SECONDARY PEAKS OF PALAK SAR SEEN FROM THE NORTH-EAST
THE SWAT REGION

THE SWAT DISTRICT IN PAKISTAN IS A REGION SPANNING FROM THE LOWLAND PLAINS TO A VAST ALPINE AREA, BORDERED BY HIGH PEAKS, AND DISPERSED WITH LAKES, WOODS AND PRAIRIES

ITS NORTHERNMOST PART IS OCCUPIED BY A MOUNTAIN RANGE KNOWN AS HINDU RAJ, HERE TOPPING OUT AT 6000 METERS

IN ANCIENT TIMES KNOWN AS UDDIYANA, SWAT HAS BEEN THE HEART OF BUDDHIST RELIGION IN THE FIRST MILLENIUM AFTER CHRIST, BEFORE BECOMING A MUSLIM PRINCIPATE

THE CENTRAL PLATEAU, DENSELY INHABITED, HAS SEEN FOR MORE THAN 60 YEARS THE PRESENCE OF ITALIAN ARCHEOLOGISTS (AT FIRST MANAGED BY PROF. GIUSEPPE TUCCI); THANKS TO THEIR WORK, THE REGION IS NOW WIDELY RECOGNISED AS A CORE CENTRE FOR THE GREEK-BUDDHIST ART OF GANDHARA

A TYPICAL STUPA IN THE SAIDU SHARIF AREA
A JOURNEY INTO HISTORY

ANCIENT RELICS OF GREEK-BUDDHIST ART FROM GANDHARA (1 CENTURY A.D. - V CENTURY A.D.)

EXHIBITS IN LAHORE MUSEUM

ANCIENT RELIQUARY IN STUPA SHAPE - ART INSTITUT OF CHICAGO
THE SWAT REGION

A STUPA AND SOME OF THE BIG BAS-RELIEFS
THE SWAT REGION

A JOURNEY INTO NATURE

The mountain part of Swat is made of two parallel valleys with south-north development.

These mountains have been explored by alpinists in the '60, but further on they lost attractiveness due to the limited height (6000 meters maximum) and the mostly difficult climbing.

Thus, Swat remained a place with lots of opportunities. Many adventure treks are still possible. Some of them crossing mountain areas up to 5000 meters.
THE SWAT REGION

SWAT IS RELATIVELY CLOSE TO THE BIG CITIES OF THE PAKISTANI NORTHERN PLAINS. RECENT IMPROVEMENTS IN THE ROAD SYSTEM ALLOWS SWAT TO BE REACHED IN FEW HOURS FROM ISLAMABAD

AN INCREASE IN TOURISTIC EXPOSITION GIVES CLEAR BENEFITS TO THE LOCAL ECONOMY, AT LEAST IN THE SHORT TIME

HOWEVER, A REAL DANGER OF A CHAOTIC AND AGGRESSIVE ANTHROPOIZATION IS TO BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT. IRREVOCABLE HARMS CAN BE CAUSED TO THIS UNIQUE ENVIRONMENT OF WOODS AND MOUNTAINS, USUALLY KNOWN AS «THE SWITZERLAND OF THE INDIAN CONTINENT»

TODAY, MOST AREAS REACHED BY THE NEW ROADS ALREADY SHOW MANY NEGATIVE SIGNS OF UNAWARE AND UNEDUCATED HUMAN PRESENCE, CLEARLY DUE TO AN «HIT & RUN» LOCAL TOURISM
THE SWAT PROJECT

ONLY THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A PROTECTED AREA WILL PRESERVE THE NATURAL HERITAGE OF THE REGION, AND VALORISE IT IN A NEW RESPECTFUL MOOD

A "BI-POLAR" PARC CAPABLE OF JOINING IN A SINGLE STRUCTURE THE ECOLOGICAL VALUES OF THE UNIQUE NATURE OF THE VALLEYS OF NORTHERN SWAT AND THE PRECIOUS ARCHITECTURAL AND ARCHEOLOGICAL REMAINS FOUND ON THE HILLS OF CENTRAL SWAT
THE SWAT PROJECT

OBJECTIVES

INCREASE THE GENERAL AWARENESS ON ENVIRONMENT ISSUES

MEET NEW SOCIAL ISSUES
THE ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION NEEDS TO POSITIVELY AFFECT THE CHANCES OF SUBSISTENCE OF PEOPLE WHICH LIVE ON THE MOUNTAIN

SET UP OF A NATIONAL PARK
A PARK WILL BE A PROPER DESTINATION FOR LOCAL TOURISM. OBVIOUSLY, THERE IS A NEED FOR A QUICK DEVELOPMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS OF PEOPLE. SO FAR MOST OF THE VISITORS PAUSE AT THE ROAD ENDS, BUT MORE AND MORE OFTEN SMALL GROUPS ARE FACING EASY HIKING AND BASIC TREKKING

BATHPEAKS SEEN FROM MATILTAN
THE SWAT PROJECT

FASE 1. TRAINING OF TREKKING GUIDES FROM THE AREA, RESPONSIBLE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL INTEGRITY
FASE 2. EXPLORATION OF TREKKING ITINERARIES ALONG THE MAIN VALLEYS OF THE REGION
FASE 3. EDITING OF A TREKKING/MOUNTAINEERING GUIDE OF THE SWAT MOUNTAINS
FASE 4. PROPOSAL OF A NATIONAL PARK PROJECT TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE PAKISTAN GOVERNMENT

JABBA LAKE

PASTURE SHELTERS IN NORTHERN SWAT
THE SWAT PROJECT

PHASE 1.

SO FAR SEVERAL TRAINING COURSES HAVE BEEN HELD: TRAINING IN ENVIRONMENTAL FRIENDLY MOUNTAINEERING FOR TREKKING GUIDES, TRAINING IN ARCHEOLOGY/HIKING FOR FEMALE TOURIST GUIDES "SWAT GIRLS IN ACTION". SOME COURSES ARE FORESEEN ALSO THIS YEAR, DUE TO THE HIGH REQUEST.
THE SWAT PROJECT

PHASE 2.

A FIRST CHOICE OF TREKKING ITINERARIES WAS SUCCESSFULLY EXPLORED IN THE YEARS 2019 AND 2021 BY SMALL GROUPS OF MOUNTAIN WILDERNESS MEMBERS AND SUPPORTERS, HELPED BY THE BEST TREKKING GUIDES FORMED DURING THE PROJECT.

THEY HIRED DIFFERENT AND VERY REWARDING ITINERARIES, CROSSING PASSES EVEN OVER 4500 METERS AND IN SOME CASES NEGOTIATING CREVASSED GLACIERS.

THE UNDERTAKING INCLUDED THE IDENTIFICATION OF ACCESS ROUTES TO THE MAJOR SUMMITS AND PHOTO DOCUMENTATION OF THE TREK ITINERARIES.
TREKKING IN SWAT

SWAT IS A PAKISTANI DISTRICT

EVERYTHING GOES THROUGH KALAM - AFTER A SHORT DRIVE, FROM THE HEAT OF THE PLAINS SUDDENLY YOU FIND YOURSELF IN THE MOUTAINS

SUCH A TERRAIN RECALLS THE HIMALAYA, WITHOUT SHARING MOST COMPLICATIONS OF HIGH ALTITUDE
PAKISTAN

PAKISTAN HAS CHANGED IN THE LAST 20 YEARS, BUT NOT TOO MUCH.

ROADS HAVE BEEN IMPROVED SHARPLY, MOST TOWNS HAVE INCREASED IN SIZE, YET IN A QUITE CHAOTIC FASHION.

BUT THE BAZAR REMAINS THE USUAL CROWDED TANGLE EVER THOUGH TODAY EVERYBODY HAS A MOBILE PHONE.
THE SWAT PROJECT

KALAM

Kalam is the starting point for any activity in Swat. From Kalam, new roads go up the valleys.

Kalam is a touristic village, now full of new modern hotels. However, it maintains its original genuine atmosphere.
THE SWAT PROJECT

SWAT OFFERS TREKKING AT VARIOUS LEVELS OF INVOLVEMENT. THEIR LENGTH/DIFFICULTY MAY RANGE FROM SHORT AND EASY TO LONG AND DEMANDING.

THE TIMESPAN OF ANY ADVENTURE TREKKING IN SWAT IS USUALLY IN A RANGE OF 7-10 DAYS. THE PROXIMITY TO ISLAMABAD LIMITS THE TOTAL TIME LENGTH TO 2-3 WEEKS MAXIMUM.

THE BEAUTIFUL MOUNTAINS, THE ALPINE LAKES AND AN UNTouched NATURE ARE COMMON FEATURES IN ANY HIKE.

IN MOST CASES THE ITINERARIES INVOLVE CROSSING OF MOUNTAIN PASSES, RARELY BELOW 4500 METERS, BUT NOT NECESSARILY GLACIERS HAVE TO BE NEGOTIATED.

SWAT IS AFFECTED BY MONSOON AND SOME AFTERNOON STORMS ARE POSSIBLE. BUT IN GENERAL FROM THE END OF AUGUST TO THE MIDDLE OF SEPTEMBER THE WEATHER IS TYPICALLY GOOD AND STABLE.
THE MAP SHOWS THE EXPLORED TREK ITINERARIES UNTIL 2022

Among which are:

- The Falak Sar Circuit, around the characteristic mountain of Swat.
- The Batin Peaks Circuit, which borders the north flanks of Mankial.
- The Baisin Pass trek, south of the beautiful pyramid of Miangul Sar.
- The Gurbila Pass trek, joining the two main valleys.
- The Manial Pass trek, going into Upper Chitral, and heading back through the Kumrat Valley, in Upper Dir.

Many other minor treks are well known too.
THE SWAT PROJECT

THESE INITIAL EXPLORATIONS DID NOT EXHAUST THE TREKKING POTENTIAL OF THE UPPER SWAT, THUS A NEW TREKKING CAMPAIGN HAS TO BE PLANNED QUICKLY.

THE MATERIAL PRODUCED DURING ALL THESE TREKS WILL BE EDITED AND PRINTED AS A GUIDEBOOK IN ENGLISH AND URDU WITH A CLEAR ENVIRONMENT-FRIENDLY, ETHICAL CHARACTER.

THE GUIDEBOOK WILL ALSO INCLUDE ITINERARIES FOR VISITING THE "ROMANTIC" RUINS OF THE BUDDHIST MONUMENTS IN THE LOWER SWAT VALLEYS.

SUMMIT (5847m) ON THE BORDER SWAT-CHITRAL

TEA TIME
THE SWAT PROJECT

CONVERSELY, MOUNTAINEERING IN SWAT IS MOSTLY A HARD JOB

THE MAIN SUMMITS HAVE BEEN CONQUERED IN THE ’60, OR IN THE BEGINNING OF THE ’70, OBVIOUSLY BY THE EASIER ITINERARIES

THUS MANY POSSIBILITIES FOR NEW CHALLENGING ROUTES EXIST ON THESE MOUNTAINS, BUT IN GENERAL ON TECHNICAL GROUND

INSTEAD MOST SECONDARY PEAKS STILL WAIT FOR A VISIT. HERE IMAGINATION HAS REALLY NO LIMIT

ON EASIER GROUND, MANY PEAKS AROUND HIGH PASSES DO NOT SEEM TO BE REAL OBSTACLES. THUS, COMBINING EASY CLIMBING OF VIRGIN PEAKS, AT 5000 METERS OR MORE, WITH TREKKING IS NOT AN EXCESS OF CONFIDENCE.
THE SWAT PROJECT

MANKIAL

DIWANGAR WALLS

BATIN PEAKS

MIANGUL SAR

PALAK SAR
THE SWAT PROJECT
NEW TREKKING PROPOSALS 2023

FIND HERE THREE SUGGESTIONS FOR NEW TREKS, OF INTEREST IN THE COMPILED CONTENT OF THE GUIDEBOOK. ANY OF THESE TREKS SHOULD BE PLANNED ON A 7-8 DAYS BASIS, BUT CAN BE COMPLICATED ON DEMAND.

THESE ARE EXPLORATION TREKS, AND INVOLVE GLACIER CROSSING AND WALKING. THUS A MODERATE MOUNTAIN CLIMBING EXPERIENCE IS ADVISED.

THE LIMITED AVAILABILITY OF PORTERS WITH EXPERIENCE OF GLACIERS ON HIGH MOUNTAINS REDUCES THE NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS TO A MAXIMUM OF 4-5 HIKERS.

AS OVERMENTIONED, THE BEST PERIOD FOR TREKKING IS THE POST MONSOONIC, NAMELY BETWEEN THE LAST WEEK OF AUGUST AND THE MIDDLE OF SEPTEMBER.
THE SWAT PROJECT

DADARILI RING TREK

THIS IS A LOOP OUTSIDE THE SWAT DISTRICT, ON THE GILGIT SIDE THROUGH THE DADARILI PASS

THE RETURN IS VIA A LOWER PASS, AT A ROUGH ELEVATION OF 4800 METERS.

IN THE PROXIMITY OF DADARILI, THE PEAK 5050 SHOULD BE EASILY CLIMBED. WHILE, TO THE WEST, THE GLACIER BASIN BRINGS TO A 5469 METERS PEAK THAT SHOULD BE POSSIBLE.

THE TREK TOTAL LENGTH IS ABOUT 55 KM, WITH A VERTICAL GAIN IN A RANGE OF 3300 METERS.
SIRRI DARRA TREK

PART OF THIS TREK IS ALREADY KNOWN, UP TO THE ICE PLATEAU FROM WHICH THE SIRRI DARRA SUMMIT RIDGE RISES

HOWEVER AN INTRIGUING LOOP COULD INVOLVE CROSSING THE GLACIER TO THE SOUTH SIDE OF MANKIAL AND RETURN TO THE MAIN VALLEY AT A RELATIVELY HIGH LEVEL

CLIMBING THE FIRST SUMMIT OF SIRRI DARRA SEEMS TO BE A TOUGH JOB, BUT FEASIBLE

THE TREK TOTAL LENGTH IS LESS THAN 40 KM, BUT THE VERTICAL GAIN IS MORE THAN 3500 METERS
GURBILA/MIANGUL SAR TREK

This is a northernmost option to reach the beautiful Miangul Sar by crossing a wide glacier region. Many easy peaks up to 5300 meters can be reached along the itinerary.

The trek total length is about 45 km, but the vertical gain in «only» of 3000 meters, if no summit is climbed.
THE SWAT PROJECT

ROCK CLIMBING - DIWANGAR WALL

A COUPLE OF HOURS NORTH OF THE MAHODAND LAKE, THAT CAN BE REACHED BY JEEP, A HUGE GRANITE WALL SOME km LONG AND MORE THAN 700 m HIGH, COULD SHORTLY BECOME A HIGH CLASS MODERN CENTRE FOR ROCK CLIMBING
THE SWAT PROJECT

TREKKING REFERENCE

A COMPLETE SERVICE FROM ISLAMABAD IS OFFERED BY ATP (ADVENTURE TOURS PAKISTAN), AN HISTORICAL PRESENCE IN THE FIELD SINCE THE EARLY '90. ONLY FLIGHT TICKETS ARE EXCLUDED.

THUS, ANY ARRANGEMENT FOR TREKKING LOGISTIC / COSTS NEEDS TO BE TAKEN WITH ATP. THE FINAL COST DEPENDS ON TREK DURATION / COMPLEXITY, AND ON SPECIAL REQUESTS.

AS A PROMOTION MOUNTAIN WILDERNESS OFFERS 100 EURO TO THE FIRST 10 PARTICIPANTS.

IN ADDITION MW OFFERS A FREE PRESENCE OF A TREKKING GUIDE TO EACH GROUP.

RECAP

PERIOD
- BETWEEN 23/08 AND 17/09

PARTICIPANTS
- 4-5 PER TREKKING

DURATION
- 7-8 DAYS TREKKING
- 12-14 TOTAL DAYS

COST
- TBD WITH ATP

MOUNTAIN WILDERNESS PROMOTION
- 100 EURO/EAC TO THE FIRST 10 PARTICIPANTS
- ONE TREKKING GUIDE PER GROUP
THE SWAT PROJECT

TREKKING INFO

FOR INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT
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PROFESSOR PINELLI IS MOUNTAIN WILDERNESS INTERNATIONAL HONORARY PRESIDENT AND ACTUAL RESPONSIBLE OF MW INT’L ASIAN DESK
HE IS THE SOUL OF THE SWAT PROJECT

CARLO ALBERTO PINELLI TOGETHER WITH THE GROUP OF INSTRUCTORS FOR THE 2022 COURSE
THE SWAT PROJECT

SO, COME AND SEE US!
WE ARE WAITING FOR YOU!