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Tracing Pukhtunwali: A Review of the Literature

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ABSTRACT

This paper offers a chronological review of the scholarly and literary tradition that has defined and redefined Pukhtunwali since the term first entered written record. Beginning with Khushal Khan Khattak's seventeenth-century Dastarnama and Mountstuart Elphinstone's 1815 account of the Kingdom of Caubul the earliest text to name the code explicitly the review traces the concept through colonial-era ethnographers (Raverty, Pennell), mid-century Pukhtun nationalist writers (Qiyamuddin Husaain, Ghani Khan), and the foundational anthropological studies of James W. Spain, Fredrick Barth, and Akbar S. Ahmed, whose Nang/Qalang distinction remains central to the field. It then turns to more recent interventions Loewen and McMichael on honor, Rzehak's and Ginsburg's analytical accounts of Pukhtunwali's internal logic, and American military and policy-oriented theses (Ross, Amato) written in the context of the post-2001 Afghan war to show how the code has been alternately romanticized, weaponized, and dismissed as anachronistic depending on the observer's institutional position. The review argues that this accumulated literature, despite its disciplinary range, has rarely engaged Pukhtun folktales as primary evidence, leaving a gap that indigenous oral narrative is uniquely positioned to fill.

Keywords: Tracing Pukhtunwali, Tradition, Kingdom, Dastarnama, Indigenous.

The Tenets of Pukhtunwali: An Overview

Pukhtunwali determines the behavior of individuals both in groups and everyday life. There are certain tenets that act as a guiding source for people. As discussed earlier, some of the primary tenets of Pukhtunwali shall be analyzed through the tales and their relevance, importance and efficacy shall be established through this work. This section attempts to list some of the key tenets of Pukhtunwali that shall be explained and analyzed in the later part of this study.

The first and the foremost tenets of Pukhtunwali is Nang (honor). Without Nang, the life of a Pukhtun is meaningless and a Pukhtun without Nang is a person bereft of life. As the famous Pukhtu couplet illustrates: "Dear God! Don't give me a son, who has no nang/ although I may lose my eyesight in looking forward for one to see" (Khalil, 2007, p. 39). These lines show how much importance a Pukhtun attaches to the concept of nang. Being a patriarchal society, Nang has various dimensions, making it a fluid code. For Pukhtun men, Nang means to exercise positive reputation both within and without and be able to assert their authority over their womenfolk while for women Nang carries the connotation of Namus which means the sense of shame, a negative value that is "defined solely by the absence of disgraceful behavior, such as engaging in illicit sex" (Pitt-Rivers, n.d., p. 172).

Badal is the other main tenet of Pushtunwali which has varied connotations. Primarily, it means exchange of gifts and paying off debts but has often been rigidly translated as revenge.

Depending on situation and context, it can also be called as 'the defense of honor' and mainly revolves around 'Zar' (wealth), 'Zan' (Woman) and 'Zameen' (Earth).

'Merana', bravery is another trademark of Pukhtunwali. A Pukhtun must be brave enough to keep his personal self-esteem intact and remain strong and confident to achieve excellence in life. 'Tura' or sword represents the tribal spirit of Pukhtunwali but currently it is translated as courage to know and seek knowledge and brave the difficult situation. However, it also means to fight back and raise arm when the need be. In this connection, it is binding upon every Pukhtun to defend one's honor. It becomes a symbol of one's honor, an emblem of supreme virtue to defend one's property, clan, community and above all one's motherland.

'Nanawati' or reconciliation or 'sanctuary is the remedy of feuds'. It is kind of civil code of Pukhtu. It literally means "going in someone's house or hujra" (Daur, 2014, p. 39). 'Nanawati' or reconciliation is sought when a family or a tribe wants to put an end to enmity or any other tribal and personal grudge. It also helps in fostering strong ties in the time of trial or any other calamity.

Jirga is the Pukhtun judicial circle where all tribal or personal disputes are settled. It is one of the most important institutions of Pukhtunwali which is still widely followed and greatly respected. There is no specific or designated place or point for the settlement of disputes however 'Hujra' or the debating chamber is mostly used for such purposes. 'Hujra' also acts as a platform where current affairs and issues related to individuals are discussed and debated. It is exclusively a male dominated circle. Due to incessant wars and the ongoing military operations 'Hujra' culture has received severe blows. Wide scale migrations have resulted in the loss of much of its importance. Salma Shaheen, a professor of Pukhtu literature writes that as a building 'Hujra' still shows its presence but as institution it is losing its importance.

'Teegha' or truce is the prerogative of Jirga or assembly. It is announced by the 'Jirga' to avoid feuds or settle disputes of sensitive nature. In some tribal areas this traditional practice of truce making is still in vogue. 'Teegha' literally means placing a stone at designated place where it is binding upon all the aggrieved parties to shun violence till permanent solution to the issue is sought. Violation of the truce can result in banishment and burning of houses by the 'Jirga'. Since urban Pukhtun belts are controlled and run by proper state laws, 'teegha' or truce does not carry that much importance. In case any punishment is meted out that contradict state laws, government sponsored 'Jirga' is called.

'Lashkar' or army is loosely established by the 'Jirga' to ensure the steady implementations of its decisions. In case of any calamity or any untoward situation, volunteers present themselves and 'Lashkar' is formed. In recent military operations 'Lashkars' have played crucial role in weeding out Talibans and other foreign fighters. 'Arabakai' or community policing system is other part of this non-funded volunteer force. This important prerogative of Pukhtun Jirga is diminishing because of the active involvement of Pakistan army in the tribal areas. Security and community surveillance role is now overseen by the jawans of Pakistan army, thus replacing the role of 'laskhars.'

'Mashar' or elder is the most respected part of Pukhtunwali. It is 'mashar' who ensures the tenets of Pukhtunwali or the traditional values to be followed and properly implemented. 'Speer geeray' or the white bearded is a sign of great respect and acts as an inspiring source of wisdom, wit and repository of experiences.

'Malik' is the headman of a tribe or family. The elevation of any person to 'malik' is not based on the law of primogeniture but rather personal honor, wisdom and leadership qualities. Malik is still widely known figure in tribal social set ups.

'Melmastia' or hospitality is another major dimension of Pukhtunwali. It is a code of social manners in which love, respect, friendship and assistance are highly valued. Closely related to 'Melmastia' is giving refuge or 'Panah.' 'Panah' is given to anyone who seeks protection in times of trial or any difficult circumstance. 'Melmastia' is connected to honor because it is the test of one's honor to serve people.

'Qawm' or localised community refers to any form of solidarity group. Qawm used to be associated with tribal ethos but it is fast losing its traction due to widespread migrations and rapid culture of cross-cultural marriages. The concept of localized community has played a crucial role in preserving the genealogical charter of Pukhtuns but this charter no longer remains to be pure.

It is important to mention here that the above discussed features of Pukhtunwali are not its absolute features but more can be inferred from the comprehensive code. For example, honoring one's promise (jabba), keeping friendship (pat), steadfastness (isteqamat) and generosity (sakhawat) are also considered as the important features of Pukhtunwali or Pukhtu.

The Literature

Dastarnama (Book of the Turban) is the oldest book written by the famous national poet of Pushtu literature, Khushal Khan Khattak (1613-1689). *Dastarnama* is the first ever written book that describes the qualities that a true Pushtun must possess. *Dastarnama* describes twenty abilities (hunaruna) and twenty virtues (Khislatuna) which a Pushtun must retain to become worthy of wearing a turban. Wearing a turban has always been a symbol of respect and honor among Pushtuns. Some of these values such as self-knowledge, bravery (Shujat), consultation (Mushawrat), modesty (Sharam wo Haya), honesty (Rishti), respect for elders (Mashrano izzat), pride and honor (ghairat), ambitiousness (Himmat), Tura (weapon or sword) and melmastia (Hospitality) contain the earliest values of Pushtunwali that later on became an essential code of conduct of all Pushtuns. Some other abilities like falconry and hunting, chess, poetry, music and painting are addressed to the elite and nobility of the time (Rzehak, 2011, p. 9).

Though *Dastarnama* did not point to any code of conduct for Pukhtun behavior that later on became a hallmark of idealized conduct but rather it loosely highlighted the important values that any individual must command.

The term Pukhtunwali for the very first time appears in the book, *An Account of the Kingdom of Caubul (1815)* by an officer, Mount Stuart Elphinstone, of East India Company who made a special official visit to the Duarrani winter place in Peshawar in 1809. He describes Pushtunwali as a "rude system of customary laws" (Elphinstone & Caroe, 1972, p. 267). He makes no other direct or indirect reference to the word Pukhtunwali. These customary laws in those days were related to land settlement, local disputes, issues of honor killings and inter-tribal affairs. However, he also mentions some other normative behavior of Pukhtunwali which later on became an integral code but he does not call them code of conduct or Pukhtunwali.

Elphinstone was greatly impressed by the Pathans especially in contrast to the Hindus of India. He admires their robust and active form, their European traits, their outfit and interest, their hospitality, staidness, their extreme fondness for independence and the energy of their character. In comparison to the Indians, Elphinstone regards Pushtuns as virtuous and honorable. However, Elphinstone, also highlights their profligacy such as revenge, envy, greed and stubbornness. On the other hand, he observes that they are also fond of liberty,

hospitality, bravery, and honor and attach great value to loyalty of their friends and affection to their subordinates (Elphinstone & Caroe, 1972, p. 189).

Elphinstone also discusses the role of Mullah in the Afghan society. He observes that the role and influence of clergy in state affairs is beyond their designated position, not only political affairs but the whole education system of the country is entrusted to them. Through the power of knowledge, they assert their influence. They hold sway over the all parts of the learning of the country. The education of the youth, the subject of law and its practice and the administration of the justice are all under their control. This mullah armed with the knowledge of the Islamic scriptures elicit respect from the ignorant and superstitious people. Major H.G Raverty in his book, *A Dictionary of The Pukhtu, Pushtu* of 1860 defined Pushtunwali as "The manners and customs of Afghan tribes, the Afghan code" (Raverty, 1867, p. 179). He used the terms Pushtunwali, and Pukhtunwali interchangeably. Raverty gives a granular account of all the current tenets of Pushtunwali in his book but in no way, he calls them as the codes or norms of Pushtunwali.

T.L Pennell in his book, *Among the Wild Tribes of the Afghan Frontier* (1909) discusses all the central features of Pukhtunwali without mentioning or a slight hint of the word Pukhtunwali. Despite the fact that he spent 16 years as a doctor and a missionary among the people of Fata, still he fails to call it Pukhtunwali or by any other name. Was it deliberate or he did not know anything about the code or Pukhtunwali was not known among the people?

Pennell brings to light all the essential codes of Pukhtunwali in his book but he does not use the word Pukhtunwali. Sense of honor, revenge, and hospitality, 'Tarboorwali', 'Zar' 'Zan' and 'Zameen' are the fundamental codes of Pukhtunwali. These codes in unison lend it authority, relevance and credence. Pennell was writing in the early 20th century when the Great Game was on the peak and the great powers, Britain and Russia were engaged in fierce fighting. KP then NWFP was newly created province and Fata was considered as a strong buffer zone between the two great powers. Pennell's book does not name the code of conduct as Pukhtunwali. His casual engagements with the Pathans of the 20th century were more frequent than another English officer. His account of the Pathan code of conduct revolves around the strict norms which make the area and the people wild in his eyes.

The way Pennell talks about Pukhtun codes shows that these were strictly followed and practiced by rural areas. The pervasive Pukhtun code of conduct is summed up in the following words. Pennell writes:

"The vendetta or the blood feud has eaten into the very core of Afghan life and the nation can never become healthy and progressive till the public opinion on the question of revenge altars. At present some of the best and noblest families in Afghanistan are on the verge of extermination through this wretched system" (Pennell, 1975, p. 18).

Pennell was a missionary doctor who had first-hand experience in dealing with Pukhtun culture and other related issues. His engagement with the tribes brings him to this conclusion that code of revenge, agnatic rivalry and bloodsheds are the markers that will in no time shatter the people and their ethos. He writes that:

"When on the march the women are heavily loaded. They can often be seen not only carrying the children and the household utensils, but driving the pack animals too, while the lordly men are content carry only their rifle, or at most give a lift to one of the children. Yet it is not because men are callous, but because it is the custom" (Pennell, 1975, p. 137).

The first ever written account of *Pushtunwali* was produced by an Afghan author, Qiyam ud Din Hussain in 1948. The sole purpose of this compilation of the Pushtun customs and manners was to provide sound footing to the Afghan nationalism. Pushtu was declared as the

national language of Afghanistan in 1935 by the then government of Aman ullah Khan. Aman Ullah wanted to unite the people of Afghanistan under a strong nationalist banner. Qiyam Ud Din Hussain's account of Pushtunwali acted as a preamble for the national integration program (Khadim, 1948, p. 10).

Qiyam udin Hussain gives some interesting arguments in the favor of Pushtunwali. He writes that among Pushtuns the word Pushtunwali implies everything what stands among the cradle and fundamentals of tribal essence, historical grandeur and Afghan norms. Pushtu is the name of their national language, Pushtun represents and speaks for their tribal spirit, Pushtunkhwa is the title of their country and Pushtunwali is their code of conduct which contains and assimilates all these words (Khadim, 1948, p. 17).

This Pushtun author, Hussain, gives primary importance to tribal spirit (Qaumi Ruh) and defines Pushtunwali in the light of this word. The tribal spirit of Pushtuns implicates the notion of common descent which is further characterized and supported by common language, culture, shared history, customs, unique pattern of life and religion. This definition of Pushtunwali is in sync with the political, cultural and nationalist reshaping and reintegration of Afghanistan. James W. Spain for the very first time brought forth the English translation of Pushtunwali in his seminal book, *The Way of the Pathans* (1957) and he relegate Pushtunwali to the people of hills and says that "It governs the life in the hills, where a Pathan is a Pathan and nothing else matters" (Spain, 1972, p. 46). His description of Pushtunwali rests on 'Badal', 'Melmastia', 'Nanawati' and 'Hujra'.

Spain terms Badal or revenge as "the greatest commandment of Pukhtunwali" (Spain, 1972, p. 57). Before Badal, the laws of Imperial Britain and the later days Pakistan failed to wield any influence.

Spain highlights the importance of Islam in the lives of Pukhtuns and its influence on Pukhtunwali. The mullah or the priest plays central role in Pukhtun society but its role is not ordained or designated one but rather anyone can preach the word of God. However, gradually mullah started to hold sway over the affairs and ended up in the Islamisation of the whole society. It offers violent resistance to any modification of the secluded status of the women. Therefore, the role of women has been minimal in the reformation and improvement of Pukhtunwali.

Spain brings out another tenet of Pukhtunwali which is still an established norm in the tribal areas but is redundant in the urban set ups. It is called as 'Lashkar or the war party'. Because the reach out of the state authority was limited therefore people would rely on these 'Lashkars'. These Lashkars are still in vogue in some parts of tribal areas and act as a viable platform for galvanizing masses in the time of peace and war.

Spain's description of Pukhtunwali is different and unique in a way that he insists on the cultural and social aspects of it. He also highlights the fact that it is a code strongly followed and practiced in the hilly areas than the urban areas. Therefore, it calls for different and variant interpretations of Pukhtunwali. Spain writes:

"To the visitor with a historical or philosophical turn of the mind, one of the most fascinating things about the tribal territory is that in much of it there is literally no Law. (There are exceptions. the Government has always controlled the roads and official buildings and a killing may be murder on a strip of concrete where a half dozen feet away it is the exclusive concern of Pukhtunwali)" (Spain, 1972, p. 52).

Fredrick Barth discusses the Swat Pathan society in his book, *Features of Person and Society: Among Swat Pathans* and attributes political motives to the cultural values of Pushtunwali. He elucidates that the striking hospitality and the lavish spending are politically motivated.

Pushtuns build their political powers through Melmastia. Through hospitality gifts are exchanged, loyalties are bought thus maximizing the influence and power in society. The gifts giving are a strong device in building political power. This device is not only employed for political support base but military purposes are also fulfilled. Barth puts undue stress on the political aspect of Melmastia which is essentially a cultural aspect of Pushtunwali. To Barth "The striking hospitality and reckless spending only seems intelligible if we recognize that the underlying motives are political rather than economic" (Barth, 1981, p. 12). To Barth, Hujra is primarily a platform to maximizing power. Thus, the tenets of Pushtunwali, according to Barth, act as essential tools in the hands of Khans and other notables of Pushtun society.

Barth's analysis of Pathan's society is based on the Swat Pathan model. Swat model is primarily a study in the historical evolution of Pathan society. The ecological and political set up of Swat is very developed in comparison to other Pathan areas. Barth tried to generalize his Swat model and attributed its features to all Pathans. This generalization of Swat model tends to ignore the variations and subtleties in Pathan society.

In his seminal book, *Millennium and Charisma among Pathans* (1976) Akbar Ahmed offers his own anthropological interpretations to Barthain model of Swat Pathan. He contends that the Pathan society is basically of two types, the Nang and the Qalang societies. The Nang is society that takes pride in honor and it is the central pillar of their social and cultural organization. To lose one honor is to invite death and shame. Honor is the be all and end all of their lives. These Nang group areas include the tribal areas also known as Fata. Pukhtunwali among the Nang group is also known as the code of Honor. Nang society is segmented in nature which provides its territorial and ethnic identity. In the absence of any other law, all the norms and life revolve around Pukhtunwali. In Nang areas, economical means of portability and power are restricted where 'nang', honor, becomes a symbol of grace, respect and social mobility. Due to the severe lack of economic zones, personal heroism, marksmanships and other skills in battle become the trademarks that bestow 'nang' (honor) and therefore status and social prestige. The Qalang also known as rent or tax based Pathan social structure is comparatively an advanced, civilized and urbanized ethos that makes for a different understanding and meaning of the codes of Pukhtunwali. Qalang areas are seen as the pivotal socio-economic structures where huge tracts of irrigated land are cultivated and redistributed among people. This giving and taking of land regulates and distinguishes subordinate from super subordinate social relations. Since these structures have greater exposure to modern education, health facilities and other essential dominators of life therefore there is mark deviation in the tenets of Pukhtunwali in the Qalang areas.

The difference between the two social groups is one between the 'warrior' (tribal) and the 'warlord' (feudal). The former takes part in forays and the latter arranges battles.

The culture of Qalang society is rich and urbane. Its language is enriched, its intonations orthodox and standard. In forms of address, there is tinge of Urdu and Persian languages and stark differentiations of higher and lower status (Ahmed, 1976, p. 77).

Ahmed's division of tribal society into Nang and Qalang groups presents Pushtunwali in new light and brings out different aspects of its tenets based on the variations in socio-economic conditions. Ahmed's study is restricted to one area and based on rural and urban Malakand model.

Akbar. S. Ahmed masterfully explores Pushtun tribal structures and their economic systems in his book, *Pukhtun Economy and Society* (1980). He argues that the ideal type model exists within Pukhtun society when cooperation and interaction with state systems is minimal and the areas are poor economic zones. Moving on, Ahmed articulates that changing economic

factors and other developmental projects can herald a new wave of change thus resulting in the encapsulation of Pukhtunwali.

Ahmed sets out to study Pukhtunwali is an ideal type among the Tribal and settled areas. His basic purpose is to see the operative role of Pukhtunwali despite the severe constraints of an encapsulated situation showing various jurally and administrative sanctions and different points of moral disunion (Ahmed, 1980, p. 56).

The book examines tribal groups and their refashioning inner and foreign relations to exogenous economic and political situations and postulates that Pukhtunwali survives political and administrative encapsulation. For this purpose, the writer examines two groups of the tribe, one, Tribal area Mohmand which is unencapsulated due its special administrative arrangements and the other, settled area Mohmand which is relatively absorbed and encapsulated within the larger state systems (Ahmed, 1980, p. 61).

The book further strengthens Ahmed's previous argument about Pushtunwali that it is followed in the areas where the writ of the state is minimal and people have no other mode of governance. In such a case, Pushtunwali serves as the best model.

Rohi Matulana: Pashto Proverbs by Leonard N. Bartlottti and Raj Wali Shah Khattak provides an insightful view into the manners and values of Pukhtuns and Pukhtunwali. The book gives an interesting account of the cultural values of the least understood ethnic group, the Pukhtuns. Since proverbs are "highly valued expression of their folk life and identity" (Bartlottti & Khattak, n.d., p. 155). One can gain a treasure trove of wisdom about Pukhtun ways.

The authors argue that proverbs are the best 'rhetorical tools' for negotiating and expanding on the demands and the values of Pukhtunwali, for these are the most powerful 'tools for living' and provide an "ethnographic record of tensions and conflicts" (Bartlottti & Khattak, n.d., p. 159).

Pashtu Proverbs are 'rhetorical tools' through which the tenets of Pukhtunwali are used and applied therefore the 'national character, national ideology and national philosophy' can be best summarized. These present the image of a courageous, proud; honor oriented, hospitable, ambitious and simplistic Pushtun. The first thing that one gets from the proverbs is the positive image of the age-old code of revenge, 'Badal'. In the proverbs the use of 'Badal' is not that much negative as has been depicted in the oriental anthropological literature. 'Badal' is used for 'gifts or visits, for bad words and rants'. It also means the 'exchange or reciprocate' of good wishes on the birth of a baby or any other day of festivity. These proverbs clearly establish that Pukhtunwali is a strong code of honor where Honor and Shame are as much dependent upon words- including defamation and verbal interpretations of one's conduct- as they are upon tussle or any other physical contest and hospitality, cordiality and munificence. 'Sharam' or Shame is also one of the powerful mechanisms for social control which one learns from these proverbs (Bartlottti & Khattak, n.d., p. 167).

The most glaring aspect of these proverbs is that the irrational and stubbornly following of Pukhtunwali code, Honor, is ridiculed and denigrated. Zeal, pride, self-definition and autonomy must be balanced and must not come at the cost of hurting someone's feelings.

This study of Pushtu proverbs becomes important for my study of Pushtunwali in Pushtun folktales because both proverbs and folktales are oral in nature and play primary role in the dissemination and preservation of the tenets of Pushtunwali.

Ghani Khan, the Pushtun Philosopher and poet, presents some fascinating reasons for the pervasive code of Pushtuns, Pushtunwali in his book, *The Pathans* (1994). He propounds his defence of Pushtunwali with a justification that it is a law that is bred and nurtured into the dendrites of every Pushtun. He alludes to the persistence of the code that despite the inroads

of too many other emerging trends, it still determines and regulates the behavior of Pushtuns. Pushtunwali, he argues, is in the blood of every Pushtun, for man give off to his children not only the form and shape of his own nose and the oddity in his type but also imparts them his worries, prognostications, his ballads and maledictions. In short, Pushtunwali, in its very core, is a cultural, social and political badge that their children inherit from their parents (Khan, 1994, p. 18).

Khan's book, *The Pathans* (1994) is basically a rejoinder to the classical English book, *The Pathans* by Olaf Caroe. Khan's book justifies Pathans' ways, their codes of conduct in a witty style. The book is a peculiar Pushtun voice that questions all other previous books written on Pushtuns.

In the defense of Pushtunwali, Khan calls down British writers and their codes of conduct as something written and preserved in big books while his Pushtun codes, customs are conserved in his wife's chest. To gain knowledge about your laws, you have to be either a judge or a criminal but a Pushtun comes to know about his customs before he learns how to eat, his manners are bred in him and are mixed in his tissues (Khan, 1994, p. 29).

The institution of Jirga and the place of 'Spingiri', white-bearded is extolled at great length. The lack of formal education is filled by white beards, the keepers of customs, laws and norms. Jirga, the tribal council is a judge and jury in its self. His forefathers have seen it and preserve it and so his ancestors will see to it (Khan, 1994, p. 35).

The institution of Badal, revenge and its impacts on Pathans is discussed in detail. The mother of a Pathan is a treasure crown jewel of the tribe and is guarded jealously. If he fails to take revenge, he will be looked down by his own family members, his wife and sons. Thus, taking revenge saves him from the taunt, Paighor of his clan and family members.

Khan supports the institution of Badal owing to the absence of proper law enforcement authority. This custom works perfectly well in the kind of society where nearly four million people live without law courts, police guards, judges and executioners.

In the *Images of Afghanistan* (2010) Arley Loewen explores the concept of Honor among Pushtuns in great detail. He argues that "Khalak ba se wai" or (what will people say?) is the driving force behind the strict observance of Honor code and maintains that it is kind of "the court of reputation" (Loewen & McMichael, 2010, p. 173). Public opinion becomes the fundamental of honor and good name. People live and die for the sake of upholding their individual, family and tribal honor. Maintaining honor gives them legitimacy in their society. In a way public praise galvanizes people's actions.

Loewen also examines Honor as a gendered code. Since tribal societies are strictly patriarchal therefore family- a man's wife and his daughters are means to project and promote his honor in the eyes of people. The immaculacy and the good name of a woman are the most delicate issues of honor in Pushtun society. A woman represents the actual status of the man and his family. The issue of honor is more strongly played out in the sphere of constituting a distinct place for the womenfolk. ZananKhana or the women's sphere reinforces the deep-rooted cultural fear that of both the genders that a woman is destined to commit mistakes and thus threaten her family and husband's honor. Secondly the instilled fear that man too is weak and unable to control his sexual cravings, so any news monger-provoking issue or situation must be avoided. The more isolated his womenfolk are, the more respectable and honorable the man becomes and thus it ensures the safety and protection of his property. Freedom of womenfolk puts the masculinity of the whole tribe in trouble (Loewen & McMichael, 2010, p. 176).

Laoewen establishes a very novel notion of honor. He says that Honor is much more than being virtuous; it is enormously merciless. He also agrees to the fact that the quest for honor in the modern ambience is played out differently but the demand and need to keep intact one's family honor still exists which at the same time is more challenging in the eve of existing political, ethnic and cultural predicaments.

Laoewen's argument about the changing nature of honor is relevant for my study of honor. Laoewen does not elaborate on the various challenges that endanger the traditional notion of honor.

In *The Thistle and the Drone* (2013), Akbar. S. Ahmed begins with an observation that tribal structures are no more "monolithic."¹ Migration, settlements and increased reliance on urbanization have resulted in the dilution of their tribal identity. This dilution of original identity calls for reinterpretation of the tribal codes in different ways. Lineage as such holds no more important place in defining the tribal links, and marriages outside the community and even ethnic groups for the sake of economic gains and alliances for political reasons have become common. He further argues that in spite of the same origins, with the passage of time the two developed unique and sometime contrary social and political ways of running and organizing their lives (Ahmed, 2013, p. 37).

The book also contends that all the tribal regions across the world have various codes of conduct. Code of honor and tribal lineage are the primary basis of identity as Islam is. These codes have various names directly or indirectly linked or related to their tribal identity. Pukhtunwali means "The way of the Pukhtuns," Baluchiat, "the way of Baloch"; the Fulani code is termed as Pulaaku, the "Fulani way"; the Yemeni code is Gabyilah, springs from the Arabic word for tribe; and the Chechan code, Nokhchala, is named after Nokhcho, their mythological ancestor (Ahmed, 2013, p. 36).

The Pushtun code of honor that Ahmed discusses in his latest book is pervasive and influential but at the same time it is elusive and ambiguous. Some call it Pukhtu, the language of Pukhtun people, others 'Tarboorwali' (the rivalry between male cousins) and most of the time as 'Nangwali' (code of honor). He argues that the code is a mixture of hospitality, revenge and the consistent compulsion to guard what is usually regarded as honor (Ahmed, 2013, p. 58).

To Ahmed, Pukhtunwali is consonant with Islamic identity and all Pukhtuns take great pride in their Islamic roots. They relate their link through their common ancestor, Qais Abdur Rashid who was converted by the Prophet to Islam. This natural link, in a way, purified Pukhtunwali which meant that almost everything that Pushtun customs include have a religious cover even though shaky (Ahmed, 2013, p. 64).

Ahmed concludes his excellent chapters on Waziristan model with a nostalgic note that the "Pakhtun way of life" is shattering gradually. Firstly, TTP inroads gave new violent interpretations to the codes of Pukhtunwali. The code of Badal was badly distorted to eliminate tribal elders. Code of honor always regards women in high esteem but TTP used them in suicide attacks which was not only violation of the tribal norm, Nang but also tarnished the image of Pukhtun women (Ahmed, 2013, p. 67).

Pukhtunwali is also threatened by the new group from within the Pukhtun tribes, The Kashar, the youth. The Kashar, the youth, armed with modern education, soaring ambitions and ideas of modernity has orchestrated new revolt against the scrupulous and illiterate Mashar, the elders. These energetic bands of youth demand greater voice in the affairs of their respected agencies, terming Mashar as selfish and corrupt. The youth even accuse the tribal elders as

¹ Akbar S. Ahmed, *The Thistle and the Drone*, p. 79.

puppet of the government who overemphasize the genealogical charter and exaggerate the tenets of Pukhtunwali. They also make demands for holding of elections on the basis of one man and established mechanisms that could best solve their pressing issues and bring them at par with the changing world (Ahmed, 2013, p. 77).

Ahmed makes a passing reference to the shattering of Pukhtunwali because of migration, urbanization and modern values. His reference to the revolts by the youth also needs to be further explored and analyzed. Lastly, Pukhtunwali as a tool of the government and the elders demands elaboration.

Pushtunwali and the American Military (2010) is an MA thesis by Robert Ross that explores the values and belief system of Pushtuns in the light of the American army in Afghanistan and the adjacent tribal belts. Before the author embarks on his ambitious project, he feels it extremely difficult to find out any specific definition of Pukhtunwali. The author is of the view that since Pukhtunwali has multiple and variant meanings therefore reaching at a proper definition is hardly possible. He goes on to build his view of the Pukhtunwali on the fact that FCR transformed it from a vocal code to a written one.

He talks about the efficacy and relevance of Pushtunwali. He makes an interesting argument for the fading value of Pushtunwali terming it the code of tribal people. He assumes that idealized form of Pushtunwali requires conditions of equality and poverty which use to be the unique prerogative of tribal people and now that these conditions have changed because of settlements, incessant wars and the onslaught of globalization therefore it no longer possesses strong explanatory powers for the changing times (Ross, 2010, p. 9).

To Ross, this irrelevance of Pushtunwali for the changing times becomes important for my study of Pushtunwali because it is still considered as a strong code of conduct.

Next, he asserts that because of the strong conflict within Pushtun society among the three competing forces, i.e. the religious leaders, Mullah, tribal leadership, Malik and the central state, there are growing threats to the future of Pushtunwali. Religious leaders have almost changed the contours of Pushtunwali by challenging some of its regressive and medieval norms. By referring to the religious onslaught on Pushtunwali, he cites the Taliban absorption of the concepts Pushtunwali in their social conservatism and imparting punishments (Ross, 2010, p. 10).

Tribal leaders too feel weakened in the face of the reign of terror owing to the impending threats to their tribal council, Jirga which was once the hallmark of their authority.

Lastly, he concludes that idealized Pushtunwali crack up is under threat because of trade, migration and wealth. These developments undermine the tribal traditional structures which in a way result in the collapse of Pushtunwali. Tribal belts are known for their group solidarity and clan loyalties but these very structures are under constant threats and the powers of Mullah outrun the dominion of tribal leadership which has not only challenged their tribal existence but has caused imbalance in Pushtunwali.

Ghulam Shams Ur Rasheed in his article "*Pushtunwali and Islam: The conflict of authority in the traditional Pushtun society*" (2012) discusses Islam and inspects the relationship of Pushtunwali and Islam in the traditional Pushtun society during the time of Afghan confederacy (1747-1880).

Ghulam is of the view that in order to weaken the tribal structure and reduce the dependency on the tribal leaders, Durrani rulers tried to consolidate space for the religious scholars which not only enabled them to maneuver tribal affairs but also help them spurring the Afghan nationalism. This point further elucidates the premise by some American authors who claim that the Pushtunwali collapse is a historic phenomenon. This Islamic inroad into the fabric of

Pushtunwali has further emboldened the hold of clergy on Pushtun society which can be seen in the misplaced and violent interpretations of the various conservative movements. Traditionally, the role of Mullah in Pushtun society has always been to guide people in rituals and other related matters (Rehman, 2012, p. 13).

Ghulam Rasool further explains the changing nature of Pushtunwali that its manifestation and operation is inharmonious from region to region as observed in the urban and nomadic Pushtun societies (Rehman, 2012, p. 15). This point gives credence to the view propounded by Akbar S. Ahmed and other anthropologists who think that the evolution in the tenets of Pushtunwali is not only resulting in its breakdown but has also enabled other competing systems to erode its essence.

Lutz Rzehak brings out some interesting aspects to the Pushtun code of conduct, Pushtunwali in his seminal article, *"Doing Pushtu"*. (2011) Pushtunwali to Rzehak is, primarily, ideal of righteous a bearing which determines conduct in peculiar circumstances. It presents racial self- portrait which means that Pushtuns are not only distinct because of their language but their upbringing also makes them unique among other races (Rzehak, 2011, p. 6).

Rzehak tries to link the roots of Pushtunwali to the nomadic culture of earlier Pushtun tribes. He believes that Pushtunwali still holds importance for Pushtuns because of the active tribal confederacy in some parts of Pakistan and Afghanistan. Lutz analysis of Pushtunwali relevance is in line with the arguments put forwarded by earlier anthropologists. Pushtunwali is followed in tribal regions because government control is weak and the tribes have been left on their own to manage their affairs (Rzehak, 2011, p. 9).

Rzehak then moves to the rules and important codes that constitute Pushtunwali. The regulations of Pushtunwali obey the contradiction of honor and shame. Conduct is mostly guided by the question how it is appraised in the eyes of others. Khalak ba se way (What people will say) is the quintessential short statement that keeps check on the behavior and conduct of people. Anyone who abides by the prescribed conduct is termed as 'Ghairatman' (honorable). Honor and shame are, according to Lutz, the central pillars of Pushtunwali. Pushtun is a person who neither disgraces himself nor others. He always protects the dignity of others. The person who tries to secure his dignity and the name of his family members is called as Nangyalay (the protector of honor) (Rzehak, 2011, p. 13).

Genealogy is of vital significance to Pushtuns and for a very long time it kept Pushtun identity intact. Some Pushtun tribes still take great pride in tracing their roots back to their proud ancestor, Qais, Abdur Rasheed who was later on converted to Islam. Genealogical roots help in promoting moral commitments and encouraging strong relationships. The essentiality of Pushtunwali is tribal spirit because all Pushtuns are patrilineal descendants of Qais, alias Abdur Rasheed. Genealogical linkage also makes a good case for tribal solidarity which, in a way, preserves and protects the tribal code of conduct (Rzehak, 2011, p. 16).

Rzehak concludes his article with estimation that some of the recent developments in Afghanistan have immensely weakened the tribal code of conduct. The newly enacted Afghan constitution has greater appeal to the educated youth and responds to international expectations than the traditional values of Pushtunwali. Lastly, Pushtunwali offers principals and these principals act as values to be followed as goals (Rzehak, 2011, p. 19).

Tribes, Pashtunwali and How They Impact Reconciliation and Reintegration Efforts in Afghanistan (2010) is an M.A thesis by Jonathan N Amato which primarily aims to bring out the main elements of Pushtunwali that could help out the coalitional forces i.e. ISAF and the NATO. In order to facilitate the stay of the forces Amato tries his best to understand the Pushtun code but fails to see its cultural side and the way the code has been practiced and

followed by the people. He starts his myopic judgment by relying on Obama's speech on the reconciliation strategies in Pak-Afghan region. "We will support efforts by those people who abandon violence and respect the human rights of their fellow citizens" (as cited in Amato, 2010)

This speech is particularly aimed at the supposedly brutal aspects of Pukhtunwali i.e. the killing of the forces in the fighting against the people. Amato terms Pushtunwali as a brutal and outmoded code that consists of Badal, revenge, Melmastia, (hospitality) and Nanawati (asylum) He does not go into the cultural and social aspects of these codes. In order to construct a narrative that suits the interest of the coalitional forces, his study feeds on the notion that:

"The Pashtuns will resist attempts by the central government to assert control over Pashtun areas so as to remain independent and not have someone issue orders to them and also the values of Pushtunwali terribly influence the Pak-Afghan insurgency" (Amato, 2010, p. 34).

This kind of perception casts Pushtunwali in extremely narrow light and serves a propagandist agenda. Amato makes an interesting point at the end of the article but he does not elaborate it. He writes that: "Adherence to Pushtunwali varies from place to place, tribe to tribe and individual to individual" (Amato, 2010, p. 45).

Tom Ginsburg's article, *"An Economic Interpretation of the Pushtunwali"* analyses Pushtunwali from a political economic perspective and elaborates on the relevance of the tribal code. Ginsburg is of the view that "Pushtunwali is a barbaric code and its replacement with the modern law would be a great advance" (Ginsburg, n.d., p. 2) and agrees to the fact that it 'has a logic of its own' and operates because there is no functioning state. He further argues that the "normative content of Pushtunwali is very fluid and it is a code of honor rather than legal one as it is believed in the conventional sense" (Ginsburg, n.d., p. 4).

Ginsburg basic assertion is that Pushtunwali does not provide legal code because 'legal codes are the product of the modern state' and it just provides rough guidelines on the conflicts and other related issues.

Ginsburg also agrees to the fact that "Pushtunwali is not a unified code" (Ginsburg, n.d., p. 9) but rather villages and regions have developed different versions of it. It is an established fact among Pushtuns that you are only regarded as a true Pushtun when you 'speak and do Pushtu' so Ginsburg is very right when he writes that "Privately developed language variations are enormous in Pukhtu" (Ginsburg, n.d., p. 12) and these variations also translate into the codes of Pushtunwali.

Ginsburg elucidates on the restoration and reclaiming of Honor through the use of money and other compensatory tools. Pushtun areas which are economically marginalized use and exchange women as a form of compensation. This barter or exchange also minimizes the spiral of violence but at the same time results in the blatant and brazen violation of women rights. This aspect of Pushtunwali invites severe criticism from the human rights organizations and was the one of the principal reasons employed to ouster Taliban regime in Afghanistan. Ginsburg justifies the codes of Pushtunwali such as 'Nanawati' and 'Jirga' as the impressive tools to minimize the unending chain of violence. Because the tribal structure remains intact and the state rarely bothers to revamp it, these two tools reduce the escalation of violence (Ginsburg, n.d., p. 15).

Ginsburg at the end of his article proposes that Pushtunwali needs to be transformed from the code of honor to the code of law. He asserts that instead of relying on unwritten codes, state laws must be introduced which will not only establish the writ of the state but will also 'domesticate Pushtunwali'. Norms regarding the handling of women undermine Pushtunwali

and also result in the escalation of violence. Education and literacy can eventually enhance the working of local village norms in Pushtunwali. It will not only benefit the locals but will also modify Pukhtunwali to comply with international norms.

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