

# The Foundation Of The Chak Dynasty And Its Administration: An Analytical Study Of Kashmir

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## Abstract

Kashmir the paradise on Earth. Mughal emperor Jahangir in the 17<sup>th</sup> century had rightly said, if there is heaven on earth, it's here, it's here, it's here. Many monarchs' eyes were drawn to Kashmir as a result of the couplet. The Muslim rule in Kashmir began in 1339 A.D., which is a unique example of its history. The Muslim takeover of Hindu hegemony was carried out without incident. The Chak dynasty took power in 1561 and ruled Kashmir till 1586. The country was cleaned from robbers and thieves. Corrupt authorities were severely punished. The rulers of the time built a well-functioning grievance mechanism for the people of Kashmir. The well-planned royal engagements and the rule of state business was an outstanding feature of Chak administration. The rulers kept a close eye on treasury and possessions of Kashmir. Due to the lack of administration treaties, the authors noted that obtaining the entire administrative structure of Chaks is extremely difficult. It is claimed that they did not bring any improvements in the administration other than a few modest adjustments enacted in times of need. As a result, the previously formed institutions were preserved and renewed in their tenure.

**Keywords:** Kashmir the Paradise, Chak dynasty, administrative structure, Treasury and possessions, Shiaism

**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 frame work and arrive at an unbiased conclusion—the data collected with the view to analyze the foundation and administration of Chaks in Kashmir.

**Literature Review:** 1. The spread of Shi'ism in Kashmir during the Chak dynasty published in a social science journal by Parweg Aalam. In this paper the author explained how Shi'ism 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 started rule in Kashmir. The author explained all the organizational strategies of Yousuf Shah Chak.

**Introduction:** Kashmir is a strikingly beautiful land region that is well-known throughout the world for its varied landscape and natural features. The breathtaking scenery attracted the attention of multiple dynasties to Kashmir. Every dynasty had a unique administrative structure. That being said, it is thought that the Chak dynasty governed Kashmir from 1561 and 1586. The Chak dynasty had multiple administrative transformations. With the diplomatic monarch Akbar establishing the Mughal emperor's cornerstone in 1586, the valley fell under the Mughals' dominion. But after defeating Ibrahim Lodi, Babar established himself as a powerful Mughal king in the Indian subcontinent. 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. Shah Mir greatly aided the Chak dynasty by enlisting Chaks in his army. The Chaks were well-known and powerful in the valley because they were mentally astute and physically robust. After a while, under Sultan Zainul Abidin's reign, the Chaks Innovations, Number 64 April 2021 [834] took a serious hit. It was Pando Chak, the great Chak monarch, who was in charge of the situation. Due to the Chaks' predominately Shia religious affiliation, a Sunni follower experienced prejudice at the hands of Mirza Haider Doulat. The authority and power of Chak were once more revoked when Mirza Haider Doulat's spirit experienced death. They elevated their sovereignty again when entering into matrimonial alliances with heavy land possessed and continued their rule in Kashmir Occasionally, the Chak dynasty's hierarchical rulers oversaw Kashmir. But Gazi Chak, who had defeated Sultan Habib Shah, the final sultanate dynasty king who ruled from 1561 to 1563, was the one who initially established the Chak dynasty's foundation in Kashmir. Due to a decline in Gazi Chak's health during the latter years of his reign, the dynasty fell. Later, from 1563 to 1570, his brother Hussain Shah Chak held the kingdom.<sup>5</sup> The Chak dynasty was ruled by a number of competent kings in Kashmir. They put a lot of effort into creating a distinctive administrative setup. There were nearly five big dynasties that governed it. Below is a list of them in chronological order.

**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**

**Administration of Chak Dynasty:** The Chaks arrived in Kashmir during Suhadeva's reign, and Sultan Shams-ud-din gave them permanent status. However, they started to play a part in the kingdom during Muhammad Shah's reign. They raised their status and power by getting married into ruling dynasties, and with time, determination, fortitude, and bravery, they were able to beat all of their rivals and establish themselves as the nation's greatest. Chaks, a Shia branch of Islam, declared that everyone was free to practice any religion and that no one had the right to restrict the beliefs of others. The Chak administration operated under an absolute monarchy, both politically and legally. But it was not an abandoned autocracy. The Ulmas, the nobles, and the rule of law served as balances on their power. Naturally, that depends on the aptitude and disposition of each ruler specifically. The Khutbah was recited aloud by the Chak kings, who also had their own coinage made. All authority, including legislative, executive, and judicial, was centralized under the Chak kings. They ruled with an enlightened despotism, and they were compassionate and generous kings. According to Muslim jurists, Yakub Shah Chak was the only Chak who made an effort to become the epitome of a Muslim monarch. His main duties were as follows:

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. 3. He was assisted by his sub ordinates when performed duties like collection of taxes.

**Gazi Chak 1561-1563 A.D** Under Nasir ud-din Muhammad Ghazi Shah, the first Chak Sultan of Kashmir came to power in 1561–1563. He was a bright individual who made numerous attempts to eradicate different sins from the state by using his intellect. In order to repair the finances, he was especially cautious. Owing to a number of natural and political circumstances, the treasure had run out. In order to uphold justice, he selected governors with high authority. His blood had a profound enrichment of justice. When a servant was caught picking fruits off an orchid, the monarch gave the order to amputate his hands. He brought about a semblance of calm and retook several of the kingdom's ancient lands, including Pakli, Gilgit, Kishtwar, and Skardu. He assigned capable and perceptive Governors to handle these. Although the Gazi Shah was a Shiite, he respected everyone's right to practice their religion. Nawadrial Akbar's script claims that Gazi Shah was an intolerant person by nature. This is the reason that numerous Sunni rulers, including Najim Malik, Yousuf Chak, and Nusrat Chak, brought Qara Beadhur to depose him. To conquer Kashmir, Akbar dispatched Qara Badhur. Nevertheless, the Sunni Nobles' union betrayed their allegiance to Gazi Shah by declining to assist him. He attempted to strengthen their administration and had all the traits of a dynamic leader. He was a cultured man and drafted many verses in Persian. He had a tender heart for everyone who remained faithful to him. Gazi Chak dealt severely with everyone he discovered to be a traitor in an embezzlement case. He put in place extremely harsh laws for anybody engaged in unethical administrative procedures. He observed the corrupt administrators on multiple occasions, and he saw that the government had a policy of amputating the limbs of individuals who adhered to corrupt practices. Gazi Shah was a man of great justice. He used to be Hider Khan's favorite son's servant, and while going with him, he grabbed up jujube from the ground. When he saw this, he ordered the servant's hands severed. Haider Khan was so incensed by this that he declined to see his father after learning of it.

Gazi Shah Chak felt hurt and sent Haiders 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.

**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 Mubarak 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.

**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 region, 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 found 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 Yousuf Shah Chak as Sultan.

**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. 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

**Yakub Shah Chak: 1580 -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.
- (ii) They would neither be made slaves nor required to do beggar, and
- (iii) The nobles with a black record would not be associated with the administration of the country.

**Council of ministers during Chak rule** A council of ministers known as Amatya Parishad or Mantra Sabha provided assistance to the Chaks. Under the king's trust, the council of ministers served as the consultative body. They may serve in their positions as the king sees fit. Landowning families and nobles make up the council of ministers. As commander in chief, he oversaw the campaign directly or by appointing other commanders to take his place. He ruled over his subjects with the authority of life and death and served as the highest court of appeals. The king made all of the major decisions, including those pertaining to foreign policy, war, peace, etc. As the Mughals meddled, the previously described system was gradually altered during Yusuf Shah Chak's rule. Then, the Council of Ministers emerged as a strong body. The Chak dynasty's administrative organization is archaic. The Qazi was the state's highest judicial authority under the system. But as a legacy of Sultan Skinder in Kashmir, the position of Qazi was established. Skinder appointed Syed Hussain Sheerazi as the first Qazi. Qazi's authority and power were extremely strong and powerful. In addition to leading the department's judicial division, he also oversaw its pastoral division. He managed the endowments for education and charity. He gave the sultan advice regarding religion. A Mufti with a stranglehold on Hanifite law assisted him. There was another officer named Mir Adl who worked under Qazi's supervision. whose responsibility it was to carry out quasi-magisterial duties. When there was a disagreement among the populace, Mir Adl attempted to mediate it as long as both sides could agree. Both the wazir and the sultan had a considerable hand in administering justice. The realm of the sultan served as an initial court of appeal, attempting to settle both civil and criminal disputes. Every day, the sultan would sit in the open darbar of the Diwani-Khana and administer justice. On the other hand, the public may reach the other officials seven days a week. The wazir oversaw civil administration and was the state's most senior officer. He had the sultan's

complete confidence and served as his constant advisor. Because of his immense influence, the prosperity and stability of the kingdom determined his skill and wisdom. Diwani-i-kul was the most important officer in the realm, second only to Wazir. The responsibility for overseeing the kingdom's finances was placed on Diwani-I Kul. The noble class was another significant dominant group that was influential in the political sphere of the Chak dynasty. Under Chaks, the nobility was not a uniform group. However, because it was made up of both locals and foreigners, it was drawn from a variety of social groupings, including the Sayyids, Dars, Maliks, Lons, Raines, Bats, Kokas, Dunis, and Najis. The Chak kings were royally patronizing certain foreign nobility. 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.

**The Military Department** Being the chief of the military department, Mir Bakshi had a significant position. He was in charge of recruiting new soldiers, allocating their pay, and maintaining the soldiers' record. Provincial Troops, Feudal Levies, Volunteers, and The Standing Army made up the army. The different provincial towns served as the headquarters for the Provincial Troops. The number changed based on the location's strategic significance. Next were the garrisons under their individual Nayak commanders stationed in the frontier Forts of watch stations at the head of the passes. Additionally, there was a garrison stationed in the forts constructed within the valley at key locations like as Biru, Manar, Andarkot, and Chiraodar Nagam. The second category consisted of the Feudal Levies, who were the armies that the aristocracy provided to the sultan during conflicts. The chief of each contingent was in charge of it. Third, a foreign invasion that endangered the valley prompted the mobilization of volunteers. The populace typically responded favorably to the Sultans' appeal and mobilized to defend their nation. The last one was the Standing Army, which was directly ruled by the Sultans and was enlisted from the Chaks, Sayyids, Rainas, and other families that were known for being skilled fighters. The standing army was positioned in the capital, and during times of conflict, the sultan led it in a march to drive out the adversary and sent out a portion of it under a different general. The cavalry and foot made up the army. While the officers rode horses imported from Iraq and Turkistan, the horsemen rode ponies. Because of the valley's mountainous terrain, the cavalry was the most vital battle force, which is why taking control of the royal stable typically came before an effort to usurp the crown. The weapons that were frequently used were spears, mace, bows and arrows, and swords. Gunpowder was used sparingly in Kashmir even in later Chaks, when it became recognized about it. The soldiers wore coats of mail, while the horses were caparisoned with steel.

**Shi -sism:** Kaka, emphasizing the basic significance of this tragedy. Shiism gained all of its adherents and supporters when these two came to accept it. It is possible that the Shiism believed their faith would spread over Kashmir if the Reshi agreed with them. The conversation between the Reshi and the Shiism was obviously an attempt to gain favor with that segment of Kashmiri Muslim society, which held total control over the majority of the people. The Reshi were not being harassed. This courageous action was done during a period of political stability when the Chaks were starting to seize control of Kashmir's government. Shiism was adopted by Kaji Chak, the most prominent supporter of Mir Shamsu-d-Din Iraqi, who was descended from Hussain Chak and Pandu Chak. Kaji Chak, the most important supporter of Mir Shamsu-d-Din Iraqi, adopted Shiism by imitating Shams-u-Din Iraqi. Hussain Chak and Pandu Chak's descendants also adopted Shiism. Shiism gained momentum after Kaji Chak, a Shiite, became the wazir and kingmaker. This, in turn, encouraged Shiis to express and spread their beliefs, practices, and rituals, as evidenced by their willingness to engage in candid discussion and debate with Sufis. Reshi and knowledgeable members of several Islamic schools. Sayyid Ali offers examples of this kind of reference, in which Shiites test the spiritual quality of Sunni Sufis and Rishis in Kashmir in a way not seen in earlier regimes in an effort to convince their supporters that Shiism is superior and therefore convert them. 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 mem 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 Hanafud-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. These two's adoption of Shiism gained the religion all of its adherents and supporters. It is possible that the Shiism Innovations, Number 64 April 2021 [838] believed their faith would spread throughout Kashmir if the Reshi agreed with them. The Reshi were not being harassed by Shiism; rather, their conversation with them was a blatant attempt to appease that segment of Kashmiri Muslim society, which now had total authority over the vast majority of the country's inhabitants. This courageous action was done during a period of political stability when the Chaks were starting to seize control of Kashmir's government.

### Conclusion and Findings:

All the historians agree that the Chaks came to Kashmir from Dardistan. 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. 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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