

**Chapter 4****Capital Concentrations and Coordinations: Peshawar Subsidies and Kabul Workshops****The British Subsidization of Durrani Rulers**

During the eighteenth century the "eastern *wilayats*" or Indian provinces of the Durrani empire provided the bulk of the revenue received by Ahmad Shah (ruled 1747–73), Timur Shah (ruled 1773–93), and Zaman Shah (ruled 1793–9).<sup>1</sup> The Indian provinces including but not limited to the Punjab, Sirhind, Kashmir, Multan, Dera Ismail Khan, Dera Ghazi Khan, and Shikarpur, formed the core of the revenue-base of the early Durrani empire. The Indian provinces contributed approximately 40 lakhs of rupees annually to the Durrani polity during the late eighteenth century, whereas the "western *wilayats*" of Kabul, Peshawar, Jalalabad, Bangasht, Ghazni, Kalat-i Ghilzai, Charikar, Panjsher, Qandahar, Farah, Herat, Bamian, and the Hazarajat provided only about 17 lakhs of rupees to the early Durrani dynasts.<sup>2</sup> By the turn of the nineteenth century, Durrani control over the Indian provinces was waning, and in 1809 when Elphinstone arrived to establish British contact with the Durrani, the Indian provinces had been permanently detached from the receding Kabul-based polity. 1

Shah Shuja (ruled 1803–1809 and 1839–1842) received Elphinstone, but the host's tenuous hold over the Durrani throne collapsed toward the end of his European guest's stay with him. Shuja's first reign ended rather ignobly with him having to accompany Elphinstone and the British entourage out of Peshawar, after which he journeyed to Kashmir and Lahore before petitioning the colonial government for permission to reside in British India.<sup>3</sup> In 1816 colonial authorities reluctantly agreed to Shuja's request and allowed him to reside in Ludiana. The British granted Shuja an annual stipend of Rs. 50,000, and his wife who was known as the Wuffa Begum was allowed Rs. 18,000 annually.<sup>4</sup> Shuja and his wife received British stipends throughout the twenty three years they remained in Ludiana, and while residing there both parties continually petitioned colonial authorities for ever-greater volumes of pecuniary assistance and additional forms of material aid, such as improvements to their respective residences.<sup>5</sup> 2

Shuja's dependence on colonial capital while he resided in Ludiana was maintained and intensified during the first Anglo-Afghan war. The British invasion of Afghanistan was commercially motivated and a subsidiary element in the colonial Indus navigation project. The British did not restore Shuja to the Durrani throne in Kabul because of his political merits. Rather, Shuja's pliability and attachment to colonial capital made him an attractive surrogate authority and public figurehead for the occupying Army of the Indus. It is important to distinguish between the stipends Shuja received from the British in Ludiana and the 3

subsidies he received while serving the British in Kabul. The stipend resembles a common form of domestic redistribution of capital, and in this regard the British were doing something the Durrani state also practiced.<sup>6</sup> The state to state dimension of the subsidies distinguish them from domestic stipends, but the British used each form of financial support to monitor and influence the political and economic activity of their client Shuja.

As noted, while in Ludiana and receiving a fixed stipend, Shuja continually petitioned the British for additional funds. The same insatiable clamoring to the British for ever more pecuniary assistance also characterizes Shuja's second term as the Durrani sovereign in Kabul. On being stationed in British-occupied Kabul in the fall of 1839, Shuja was given full control of the Durrani state's resource base, and during the occupation the British deployed a number of financial statistics in an attempt to demonstrate the revenue gains resulting from their "superior protection of merchants and cultivators."<sup>7</sup> Despite his renewed access to and control of the allegedly increasing Durrani state revenue, Shuja continued to appeal to the British for further infusions of cash. In May 1841 he asked for an additional Rs. 50,000 per month, which alienated his patrons to such an extent that they assumed full revenue control of the Durrani polity.<sup>8</sup> By August Shuja was borrowing money from local bankers in Kabul to support his family and retainers.<sup>9</sup> The first colonial occupation of Afghanistan became a legendary military disaster for the British, and Shuja expired shortly after the demise of the Army of the Indus. 4

The extensive Durrani empire of the eighteenth century had already been truncated when the British began to reconnoiter the Indus and its northwestern flank in the 1830s. The results first Anglo-Afghan war further shrank, isolated, and restricted the flow of capital to, through, and within the fledgling state. Similar to Shuja during his hiatus from the Durrani throne, Dost Muhammad (ruled 1826–1839 and 1842–1863) sought and received a British pension during the interim period between his tenures of rule in Kabul. The British did not provide Dost Muhammad a cash subsidy immediately on his second accession, but he did successfully petition colonial officials to fund his military defense of Herat in 1856. The British subsidized Dost Muhammad to buttress his claimed inability to repel a Qajar military threat on Herat. Arguing in favor of this subsidization of the Durrani state, the Governor General of India then reasoned: 5

I believe that one of the best securities for success and harmony in our present dealings with the Afghans, and for the avoidance of embarrassments hereafter, consists in our having as few points of contact with them as possible.<sup>10</sup>

In 1856 the British conceived the Durrani subsidies to be a short-term tactic in a longer-term anti-Russian strategy in Afghanistan, Iran, and Central Asia. By convincing the British that Herat was in jeopardy of being taken by the Persians who were at least tacitly supported by Russia, Dost Muhammad was granted an annual cash subsidy of not less than Rs. 6

10,00,000.<sup>11</sup> For not agitating against the British during the Indian Mutiny of 1857, Dost Muhammad's subsidy was increased and regularized into monthly allotments of Rs. 1,00,000, but the funds were still conditional on his defense of Herat from Russo-Persian threats.<sup>12</sup> Dost Muhammad died in 1863 while defending Herat from another Iranian advance on the city.

The British subsidization of the Durrani state continued after the death of Dost Muhammad. Sher Ali (ruled 1863–1866 and 1868–1879) occupied Kabul immediately after Dost Muhammad died, but he had to contend with a number of other claimants and competitors to his authority there and in other cities, and in 1866 he was driven out of Kabul. From 1866 to 1868 Kabul was occupied by Muhammad Afzal (ruled 1866–1867) and then Muhammad Azam (1867–1868), but Sher Ali retook the city and the Durrani throne in 1868 and retained his position there until he died in 1879. From 1863 to 1869 the British provided Sher Ali with a number of subsidy payments totaling Rs. 12,00,000.<sup>13</sup> Until this point the British subsidies had been dispensed to shore up the Durrani state against internal dissent and external threats that were invariably deemed to be inspired by Russia. In the 1870s Sher Ali petitioned the British for additional subsidy funding. His intent was to erect forts and garrison them with troops in a number of areas he wished to subjugate on the eastern and northern flanks of his realm, namely, Chitral, Bajour, Wakhan, Shignan, Maimana, and in the Waziri Pashtun tribal territory in the vicinity of Bannu and Dera Ismail Khan. British policy makers balked at this request because Sher Ali did not intend to use the subsidy to repel external aggression on his territory that the British also perceived as threatening their position in India. Colonial officials expressed the viewpoint that Sher Ali was asking for money to pursue an agenda that would not provide them any advantage.<sup>14</sup> 7

Unlike his Durrani dynastic predecessors, Abd al-Rahman (ruled 1880–1901) received regular and large cash subsidies from the British throughout his reign. The ongoing and increasing colonial subsidization of Abd al-Rahman draw attention to an important area of routinization in Anglo-Durrani relations. Compared to the experimental period of Anglo-Durrani relations covering the period between Elphinstone's mission to Shuja in 1809 and the end of the first war in 1842, and the interim period of restricted contact between the two states from then until second war (1878–80), Anglo-Durrani relations appear quite routinized around the subsidy during Abd al-Rahman's reign. After the second war the issue in question for colonial policy makers became not whether to subsidize the Durrani state, but rather to what extent. 8

In the spring and summer of 1880 the second colonial occupation of Afghanistan was devolving in ways similar to the unraveling of the first occupation forty years earlier. The appointment of Abd al-Rahman was made to facilitate the evacuation of colonial forces from Kabul and Qandahar and thus avert a siege, massacre, and the taking of British hostages as experienced by the Army of the Indus and its followers. Abd al-Rahman's accession to the 9

Durrani throne in Kabul required the political collusion and material support of the British.<sup>15</sup> During negotiations about his prospective role and service to the British as the Durrani sovereign in Kabul, Abd al-Rahman repeatedly clamored for guns, money, and a formal treaty from the British.<sup>16</sup> In accepting the colonial appointment to the Durrani throne in Kabul, Abd al-Rahman agreed to two points contained in the 1879 Gandamak Treaty between the British and Sher Ali's son Muhammad Yaqub (ruled 1879). The first element was that the Durrani state's foreign relations be conducted through British India. The second item was that a British agent be given access to Abd al-Rahman's public court.<sup>17</sup> The subsidies were granted in return for these two key points of "friendship" between Abd al-Rahman and the British.

<b>Table 4.1: British Cash Subsidies Granted to Abd al-Rahman from His Appointment to the Durrani Throne in July 1880 to December 1881<sup>18</sup></b>
I. Rs. 10,00,000. Paid through Chief Political Officer, Kabul, on 20 July 1880.
II. Rs. 9,65,000. Left in Kabul for Abd al-Rahman from Yaqub Khan's treasury, fall 1880.
III. Rs. 5,00,000. Paid through Peshawar Commissioner, on or about 10 January 1881.
IV. Rs. 5,00,000. Paid through Qandahar Resident, on or about 16 April 1881.
V. Rs. 5,00,000. Paid through Peshawar Commissioner, on or about 13 May 1881.
VI. Rs. 3,00,000. Paid through Colonel St. John, Qandahar, at the end of September or beginning of October 1881.
VII. Rs. 2,00,000. Deposited at Quetta (but not paid as of) December 1881.

Table 4.1 indicates that in the eighteen months after being recognized as the Amir of Kabul in July 1880, Abd al-Rahman received Rs. 39,65,000 in cash subsidies from the British, which averages out to Rs. 2,20,277 per month. During their second occupation the British estimated the annual revenue of Afghanistan to be Rs. 73,30,677.<sup>19</sup> With the monthly revenue of the Durrani state estimated at Rs. 6,10,890, the British monthly provisioning of Rs. 2,20,277 to Abd al-Rahman during the first eighteen months of his reign was roughly 33 percent above the estimated internally generated revenue of the polity.

In 1882 British policy makers resolved to transform their extensive but haphazard subsidization of Abd al-Rahman into regularized and predictable dispersals. In July Abd al-Rahman began to receive a standardized subsidy of 12 lakhs per year to be disbursed in equal monthly payments of Rs. 1,00,000. Between 1882 and 1893, or about one-half of Abd al-

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Rahman's reign, he was privy to a cash subsidy of 1 lakh of British Indian rupees per month. This was more than 16 percent above the estimated monthly revenue of the Durrani state immediately before Abd al-Rahman's colonial appointment in Kabul.

Two boundary agreements concluded between Abd al-Rahman and British led to even greater dispensations of subsidy funds. The Durand agreement of 1893 was an attempt to establish a permanent border between Afghanistan and British India. Although the Durand boundary remained imprecise and contested in a number of important respects, it resulted in Abd al-Rahman's subsidy being augmented by 50 percent or six lakhs per year, bringing the annual total to eighteen lakhs. The additional six lakhs of rupees resulting from the Durand agreement were paid in lump sum once per year on 12 November. In 1895 as compensation for consenting to the British desire that he assume administrative responsibility for the Wakhan corridor, a region separating the Russian and British empires in Central Asia, Abd al-Rahman was granted an additional Rs. 50,000 per year to be paid on March first. **12**

The seven irregular subsidy dispersals made during the first eighteen months of Abd al-Rahman's reign were prompted by urgent and near-emergency pleas to his colonial patrons for cash. However, accusations of impropriety, reprisals, and general confusion, as illustrated later, prevailed during the reception and handling of these early subsidy dispersals. Such chaotic conditions impeded Abd al-Rahman's ability to receive let alone use the subsidy money in a timely fashion, and as such destabilize the dire character of his "needs" in the first instance. **13**

The changing patterns of reception and redistribution of the subsidy provide useful information about Abd al-Rahman's economic restructuring of the Durrani state. At the beginning of his reign there were significant areas of continuity with earlier Kabul-centered Durrani fiscal regimes, but Abd al-Rahman soon and thoroughly transformed the personnel, institutions, and practices comprising the Durrani state's financial and commercial bureaucracy. Early in his reign Abd al-Rahman relied on Shikarpuri bankers to handle the subsidy, but he quickly moved to displace that group in favor of commercial agents he personally appointed and controlled. **14**

Subsidy documents generated less than a year into Abd al-Rahman's reign indicate the Durrani state's inherited dependence on the financial services provided by a resident corps of Shikarpuri and other Indian bankers and merchants and their agents in Kabul. Collection of Abd al-Rahman's fifth intermittent subsidy dispersal (listed in 2.1) resulted in a group of "Peshawar bankers" assuming responsibility for more than two of the five lakhs of rupees made available in May 1881.<sup>20</sup> In this instance, Abd al-Rahman deputed two people to Peshawar to collect the Rs. 5,00,000 of subsidy funds, but he subsequently replaced that pair with a single person, and a quarrel developed between the factions.<sup>21</sup> The new agent and a fourth individual then tried unsuccessfully to deposit over Rs. 50,000 with the two original **15**

appointees.<sup>22</sup> Nearly three months after the five lakhs became available to Abd al-Rahman, his Envoy with the Government of India, General Amir Ahmad Khan, ordered all parties to deposit a total of Rs. 2,07,000 with a collection of unnamed Peshawar bankers.<sup>23</sup> Their roles in the resolution of such extra-territorial conflict among Durrani state officials and in the routing of subsidy money to Kabul indicate the Peshawar bankers' knowledge of and familiarity with the fiscal conduct of Abd al-Rahman and his budgetary officers.

The Peshawar bankers' intimacy with Abd al-Rahman's financial practices arose from the long-standing implication of their capital in the Durrani state's resource base. Early in his reign Abd al-Rahman regularly borrowed or extorted money from the Shikarpuris in Kabul, and on certain occasions he repaid those individuals or their representatives from the subsidy.<sup>24</sup> For example, sixteen months after the regularization of the subsidy into monthly installments, Abd al-Rahman wrote the Government of India to state:

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As regards the allowance for November 1883, I find it desirable to realize it from the Peshawar Treasury through certain bankers, and by bills of exchange . . . I have just received Rs. 42,229.4 of the English currency from the following sixteen Hindu Bankers at Kabul.<sup>25</sup>

Abd al-Rahman mentions a second group of Shikarpuris in another letter to his colonial sponsors about the redistribution of this single month's subsidy: "I now beg to ask you to kindly pay Rs. 30,450.4 to twenty five merchants of Shikarpur, of whom twenty four are Hindus and one a Muhammadan."<sup>26</sup> The British-appointed Durrani ruler in Kabul requested a further redistribution of his November 1883 subsidy, making a total of three separate communications to ensure that forty-three people received payments from this single subsidy allotment. The final breakdown of this monthly lakh of subsidy was Rs. 42,229.4 to one group of Shikarpuris, Rs. 30,450.4 to a second collection of the same, Rs. 24,520.8 to Haji Asad Khan, Abd al-Rahman's commercial agent in Bombay, and Rs. 2,800 to a merchant named Haji Saleh.

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**Table 4.2: Shikarpuri Hindu Bankers/Merchants (of Kabul) Paid (in Peshawar) from Abd al-Rahman's November 1883 Subsidy**

Name	Amount (Rupees.Annas.Paisa)
1. Lekhu	1,909.4.0
2. Chur	2,212.8.0
3. Dheru	1,331.0.0
4. Asa	8,711.2.0
5. Lalu	6,175.0.0

6. Jassu	3,972.8.0
7. Hira, son of Manku	768.12.0
8. Birij	2,350.0.0
9. Taliya	2,673.8.0
10. Mishar Ganran	3,075.0.0
11. Dilaram	1,468.4.0
12. Hira, son of Taku	997.8.0
13. Ramu	3,768.12.0
14. Kishan	1,008.8.0
15. Santu	256.4.0
16. Mangu	1,451.6.0
17. Kundun	2,954.15.9
18. Manwi (Nanoo)	510.2.6
19. Jangal	612.3.0
20. Alwi (Hotoo)	469.2.9
21. Sharbat	111.9.0
22. Asa	238.0.0
23. Notan	1,219.10.0
24. Nainban, (son of Jaltu [Dilta])	496.3.6
25. Mango	1,456.7.6
26. Brijdas (Moorj)	631.14.9
27. Shewal	10,004.2.0
28. Tharu, (son of Khotu [Paman])	401.10.0
29. Mishar Amar Singh	358.2.6

30. Ram Kishen	598.4.0
31. Naru	4,101.3.0
32. Mula, son of Gulab	1,515.6.0
33. Muhammad Sharif	1,397.0.6
34. Naina, son of Maraj	1,344.2.9
35. Asu, son of Laila	595.0.0
36. Lukrooma (Pokar)	867.6.0
37. Daulat	1,230.0.6
38. Moola, son of Rukko	490.0.0
39. Mishar Kalua (Jagua)	2,381.4.6
40. Mishar Thakur, (son of Ram Das)	163.10.0
41. Harji, Goldsmith	298.9.0

### **Unequal Reciprocity: Durrani State Commercial Agents in Peshawar and English Firms in Kabul**

It was complicated and time-consuming for British officials to continually redistribute such small portions of Durrani subsidy funds to so many different Shikarpuri and other bankers and merchants. Colonial authorities therefore proposed a number of alternatives to remedy Abd al-Rahman's "inconvenient and dangerous" habit of handling his cash grants in that manner. At least five suggestions were proffered to help alleviate some of the confusion and imprecision characterizing these unwieldy Durrani subsidy redistributions. The British proposed that Abd al-Rahman write in words the payment amounts, provide accurate and full descriptions of all payees (not just a father's name, if anything), send triplicate copies of all requests, appoint one agent in Peshawar to receive the funds, and/or send separate checks directly to the individuals without the mediation of the Indian Government.<sup>27</sup> Although Abd al-Rahman may have heeded some of these suggestions, the effect desired by colonial officials was achieved largely through a series of domestic economic initiatives undertaken by the Durrani ruler independent of the British proposals about streamlining the subsidy redistributions.

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Abd al-Rahman's establishment of trading monopolies and his confiscation of local merchant capital devastated the community of Shikarpuri Hindu bankers residing in Kabul at the outset of his reign.<sup>28</sup> By 1886 it was reported that only eight British Indian subjects active in the trade between India and Central Asia remained in the city.<sup>29</sup> Abd al-Rahman's initial dependence on Shikarpuri and other interregional bankers and traders based in India was soon transformed into competition with and then decimation of them. The practice of borrowing multiple small sums of money, on the order of a few hundreds or thousands of rupees, from the Shikarpuri bankers in Kabul that were repaid from single month subsidy dispersals began to fade away in the mid- to late 1880s. By 1890 a clear shift had occurred as the preponderance of redistributions became much larger, on the order of multiple lakhs of rupees. Furthermore, the redistributions became far more intermittent, often occurring after multiple months of subsidy had accrued, and they went not to private bankers but rather to a handful of expatriate Durrani state officials Abd al-Rahman stationed in Peshawar and other Indian cities.

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Transformations in the structure of subsidy redistributions occurred processually, not abruptly, and the transition period can be estimated as covering the years from 1884 to 1889. During this period Abd al-Rahman's ongoing and rapacious domestic confiscations of capital appear to have allowed for the subsidy installments to accumulate over months. After multiple months of subsidy accrual, Abd al-Rahman would write his patrons with requests detailing which portion of which month would go to whom, where, when, and how. Communication of these instructions among Durrani authorities, between them and British officials, and within the many British bureaucracies was wrought with the potential for misunderstanding. The gradual change in subsidy procedures was demonstrated between April 1888 and March 1889 when Abd al-Rahman was privy to twelve lakhs of British Indian rupees. During this twelve-month period Abd al-Rahman requested fourteen separate subsidy dispersals to be made in four different cities, Peshawar, Bombay, Calcutta, and Simla.<sup>30</sup> Abd al-Rahman directed Rs. 5,70,000 to his almond agent or *badami* in Peshawar, Rs. 5,60,000 to his mercantile agent in Bombay, and Rs. 70,000 to his Envoy with the Government of India.<sup>31</sup>

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At this time there were still many lines of communication within and between the Durrani and British Governments about the subsidy. In general, to convey his wishes about subsidy funds to the British Abd al-Rahman wrote to his primary agent, his Envoy with the Government of India, who would transmit the requests to the Foreign Department of the Government of India. The Foreign Department would in turn usually correspond with the Comptroller General of India, and the Punjab and other provincial administrations, particularly those in Bombay and Sind. Colonial bureaucrats at the central and provincial levels of British Indian government ultimately had to communicate about the subsidy with the Commissioner and Superintendent of the Peshawar Division through the Punjab Government. This was so

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because the subsidy money and goods purchased with those resources (see later) were accounted for in and transmitted through Peshawar, which was then a part of the Punjab Province. In some instances, but far less frequently, Abd al-Rahman corresponded directly with the Viceroy and Governor General of India and/or the Foreign Secretary about the subsidy. It was standard practice for Abd al-Rahman to reiterate his wishes about subsidy redistributions, often using different words and calculations than deployed in his correspondence with his Envoy and/or British officials, to his almond agent and/or postmaster in Peshawar. The badami and/or postmaster would then transmit those instructions to Peshawar Treasury officials through the office of the Peshawar Commissioner.<sup>32</sup>

The communicative web generated by the subsidy extended deep within and between the Durrani and British Indian states, and was wrought with the potential for confusion, uncertainty, and misinterpretation. For example, between April 1888 and March 1889, archival records indicate Durrani requests were not honored by the colonial government as a result of a lack of signatures and proper seals, and an even more problematic incongruence between Durrani and British calculations as to how much subsidy remained collectable after certain payments.<sup>33</sup> Solving such problems was bureaucratically time-consuming and required both sides to retrace communication paths in all directions. Durrani and British officials then had to meticulously review and compare documents detailing multiple arrangements in various locations at all levels and stages of the process. Subsidy correspondence between Abd al-Rahman and his Envoy to the Government of India regarding the payment of a Durrani state-contracted European engineer contains superfluous information and contingency details that represent one small set among many possible loose ends in the long tangles of a much larger body of subsidy correspondence:

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Be it known to you that Mr. Pyne, an officer of the God-granted Government, has got leave from us for the winter season, and has been entrusted to do certain things in connection with State matters. After passing the winter he will come and join his appointment at the capital. We therefore write to you that he has received his pay for January 1891; that we empower you to get Rs. 4,000 (Rupees four thousand), out of my due for the second half of October 1890, from the Government Treasury, and make the money over to Mr. Pyne in lieu of his payment for two months, viz., from 1st February 1891 corresponding to 21st Jamadi us-Sani 1308 H., to the last day of the month of March 1891, corresponding with 20th Rajab 1308. If he be engaged in State business after the expiry of two months, you will be authorized to give Mr. Pyne his monthly salary, otherwise he will start for the capital. For the present make over this Rs. 4,000 to the said Mr. Pyne in lieu of his pay for two months. Consider this correct and approved by us.<sup>34</sup>

This quote is contained in a review of subsidy redistributions from fourteen lakhs that accrued between September 1889 and October 1890. The vast preponderance of this amount, Rs. 12,00,000 covering the period from September 1888 to September 1889, was redistributed in eight installments between May and September 1890 to Abd al-Rahman's badami or almond agent in Peshawar. The final in a series of disbursements to the badami, then Abd al-Khaliq Khan, occurred on September 22 and was for five lakhs of rupees.<sup>35</sup> **23**

To obtain the subsidy cash from the Peshawar provincial treasury, the badami was required to match the details of Abd al-Rahman's written order to him with what British officials there understood of the transaction based on what they knew of the central Government of India's communication with the Durrani Envoy. The coinage likely came in boxes containing twelve bags, each of which held Rs. 2,000.<sup>36</sup> To transmit the twenty or twenty-one boxes of money to the mashin khana and the new minting machines there, the badami communicated with the qafilabashi or Durrani caravan official in charge of transporting state goods from Peshawar to Kabul through the Khaibar Pass.<sup>37</sup> The transmission of such a large amount of subsidy coinage to Kabul was an infrequent occurrence because Abd al-Rahman's standard practice was to use hundis or bills of exchange to redistribute subsidy funds to Durrani state commercial agents and other recipients in India. The badami was the most important facilitator of subsidy-related communication between Abd al-Rahman and his expatriate commercial agents. The badami held primary responsibility over the subsidy account. His duties included the relatively infrequent arrangement for subsidy cash transmissions to Kabul, and, more commonly, the redistribution of those funds via hundis to Durrani state commercial agents based throughout India. **24**

In addition to the badami, the Durrani postmaster stationed in Peshawar was also an important handler of the subsidy.<sup>38</sup> Less than one year after he was appointed by the British, in the spring of 1881 Abd al-Rahman deputed Mirza Baiza Khan to serve as the Durrani state postmaster in Peshawar. The British not only accepted the unique presence of this Durrani state institution in their territory, they supported the foreign post office by providing office space for it. After appointing Abd al-Rahman, the only official British presence in Kabul was an Agent whose communication with Durrani officials and access to other local sources of information such as Indian merchants was heavily controlled and restricted.<sup>39</sup> The British therefore believed that a Durrani postmaster in India would facilitate their communication with Abd al-Rahman, increase their access to data about conditions in Kabul and greater Afghanistan, and heighten their ability to disseminate information to their contacts inside the country.<sup>40</sup> **25**

Like the subsidy itself, the postmaster was a key institutional link in the communication scheme integrating, however loosely, these two disproportionate state powers. Partly as a result of his connection to the subsidy, the postmaster communicated on behalf of Abd al- **26**

Rahman with a plethora of British and Durrani officials, and Indian and Afghan traders in Peshawar and throughout India.<sup>41</sup> The badami and the postmaster provided intelligence to and disseminated a wide variety of information for Abd al-Rahman, not only in Peshawar but also by extension from there throughout India. There was a good deal of overlap between the subsidy-related duties of the Durrani postmaster and badami, and this arrangement was Abd al-Rahman's method of obtaining mutual oversight of the two individuals he deputed to manage the extensive pool of subsidy resources the British made available to him in Peshawar. In practice, however, joint oversight of the subsidy created mutual intrigue and inefficiency between these two Durrani officials in Peshawar.

For reasons related but not limited to intelligence gathering, promotion, or punishment, Abd al-Rahman commonly circulated his official appointees between posts domestically and in India. The ongoing circulation of Durrani state personnel had the effect of impeding subsidy collection and redistribution. One such occasion appears to have been on June 19, 1898, when the recently appointed Durrani postmaster, Mirza Khalifa Ji Khan, went to the Peshawar Treasury to collect Rs. 5,58,954 in cash from the subsidy account.<sup>42</sup> In this instance, a quarrel broke out between the Durrani postmaster and his entourage, and British officials and their staffs, regarding the exact form of the coinage's packing in bags and boxes. Apparently to support his claim of entitlement to a particular configuration of bags and boxes, Khalifa Ji Khan made a series of unusual and extraordinary statements that Peshawar Treasury officials quickly forwarded to their superiors in Lahore and Calcutta. Shirking any ability to remedy the local level confusion about subsidy packaging in Peshawar, the Foreign Secretary of the Government of India actually compounded the quandary by punting the question back to its askers: "(p)lease instruct the Treasury officials to act in accordance with the usual practice, *whatever that has been*" (emphasis added).<sup>43</sup>

It is striking that after nearly two decades of Abd al-Rahman receiving his first subsidy payment, and more than fifteen years of being granted monthly allotments, Durrani and British officials were still quibbling about such details. However, communication between Durrani and British officials about this somewhat petty point is interesting for a number of reasons, particularly because it reveals the unequal weighting of the subsidy in each government's ordering of priorities. British officials received this and many other Durrani communications about the subsidy with an air of nonchalance and a tone of distance and disinterest that reveals an inverse proportionality of the importance of the subsidy to each government. For Abd al-Rahman, the subsidy was crucially important to the financial structure of the state, and it therefore consumed a large amount of his and other Durrani officials' time and attention. For the British the subsidy was far less important and consequential, and colonial authorities viewed matters related to the subsidy as increasingly pestering and trivial as Abd al-Rahman's reign wore on.

Among the Durrani officials in Peshawar and greater India, knowledge of Abd al-Rahman's unstable temperament and proclivity for violent reprimands evoked a tangible and well-founded fear of harsh reprisals for any misconduct or failure to execute orders, particularly insofar as the cherished subsidy was concerned. Their acute awareness of quite possibly life-threatening punitive sanctions from Abd al-Rahman for any real or perceived malfeasance is reflected in the anxious and agitated tone of the Durrani appointees' communication about the subsidy. The alarm and desperation often expressed by Durrani officials in India about the subsidy and matters related to it become more palpable when set against the colonial bureaucratic tone of voice, and might account for some of the exaggerated and confusing claims made by these expatriate state functionaries. For example, as leverage to help him rectify the problem he encountered at the Peshawar Treasury in June 1898 that was mentioned earlier, Mirza Khalifa Ji Khan made an unfounded assertion concerning the displacement of a higher ranking, indeed the highest ranking, Durrani state official in India. The Peshawar-based Durrani postmaster announced he had "received orders from the Amir that His Highness's subsidy will be remitted through the Postmaster and not through the Amir's Envoy with the Government of India."<sup>44</sup> This bewildering declaration contravened past practice and elicited the following dismissive response from the Assistant Foreign Secretary of the Government of India:

No importance need be attached to the report that future payments on account of the subsidy are to be made through the Postmaster, and "not through the Amir's Envoy" (to the Government of India); for, in the first place, there is no Envoy just at present, and in the second, payments on account of the subsidy for a long time past have been more often paid to the Amir's Agents at Bombay and Karachi than to the Envoy.<sup>45</sup>

The Durrani Envoy to the Government of India was Abd al-Rahman's main commercial and political representative outside of Afghanistan.<sup>46</sup> Similar to the subsidy-generated practices exhibited by the badami and postmaster in Peshawar, the Envoy redistributed subsidy funds to Durrani commercial agents stationed throughout India, in addition to making direct purchases and payments with those resources. The Envoy's subsidy-related activities can be distinguished from those exhibited by the badami and postmaster because they occurred on a wider and larger scale, and because he retained ultimate political responsibility for the subsidy as a result of his duty of overseeing all other Durrani state officials in India. The Durrani Envoy was based near the Governor General of India, so he resided primarily in Calcutta but spent summers in Simla. As the political representative of a foreign government, the Durrani Envoy's movement in India independent of the Governor General's travels required him to be monitored. In 1899 George Curzon was the Governor General and he advocated such surveillance when the Durrani Envoy Sardar Muhammad Ismail Khan sought permission to

travel to Lahore to buy Rs. 70,000 worth of *pashmina* or woolen goods. Curzon sanctioned the commercial excursion provided the Envoy not be "allow(ed) to conduct a political or religious propaganda [*sic*] under our very noses."<sup>47</sup>

The Envoy's redistributions of subsidy funds compensated primarily two categories of people, either Durrani commercial agents stationed in various Indian cities, or English firms whose services Abd al-Rahman contracted. The subsidy transfers to English firms involved noticeably large sums. For example, during the summer of 1893, Messrs. Walsh, Lovett & Co. requested to be paid Rs. 4,00,000 in Calcutta, which prompted the Durrani Envoy to take hasty and unusual action on this matter from the Governor General's Simla retreat.<sup>48</sup> Another illustration comes from 1899 when the Envoy facilitated six deposits totaling Rs. 13,35,814 from the subsidy account into the account of Messrs. J. Buchanan Guthrie & Co. at the National Bank of India in Calcutta.<sup>49</sup> This substantial sum comprised almost 75 percent of Abd al-Rahman's annual subsidy, then Rs. 18,50,000. The firm of J. B. Guthrie & Co. was arguably the most prominent of all the trading companies commissioned by Abd al-Rahman to build and supply his workshops, courts, and palaces (see later).

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Whether through the Envoy, other expatriate Durrani officials such as the badami or postmaster in Peshawar, or directly by Abd al-Rahman, subsidy funds were regularly redistributed to Durrani commercial agents stationed in various cities throughout India. Subsidy payments were made to Durrani commercial agents stationed in or traveling to Calcutta, Delhi, Amballa, Lahore, Quetta, and Peshawar. However, subsidy payments made to Durrani commercial agents appear to have been made most often to individuals based in Bombay and Karachi. Table 4.3 provides a glimpse into some of the subsidy transactions at these two primary South Asian port cities.<sup>50</sup>

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<b>Agent</b>	<b>Transaction date/s and Location</b>	<b>Total RS.</b>
1. Haji Asad Khan	December 1883, Bombay	24,520
2. Mullah Abu Bakr Khan	July, September, and October 1888 and May and September 1889, Bombay	3,70,000
3. Ghulam Rasul Khan	September and October 1890, Bombay	1,00,000
4. Mullah Muhd. Azim Khan	June 1892, Bombay	73,949

5. Mullah Dost Muhd. Khan Tokhi	June 1897, Bombay	40,000
6. Mullah Dost Muhd. Khan Tokhi	June, October, and November 1897, and January, and March 1898, Karachi	11,70,000
7. Mullah Dost Muhd. Khan Tokhi	September 1899, Karachi	15,000
8. Mullah Muhd. Azim Khan	July and December 1899, Bombay	50,000
Total Rs. Paid: 18,43,469 (Rs 6,58,469 in Bombay and Rs 11,85,000 in Karachi)		

These figures show how nearly a year's worth of subsidy funds at the end of Abd al-Rahman's reign, or Rs. 18,50,000, was distributed through time to various agents stationed in or passing through Bombay and Karachi. They do not represent the cumulative total or complete record of subsidy transactions in either city. Table 4.1 also draws attention to the fluid structure of the Durrani state's presence in British India. There was an ongoing circulation of Durrani commercial agents between posts, as well as a tendency for appointees to experience short tenures in each position. The rapid cycling of individuals into, within, and out of this network of commercial agents in India mirrors a structural flaw in the Durrani state's domestic bureaucratic architecture as viewed by Abd al-Rahman's contracted European surgeon.<sup>52</sup>

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Subsidy funds were also redistributed to Durrani state brokers who heavily influenced commercial traffic between Peshawar and Kabul. In 1899 a redistribution of two lakhs went to the joint receipt of Mirza Muhammad Rahim, Mirza Muhammad Ishaq Khan, Mirza Allahdad Khan, and Diwan Baghwan Das.<sup>53</sup> Subsidy documents identify these three last-mentioned men as "Commission Agents of Afghan merchants residing in Peshawar." Elsewhere the same three men are described as Durrani state brokers of the trade from Peshawar to Kabul through the Khaibar Pass:

34

[Mirza Muhammad Ishaq Khan, Mirza Allahdad Khan and Diwan Baghwan Das] are the men through whom all trade with Kabul must pass. They will either buy goods for merchants in Kabul charging 1/40th as brokerage, or if a merchant comes to Peshawar himself to trade, he must first, before his goods can be forwarded to Kabul, go to these men and pay 1/40th of the cost of the goods as brokerage and get a pass from them without which his goods will not be sent on

by the kafilabashi. The pay of these men is Rs. 1,000, 800, and 800 respectively, and the whole of the brokerage is sent to the Amir.<sup>54</sup>

The subsidy funds allowed Durrani and British agents of Abd al-Rahman to make considerable purchases of Indian and European commodities in Peshawar and throughout the subcontinent. The primary items bought with subsidy funds were raw materials destined for finishing in Kabul.<sup>55</sup> The aforementioned Mullah Abu Bakr, who retained Abd al-Rahman's confidence for a considerable period of time through a number of different postings, was involved in an ongoing series of subsidy-generated purchases. For at least two years he received a lakh of rupees every third month with which he purchased brass and copper in bulk form.<sup>56</sup> At that rate, subsidy expenditures for the import of brass and copper alone consumed at least 5 percent of the Durrani state's total income.<sup>57</sup> **35**

### **The Mashin Khana**

The first dispatch of a Durrani state commercial agent to British India to purchase goods with subsidy money came less than four months after colonial authorities appointed Abd al-Rahman to the Kabul Amirate on July 20, 1880. Abd al-Rahman immediately received Rs. 10,00,000 as a result of his colonial appointment, and on or near December 14 he wrote to the Peshawar Commissioner to ask for logistical help and tax relief on the portion of that money which would soon be spent in India. Abd al-Rahman requested that the *kotwalis* or local magistrates of Peshawar, Amritsar, and Delhi be given official notice that Durrani state commercial agents would be traveling to and through their jurisdictions to make purchases on his behalf.<sup>58</sup> **36**

The commodities purchased on Abd al-Rahman's first subsidy-induced state shopping excursion in India were broken down into two categories, iron and other articles. Under the former heading were "metal bars, sheets, steel, files, vices, screw making machines and metal presses." The other articles included "brass sheets, copper, tin, blankets, shirts and pantaloons."<sup>59</sup> This list indicates that early in his reign Abd al-Rahman used subsidy funds primarily to import relatively inexpensive raw materials, a large portion of which were refined and redistributed to his military forces. More expensive finished military products such as guns, rifles, cannons, cartridges, and ammunition are not represented in the records of Abd al-Rahman's inaugural spending spree in India. **37**

Most of the raw materials imported at the beginning of Abd al-Rahman's reign were transferred to craftsmen populating the Kabul bazaars who were contracted by the Durrani state for the labor-intensive finishing process. In the early nineteenth century, Elphinstone reported that each of the thirty-two artisanal group in Kabul was represented by a *kadhoda* who managed the given labor community's transactions with the Durrani government.<sup>60</sup> At **38**



the end of the century each community of craftsmen was noted as having an elder spokesman or *kalantar*, and master artificers or *ustads*, as well as apprentices or *shagirds*.<sup>61</sup> The mashin khana or Durrani state workshops established by Abd al-Rahman significantly transformed the institutional leadership and demography of Kabul's local labor communities.

The weapons workshops established by Durrani rulers in Kabul before 1878, including those constructed by Sher Ali, were destroyed by the British during their second invasion and occupation of Afghanistan. The second Anglo-Afghan war wound down far less dramatically than the first conflict that was a resounding military humiliation for the British. Abd al-Rahman facilitated a safe and orderly British retreat from Kabul to begin a sufficiently noble end to the second unsuccessful Anglo-Afghan war as far as colonial policy makers were concerned. After suppressing the most threatening local revolts against his colonially ascribed position, Abd al-Rahman began to divert the bulk of his subsidy funds to resuscitating and significantly expanding on the state workshop concept.<sup>62</sup> Abd al-Rahman's state workshop complex became known locally as the mashin khana, and Pyne was employed by Abd al-Rahman to oversee the technical aspects of the enterprise.<sup>63</sup> **39**

At a ceremony marking the inauguration of construction on the workshops on 7 April 1887, Abd al-Rahman reportedly told Pyne: "This is the happiest day of my life ... (b)efore these workshops can be finished there are three essentials required: 1. God's help; 2. My money; 3. Your work. God's help and my money without your work, and your work and my money without God's help are equally useless."<sup>64</sup> Beyond daily oversight and managerial responsibilities over the Kabul workshops, Pyne's duties included traveling to India and England to purchase machinery, materials, and supplies, and to locate Indian and European specialists to employ at the mashin khana. **40**

The mashin khana was initially organized around machinery for the production of weapons and military supplies, and by 1891 separate workshops were producing rifles, cannons, ammunition, and boots. However, the workshops were continually expanded to encompass activities far beyond the production of military supplies alone. During Abd al-Rahman's reign the mashin khana was broadened to include stamping, dyeing, minting, lithographic printing, and weaving equipment, as well as flour mills, saw mills, distilleries, tanneries, steam hammers, and lathes. New machines constantly arrived in Kabul, and existing ones were continually upgraded and refurbished.<sup>65</sup> In the late 1890s about one hundred machines, between four and five thousand local workers, and dozens of European and Indian experts and foremen employed at the mashin khana were churning out agricultural implements, candles, carpets, clothes, coats, coins, food, glass, soap, kilns, liquor, needles, paper, and soda pop, in addition to weaponry, most of which imitated European models.<sup>66</sup> **41**

As local craftsmen were incorporated into the mashin khana the chains of authority and gradations of prestige within Kabul's artisanal communities were transformed in significant ways. Europeans contracted by Abd al-Rahman were grafted over the local social hierarchies and institutions mentioned earlier. Indian *mistarīs*, the subcontracted assistants to the British mechanics and engineers employed at the mashin khana by Abd al-Rahman, were also interposed over and within the existing chains of authority, expertise, and resource management of local artisanal groups. The Europeans, Indians, and Afghans appointed by and responsible to Abd al-Rahman also influenced the residual Kabul bazaar production regimen by periodically siphoning human, technical, and material resources from those labor communities that were not fully encompassed by the workshop project. The mashin khana was the institutional locus for the reconfiguration of social relations within and between the various local labor communities in Kabul and beyond, as well as between those professional networks and the Durrani state. **42**

At the beginning of Abd al-Rahman's reign raw iron, steel, brass, copper, machinery, and military clothing were imported with subsidy funds. The following Table 4.4 illustrates subsidy purchases during the latter stages of Abd al-Rahman's tenure were also characterized by the import of relatively high volumes of machinery and raw materials such as iron, copper, and bricks. However, at the end of his reign various European novelties and commodities destined for mass reproduction at the mashin khana, ceremonial display, or consumption at the palaces, courts, and homes of the supraelite of Kabul, were also imported from India with subsidy funds.<sup>67</sup> Like the subsidy itself, the mashin khana was oriented toward satisfying the state's needs. The majority of the popular classes of Afghans in Kabul and elsewhere did not benefit from the European and Indian imports to the mashin khana. Rather, ordinary people were generally adversely affected by the workshops' transformation of the mercantile social order and its output of coercive implements that were deployed by the Durrani state against them. Instead of functioning as a socially integrative institution, the mashin khana contributed to the growing gap in state-society relations in nineteenth-century Afghanistan. The mashin khana was the prized and most emphasized component of this Durrani ruler's state formation agenda, and to his credit Abd al-Rahman recognized its alienating effect on at least some sectors of Afghan society: **43**

The difficulties that I had to encounter on first opening the manufactories and workshops were enormous. My people knew nothing of modern inventions and appliances, and were consequently opposed to all these new ideas . . . (w)hen I first opened the workshops my people made all kinds of remarks; they said that I did not know that the work could be much better done by hand than by machinery. They accused the officials who were working at the factories of being enemies of the Government, who wanted to send the money out of the country under the pretense of buying machinery. I was tired of all this nonsense and opposition, but, all the same, I would not give up my determination to proceed

on the road I had marked out for myself . . . (t)here is no doubt that it took a very long time to reap the fruits of all this expenditure on machinery; all these large amounts had to be paid by the Government Treasury, and I could not help calculating the interest on the money which was paying nothing for years, being all sunk in the factory and workshops. But I did not lose heart. I continued to buy every year as much machinery as I could find the money for, and as the machines increased I had new factories built to receive them. This I continue to do year by year . . . <sup>68</sup>

<b>Table 4.4: Commodities Purchased with Subsidy Money by Durrani State Commercial Agents Based in India and Conveyed Duty-Free from Peshawar to Kabul through the Khaibar Pass in 1898<sup>69</sup></b>				
<b>Animal Conveyance:</b>	<b>Camel</b>	<b>Bullock (a/o cart)</b>	<b>Donkey</b>	<b>Mule</b>
<i>Commodities:</i>				
Bricks (Pucca and other)	1139.5	85	184	1
Charcoal	121			
Copper	79			
Iron (sheets and melt)	587			
Kerosene Oil	95			
<i>Machinery (of all kinds):</i>	404	255	1	
<i>Miscellaneous items:</i>				
Bottles	1			
Boxes	1		1	
Candles	10			
Cartridges				5
Empty gunny bags	23½			
Glasses	5			
Harness	½			
Ink pens	2			
Lime	12	9		
Liquid	1			

Miscellaneous	½			
Musical instruments	1			
Lemonade bottles	14			
Packages				2
Paper	1			
Parcel			1	
Piece goods			12	
Pipes		1		
Rice				2
Rifles and cartridges			1	
Snuff				1
Soap			1	
Spices				1
Stationary	1			
Stirrups	15			
Tents		32		
Treasure	5			26
Wearing apparel	6		1	4
<i>Zakhdan</i> (portable ice chest[s])			1	1

## Notes

**Note 1:** Gankovsky, 1982, pp. 85–96.

**Note 2:** Ibid.

**Note 3:** "Shuja Wants Refuge in British Territory," PPA, Press List 2, Book 8, Serial No. 39 (dated 18 June 1813), and "Shuja's Intention to Seek Asylum in British Territory," PPA, Press List 2, Book 8, Serial No. 51 (dated 9 July 1813).

**Note 4:** "Shuja Allowed to Stay at Ludiana with Rs. 50,000 annually as a stipend," PPA, Press List No. 2, Book 9, Serial No. 97 (dated 28 September 1816). For Shuja's wife see PPA, Press List 3, Book 18, Serial No. 157 (an untitled document dated 7 December 1816), and "Destitute Condition of Shuja's Wife," PPA, Press List 2, Book 9, Serial No. 32.

**Note 5:** "Shuja Refuses Initial Housing Offering and is Informed about His Stipend," PPA, Press List 3, Book 18, Serial Nos. 136-138 (dated 10 November 1816), and "Shuja Writes for Increased Allowance but is Informed of the Necessity of Economy," PPA, Press List 4, Book 72, Serial No. 322 (dated 1 April 1825).

**Note 6:** See appendices D through L of "Resources and Expenditure of Afghanistan, 1841," NAI, Foreign S.C., 25 October 1842, Proceeding Nos. 32-35, where the allowances (*mulikana*), pensions (*jagirs*, *rukshadigi*, and *mulak-i zur khurid*, which were treated more like exemptions in the state fiscal registers), stipends (*wazifa*, which were generally granted to *ulama* or the clergy), remissions (*tukhfif*), and salaries (*musarifi* and *aliosurifi mulkia*) dispensed by the Durrani state before the British occupation are listed. See Chapter 3 for more on Durrani state revenue documents and the British manipulation of them during the first occupation.

**Note 7:** "Income and Expenses of Shuja," NAI, Foreign S.C., 24 May 1841, Proceeding Nos. 36-38.

**Note 8:** Ibid.

**Note 9:** "On the Finances of Shuja," NAI, Foreign S.C., 4 October 1841, Proceeding Nos. 54-56. See Chapter 3 for attention to the British reformation of Durrani state finances after they assumed full control of those resources.

**Note 10:** "Temporary Subsidy of 10 Lacs/Year to Amir of Cabul," NAI, Foreign S.C., 26 December 1856, Proceeding Nos. 7-12. The first or one of the first remittances to Dost Muhammad was for Rs. 3,00,000 and the British had difficulty securing reasonable hundi exchange rates from local bankers in Qandahar to finalize the transaction "due to the insecure and confused state of Afghanistan and Qandahar." See "Remittance of 3 Lacs to Amir of Cabul," NAI, Foreign S.C., 31 October 1856, Proceeding Nos. 58–61.

**Note 11:** "Temporary Subsidy of 10 Lacs/Year to Amir of Cabul," NAI, Foreign S.C., 26 December 1856, Proceeding Nos. 7–12.

**Note 12:** "Amir's Wish to Receive Subsidy Without Allowing Any Advantage in Return," and "Census of Revenue and Population in Provinces Under Amir's Authority," NAI, Foreign Secret, August 1875, Proceeding Nos. 82-86 (the title on the document itself is "Memorandum by Munshi Faiz Bux").

**Note 13:** Ibid.

**Note 14:** Ibid.

**Note 15:** See Kakar, 1971, appendices IV and VI, for revealing conversations between Abd al-Rahman and Lepel Griffith, particularly p. 268, where the former confesses to the latter: "I am really appointed by you."

**Note 16:** Ibid. A formal treaty never materialized, although there were many informal agreements made between the British and Abd al-Rahman, many of which were terminated by the former on the latter's death in 1901. The British claimed the deals they had struck with Abd al-Rahman were specific to his person, not the Durrani state.

**Note 17:** Abd al-Rahman succeeded in obtaining the British consent that their agent in Kabul be an Indian Muslim and not a European.

**Note 18:** N.D.C., Photocopy Accession number 291, p. 123 (in one pagination series of many; this citation appears to correspond with the India Office Library and Records citation L/P+S/20 B258.) All rupees are the British variety (see Chapter 1 for more on the relationship between the Kabul and British rupees). These figures exclude Rs. 50,000 paid monthly to Abd al-Rahman's Governor in Qandahar from April to July 1881, or a total Rs. 2,00,000.

**Note 19:** "Memorandum of Information Available in the Foreign Department on the Government, Revenue, Population and Territorial Divisions of Afghanistan," NAI, Foreign Secret (Supplementary), January 1880, Proceeding Nos. 536-544. Afghanistan here meant the "Kabul Kingdom (including provinces/districts of Jallalabad, Kandahar, Herat, Pusht-i Rud) and Afghan Turkistan." In these figures the category "revenue" excludes subsidies but is comprised broadly to include land revenue, and other charges payable with land revenue, a wide variety of taxes, duties, tolls and other extractions of road dues, and income from fines and forfeitures.

**Note 20:** "Disposal of Money Belonging to Afghan Amir by Peshawar Merchants," NAI, Foreign Political B, September 1881, Proceeding Nos. 79-80. These "Peshawar bankers" were Shikarpuris. See later.

**Note 21:** Ibid. Mullah Muhammad Bakr and Muhammad Akbar were replaced by Yar Gul Khan.

**Note 22:** Yar Gul Khan attempted to deposit Rs. 33,000 and Ghulam Mohiyudin Rs. 22,800 to Mullah Muhammad Bakr and Muhammad Akbar.

**Note 23:** Mullah Muhammad Bakr and Muhammad Akbar deposited Rs. 1,52,000.

**Note 24:** Dost Muhammad was also known to extort money from the Shikarpuri banking community in Kabul. For example, in response to Shuja's aborted attempt to recoup his lost royal prerogative in 1832-1833, Dost Mohammad was reported to have levied forced contributions from "every tribe, Sunni, Shia sect, the sons and grandsons of Agha Muhammad know as Ismailoo, the *mujawer* (attendant/keeper) of the tomb of Ashiqan-i Arifan, from the sons of Dervish Khwaja Esa Khan and Khwaja Khan, . . . every district, town, village, as well as the mercantile part of the community . . . (to the point where) he is destroying Kabul" (PPA, Book 139, Serial Nos. 51-68[?]). Shikarpuri merchant capital is specifically mentioned as having been confiscated by Dost Muhammad during this period: "(t)o meet his pecuniary exigencies, Dost extorted one and one half laks of rupees in money and effects from the Shikarporees of Kabul. He calls it a loan paying at the rate of 3000 rupees per diem." See NAI, Foreign P.C., 30 March 1835, Proceeding No. 46.

**Note 25:** "Disbursement of the Subsidy of the Amir of Afghanistan," NAI, Foreign A Political E, February 1884, Proceeding Nos. 34-53. The individuals referred to are the first sixteen people named in Table II later. One aspect of the disorder accompanying this particular subsidy dispersal revolved around Asa and Lalu, the fourth and fifth persons mentioned in Table II, arriving at the Peshawar Treasury claiming to be owed different amounts than indicated by Abd al-Rahman. Asa claimed Rs. 4,000 more and Lalu Rs. 4,000 less than indicated by Abd al-Rahman. Ibid.

**Note 26:** Ibid. Persons numbered 17-41 in Table 2.2. In the cited source, the Muslim from Shikarpur is indicated to be Muhammad Sharif, number 33 in the table, but number 37, Daulat, is also a Muslim name. Concerning the second group of Shikarpuris, colonial officials resolved "the payment

should not under any circumstances exceed the total amount given in the Amir's letter" (of 17 December 1883). Abd al-Rahman also wrote to the British on 2 November and 16 December 1883 about this month's subsidy.

**Note 27:** Ibid.

**Note 28:** See Chapter 5 for attention to some of the state trading monopolies established by Abd al-Rahman and his seizures of merchant and other forms of capital in Kabul and beyond.

**Note 29:** "Proposed Organization of an Improved News Agency on the Russo-Afghan Frontier," NAI, Foreign Secret F, March 1886, Proceeding Nos. 303–13.

**Note 30:** "Payments Made to the Amir's Agents in India on Account of His Highness's Subsidy," NAI, Foreign Frontier K.W., May 1890, Proceeding Nos. 5–24.

**Note 31:** Ibid. See later for more on the Durrani badami and postmaster in Peshawar, the Durrani Envoy with the Government of India, and the commercial agents stationed elsewhere in India.

**Note 32:** The subsidy files I have seen at the NAI and the NWFPA appear to have been generated by discrepancies, disputes, or other irregularities concerning the transmission or redistribution the subsidy.

**Note 33:** "Payments Made to the Amir's Agents in India on Account of His Highness's Subsidy," NAI, Foreign Frontier K.W., May 1890, Proceeding Nos. 5–24.

**Note 34:** "Payments made on account the subsidy of His Highness the Amir of Afghanistan," NAI, Foreign Frontier A, March 1891, Proceeding Nos. 8–16. See later for more on Salter Pyne.

**Note 35:** Ibid. This particular cash dispersal of British Indian rupees was destined to be re-coined with minting machinery recently imported from Europe and installed in the Kabul workshops or mashin khana, which was an exceptional use of subsidy funds. See Chapter 5 for more on the impact of European minting machinery in Kabul, and later for attention to the mashin khana. Supplying the mashin khana with Indian and European commodities, particularly heavy machinery, consumed most of the subsidy funds.

**Note 36:** Such a configuration is deduced from information contained in a file generated by the theft of subsidy cash by a Shikarpuri Hindu named Jawahir Mal who was banished from Kabul during the early years of Abd al-Rahman's reign. See "Misappropriation of Money Belong to Amir of Kabul by Jawahir Mal alias Jaru," NWFPA., Records from the Office of the Peshawar Commissioner, Bundle No. 60, Serial No. 1545.

**Note 37:** See Chapter 5 for more on the Durrani state qafilabashi in Peshawar.

**Note 38:** "Establishment of a Post Office in Peshawar by the Amir of Kabul," NWFPA, TARC. Afghanistan Index I, File No. 205 (records from the Chief Commissioner's Office, 1881). A partial list of the men appointed to this position of Durrani postmaster in Peshawar begins with Mirza Baiza Khan who assumed the position in 1881. Mir Haidar was the Afghan Postmaster in Peshawar in 1885, and Mirza Khalifa Ji Khan held the office in 1898. See Chapter 5 for more on the mirzas or state-appointed account/bookkeeper/financial clerks during Abd al-Rahman's reign.

**Note 39:** See Chapter 5 for more on the predicament of the British Agent in Kabul. It is nevertheless useful here to convey a quote from Hamilton, pp. 373-374: "The British agent at Kabul holds an absolutely thankless position. He is shunned of necessity by Europeans in order to avoid giving rise to political suspicions, and he may see the Amir only in the public Durbars or by special appointment. To all intents and purposes he is a prisoner; since, although received in Durbar, he does not visit anyone and seldom ventures into the street. If a European were seen speaking to the British Agent, or to anyone attached to his staff, he would certainly be packed off to at once to the frontier. No Afghan is allowed to enter the British Agency and no Englishman has visited the British Agent, since Sir

Salter Pyne left Kabul. Even to be found near the building causes suspicion, as several Afghans have discovered. Moreover, since in many cases punishment has not ended merely with imprisonment, it has become an unwritten law to avoid the British agent and his *entourage* at any cost."

**Note 40:** When the Durrani post office in Peshawar was established "almost all" of the fifty or sixty letters sent each week between that city and Kabul were the correspondence of traders. Ibid. The same source indicates it took five days for mail between the cities to be conveyed through twenty post stops at each of which three runners were stationed. Excepting Abd al-Rahman's correspondence that came and went as needed, mail ran twice weekly, usually on Monday and Thursday. Kakar (1979), p. 33, indicates that between Kabul and Jalalabad postal runners carried spears with small bells attached while transporting mail ten miles a day, five miles in each direction, and that they lived communally in stone huts stationed five miles apart. Kakar, *ibid.*, also indicates Sher Ali established "the modern Afghan postal service."

**Note 41:** For example, in February 1884, Abd al-Rahman directed his postmaster Mir Haidar to pay eighteen Shikarpuris through a subsidy redistribution. Abd al-Rahman had recently purchased Rs. 8,000 worth of gold the Shikarpuris carried from Bukhara to Kabul. Abd al-Rahman likely imposed his own value on and coerced the "sale" of the gold, and then issued the Shikarpuris a hundi payable in Peshawar from the subsidy account for that amount. See "Misappropriation of Money Belong to Amir of Kabul by Jawahir Mal alias Jaru," NWFPA, Records from the Office of the Peshawar Commissioner, Bundle No. 60, Serial No. 1545.

**Note 42:** "Statement Showing the Payments Made to His Highness During 1897-98 and the Balance At His Credit on the 1st March 1898," NAI, Foreign Frontier A, August 1898, Proceeding Nos. 48–57.

**Note 43:** Ibid.

**Note 44:** Ibid.

**Note 45:** Ibid.

**Note 46:** The Durrani Envoy is often referred to as the Durrani Agent in India. Envoy is used here to distinguish that official from other Durrani commercial agents stationed in India (see later). Abd al-Rahman desperately wanted to have a Durrani ambassador in London, and he took steps to debunk arguments circulating against such an appointment by claiming the subsidy did not remove but rather enhanced his perceived right to political representation in London. In this regard, Abd al-Rahman is reported to have heard of Englishmen in his employ on leave in London claiming to the Queen and Parliament they could sway him in matters of policy. Far from denying the validity of those reports, Abd al-Rahman actually deployed them to bolster arguments for having a Durrani ambassador in London by inferring a reciprocal presence of English 'ambassadors' in Kabul. See S. M. Khan, vol. II, pp. 254–7.

**Note 47:** "Payments Made Out of the Amir's Subsidy. Statement Furnished to the India Office of Arms, Ammunition, and Money Presented by the Government of India to His Highness the Amir During The Year 1899," NAI, Foreign Frontier B, January 1900, Proceeding Nos. 171–201. This source indicates that from May 1899 to January 1900 the Durrani Envoy Sardar Muhammad Ismail Khan received seven subsidy redistributions in Amballa, Lahore, and Simla that totaled Rs. 2,63,100.

**Note 48:** The Durrani Envoy was then Ghulam Rasul Khan, and 4 lakhs of rupees was between 22 percent and 33 percent of the annual subsidy, which increased from 12 to 18 lakhs in 1893. See "Payments Made on Account of the Subsidy of His Highness the Amir of Afghanistan," NAI, Foreign Frontier A, October 1893, Proceeding Nos. 42-50. The Walsh firm was among the most visible of foreign mercantile organizations commissioned by Abd al-Rahman to supply his court, palaces, and workshops or mashin khana (see later). The subsidy exposed a number of Englishmen and their firms to Abd al-Rahman's fiscal conduct, and their influence over his financial practice became quite pronounced. Abd al-Rahman's notice of his sometimes-subordinate role in this relationship was



noted above. Another example of that phenomenon apparently came in response to the steep rise in transit tolls and other commercial dues and tariffs Abd al-Rahman instituted (see Chapter 5). In various ways the Government of India, and many Afghan, English, Indian, and Iranian, trans-national merchants and trading houses made repeated unsuccessful attempts to persuade Abd al-Rahman to reduce his new and exorbitant impositions on Afghanistan's potentially lucrative 'through trade' between Central and South Asia. Kakar, 1979, p. 212, argues that in 1890 Walsh, Lovett and Company succeeded in convincing Abd al-Rahman to reduce the heavy tax burdens imposed on the transit trade which was stifling commercial activity in Afghanistan as a whole.

**Note 49:** The deposits occurred between April and December 1899. See "Payments Made Out of The Amir's Subsidy. Statement Furnished to the India Office of Arms, Ammunition, and Money Presented by the Government of India to His Highness the Amir During the Year 1899," NAI, Foreign Frontier B, January 1900, Proceeding Nos. 171–201. During 1899, and many if not most other years of Abd al-Rahman's reign, the subsidy documents contain a conspicuous "*nil*" or absence of transference of coercive means under the heading "Arms and Ammunition Presented to the Amir." But of course the presence of the heading itself is also important.

**Note 50:** Although possibly not a comprehensive list, the post of Durrani commercial agent in Bombay was held by (at least): Haji Asad Khan in 1883; Mullah Abu Bakr Khan in 1888 and 1889; (possibly) Colonel Ghulam Rasul Khan Safi in 1890; Mullah Muhammad Azim in 1892 and 1893, and again in 1899 and 1900; and Mullah Dost Muhammad Khan Tokhi in 1897 and 1898. There does not appear to have been a Durrani commercial agent regularly stationed in Karachi. Abd al-Rahman apparently dispatched the Bombay agent or his main Envoy to that city on an *ad hoc* basis.

**Note 51:** This table is distilled from notes taken on all the NAI subsidy documents cited above. The invocation of identity adjectives and markers in the table deserves brief attention. Use of core Islamic terminology such as "Haji" or "Mullah," and the regional Indo-Persian-Turkic titulature such as "Khan," "Mirza," and "Sardar" abound in the correspondence between Durrani and British officials in India. Colonial bureaucrats and scribes reproduced and eliminated these indigenous honorifics at apparent random, and in both inconsistent and arbitrary ways. The difficulties of precisely identifying "Shikarpuris," "Hindus," or "Peshawar bankers," in nineteenth-century Kabul and Peshawar were addressed briefly above and more extensively in Chapter 1. Likewise, concrete and thorough understanding of the identity packages of Durrani state agents in India proves illusive at a variety of levels including cultural background, ethnicity, linguistic attributes, intrareligious distinctions (Shias and Sayyids among Muslims; Khattris, in particular, among Hindus castes), territorial affiliation, and tribal membership.

**Note 52:** See Gray 1895, p. 512-515. Gray was Abd al-Rahman's personal surgeon for a number of years. One exception to the rotation rule was Mullah Abu Bakr. This individual was one of the first two agents Abd al-Rahman deputed to assume control of his British subsidies in Peshawar immediately after his colonial appointment in Kabul, and someone who managed to retain the Durrani ruler's confidence for an extended period of time.

**Note 53:** "Payments Made Out of the Amir's Subsidy. Statement Furnished to the India Office of Arms, Ammunition, and Money Presented by the Government of India to His Highness the Amir During the Year 1899," NAI, Foreign Frontier B, January 1900, Proceeding Nos. 171-201.

**Note 54:** "Complaint by the Amir's Officials against the Peshawar Municipality in Connection with His Highness's Goods. Letter to the Amir about the Continued Collection of Afghan Dues and Tolls in British Territory," NAI, Foreign Frontier A, August 1901, Proceeding Nos. 34–40.

**Note 55:** The raw materials imported with subsidy funds were finished primarily by the handcraftsmen of Kabul until 1887 when the machines of the Kabul workshops began to assume the preponderance of that labor burden. See later. The qafilabashi or Durrani state caravan official in Peshawar was responsible for the conveyance of those raw materials to Kabul before and after the establishment of the workshops. See Chapter 5 for more on the Durrani qafilabashi in Peshawar.

**Note 56:** "Payments Made to the Amir's Agents in India on Account of His Highness's Subsidy," NAI, Foreign Frontier (K.W.), May 1890, Proceeding Nos. 5-24. The Durrani Envoy Wali Ahmad Khan followed a precedent established by his father General Amir Ahmad Khan as ordered by Abd al-Rahman: "every three months make over to Mullah Abu Bakr Khan the sum of Rs. 1,00,000 to enable him to purchase the articles (brass and copper)." Mullah Abu Bakr Khan was then the Durrani commercial agent in Bombay. It is unclear precisely how long this practice may have continued, but it lasted at least two years.

**Note 57:** It was estimated above that the subsidies, once regularized at 12 lakhs of British rupees per annum in 1882, accounted for roughly 16 percent of the revenue received by the Durrani state. The approximate total government revenue used in those calculations, Rs. 73,30,680, was based on statistics gathered from Durrani state sources for the years 1877-1878 that were consulted during the second British occupation of Kabul in 1879 (see "Memorandum of Information Available in the Foreign Department on the Government, Revenue, Population, and Territorial Divisions of Afghanistan," NAI, Foreign Secret [Supplementary], January 1880, Proceeding Nos. 536-544). That data is organized on the basis of province. The majority of provincial revenue was derived from agricultural production and a significant amount from transit trade taxation. Both of these economic sectors and their derivative income declined markedly during Abd al-Rahman's reign (see Kakar, 1979, p. 189, for agricultural decline, and *ibid.*, p. 215, for the diminishing transit trade). Therefore, the subsidies could have been substantially more significant than the previously indicated 16 percent of the Durrani state's gross national product, making four lakhs per year for brass and copper far more than 5 percent of the state's revenue in all its forms.

**Note 58:** "Purchase of Articles for Amir of Kabul in Peshawar," NAI, Foreign Political B, September 1881, Proceeding Nos. 178-179. Abd al-Rahman wanted these kotwalis informed at least for the purpose of avoiding octroi, other municipal taxes, and transit duties on the subsidy-garnered goods as they moved through and between those primary markets in India.

**Note 59:** *Ibid.* Without the original letters it is impossible to know if the two categories were Abd al-Rahman's or colonial bureaucratic artifacts. According to Kakar, 1979, pp. 193-4, iron became the preferred metal for rifle and gun production in the Kabul weapons workshops, the *karkhana-i sultanat-i Kabul*, during the reign of Sher Ali. Gregorian, p. 86, indicates a karkhana or workshop was established solely for weapons production by Abd al-Rahman's father Muhammad Afzal, and significantly expanded on by Sher Ali.

**Note 60:** See Elphinstone, vol. II, p. 336, for categories of craftsmen, merchants and traders in Kabul. It is important to remember Elphinstone's description of the social organization of Kabul's mercantile community is not first hand. Rather, it is based on data gathered primarily through informants interviewed and information collected in Peshawar.

**Note 61:** Kakar, 1979, p. 193.

**Note 62:** See Kakar (1971) for more on the internal revolts against Abd al-Rahman's rule.

**Note 63:** Pyne was approached and contracted in 1887 through Abd al-Rahman's Envoy in Calcutta, General Amir Ahmad Khan. Sultan Muhammad Khan later became Abd al-Rahman's *mir munshi* or chief secretary, and helped author his patron's "auto"-biography. See S. M. Khan, vol. II, p. 23, for Sultan Muhammad Khan's role in bringing Pyne to Kabul, and Yapp's introduction in vol. I, p. xvii, for the autobiographical spuriousness of volume two of this text. The first foreigner contracted by

Abd al-Rahman to rebuild and expand the Kabul workshops was M. Jerome who was given Rs. 1,41,000 to purchase European engines and machines, which he successfully arranged to be conveyed to Kabul along with twenty-one Indian workmen familiar with that technology. However, Mr. Jerome never reappeared in Kabul, which resulted in Abd al-Rahman hiring Pyne.

**Note 64:** Quoted in Kakar (1979), p. 195.

**Note 65:** The Kandahar Newsletters from the 1890s contain numerous reports of people being maimed or killed while transporting some of these heavy machines overland to Kabul from Qandahar. However, not all of the larger machines imported from Europe were shipped to Karachi and then transported to Quetta before reaching Qandahar. Many if not most of the disassembled and crated machines and machine parts were routed from colonial India to Afghanistan through the Khaibar using elephants. See Table 4.2. A. C. Jewitt, an American engineer who between 1911 and 1919 during the reign of Abd al-Rahman's son Habibullah (ruled 1901-19) supervised the construction of Afghanistan's first hydroelectric plant, the *jabal as-siraj* or mountain of light, in the Kohistan district roughly fifty miles north of Kabul, provides a number of pictures of these elephants. See Bell, pp. 99, 101, and 102. Other sections in this interesting and lively series of vignettes forming Jewitt's account of his experiences in Afghanistan that bear on this study are *ibid.*, pp. 67–70, 82–86, 196–206, and 234–41.

**Note 66:** Wooden models of Hotchkiss, Maxim, Gardiner, and Gatling guns were used to mimic the authentic variety, and these wooden imitations served as the reproductive template for workmen at the mashin khana. See S. M. Khan, vol. II, pp. 29-30. Most of the weapons produced at the mashin khana were imitations of European models and notable for their uneven if not inferior quality. See Gregorian, p. 143, and Kakar, 1979, pp. 193-198. Production of weaponry and all other finished goods at the Kabul workshops was constrained by a dependence on moving water, steam and wood, as opposed to coal, for fuel. Kakar, 1979, p. 196, notes the following about the volume of arms production at the machine khana for the year 1896: 4 differently sized artillery guns each week, and 15 rifles (imitations of English Martini-Henrys [*panahpur* locally] and Sniders [*baghalpur* locally], and apparently to a much lesser extent local versions of Russian designs and models) and 20,000 cartridges (10,000 for both Martini-Henrys and Sniders) daily. Quality, not quantity, was the challenge of arms production at the mashin khana. Pyne had a vested interest in the reputation of mashin khana products, and therefore praised the finished results. Observers with less personal stake in Abd al-Rahman's workshops characterized both the arms and ammunition produced in Kabul as unreliable and of poor quality.

**Note 67:** Chapter 2 referenced Masson's opinion from the mid-1830s that "looking glasses and a multitude of various little articles conducive to comfort and convenience" of ordinary consumers be specifically targeted for import to Kabul from Mithenkote by the Lohanis in order to drive out similar Russian goods that were more expensive and of inferior quality. See "Masson's Observations on Kabul Commerce," NAI, Foreign P.C., 2 November 1835, Proceeding No. 56 (which I also, perhaps incorrectly, have as titled "Observations on Trade of Kabul"). Chapter 2 also noted that during the same period the Governor General of India sent the Kabuli merchant Mullah Khair ud-Din gifts including pocketknives, flasks, buttons, and belts. See "Measures to Promote Trade Between Mithenkote and Central Asia," NAI, Foreign P.C., 16 May 1836, Proceeding Nos. 47-48. Similar versions of the European commodities advocated for import and mass consumption during the experimental period of 1830s ultimately did make their way to Afghanistan during the 1890s routinization period. However, during the later period the European novelties were consumed primarily by Abd al-Rahman and the Muhammadzai Durrani political elite he catered to domestically, not the popular consumer classes of Afghanistan referenced by Masson.

**Note 68:** S. M. Khan, vol. II, pp. 27-28.

**Note 69:** "Tolls Realized from Khaibar Pass," NWFP, List of Foreign Frontier Files 1880-1900 (indexed in the list of files transferred to T.A.R.C.), 1898 Serial No. 958, File No. 102 (corresponding to Punjab Government Civil Secretariat, Foreign Department, April 1898, B Proceeding Nos. 95-96). The statistics cover the eight months from April through November, the Khaibar being infrequented by commercial traffic from December to March. This file indicates Rs. 11,110 were collected as Khaibar Pass tolls from April 1897 to March 1898, compared with Rs. 46,545 in 1896-1897, and Rs. 51,163 in 1895-1896. The Khaibar tolls deserve separate treatment and will not be considered through time or in depth here. Road tolls and transit taxes are usually termed *rahdari* in Iran and generally *arat* in Afghanistan during this period. There were a wide variety of terms used in colonial records to identify an array of road and transit taxes in Afghanistan during Abd al-Rahman's reign. Kakar, 1979, p. 209, notes three kinds of tolls applied to Khaibar Pass traffic alone, *goshi*, *rawanagi*, and *badraqagi*.

The bricks were for palace, workshop, road, and other government buildings' construction. According to Kakar 1979, p. 199-200, major construction projects completed during Abd al-Rahman's reign include: the *Arg* or new palace-fort complex which enclosed the kotwali offices and was modeled on a church Abd al-Rahman had seen in Tashkent; the Gulistan and Boston serais near the Arg, and other caravanserais on the principal roads throughout the county; the Bagh-i Bala palace, the Chilisutun (Hindki) palace (for a distant picture of which see McChesney, 1999, p. 12), and the Qala-i Hashmat Khan palace in Kabul; the Paghman summer palace (the "Simla" of Afghanistan); the new Jalalabad Palace; and the Pul-i Chishti mosque, Eid Gah mosque, royal mosque and Shahrara tower in Kabul.

The copper was primarily used for the production of state coinage (which included silver, copper, and brass coins), and cooking, dining utensil, and storage container production for the court and palaces.

The iron was largely consumed and transformed in the weapons workshops where rifles, artillery guns, and cartridges were produced (separate rifle barreling, cannon foundry, and cartridge workshops existed).

The donkey load of rifles and cartridges were either destined for the workshops to be evaluated for potential mass reproduction, or possessed more of an ornamental value than a coercive purpose for Abd al-Rahman.

Conspicuously absent from this accounting are any heavy guns, artillery pieces or cannon. This is significant because most analyses of Durrani state formation place very heavy weight on the importation of arms by Abd al-Rahman. Rubin, 1996, p. 48, is an explicit proponent of the position that 'weapons aid allowed Abd al-Rahman to pursue a coercive-intensive path the state formation.'