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Part of a Special Series

19th Century
Great Games and
Indomitable
Dogra Warriors

Reclaiming
History And
Marking New
Policy
Indicators



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Part of a Special Series entitled 'From Kashmir to Haridwar' based on family history, anecdotes, cultural linkages and ancestry, by journalist Venus Upadhyaya.



Photo courtesy: The British Library.



"Great Games were a series of geo-political activities between the Russian Empire and the British Empire from 1838 to 1907. They still continue today, albeit with different players."

Photo courtesy: Wikipedia Commons.



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Bridge India is a progressive non-profit think tank dedicated to discourse on public policy. Given its diversity, everything about India, and its polar opposite, is true in unison. Bridge India seeks to highlight and celebrate this nuance, to help India-watchers understand India better.

Great Games were a series of geo-political activities between the Russian Empire and the British Empire from 1838 to 1907. They still continue today, albeit with different players.

In the 19th century they were driven by expansionist agendas and led to massive territorial, political and socio-economic changes in the region that lay between the two empires. The sandwiched region included today's Central Asia, Afghanistan, India's and Pakistan's northern frontiers, today's Xinjiang and Tibet.

The Russian empire had an eye on the most coveted British colony – India. The British had reached India by sea and the Russians wanted to march through the land and they went about devouring everything that came on the way.

For the many Great Game exploratory expeditions that happened then, Kashmir was the entrance to the mainland. From beyond Kashmir started the wilderness for the British camping in Srinagar and from beyond Kashmir started India for Russians camping in Bokhara. It's designed that way by geography.

During the Great Games period, Kashmir was ruled over by Dogras, a warrior race of the north western Himalayas and its adjoining Indus Basin. Dogras were responsible for some of the most dynamic, high altitude-victories in the Himalayan and trans-himalayan region.

The propaganda of the Great Games ensured that their legacy be demeaned and their history of warfare remains one of the least studied in the subcontinent until today.

My friend and journalist, Ethan Gutmann, had long suggested that I read *The Great Game, on Secret Service in High Asia* by Peter Hopkirk but I had lacked enthusiasm despite being of Dogra ethnicity.

Gutmann had himself been on a "secret service" in the recent past in Central Asia for his upcoming book. Hopkirk's travels during Great Game one happened through Russian dominated territory while Gutmann in Great Game two traveled on missions through Central Asia where Chinese are the main players.

Gutmann's aim was to uncover some of the most heinous acts the Chinese Communist Party has committed against humanity within its Xinjiang region, the linkages of which can be intercepted across central Asia.

Today China is the main player across those same contentious territories which the Russian empire conquered by late 1800s in Central Asia while on its pursuit to find a land route to India. China's power play today in high Asia involves its Belt and Road initiative and its burgeoning economic investment. Some call it China's debt-diplomacy that's gradually turning these nations into its undeclared vassal states.

China is also wrestling with India for its northern frontiers in similar ways like the Russian empire wanted to from the mid-1800s from the British Empire. In fact China already occupies some of those heights.

With the past few decades of geo-political developments particularly with China's increasing military footprints across the Himalayan and trans-himalayan regions that Dogras ruled until 1947, it has become imperative that Dogra history, particularly their high altitude war games and their Shastra Vidya (military knowledge) be studied thoroughly. And the Great Games of the 1800's provide the right context.

It also calls for some reflection on why instead of inheriting these heights from the Dogras, India went on to inherit border disputes. Wasn't Mao Zedong's annexing Xinjiang and Tibet in 1949 about the Great Games? Did he understand the Great Games better than the native leaders of nascent India born in 1947?

In the early 20th century some of the Soviets entered the northern frontiers at Chitral, alarming India's British administrators. I'm compelled to think if the Chinese inherited the Great Games from their Soviet comrades.

Why did Pakistan transfer the Shaksgam valley, a part of Dogra territory under its occupation in Karakoram in 1963 to Mao? And why does Pakistan claim the entire region of Jammu and Kashmir as disputed, but doesn't address the CCP occupied Dogra territory with the same claims of dispute?

What is transpiring behind the scene? Are these the new Great Games?

"China is also wrestling with India for its northern frontiers in similar ways like the Russian empire wanted to from the mid-1800s from the British Empire. In fact China already occupies some of those heights."

Dogras: The Shen-pa

Dogras won a large swath of India's northern frontiers during the Great Games. They were present in the north western Himalayas for thousands of years and are known for their military valor and loyalty in the last few centuries.

The soldier masculine identity is so native to Dogras that even their folk songs are about their maidens waiting for her "sapa-ayiya" (sepoy in dogri) who's away on the war front. Or they are about love and war with most of the time hills and mountain routes (taki, takiya or dhakis) forming a backdrop.

Frank F. Younghusband, the traveler and explorer who served as the British

commissioner to Tibet from 1902-1904 called Dogras "the soldier race," in his book, "The Heart of a Continent, A Narrative of Travels in Manchuria, Across the Gobi Desert, Through the Himalayas, the Pamirs, and Chitral, 1884-1894. (8)

The Dogras conquered the northern frontiers around the same time as the Russians conquered Central Asia. They emerged into power from the Sikh garrisons of Maharaja Ranjit Singh and turned into a formidable British military ally after the British defeated the Sikhs in the Anglo-Indian war of 1846.

Sikhs were present on a few heights in the trans-himalayan region in the early 19th century. After the Dogras took over from them, they became the rulers of British India's largest princely state called "Jammu, Kashmir and the Allied territories of Tibet." This land-locked kingdom lay sandwiched right between the British and the Russians during the Great Games. This could explain why its situation grew to the point that it turned into a contemporary military theater.



Photo courtesy: Getty Images.

"My purpose is above all to tell the story of Dogras or the warriors that China's Qing empire termed Shen-pa ["Singh people"]. I want to narrate their story as an important Great Game player or you can say my purpose is to retell the story from the Dogra perspective."

Hopkirk's Great Game (1) aptly explains how the reality of the geo-political games across high Asia in the 19 century is linked with the history of the Dogras. Hopkirk mentioned Kashmir and Dogra Maharaja 26 times, all together in his classic.

Today some of those impeachable heights reached by the Dogras are controlled by the Chinese and the Pakistanis, while Kashmir, the summer capital of Dogras has become synonymous with conflict narratives. Not only the contemporary territorial conflicts between India, Pakistan and China but also the territorial disputes between

Between Pakistan and Afghanistan are today a legacy of the Great Games and I find myself drawn into them.

I'm compelled to explore my own routes through the past and present Great Games because my ancestry and my home today lies at the bottleneck of the Dogra heartland. My purpose is however not stirred by the intention to find a route like many explorers did during the Great Games. (4) My purpose is rather to resolve, undo a lot of dust that has settled on a great story that today the communist Chinese want to re-engineer for themselves.

My purpose is to answer questions about why my ancestors in a remote Shivalik village were keepers of rich civilizational heritage. How and what impacted our history and how today our personal lives knowingly and unknowingly form a backdrop to next generational geo-politics.

My purpose is above all to tell the story of Dogras or the warriors that

China's Qing empire termed Shen-pa ["Singh people"]. I want to narrate their story as an important Great Game player or you can say my purpose is to retell the story from the Dogra perspective.

High altitude warriors

Ironically today with Kashmir conflict dominating the narrative there's either an attempt to demonise Dogras or an attempt to paint them as saints by counter narrators. But they were neither – they were just sword-wielding warriors adept at high altitude warfare.

Some of their best military generals were Vartyas or the adherents of ancient martial arts which have a history of thousand years in these frontiers. (9)

By eulogising Dogras or demonizing them, we aren't studying their history rightly. Their genius has remained unsung and undiscovered. The Great Game period proves that the Dogras

Stages in the creation of the State of Jammu and Kashmir



Stages in the creation of the Dogra state of Jammu and Kashmir, the largest princely state under the British Empire. (7). Photo courtesy: Venus Upadhyaya.

were the most competent Indian militaries of high Asia during colonial times. They reached where neither the British Empire [directly] nor the Russians could reach.

Between 1838 when the Great Games started and 1857 when the British Empire took over ruling India from the East India company, the Dogras won Ladakh (1834) and Baltistan (1840).(7) Ladakh and Baltistan are today one of the highest and the most militarized theaters of the world. Even today this moon land topography is so treacherous and sparsely populated—the highest mountain passes snow while its peak summer in the gangetic plains below and roads constantly slip off from their track. How would it have been then!

In fact today's de facto borders between India, Pakistan and China meet at Dogra territory between Baltistan and Ladakh. The same territory between India and Pakistan holds the Siachen glacier (18,875 feet), the highest battlefield of the world controlled by India.



The palace of Maharaja Gulab Singh, on the banks of Chenab, Jammu, mid 19th century. Photo courtesy: The British Library.

The Kashmir valley, to the west of Ladakh and Baltistan was only a small part of the larger Dogra kingdom and there's a geo-political history of it.

The valley was ruled by Sikhs when they lost the Anglo-Sikh war to the British. Immediately after in 1846, the Treaty of Amritsar was signed and the Vale of Kashmir was given to Dogra Maharaja Gulab Singh by the British for ₹75 lakhs (₹7,500,000).

By then the Dogras had already conquered the massive territory that sandwiched the

picturesque Kashmir vale. The Dogra territories simply went from being a Sikh suzerainty to being a British suzerainty.

These Dogra and Sikh territories weren't devoid of Great Game intelligence agents even before the high altitude games formally started. Intelligence recruits ranged from Europeans, to Russians including local recruits who scoured Sikh and Dogra territories. There were agents in the disguise of Buddhist monks and Muslim holy men and there were some notable cases like a local Russian agent in Leh, Aga Mehdi.(1)

Mehdi, a man of Persian-Jewish origin, dealt in Kashmiri Pashmina shawls in the 1820s from the Dogra territory to Central Asia and even uptill St. Petersburg. The British intercepted him as an agent working on Tsar Alexander 1 direct instructions to establish political and commercial relationship with Sikh Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

While on his way to Punjab, he perished in the high Karakoram passes. He was carrying a great sum of money and the highest quality of rubies and emeralds, suspected to be gifts from the Russian Tsar to the Sikh maharaja. His death till date remains a mystery. (1)

Before the Dogras took over, the Sikh ruler, Ranjit Singh had also recruited into his army some wandering foreigners with a “passable military CV” who arrived in the Punjab after fighting wars in Europe. Some of his most high-ranking generals were former Napoleonic officers including the popular Italian, Paolo di Avitabile,

who later conquered Peshawar for the Sikhs. (4)

To north of Peshawar lie all routes and passes to Central Asia and today it hosts the military headquarters of Pakistan. Don't forget that in 1807 Napoleon had planned with Tsar Alexander 1 to invade India through the same passes.

"So why did both the Sikhs and British choose Dogras for their high altitude expeditions?"

Ironically British vet William Moorcroft who arrived in India in 1808 to look for high quality studs for the British military in the trans-himalayas had found two European origin dogs, a pug and a terrier in the home of a Tibetan official in the Kailash region during one of his journeys. (1) Moorcroft believed them to have come from Russian soldiers despite the Tibetans telling they were left behind by Russian traders.

So why did both the Sikhs and British choose Dogras for their high altitude expeditions? That's because first the north western Himalayas were home to Dogras and second they were the most fearsome, loyal and time-tested warriors during the times when all that many British officers and diplomats had themselves experienced in those altitudes was calamities, ambush, deception, kidnappings and brutal deaths.

In fact the location of the bloody conflict of Galwan between India and China in June 2020 was also in the past a route for Great Game expeditions. Ghulam Rasool Galwan was a guide for many Great Game expeditions, the valley was named after him when he perished there during one of the expeditions. His ancestral home still stands in downtown Leh on the ancient entry street to the caravans from Kashgar and Khotan, not far from the region's only Central Asian museum at Tsa Soma area.

It also houses a small, 17 century Central Asian mosque that once served traders from Khasgar and Khotan whose double-humped camel and sheep-goat caravans kept coming to Leh until the early 1950s. The entry street had a gateway where tax collectors perched counting the caravan strength.

In another street in the old town stands the Haveli (residence) of Mehta Basti Ram, the Dogra governor of Leh from 1847 and 1861. It's currently converted into a Ladaki restaurant but once was the seat of silk route trade transactions particularly of Pashmina wool that brought the Dogras and British lots of tax revenues. It was also the hob-nob of Great Game politics.



"When I follow the Dogras as warriors of the treacherous heights, in their war games and war practices they were as brutal and maneuvering as their invading opponents."

Central Asian caravan street in Leh. Photo courtesy: Venus Upadhyaya.

When I follow the Dogras as warriors of the treacherous heights, in their war games and war practices they were as brutal and maneuvering as their invading opponents. Through the ups and downs of facing invaders, death and loot from the western corridor, history shaped their survival instincts that way.

Some of them were also the proponents of rare warrior traditions which were preserved through generations in the seclusion of the forested hills connected through easily commutable passes. Seclusion was important for the practice and

preservation of traditions in times of constant Islamic invasions.

Today the Dogra kingdom of the 19th century is a nuclear flashpoint. This itself acts as deterrence and there are also military protocols to be adhered to. Despite all that in the last seven decades, the same territory has seen four wars between India and Pakistan and a burgeoning military confrontation between India and China.

In the age of Dogras there was no deterrence during the great games. There were only two possibilities—you either conquer or you will be conquered. And the northern frontiers were unforgiving.

Critics say Dogras ruled only for 101 years from 1846 to 1947 but they forget that the Dogras since generations were the recruits in the garrisons of the rulers in the northern frontiers exactly like how the Kashmiri pandits [brahmins] provided intelligentsia and statesmen in the princely states' courts around India.

While Kashmir was known as the Sharda peeth (ancient center of learning), the Dogra hills silently incubated ancient shastra vidya traditions. These traditions have remained unknown just because they were ancient and unique. One of my own ancestors was a Vartya employed in a Sikh garrison in Patiala sometime after the mid 19th century.

So I would attribute at least a few case stories of Dogra General's unparalleled military valor in some of their Great Games victories to these traditions.



Mehta Basti Ram residence entrance. Photo courtesy: Venus Upadhyaya.

Shen-pa Zorawar Singh

One of the first high altitude expansions that Dogras registered was their victory over Ladakh in 1834 and this was led by an indomitable warrior called Gen. Zoravar Singh. His small fort still exists at a junction in the Leh city overlooking the Karakoram.

My friends in Ladakh tell me about General Zorawar's expeditions. He was so much feared in those heights, that when he was killed on the battlefield of To-yo by Tibetans and the Qing Chinese, his body was dis-assembled to the extent that even a little finger went to some war avenger who had it as a memoir, an evidence of victory against the indomitable. His cremation tomb exists in To-yo even today.

Before Shen-pa Zorawar died in 1841 on the battlefield his forces had crossed Pangong Tso lake—today's confrontation point between India and CCP Chinese. He had marched way ahead into Kailash Mansarovar—the sacred lake or the holiest pilgrimage spot for Hindus, Buddhists and Bods.



"Around the same time as Zorawar had marched into Tibet, the British had gone further west in Afghanistan."

General Zorawar Singh with the Gyalpo (King) of Ladakh. Photo courtesy: Wikipedia Commons.

Even in today's time when you visit the Pangong Tso (13,862 feet) you would need layers of thick blankets on a summer night and a few days to acclimatize to altitude sickness. The freezing high velocity winds at night shake everything violently while waves of saline water repeatedly wash the slate-chipped beaches with no sign of any life forgivingly being nurtured in its water. What heart and blood were those Dogras!

There was no politico-military attempt from across the Himalayas before theirs and the next attempt into Tibet from this side occurred almost half a century later when the British 'Mission to Lhasa' happened under Younghusband. (4)

Around the same time as Zorawar had marched into Tibet, the British had gone further west in Afghanistan. The British Empire Army of the Indus had been totally wiped out during its humiliating retreat from Kabul.(4) Western authors wrongly compare the Dogra fate in Tibet with the British fate in Afghanistan.

They forget that while Kabul is at 5,873 feet above sea level, Mansarovar lake is 15,060 feet. They selectively closed their eyes to the fact that after Zorawar's march into Mansarovar, the Dogras had a few territorial rights in Tibet while the British didn't in Afghanistan.

Four villages at Mansarovar kept paying land revenue to the Dogras while one village called Mansar, located to the north of the sacred lake kept giving it to India much after its independence from the British in 1947. Its land revenue and census operations were a part of India. (3)

Today China hosts an inter-continental ballistic missile at Kailash Mansarovar region. Two-third of the Pongso Tso is also controlled by the PLA where it has built a bridge and a permanent military base. So why should I not be enamored by Shen-pa Zorawar

whose feat from every angle appears super-human, even today. Moreso today!

Geography and history defined that Shen-pas or the Dogra rajputs turn into the warriors of the Himalayan and the trans-himalayan regions. For over a thousand years of Islamic invasions they and the Sikhs of the Punjab were placed at India's gateway by geography to face intrusions. How else would they have faced it if not by what they turned into.

When the Great Games started in 1838, the Russian and British Empires were separated by 1500 miles (1) and by the time these finished in 1907 there was only Afghanistan between them. Geo-strategists call it Afghanistan's sad fate.

What we don't recognise is that the same sad fate would have met the

entire Jammu and Kashmir too if not for the Dogras. In fact Kashmir's fate too is a consequence of the Great Games. And if not for India, a worse fate would meet it even today because the Russian Empire is simply replaced by the Communist Chinese who sit on the territories that Zorawar won.

I see Prime Minister Narendra Modi's decision of 2019 to bifurcate the erstwhile Dogra kingdom into two federally governed territories of: Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh as a Great Game strategy. It's Great Game two and India has started warming up to it.

So it's high time that Indians reclaim the Dogra legacy and the Dogra's rightful status as indomitable warriors of high altitudes.

And it's also high time that the study of the Himalayas and the five trans-

Trishul Hill, in Ladakh or Kailash range, as seen today under Chinese control. Until 1962 Maan-Pangong (village on a bank of Pangong Tso) and Chushul nomads (border region today) used to go to Yula, Trishul areas for winter pastures. Photo courtesy: Konchok Stanzin, March 14, 2023



himalayan ranges of: Pamirs, Hindu Kush, Karakoram, Kailash Range and Kun Lun Shan be designated a separate legion in today's geo-politics.

India should in its policy making designate it as a specific geo-political region because this is the fulcrum of the new Great Games.

This Great Game two region should be studied on defined parameters from an Indian perspective and a list of fresh policy indicators should be determined for policy analysis and design. In China's pursuit of 100 years of its socialist development that's reaching its goal by the mid-21st century this region will certainly see enhanced great games.

And India can't escape its destiny of sharing the longest himalayan border with the PLA including the trans-himalayan borders of Ladakh. In the treacherous northern frontiers, you either conquer or you are conquered. Anything else is as blurry as today's disputed borders—You can claim it but not control it. And the Communist Chinese are controlling it and claiming it, both!

Development perspectives have changed with Chinese translating a socialist policy of Himalayan and trans-himalayan modernisation. And this will play on the global policy platforms as well in propaganda narratives.

Shen-pa Hoshiyara Singh

Dogras went to the extremes of the northern frontiers in Gilgit after the 1860s. One of their major battles in the region was led and won by Gen. Hoshiyara Singh.

Hoshiyara won the Battle of Yasin for Dogras in 1863. I happened to visit his two-century old home last year. Yasin is a high valley in the Hindu Kush mountains in Gilgit-Baltistan that today India claims and Pakistan controls.

This valley was extremely strategic for the Dogras during the Great Games because it controlled a high mountain pass to Yarkhun Valley and then to



Leh heights (top); Leh today (above). Photo courtesy: Venus Upadhayaya.

Broghil Pass in Chitral. This provided a way to the Wakhan Corridor of Afghanistan and Tajikistan which in those days was roughly from where Russian territory started.

Yasin today is an equally important geo-strategic location for the Chinese and the Pakistanis.

Even today Shen-pa Hoshiyara's original mud and wood home preserves the devi temple he consecrated, the one he worshiped on his last trip before the battle of 1863. Two old ladies of the house attend to it and make sure that the oil lamp set by Hoshiyara's wife never gets extinguished. So it's been burning for 160 years non-stop while its original bearer's story remained hidden and untold.

The old ladies took out a few of Hoshiyara's weapons including a Victorian sword and talked elaborately about his devotion to the Devi, the presiding deity of the Dogras and their mountains. For them, Hoshiyara's exceptional prowess was due to his religious practice and his shastra vidya (weaponry tradition). His weapons including a battle ax which would certainly need a very muscled hand to hold are still preserved with the family.

In battle Hoshiyara carried a totem of the Devi in his turban and 11 Shaligrams (fossilized ammonite considered sacred) in his pocket which meant that he was a Vartya and adhered to 11 vows of religious practice. This also represented his lineage in an ancient warrior tradition or a tradition of Indian martial arts.

"The old ladies took out a few of Hoshiyara's weapons including a Victorian sword and talked elaborately about his devotion to the Devi, the presiding deity of the Dogras and their mountains."

Geography is very challenging in the mountains and it toughens out people – supernormal poweress are more believable among Dogra warriors, the adherents of such martial arts since generations. Hoshiyara's journey from this village at merely 2,000 feet above sea level altitude to 6000 feet of Kashmir and further to an average elevation of 12,000 feet of Gilgit after crossing higher passes is obviously exceptional even today.

It was more so 160 years ago when he was sent by the second Dogra Maharaja, Ranbir Singh to conquer the strategic territory of Yasin which also consists of the Darkot Pass (15,430 feet), an historical mountain pass near which British explorer George Hayward was beheaded seven years later. This pass is currently managed as a restricted zone by the government of Pakistan.



"Darkot pass used to be the shortest means of communication between the Oxus (Amu dariya) and Indus."

British explorer George Hayward was beheaded at the Darkot Pass, an historical mountain pass in the strategic territory of Yasin. Photo courtesy: Geographicus.

The Darkot pass used to be the shortest means of communication between the Oxus (Amu dariya) and Indus – the region of overlap between the fertile Oxus and the Indus basins—the old world Indo-Iranian borderlands that were also once under the reign of the Bactrian and Indo-Greek Rulers. (2)

From time immemorial these passes connected stations on silk routes from China to the Mediterranean while on the other hand they connected Central Asia with Punjab which also meant a linkage between the Tarim Basin, Sinkiang and Tibet with the fertile plains of Punjab.

According to Sanatan Shastarvidiya, a rare research institution on Indian martial arts, this route was also the conduit for the transference of various knowledge traditions including the traditional martial arts between ancient India and ancient China. (9)

So these seemingly remote and treacherous high altitudes were actually known to warriors and seekers since ancient times. Yasin was the hob-knob of the thousand of years old power and politics of the Indo-Iranian borderlands and when Shen-pa Hoshiyara reached there in 1863 with 2000-3000 Dogra sepoy of the “Ram Gol Platoon,” he and his Maharaja were well versed with its people and their politics. (5) For that matter Maharaja's bodyguards were Pushtoons and he was himself fluent in their language, Pushto.

After reaching Gilgit, 2000-3000 other Dogra troops, chiefly men from Eusufzye, Boonair, Swat and Pathans joined him and then this multi-racial army of 6000 sepoy marched to Yasin whose chief with his followers escaped to Madoori where the final bloody battle took place. (5)

The Battle of Yasin shows the strategic prowess of the Dogras who could resource such a war force at such a high altitude. Its brutal whims reached Indian mainland seven years later when Hayward visited the Madoori fort and reported the tales of Dogra brutality to a Calcutta newspaper.

Dogras were competent military strategists having risen from the Sikh military ranks—the Sikhs themselves had a legacy of warring in the inhospitable mountainous northern frontiers and their garrisons were significantly fed by Dogra officers and sepoys from the Shivalik hills and other himalayan and trans-himalayan ranges.

Ironically after winning the Battle of Yasin, Shen-pa Hoshiyara himself fell to the treacherousness of power politics. I was told by someone from within the Shen-pa (Singh's or Dogra Rajput) clan that he was deliberately implicated in a conspiracy against the Dogra Maharaja on his return to Jammu after the Yasin victory.

This happened when the Dogra troops reached back the gateway of Jammu city at what's today Gandhi Nagar.

He was ordered to be killed by the canon but the canon had turned towards the conspirators which had spread more stories about him being protected by the Devi. After many unsuccessful attempts, he was finally killed by slow poisoning and all records about him were buried. (6)

What most people don't recognise in this war of narrative is that Shen-pa Hoshiyara was one of the many victims

of the Great Game power politics. How different was his fate from the fate of Col. Charles Stoddart and Cap. Arthur Connolly, two brothers and East India Company officers who were executed in Bukhara in 1843 after much torture by the Emir. (1)

Probably the only difference was, Cap. Connolly was the first to call these geo-political events between the territories of the Russian empire and the British empire as "Great Games" while Shen-pa Hoshiyara didn't know such terminology! They however both were a part of this blood-stained canvas which today calls for redemption and wishfully a new world order.

You find stories on the "bloody" battle of Yasin even today in Pakistani newspapers. They obviously depict the one-sided narrative. Pakistanis don't mention that the Dards had killed every Dogra at Gilgit fort including their families almost in the same bloody fashion in 1852 (5). That the wife of a Gurkha sepoy in the Dogra army had jumped into the river flowing by the fort and survived by holding on to the tail of a carcass. She had managed to reach the Maharaja and was the lone eye-witness. (5)

How ironic that the Great Games bloody battles are still invoked for propaganda while the stories of real warriors, their genius and tradition lay hidden. These stories of the yore need to be undone for any sense and aspiration for peace and development to prevail. Otherwise the Great Games will prevail.

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