resources, if nothing else "because everyone in Afghanistan knew (Sarwar Khan) had lent Macnaughten Rs. 1,00,000."

Note 109: Ibid.

Note 110: Abd al-Rahman ruled from 1880 to 1901.

Note 111: Ibid. The regional rebellion referenced is that of Muhammad Ishaq Khan in Turkistan from 1888 to 1890, for which see Faiz Muhammad, vol. III, pp. 575–625, with digressions.

Note 112: Ibid. Mushka Khan traveled to Qetta via Bukhara, northern Iran, the Gulf, and Karachi, thus avoiding territory claimed by Abd al-Rahman. Browne's jurisdiction may have include Karachi which is where Mushka Khan went to speak with the *madar-i wali-ahd*, or the widow of Sher Ali and mother-in-law of Sardar Muhammad Hashim Khan, at one time the heir apparent to the Durrani throne, who was said to have information about the original orders.

Note 113: Ibid. The file is incomplete, so the exact outcome of this case is unclear. The colonial bureaucracy never directly challenged the claim that Macnaughten issued the said bills to Sarwar Khan, nor could they prove they had been cashed. However, the British mustered point-by-point rebuttals of many of Mushka Khan's subsidiary claims. The colonial bureaucracy dealt with hundreds if not thousands of petitions from various Afghans for payment for past services rendered to the British during the two Anglo-Afghan wars. Mushka Khan refers to "Lord Roberts, Sir Lepel Griffin, the late Sir Thomas Baker, and other British officers" who could vouch for his service during the second Anglo-Afghan war. Mushka also claims to have had a receipt from a British lady prisoner held in Laghman during the disastrous retreat of 1842 indicating Sarwar Khan had lent her Rs. 25.