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## Administration of Chak Dynasty in Kashmir during 1561-1586 A.D

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### Abstract

Jammu and Kashmir are commonly regarded as paradise on earth. The Farsi couplet is that if there is paradise on earth, it is this, it is this, it is this (**Amir Khusrau**). The couplet pushed the eyes of many rulers to rule over Kashmir. The Muslim rule was started in Kashmir in **1339** A.D, which represents a unique example in history. The replacement of Hindu rule by Muslims was affected without any bloodshed. The Chak dynasty came into power in **1561** and ruled over Kashmir till **1586**. The country was cleared of thieves and robbers. Corrupt officials were severely dead with. The rulers at that time established well grievances mechanism for the people. The great feature of administration was well planning of royal engagements and the regulation of state business. The rulers had an eagle eye on the treasury and territories of the state. The writers stated that it is very difficult to get the comprehensive administrative structure of Chaks, owing to the absence of any administration treaties. Its to be believed that chaks did not bring changes in the administration except few minor reforms which were effected at the time of need. The result was that the already established institutions were retained and revitalized until the chak rule. The research paper examined the foundation of the Chak dynasty and its administration in Kashmir.

**1.1 Keywords:** 1 Ghazi Chak, 2 Justice, 3 Jazia,3 the council of ministers, 4 Shi-ism etc.

### 1.2 Research Objectives:

1. To unearth the foundation of Chak rule in Kashmir.
2. To shed light on the administration of the Chak dynasty.
3. To identify the ascending order of the Chak dynasty in Kashmir.

### 1.3 Research Question

1. Understanding of Chak rule in Kashmir?
2. How Chak dynasty came into Kashmir?
3. Discuss the ascending order of Chak rulers?
4. Highlight the administration Chak dynasty in Kashmir from 1561-1586?

#### 1.4 Methodology:

In this paper, data for the present study is collected mainly through primary & secondary sources. The objectivity of historical and current writings has been used to develop a study's framework and arrive at an unbiased conclusion—the data collected with the view to analyze the foundation and administration of Chaks in Kashmir.

#### 1.5 Literature Review:

1. **The spread of Shaivism in Kashmir during the Chak dynasty** published in a **social science journal by Parweg Aalam**. In this paper the author explained how shiism gained ground in Kashmir also he highlighted the establishment of Chak dynasty.
2. The book entitled as "**Kashmir under sultans** tailored by "**Mohibbul Hasan**" published in the year of **1959**. In this book the author explained the Chak rule in Kashmir. He analyzed the administrative structure of Chaks and scattered light on the administration of Chaks of different Chak rulers.
3. Another craft is entitled "**Medieval Kashmir from Chak to Mughals**" drafted by "**Mushtaq Ahmad Tantry**" in 2017. In the craft, the author highlighted the social, political, economic life of Chaks in Kashmir. The book also shed light on various types of taxes imposed or abolished by Chaks in Kashmir
4. Another statecraft, "**Kingdom of Kashmir**" written by "**M . L Kapoor**" published in 1983. In this book, the author analyzed the political and cultural history of Kashmir from the earliest times to 1586 A.D.
5. A history of "**Muslim rule in Kashmir from 1320-1890** "written by "**R.K Parmu**" explained the history of the entire period of Muslim rule dealing with its political, cultural, economic features in a thoroughly critical and objective manner.
6. Another paper is written by "**Jozef Pacholczyk**" entitled as "**Sufiyana Kalam, the classical music of Kashmir**" published in 1978 in the **Journal of Society for Asian music**. He explained how the Muslim dynasties promoted the music as a part in their administration.
7. Another article entitled as "**Yousuf Shah Chak- a ruler of Kashmir**" written by "**Deepak Kamboj**" in the year of 2020. He explained the Yousf Shah Chak life history and shed light on how Yousuf Shah Kashmir started rule in Kashmir. The author explained all the organizational strategies of Yousuf Shah Chak.
8. The article drafted by "**Aijaz Hussain Malik** "entitled as "**Sufism & Shaism in medieval Kashmir: A study of the relation between state and religion** "published in the year of 2014 in **Indian journals**. In this paper the author defined how shaism entered Kashmir also, the writer scatter light on what is the connection between shaism and Sufism.
9. Another paper drafted by "**Mushtaq Ahmad Wani student of Ali Garh Muslim University** "published in 1992. The paper is entitled "**Muslim religious trends in Kashmiri modern times**". He examined that how the Muslim religious trend of Chak and other dynasties influenced Kashmir in modern times.

##### 1. Introduction:

The Kashmir a heart-throbbing picturesque land scape, is worldwide famous for its diverse scenery and natural features. The heart-throbbing landscape took the eyes of several dynasties to rule over Kashmir. All the dynasties have their peculiar administrative setup. However, it is to be believed that Kashmir was ruled by the Chak dynasty from 1561 -1586. The chak dynasty had undergone several administrative Changes. The valley came under Mughals' lap with diplomatic ruler Akbar, who laid down the Mughal emperor's bedrock in 1586. However, Babar established a strong Mughal sultan in the Indian subcontinent after the triumph over Ibrahim Lodi. The Chaks were originally connected to a tribe of dars found in the Gilgit Hunza area. The historians believed that Chaks originally came from Dardistan (Gilgit Hunza Region) and cemented their rule in Kashmir. The Chak dynasty was strongly assisted by Shah Mir, who recruited Chaks in his army. The Chaks were bodily strong cleaver by mind thus possessed fame and strength in the valley. After some time, the Chaks

suffered a severe blow in the times of Sultan Zainul Abidin. During this situation, the leadership was in the hands of the great Chak ruler i-e Pando Chak. The Chaks have mostly belonged to Shia sect; hence, during Mirza Haider Doulat, a Sunni follower suffered discrimination at his Hands. When the soul of Mirza Haider Doulat tasted death, the power and authority of Chak were repealed again. They elevated their sovereignty again when entering into matrimonial alliances with heavy land possessed and continued their rule in Kashmir. The Chak dynasty had hierarchical leaders who ruled Kashmir from time to time. However, the Chak dynasty's foundation in Kashmir was first laid down by Gazi Chak after having triumph from Sultan Habib shah last ruler of the sultanate dynasty from 1561-1563. During the last years of Gazi Chak's leadership, the dynasty became weak when Gazi Chak's health has deteriorated. The throne was later managed by his brother, namely Hussain Shah Chak from 1563-1570.5 several capable leaders in Kashmir ruled the Chak dynasty. They strongly made their administrative set up with unique features. Almost five great leaders ruled the dynasty. Their names are chronologically mentioned below.

1. *Gazi Shah Chak from 1561-1563 A.D*
2. *Hussain Shah Chak 1563-1750 A.D*
3. *Ali Shah Chak from 1570- 1578 A.D*
4. *Yousuf Shah Chak from 1578-1579A.D*  
*Second phase of Yousuf Shah from 1580-1586 A.D*
5. *Yaqub Shah Chak from 1586 A.D*
6. *Counsil of Ministers*

## **2. Administration of Chak Dynasty:**

The Chaks had entered Kashmir in the time of Suhadeva and were raised to permanent status by Sultan Shams-ud-din. But begin to play role in the kingdom during the rein of Muhammad Shah, they increased their prestige and power by entering into marriage alliances with ruling dynasty, and by their discretion, energy, perseverances and valour they in due course succeeded in defeating all their rivals and making themselves supreme in the country. Chaks being a Shia sect of Muslim theology proclaimed that the people were free to profes any religion and no one was allowed to impose restrictions upon others belief. The Chak government was on absolute monarchy, both in legal and political sense .But it was not an abandoned autocracy. Their authority had its checks in the code of law, the nobility and the Ulmas. Of course, it depends upon the ability and attitude of each individual ruler. The Chak kings had the Khutba read and coins struck in their own name. The Chak rulers concentrated all powers weather executive, legislative and judicial authority was in their own hands. They were kind and benevolent kings and their rule was enlightened autocracy. Yakub Shah Chak was the only Chak who attempted to establish himself as an ideal Muslim king whose primary functions accordingly to Muslim jurists was:

1. He always tried to defend the territories of Islam and cannot endure any intervention of anyone who wages a war against Islam.
2. He was a great ruler and performed himself several duties as a supreme administrator & judge. He was assisted by his sub ordinates when performed duties like collection of taxes.

### **4.Gazi Chak 1561-1563 A.D**

The first Chak Sultan of Kashmir ascended the throne under Nasir ud- din Muhammad Ghazni Shah from 1561-1563. He was an intelligent person and used his mind to make many efforts to remove various evils in the state. He was particularly careful to rehabilitate the finance. Due to various factors, political and natural, the treasure had become empty. He appointed high level headed Governors for maintaining justice. The justice was deeply enriched in his blood. Once upon a time, one servant caught plucking fruits in an orchid, the king ordered his hands cut off. He established a semblance of peace and reconquered some of the kingdom's traditional territories, notably Skardu, Gilgit, Kiahtiwari, and Pakli. For these, he deputed able and intelligent Governors. The Gazi Shah was a Shiite, but he allowed freedom of belief to all religious persons. According to the script of Nawadrial Akbar that Gazi Shah was intolerant by nature. Due to this reason, many Sunni chiefs like Nusrat chak , yousuf chak and Najim malik brought Qara Beadhur to overthrow him. Akbar sent qara Badhur to invade Kashmir. Still, the union of Sunni Nobles refused to help him and showed their loyalty to Gazi Shah. He possessed all the charismatic qualities and tried to make their administration strong. Under his administration, there was the department of vigilance, energy. He

established good law and order in the state and tried to protect it from Mughal invasions. He was a cultured man and drafted many verses in Persian. He was soft-hearted to those who were loyal to him. All the people, traitors, were ruthlessly treated by Gazi Chak if he found them in any embezzlement case. He introduced very draconian laws for those who were involved in the ill practices of administration. He severely watched the ill administrators, and there was a law of cutting limbs of those who were followed ill practice inside the administration. Gazi Shah had a high sense of justice. Once a servant of his favourite son, Hider khan, he picked up jujube from the ground while accompanying him. He observed this and had the hands of the servant cut off. When Haider khan heard of this, he was so angry that he refused to visit his father. Gazi Shah Chak felt hurt and sent Hiders uncle, Muhammad Malik, to remonstrate with him. Haider got enraged and stabbed his uncle in death. Gazi Shah, thereupon, caused Haider to be hanged. His body was exhibited on the gibbet for eight days and then thrown into the river.

#### **5.Husain Shah Chak: 1563-1570 A.D**

The second ruler of Chak dynasty was Husain Shah Chak. He was succeeded by his brother and ruled Kashmir from 1563-1570. He, too, was a great administrator having lofty leadership skills to run the state business. Besides some ministers, he makes their chief ministers like Mubariz khan, Malik Lula, and Ali Koka, who helped him in his administration.<sup>15</sup> The Sultan made a system in his administration once in a week to dispose of each department's work in a particular day. He divided the days in the following manner: On Monday, he attended the court with Qazi. On Tuesday, he went on hunting. Wednesday, he spent with his army. Thursday, he passed in the company of musician and friends. Friday, he discussed with Ulmus. On Saturday with the society of Hindus and Buddhists priests. And Sunday, he spent with the Sufis. He was a liberal because Hindu enjoyed full freedom during his reign. He was against embezzlement and corruption. He was much soft-hearted when he allowed Shia, Hindus to participate in festivals like Sripancham and Besant Panchami the Sultan himself participated. By the time Husain Shah ascended the throne, the bitterness in relation between the Sunnis and Shia had greatly died out, so Husain Shah appointed Sayyid Habib, a Sunni jurist as Qazi Srinagar. He always shows great hospitality to Akbar's envoy and sent them back with gifts and honors.

#### **6. Ali Shah Chak 1570- 1578 A.D**

Ali Shah Chak headed the Chak dynasty from 1570-1578. He made Sayyid Mubarak Baihaqi his Wazir. Sayyid Mubarak Baihaqi was a man of peace and believed in settling the affairs by tact. To strength further the bond of friendship, he gave his daughter to Mubarak's son, Sayyid Abu-i Maali. He was a strong believer of justice, peace etc. He was kind and of a humane disposition and forgave even those who took up arms against him. He discontinued the practice of blinding and cutting off limbs of a political opponent. He was a liberal and did not discriminate Shite and Sunnis. He deeply used religious principles as a tool to maintain state affairs. Therefore during his reign, the administration was based on religious principles. He, to a great diplomatic and religious leader. He ordered that Khutba should be recited in the emperor name. He runs the administration with justice's moderation and kindness. He was fond of playing a game polo, but one day in early 1579, during a game, he was mortally injured and returned to the palace and realizing that his end is near, and crowned his eldest son Yusef Shah Chak as Sultan.

#### **7. Yousuf Shah Chak 1578-1579 A.D**

Yousuf Shah Chak ascended the throne in 1579, which ultimately ended in 1580. He was a romantic figure married to a great Kashmiri poet, namely Hubba Khotan, popularly called Zoon or Zooni. He was a luxury person in nature, which led to the decline in state administration. He visited Agra to meet with Akbar expected his assistance to regain or restore his throne. He was a great ruler as he abolished much tax like Mir Bhari (tax on boot man), the bagger system, and Jaziys. Under his administration, some defective ministers and nobles like Haider Chak, Muhammad Bhat later led to revolt.

#### **7.1 Yousuf Shah Chaks second reign from 1580- 1586 A.D**

During the first phase of his tenure ship, he was not interested in looking after the state administration. This negligence led to the heavy loss of Yousuf Shah Chak. After the heavy loss, the sultan looked at the administration seriously and became sultan a second time. After becoming king, he appointed Mohd Bhatt as his chief minister. During his second reign, he looked upon his

subjects carefully was helped by some great men like Haider Shah Habib shah and Yousuf khan. The Mughal emperor Akbar helped him by sending troops. The ruler maintained a majesty court for justices. In the end, Yousuf Shah surrendered his will and died in 1592. His death led the Mughal rule in Kashmir.

### **8.Yakub Shah Chak:1586 A.D**

The Mughals were not successful in ascending the throne in Kashmir, and they withdrew from Kashmir. Yakub Shah Chak declared himself the ruler of Kashmir but was under the lap of the Mughal threat. He was very argent and showed little respect towards nobles. His general attitude towards his subjects was also cruel and merciless. The people during his reign did not tolerate suppression. The people's patience was now at an end. Led by Shaikh Yaqub Sarfi, a noted Scholar and some prominent persons approached Akbar to annex Kashmir without further delay. On their part, they promised him all help on certain conditions, which Akbar accepted. These were that:

- (i) The government would not interfere in their religious affairs and grant full freedom of worship.
- (ii) They would be allowed to carry on their trade and commerce.
- (iii) They would neither be made slaves nor required to do beggar, and
- (iv) The nobles with a black record would not be associated with the administration of the country.

### **9.Council of ministers during Chak rule**

The Chaks was assisted by a council of ministers called Amatya Parishad or Mantra Sabha. The council of ministers was the advisory body and worked under the king's confidence. They can hold office under the king's pleasure. The council of ministers belongs to landowning families and nobles. He was his commander in chief and led the campaign either personally or appointed other commanders in his place. He was the highest court of appeal and had the power of life and death over his subjects. All the important decision was taken by king himself like foreign affairs war, peace etc. Gradually during the reign of Yusuf Shah Chak, the system as mentioned above was changed when Mughal interfered. The council of ministers then became a powerful body. The administration of the Chak dynasty has its archy structure. Under the structure, the highest judicial authority was the Qazi in the state. However, the office of the Qazi was introduced and was the legacy of Sultan Skinder in Kashmir. Syed Hussain Sheerazi acted as the first Qazi appointed by Skinder. The power and authority of Qazi were much tectonic and influential. He was not only the head of the Judicial department but also of the pastoral of the department. He looked after the educational and charitable endowments. He advised the sultan on religious matters. He was helped by a Mufti who had a stronghold on Hanifite laws. Another officer under the supervision of Qazi, whose name was Mir Adl. Whose duty was to perform semi magisterial functions. Whenever there was a dispute between the people, Mir Adl tried to resolve the dispute if both parties were agreed. Justice was strongly administrated by the sultan as well as by the wazir. The sultan's domain acted as a first court of appeal who tried to resolve civil and criminal cases. The justices were dispensed by the sultan sitting in the Diwani-Khana in the open darbar every day. However, the other officials were accessible to the people on every day of the weak.

The wazir was the highest official of the state and was head of civil administration. He was the constant adviser of the sultan and enjoyed his utmost confidence. His powers were great, and, therefore, his ability and wisdom depended on the kingdom's welfare and stability. Next to Wazir, Diwani-i-kul was the most important officer in the kingdom. Diwani-I Kul was entrusted with the financial management of the kingdom.

Another important dominant group was the noble class, which played an important role in the Chak dynasty's political field. The nobility under Chaks was not a homogenous body. Still, it was drawn from various social groups, viz Sayyids, Dars, Maliks, Lons, Raines, Bats, Kokas, Dunisand Najis, being composed of all sorts of local and foreigners. Some foreign nobility was receiving royal patronage of the Chak kings. Baba Talib Isfhani and Mohammad Salem Kashghari, both these nobles, played a significant role in the times of Yusuf Shah Chak and Yaqub Shah Chak and fought against Mughal invader Raja Bhagwan Das.

### **10.The Military Department**

Mir Bakshi was the head of the military department and was, therefore, an important officer. He kept the register of the soldiers, distributed their pay and was responsible for their recruitment. The army consisted of Provincial Troops, Feudal Levies, Volunteers and The Standing Army.

The Provincial Troops were stationed in the various provincial towns. Their number varied according to the strategic importance of the place. Then there were the garrisons in the frontier Forts of watch stations at the head of the passes under their respective commanders called Nayaks. There was also garrison in the forts built inside the valley at strategic places like Andarkot, Manar, Chiraodar Nagam and Biru. The second type was the Feudal Levies were the forces which the nobles supplied the sultan in the time of wars. Each contingent was under the command of its chief. Third was Volunteers were called out in a time of emergency when a foreign invasion threatened the valley.

Usually, the Sultans' appeal response was favourable, and the people rallied to their country's defence. The last one was the Standing Army, who were under the Sultans' direct control and was recruited from amongst the Chaks, Sayyids, Raina's and others, who had the reputation of being good soldiers. The standing army was stationed at the capital, and in time of war, the sultan marched at its head to repel the enemy and dispatched a part of it under a separate commander. The army comprised foot and cavalry. The horsemen rode on ponies, but the officers rode on horses imported from Turkistan and Iraq. Owing to the mountains nature of the valley, the cavalry was the most important arm of fighting force, and that is why the capture of the royal stable usually preceded an attempt to seize the throne. The weapons commonly employed were swords, bow and arrows, spear and mace. In later Chaks, gunpowder came to be known in Kashmir, but even then, its use was on a restricted scale. The soldiers wore coats of mail, while the horses were caparisoned with steel.

#### **11. Shi -sism:**

Kaka, highlighting this incident's fundamental importance. The acceptance of Shiism by these two had won Shiism all their followers and devotees. The Shiism might have thought that if the Reshi accepted their beliefs, their faith would flourish across the length and breadth of Kashmir. The Shiism was not harassing the Reshi; their discussion with the Reshi was a clear ploy to win that group of the Kashmiri Muslim society, which had complete sway over most of its population. This brave step was taken in an atmosphere of political security when Chaks were beginning to dominate the administration of Kashmir.

Kaji Chak, the foremost benefactor of the Mir Shamsu-d-Din Iraqi the descendants of Pandu Chak, Hussain Chak and Kaji Chak embraced Shiism. Kaji Chak, the foremost benefactor of the Mir Shamsu-d-Din Iraqi the descendants of Pandu Chak, Hussain Chak and Kaji Chak embraced Shiism by following Shams-u-Din Iraqi. The growth of Shiism witnessed with the ascendance of a Shii, Kaji Chak to the position of wazir and kingmaker, and the resultant encouragement Shiis felt in the expression and propagation of their rituals and practices, belief and outlook are demonstrated by the way they look to debate and discussion openly with Sufis, Reshi and learned men of other schools of Islam. Sayyid Ali provides references of such sort where Shiis put to the test Sunni Sufi and Rishis of Kashmir's spiritual worth in a manner not witnessed during previous regimes to impress their followers with superiority of their faith and thereby conversion to Shiism. Tawarikh Kashmiri mentions that Baba Lusti, one of the disciples of Baba Hanafu-d-Din, was head of the Reshi during Malik Kaji Chak's reign because of the religious discords ( fitna ) he was harassed for his religious beliefs by Shiis. Some of the Reshi, like Shungli Reshi and Beni Kaka, because of their weak faith, had given up their Sunni beliefs. Sayyid Ali feels disgusted with Shiism's adaption by Ahungli Reshi and Beni by following Shams-u-Din Iraqi. The growth of Shiism witnessed with the ascendance of a Shii, Kaji Chak to the position of wazir and kingmaker, and the resultant encouragement Shiis felt in the expression and propagation of their rituals and practices, belief and outlook are demonstrated by the way they look to debate and discussion openly with Sufis, Reshi and learned men of other schools of Islam. Sayyid Ali provides references of such sort where Shiis put to the test Sunni Sufi and Rishis of Kashmir's spiritual worth in a manner not witnessed during previous regimes to impress their followers with superiority of their faith and thereby conversion to Shiism. Tawarikh Kashmiri mentions that Baba Lusti, one of Baba Hanafu-d-Din, was head of the Reshi during the reign of Malik Kaji Chak religious discords ( fitna ), he was harassed for his religious beliefs by Shiis. Some of the Reshi, like Shungli Reshi and Beni Kaka, had given up their Sunni beliefs because of their weak faith. Sayyid Ali feels disgusted with Shiism's adaption by Ahungli Reshi and Beni Kaka, highlighting this incident's fundamental importance. The acceptance of Shiism by these two had won Shiism all their followers and devotees. The Shiism

might have thought that if the Reshi accepted their beliefs, their faith would flourish across the length and breadth of Kashmir. The Shiism was not harassing the Reshi; their discussion with the Reshi was a clear ploy to win that group of the Kashmiri Muslim society, which had complete sway over the majority of its population now. This brave step was taken in an atmosphere of political security when Chaks were beginning to dominate the administration of Kashmir.

### 12. Conclusion and findings:

All the historians agree that the Chaks came to Kashmir from Darads I.e, Dardistan, ferocious and turbulent by nature; they possessed great physical strength. When Shah Mir founded the Sultanate, he recruited them into prominence. In the time of Zainul Abidin, Pandu Chak was their leader. But he showed willful conduct; after that, the sultan put him and some other leading Chaks to death. The surviving Chak families were then settled in Kupwara and Trahgam, known as the kupwari and the trahgamiChaks. Kashmir is regarded as paradise on earth, but in a real sense, it is a state of war from beginning to now. Kashmir is ruled by several dynasties like Mauryan, Pathans, Huns, sultanate dynasty, Chak dynasty Afghan dynasty and Dogra dynasty. The last ruling dynasty of the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir. All the dynasties followed their own administrative set up with the name of different administrative portfolio. Kashmir experienced different political, social, economic, cultural and administrative changes from time to time. It is worth mentioning here that the entire ancient dynasties had gone, but their cultural existence and some footprints in different forms are still prevalent in some parts of the valley..

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