

A Historical Overview of Mamund Tribe

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ABSTRACT

The Mamund tribe is a prominent sub-tribe of the Tarkalani Pashtuns that has had major contributions to the historical, social and political environment of north western Pakistan and eastern Afghanistan. This paper provides a historical overview of the era of the Mamund tribe based on genealogical documents, oral traditions, writings of the colonial period, and recent academic studies. It explores the origins, the lineage, the inner divisions, migrations, and the settlements of the tribe, referring to the role of Mamund Baba, the Kakazai (Loi Mamund), and Wurhzai (Warha Mamund) sub-clans. The paper also discusses how the Mamund tribe was involved in all the major historical activities, the alliances with the Yousafzai tribe, opposition to the Mughal forces, and participation in the 1897 Pashtun rebellion against the British colonial government. It also comprise the old system of Da Mamundo Wesht/Taqseem which was a rotational land distribution system among sub-clans which encouraged equity and social cohesion. This research offers a concentrated history of the Mamund tribe, by synthesizing fragmented historical, ethnographic, and oral sources, and fills an important gap in the literature, as well as to the dynamics of the Pashtun tribes.

Keywords: Mamund Tribe, Tarkalani Pashtuns, Tribal History, 1897 Pashtun Uprising, Genealogy, Da Mamundo Wesht/Taqseem, Tribal Conflicts

INTRODUCTION

Mamund Tribe is a Pashtun Tribe originally from Afghanistan. It was living in Qandahar (Ghwarha Marghy), Afghanistan. In addition, they were settled in Afghanistan's Province Laghman. It is part of the larger Tarkalani lineage, traced to Qais Abdur Rashid in genealogical records. Tarkalanis are the descendants of Trurk Baba whose full and original name was Badruddin Turk. Historical accounts suggest that Tarkalani Tribe had come to Afghanistan from Iran through Turkistan and Kurram District. Turk Baba had two sons namely, Shoaib and Musa. The descendants of Shoaib are being called Shoaib Zai and are living in Sra Qala, Sa Sadha, Laghman and Nangahar. All of them primarily reside in Afghanistan. And his another son Musa had eight sons namely, Mahmud (Mamund), Ismail, Esa, Ilyas (Salar), Hassan, Madhay, Haroon and Mawar. They are living in Kabul, Laghman, Kunarh, Marawara, Punjab, Bajaur, Jandool and Maidan.

Most of Mamunds came to Indo-Pakistan and current Pakistan with Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni. Mahmud of Ghazni attacked Indo-Pakistan nearly seventeen times between the year 1000 to 1026 AD and Mamunds were in his army and some of them never went back to Afghanistan. Besides this, many Mamund Tribe's people came to Indo Pakistan with Shahab Uddin Muhammad Ghorī, Bahlul Khan Lodhi and Ahmad shah Abdali. Furthermore, it is said that they were living in Laghman Province of Afghanistan and were in greater number, so that place was small for them, therefore, they started migration to other places like Kabul, Kunar, Nangahar, and current Bajaur District Of Khybe Pakhtunkhwa.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Mamund tribe inhabits regions of the Bajaur and Mohmand tribal districts of modern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan (Ahmed, 2013). Ethnographic researches emphasize their commitments to Pashtunwali, an indigenous system that regulates those principles of honor, hospitality, justice, and revenge and their specific socio-political systems based on Jirga-related government and segmentary descent structures (Pelevin, 2015). The given traditional structure has been one of the foundations of their stable society and conflict management over centuries (Pelevin, 2015). The historical struggle of these Pashtun tribes, such as the Mamund, against foreign influence, especially the British colonial rule, is quite recorded, as such an aspect of geopolitical value has been strategic in the North-West Frontier region (Ahmed, 2013)(Hussain et al., 2022). The legal framework that existed during colonial rule, including the Frontier Crimes Regulations (FCR), applied to this group of "peripherals" such as tribal Pashtuns, had far-reaching implications on their government and legal frameworks, a legacy that lasted more than a century before its repeal (Yousaf & Wakhu, 2020).

The modern studies have devoted attention to the dramatic changes that have affected the Pashtun tribes including the Mamund, since the end of the 20th century. Such changes include displacement as a result of militancy, counterinsurgency actions and massive infrastructural development endeavors (Kubota et al., 2024)(Shakirullah et al., 2020). Research underscores decline in traditional power systems and the movement of the younger generation to urban areas, as well as the changing gender roles based on humanitarian activism and the growth of formal education (Akhtar et al., 2023). As an example, Pakistani women in Pashtun tribes in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa still have to struggle with issues related to land ownership, forced marriage, and access to education, although Sharia and Pakistani law treat women as independent people (Akhtar et al., 2023). It is perceived that by means of education integration, the marginalized communities can achieve socio-economic progress and cultural continuity, tackling disparities and insufficient infrastructure (Khan and Saikia, 2024).

Given the limited and sometimes biased literature on the Mamund tribe, this paper aims to offer a comprehensive historical narrative based on genealogical traditions, oral histories, colonial-era writings, and existing historical documents. By examining the origins of the Mamund tribe, their ancestry, migrations, internal divisions, political groupings, and patterns of resistance, the study seeks to document the historical progression of the tribe within the broader framework of Pashtun tribal society. This analysis not only helps preserve the historical memory of the Mamund tribe but also provides a contextual understanding of their role in the socio-political history of Afghanistan and the northwestern regions of modern-day Pakistan, thereby addressing a significant gap in the literature.

Although there is an expanding literature on the topic of Pashtun tribal societies in northwestern Pakistan, studies on the Mamund tribe are insufficient and scattered. The majority of the available literature concern larger Pashtun communities or the areas adjacent to them including Swat, and North Waziristan, and usually discusses the Mamund as part of larger analytical approaches of conflict, rule and development. As a result, historical continuity, socio-cultural structure, and the experiences of the Mamund tribe are still poorly represented in the scholarly literature. The gap in this paper is filled by synthesizing the existing historical, ethnographic and modern literature to give a narrow focus of writing the historical trajectory of the Mamund tribe with the aim of preserving the history of the tribe and creating a better dimension of tribal dynamics in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

METHODOLOGY

The research design adopted in the study is a qualitative historical research, which aims at giving a detailed account of the Mamund tribe. The study will be based on primary and secondary sources, as well as oral

materials that will be used to reconstruct the tribe in terms of genealogy, past occurrences, migrations, and socio-political functions.

Data Collection

Primary Sources: Interviews and local narratives of the elders of the Mamund were included to help preserve tribal memory, genealogical documents and oral accounts of the battles and rebellions, such as the 1897 Pashtun uprising. Oral traditions provided information on sub-clans divisions, leadership, and local practices including Da Mamundo Wesht/Taqseem. These are primary sources that give the personal narrations about Mamund engagement in battles, tribal affiliations, and uprisings.

Secondary Sources: Academic articles, books, newspapers and ethnographies about the Pashtun tribes, Tarkalani lineage and uprisings of the tribes. These were the sources that helped to contextualize the Mamund tribe in the greater context of the Pashtun history.

Data Analysis

Thematic and chronological methods were employed in the analysis of collected data on a qualitative level. Thematic analysis focused on lineage, sub-clan structures, migrations, tribal alliances, conflicts and customary governance. The chronological analysis enabled the description of the past events, including the beginnings of the Mamund tribe and their role in major rebellions against foreigners. Comparing the oral and written history made the historical narrative valid and reliable.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF MAMUND TRIBE

The genealogy of Mamund Tribe is debatable. According to Pir Moazzam Shah’s book “ Tawareekh-e-Hafiz Rahmat Khani”, the eldest son of Musa, Mahmud’s generation is known as Loi Mamund or Kakazai and the son of Ismail, Mahmud’ generation is known as Wurh Mamund or Wurhzai. Both were uncle and nephew and the whole Tribe is called Mamund Tribe. According to Malik Shaheen Khan Kakazai and many other people, Mamund Baba had two sons. The descendants of elder one is called Kakazai or Loi Mamund (Kaka is used for elder and Zai for descendant in Pashto). And the descendant of younger son is known as Wurh, Wurhzai or Warha Mamund (Wurh is used for small or younger in Pashto).

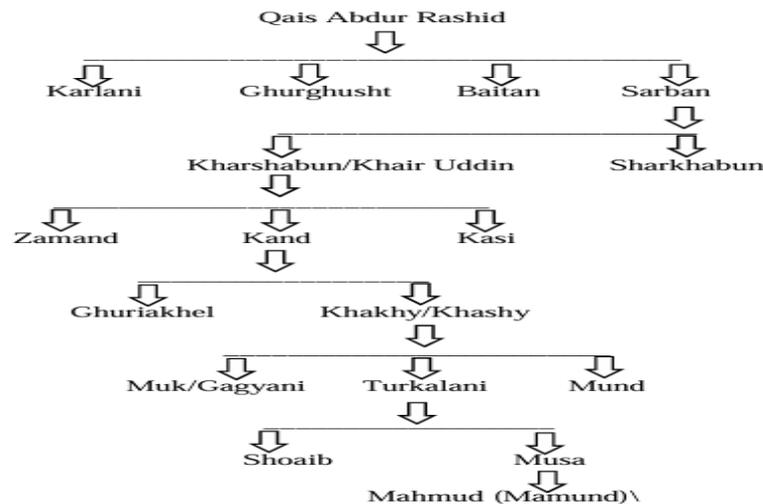


Figure 1. Traditional genealogical representation of the Mamund Tribe, tracing lineage from Qais Abdur Rashid through the Tarkalani branch to Mahmud (Mamund Baba).

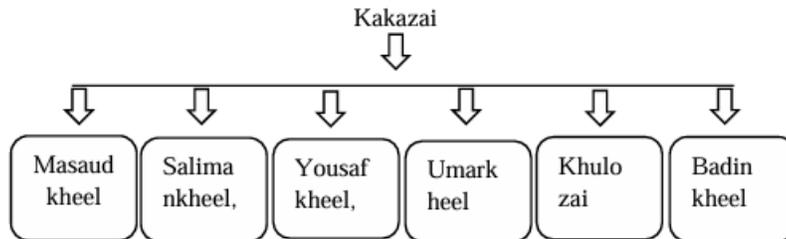
Mamund Baba

Mahmud who is famous by Mamund Baba was a religious scholar of his time. He was the elder son of Musa Baba and was the grandson of Turk Baba. Furthermore, he had two sons, the descendants of the elder son are known as Kakazai or Loi Mamund and the descendant of the younger son are known as Wurhzai or Wurh Mamund. The grave of Mamund Baba is in Mouza Daag, Tehsil Mamund, Bajaur.

Kakazai/Loi Mamund Kakazai

Kakazai or Loi Mamund are the offspring of the eldest son of Mamund Baba. Kakazai is further divided into six clans, namely, Masaudkheel, Salimankheel, Yousafkheel, Umarmkheel, Khulozai, and Badinkheel. (Kakazai M. S., 2025).

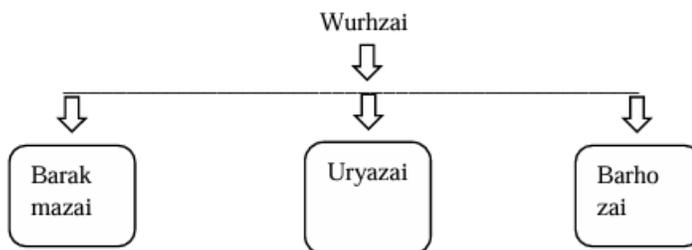
Figure 2



Wurhzai or Warh Mamund

Wurhzai or Warh Mamund are the offspring of the youngest son of Mamund Baba. Wurhzai is further divided into three clans, namely, Barhozai, Uryazai and Baramkazi or Barakmazai. (Khan S., 2014).

Figure 3



Places of Living of Mamund Tribe

Mamund tribe is basically living in Mamund Tehsil of Bajaur. Its first name was Watalai, but later on this was changed to Mamund because Mamund Tribe was living there. They are living all around Pakistan but particularly in; Bajaur, Jandool, Maidan, Talash, Chackdara, Swat, Peshawar, Abbottabad, Sialkot, Lahore, Dera Ghazi Khan, Quetta, Sargodha, Chakwal, Gujarat, Chakral, Jhelum, Karachi, Kashmir, Pishin,

Esakheel and Musakheel. In Afghanistan, they are living in Kabul, Qandahar, Laghman, Kunar and Marawara. In India they are living in Jalandhar and Gurdaspur.

TRIBAL BATTLES AND ALLIANCES

Helping Youafzai Tribe against Dilazak Tribe

When Yousafzai migrated to Peshawar in search of facilities and agricultural land from Afghanistan, at that time Dilazak Tribe was living in Peshawar. Yousafzai Tribe's people requested to Dilazak to give some land to them for living, so Dilazak gave them Kalpanrhi, a town in Gijjar Garhi. Yousafzai Tribe's leaders requested them that more Yousafzai Tribe's people are also coming from Afghanistan, so give us more land so, Dilazak gave them the land of Danashkol, Anbar and Bajaur.

At that time, Malik Haibu Dilazak Umarkheel was living in Bajaur and Jandool and he openly rejected this decision of Dilazak Tribes' elders to give Bajaur to Yousafzai Tribe. Yousafzai Tribe's leaders and Dilazak Tribe's leaders requested Malik Haibu to leave Bajaur to Yousafzai Tribe because it is the decision of the whole tribe of Dilazak but he refused. This thing reached to a battle between Yousafzai and Dilazak. So Yousafzai Tribe was helped by Tarkalani Tribe, especially by Mamund because both tribes had brotherly relations. At this time Tarkalani Tribe was living in Laghman and the leader/Malik of this tribe was Sarkhabi-Bin-Shamsu Tarkalani. By listening this news that Yousafzai and Dilazak are going to fight a battle, he led his army to Bajaur to negotiate an agreement between both tribes. But heartedly, he also wanted that Dilazak should give Bajaur to Yousafzai Tribe. So, he requested Malik Haibu to leave Bajaur to Yousafzai Tribe but he refused and announced the battle and directly attacked Yousafzai Tribe. By doing this, Tarkalani Tribe joined the battle and fought against Dilazak. In this battle Malik Haibu was attacked by Payenda Tarkalani (Belonging to Kakazai Mamund) by sword but eventually he was beheaded by Burhan Tarkalani (also belonging to Kakazai Mamund). Malik Haibu's brother Jahan Shah was also killed in this battle. Dilazak fled from Bajaur and Bajaur was conquered by Yousafzai Tribe. At the end of this battle Tarkalani Tribe went back to Laghman (Caroe, 1958).

Babar's Account of Tarkalani Courage

Mughal king Zahir-Ud-Din Muhammad Babar writes in his book "Babar Nama" about the courage and bravery of Tarkalani Tribe, "that no one had stopped our way except Tarkalnis". He had written that the Tarkalanis had made fortress on the top of mountain and were calling/hinting us to fight with them. It was a great bravery to stop the way of Mughal troops and inviting them for war. The mountain on which fortress was build is in Mamund Tehsil (Babar, 1493-1530).

Recognition by Winston Churchill

"Winston Churchill writes about Mamund Tribe that, it would be injustice to deny the people of Mamund, their skills of war, skills of the right target and courage. During an indefinite period how they have fought us, fought in the wild barbarity, and dealt a long blow to our civilization, our civilization admits without any hesitation that they are a brave tribe. Their name in this busy century, will not only be persevered in the minds of our men for many years, but there are many families in England who will never forget them" (Churchill, 1898).

The Pashtun's Uprising 1897

In 1897 there was a general revolt and uprising in NWFP now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, especially in tribal areas. It was a severe agitation against British authorities. In every village Ulema and religious scholars

contributed to this uprising. The Ulema gave emotional speeches to their students, and their students fought with British authorities by religious spirits. They issued a general verdict (Fatwa) of Jihad against English authorities. Almost all Pashtuns fought with enthusiasm. The British authorities received huge destruction. The English authorities said that, all these happenings were organized and free-engineered by rebel elements.

CAUSES OF UPRISING 1897

There were many causes of the Uprising of 1897 and some major of the important are going to be explained in the following lines.

1. Religious Motivation

The first and main cause was that, it was thought and revolted by the people that it was their religious duty to resist and finish British occupation of the Muslims areas of NWFP.

2. British Interference

It was also the result of the continuous irritation and interference against life in the hills, the tribal people were and are freedom loving, but on the other side British authorities interfere in their local areas more than sixteen times and it was their desire to dominated the local people.

3. Durand Line Discontent

The Pashtuns of tribal areas were not happy and were disturbed due to Durand Line Agreement in 1893. After this agreement British authorities started to considered tribal people as their subjects which was not acceptable to them.

4. Regional Political Context

Moreover, Amir Abdur Rahman was very sharp and farsighted but he was weaker and could not compete British authorities directly. He took some advantages from British India and supported them, but secretly, he supported the Tribals. He would direct his commander Ghulam. Haidar Khan to work against British authorities and he also helped Pashtuns in the war of Chitral.

5. Immediate Trigger

The immediate cause of Pashtun Uprising 1897 was, Mr. Gee, the political officer of Tochi, along with his army went to “Meezaar” a village in Tochi, for selecting a site for a post. They got a warm welcome there by the people but due to some objectionable activities, people rose against the British soldiers and started firing. It resulted a huge destruction and the fire spread in the whole Tribal belt. (Bakhtiar P., 2009)

UPRISING AND THE MAMUND TRIBE

Mamund Uprising was the part of larger NWFP Uprising 1897 and was the part of Malakand Uprising and greater Pashtun Uprising. When the Malakand Uprising started, so Mamund Tribe also started a war against British authorities in Mamund Valley and attacked a British Unit in Mamund Valley and killed eleven soldiers and many were wounded. At this time there was a camp of British in Inayat Kily and had come there about three months ago when this uprising started. In response of this attack British decided to subdue

the Mamund Tribe and sent a military expedition under Brigadier General Jeffreys. And it was September 16, 1897 when Mamund fighters did a surprise attack on British Camp at Inayat Kily and in this attack a senior British officer, Lieutenant-Colonel Arthur Anderson was killed. In the response of this, British Army implemented Scorched-Earth Policy and destroyed many villages, killed livestock and burned crops, just to make the Mamund weak. Despite of this the Mamund fighters were not ready to stop and they started guerrillas' tactics to keep resisting. And news of general Jihad was spreading quickly by tribal Mullahs and more people were joining this Jihad day by day. And this war/Jihad was leading by Malik Muhammad Amin Khan, he was the Malik of Mamund Tribe at that time.

It is said that in Mamund Uprising, especially in the battle of Agrah and Gat, Mamund fighters fought courageously and killed many English soldiers including one commander, he is known by the name of Meechani. This name is not present in official records, but maybe pronunciation difference will be there in speaking, because this is not present in written form but has been transferred chest-to-chest to today's generation. A Pashto tappa in Bajaur is also famous about this story, which is,

پیرنگ کمپنی ته په جرا شو

چی میچنی می په گت بنار ورژیدنه

(In English it can be translated as; The Englishman started weeping to the company that we lost Meechani in Gat Khaar)

It is also famous in Mamund that, a person of Mamund Tribe named Muhammad captured an English man in Spira Kandha (A canyon in Mamund Tehsil) and he was deported alive from Bajaur. A Pashto tappa is also famous about this story there in Bajaur, which is

ده دی سپیری کندي په سر کینی

محمد گهوره ونيو ژوندیي ستنه وینه

(In English it can be translated as; Mahmud captured an Englishman in Spera Ganda which is the name of a canyon and deported him alive)

It was October 2, 1897 when General Sir Bindon Blood left the Panjkora along with a huge army and started journey to Inayat Kily camp of Bajaur for suppressing the Mamund Tribe. He reached Inayat Kily on October 4, 1897. When Mamund Tribe's people came to know that more army reached and they were not in the position to fight with them, because they were tired and had no weapons and English army was fully equipped with weapons. So the Mamund fighters needed some time to be fully prepared for a big war. And at the same time British authorities also wanted cease fire. Therefore, The Khan of Nawagai was requested to negotiate a cease fire. So on October 12, 1897 in a Jirga British negotiated a truce. The Mamund Tribe agreed to stop attacks but retain their autonomy. Thus, the war was stopped. After this truce, Mamund Tribe retain their autonomy and independence. On the other hand British did not established permanent control in Mamund and Bajaur and finally they left Bajaur. They just spend almost six to seven months there, three months before the Uprising and three to four months after the revolt.

Beside of Mamund or Bajaur uprising, Mamund Tribe's people also had taken part in Mohmand Uprising and Malakand Uprising and went there and fought side by side with their Pashtun brothers. And now in Mohmand District and In Malakand there are the graveyards of Mamund Tribe martyrs.

DIVISION OF MAMUND

This act of the division of Mamund is called “Da Mamundo Wesht/Taqseem” in Pashto. This was basically the division of areas among the sub clans of Mamund. This division was doing after every twenty years. After every twenty years the Sub clans of Mamund would come to a place, commonly to a Hujra and would divide the places/areas amongst the sub clans. There used to be a lucky draw or lottery on places/areas. The whole Mamund Tribe was divided into ten parts, Loi Mamund was divided into five parts and Wurh Mamund was also divided into five parts. And their places/villages were also divided into ten parts. There used to be a lucky draw and the people would change their villages after every twenty years. The clan who won the first lucky draw would go to Kitkot, the clan who won the second lucky draw would go to Gabari, and the clan who won the third lucky draw would go to Nakhtar, and so on. Its main purpose was justice and equality. For example, Kitkot was the most developed and agriculturally productive area of that period, there were many flour mills and the land was agricultural and water was in greater quantity, so if a clan spend twenty years there, so now it’s the right of other clan to go there and spend time there because it was one tribe, so, this division was just for justice. This division was extended to Marawara, Qandahar, and Laghman in Afghanistan and still the Mamund Tribe has its land in Afghanistan and Bajaur, Jandool, Peshawar etc. in Pakistan. The first division was done by Sheikh Mali Baba and the last division was done by Malik Khan Zada. It is said that the last division of Mamund was done in 1926-1927 and after that it has stopped (Kakazai M. S., 2025).

CONCLUSION

The paper gives a detailed historical description of the tribe of Mamund; one of the prominent sub-tribe within the Tarkalani Pashtuns. The research has been able to trace the origin of the tribe, divisions within the tribe, migrations, and settlements of the tribe, and their socio-political activities throughout centuries through analysis of genealogical traditions, oral histories and historical documents. Their martial and political importance is shown by the active involvement of the Mamund tribe in such major historical events as the alliances with the Yousafzai and the opposition to the Mughal forces as well as the participation in the 1897 Pashtun rebellion against the British colonial power. Moreover, the paper brings out the traditional governance system of the tribe, Da Mamundo Wesht/Taqseem that had provided the tribe with an equal distribution of land, as well as social cohesion between sub-clans. The study highlights the beneficial role of oral traditions, tappas and genealogical documents in restoring tribal histories, providing information that is usually missing in the mainstream historical accounts. By consolidating scattered literature and oral accounts, this paper fills an important gap in Pashtun tribal studies, providing a focused understanding of the Mamund tribe.

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